CHAPTER 3:
The Mayor, Minister & Property Developers

"Find out where the people are going, and buy land before they get there."
- William Penn Adair

"The struggle of people against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting."
- Milan Kundera, The Book of Laughter and Forgetting

Face it, if you’re the average citizen, you don’t control your future. Not because you can’t but because you’re lazy. You’re like almost everyone else who allows others to make important decisions for them. Then you bitch about the Government at a braai, or during the intermission of a rugby or soccer game. And you feel ok cause you’re drinking a beer in the company of other whiny bitches.

If I just described you, the biggest question in your life should be, “Who do I want to control my future?” Would your answer include politicians and property developers?

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Since 2013, the DA-led Knysna Municipality has supported an illegal tender that was the first major step towards determining the future of its residents. Instead of calling the objective something comprehensible such as 'The Plan for Our Future', they went with 'Integrated Strategic Development Framework'. My opinion makes it the 'Insane Selfish Developers Fraternity'. But for you, I'll just call it by its acronym, the 'ISDF'.

The ISDF is supposed to become the blueprint for Knysna for the next 30 years. It determines everything from where development will be permitted and infrastructure erected, where people will work and live. That's disturbing considering that the tender was illegally awarded to those who never won the bid, and that many involved were in conflict of interest.

Knysna was said to be the test case for the Western Province. Don't think of the Western Cape as somehow less meaningful for only being part of South Africa. It's an area the size of Greece with a population greater than Denmark or Ireland's. This is about more than Knysna. It's about what the DA might do anywhere they rule, and that they consider the interests of property developers to be more important than us. It's likely about power wanting more power.

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In May 2013, I posted an article about several controversial property issues on opposite sides of town. I wondered if there was a link between them. That it became
my most popular blog at the time meant my worry was shared.

Lauren Waring was the Municipal Manager of Knysna. I once described her character “like grass after a pig’s snout has dug through it; slippery and muddily ugly. No matter how she ignores or lies to the Knysna public, she’s still going to walk home with her 6-figure salary every month. Residents associations are scared of her. Businesses are frustrated by her. I have come to despise this woman because she despises Knysna with her actions.”

She was in charge of Knysna but didn't live in it. She commuted from George Municipality. How residence wasn't an employment stipulation escapes me but it's awkward fact that would be repeated with one of her successors.

Chris Mulder is the owner and director of Chris Mulder & Associates Incorporated (CMAI). He’s the most famous and infamous property developer in a town once flooded by his ilk. The Americanised boom may have bust in 2009 but he seemed to continue doing well.

He was the brains behind Thesen Islands which splashed 568 houses and apartments in the middle of the sensitive Knysna Estuary. Prices range from R3-million to R30-million. Many stand empty most of the year, holiday homes for global trotters. It’s a remarkable construction admired by some but hated by others who believe it to be the anti-thesis to the natural beauty Knysna’s famous for.

I too have my doubts about whether it should’ve been allowed to exist. Although only a guard house and a bridge away from the centre of town, Thesen Islands is a gated community. It's essentially dislocated from the people of Knysna. I object to the fact that us regular folk aren't allowed to walk its shores. There's a small Public section with shops catering to the rich but the restaurants have their moments of popularity with the locals. From a developer’s point of view, it was a job well done. And the residents' association, who are our fellow citizens, are well-intentioned and efficient. And as much as no one wants to be a gardener or a maid, they also don't want to be unemployed. Thesen Islands is a contributor to the job market. It must also pay a lot of taxes.

My view is that what's done is done, so we may as well embrace it. I regularly walked its few public streets, enjoyed meals, drunk excessively over-priced beer, and took photographs.

Mulder, however, will never escape the controversy.
CMAI was part of the Knysna Creative Heads Consortium (KCH) which 'won' the first ISDF tender. The consortium was headed by Mulder and had been established for the purpose of becoming the ISDF service provider.

Resident Susan Campbell read my article and began conversation with me via email and phone. She who would become both a major player in Knysna and a feature in my life. I used to describe her as a fellow activist but now have serious doubts about her ultimate intentions. But, at that stage, her work made her remarkable. She'd previously halted questionable development in Uitzicht, had turned a family property into an environmentally friendly bush camp, and, with regards the ISDF, had compiled an impressively factual and intelligent objection. It helped that she was an attorney.

3 days after my initial article, I [blogged a version](#) of Campbell's objection on behalf of several conservancies and homeowner's associations.

Campbell had done the hard part but I'd given it wings. Certain circles in town were abuzz. Others began waking up.

Later that month, the Cape Times published 'Knysna Charm at Risk'. The Cape Argus followed with Melanie Gosling's 'Knysna Developer at Centre of Storm' on its front page. Gosling was a family member of a local businesswoman who was one of the main forces in the Noetzie Conservancy, on the other side of town to those Campbell was objecting for. The circle of dissatisfaction was complete.

But the Knysna Municipality, our Local Government, still wasn't listening. Their determination to disregard the Public's opinion made the issue bigger. I singled out the usual unhelpful suspects with, “Lauren Waring, our controversial Municipal Manager, has chosen to ignore residents’ associations. Our Mayor, Georlene Wolmarans, has again forgotten to be our leader. In fact, our politicians, from both the ANC and the DA, have been scarily silent.”

But Public participation, no matter that it's most times mockery and ineffectual, is guaranteed by the Constitution.

A meeting was set up for September 2013 at what Knysna Creative Heads (KCH) had creatively called an ISDF Connection Café. It was actually an abandoned shop in an abandoned mall that our small town library was temporarily using whilst its home got a charming yet absurd R5-million makeover (which would go over budget by half-a-
The ISDF flyer used community words such as "integrated", "interconnect", "interactive", "share" and "your" a whopping 17 times. It was meant to make one feel special, a believer in the promise of, "Giving us all a better life and a better place to live." As a final say, they even saluted our involvement in capitals: "YOU will shape the future by sharing your ideas for a better Knysna."

Sign me up! Oh, wait! There’s was that pesky worry that the people who were praising us may have been lying to us.

On my blog, I related what happened next:

"It was a first to drink wine in the library. I ignored my paranoia which said we were being lubricated into stunned lambs at a slaughter. In fact, every member of the public skipped mentioning past complaints and mused as to what was about to be delivered. In itself, that was an incredible feat considering we were surrounded by politicians who had either lied, being unhelpful or obstructive too many times before.

There were even two non-white, opposition politicians there, no mere tokenism considering that they, in the past we try to forget, were suppose to score from BEE developments from the same white people who were in the room with us. That wine sure felt comforting.

They said nothing. At least nothing of value that would explain the future of Knysna, the blueprint that may decide the future of the Western Cape. Over a poor quality microphone, Municipal Manager Lauren Waring, Mayor Georlene Wolmarans and ISDF Director Dr Chris Mulder spoke for approximately 30 minutes. They spoke with sufficient positivism so that some of the audience clapped at the end... despite us having learnt nothing at all.

A summary would say, 'We worked hard, we’re the best qualified and there are going to be more interaction Café’s.' If it had been delivered in a cup, it would have taken us longer to drink than one of those free wines. Our future should be longer than that.

Susan Campbell stood to ask questions. This was my first time meeting her in person. You’d think that such a person would be respected by those supposed to be guiding our future but exactly the opposite happened which begs the question, 'Whose future does the Knysna Municipality truly have at heart?'
This was advertised as an interactive meeting and only minutes before the speakers had spoken much about Public participation. Yet when Campbell tried questioning, she was refused by Georlene Wolmarans, the DA’s rent-a-mayor for Knysna. This prompted this writer and others to voice our disapproval, saying that we wanted to hear the answers and had questions of our own. The obvious objection by the Public found Chris Mulder, to his credit, heading back to the podium.

Campbell was very polite. She spoke in a calm voice and began by saying that she respected the Mulder family and that her questions were not targeted at them but at long unanswered questions involving the ISDF.

But the meeting became chaotic. The Mayor began acting like a spoiled child at a party, shooting comments from the sideline and totally disrupting the meeting. The staff were ordered to pack up which led to loud noises of more voices, packets and scraping chairs. It was an intentional act of sabotaging public participation. The DA’s part in the lie was exposed.

The Knysna-Plett Herald later reported that Mulder was told, 'Not to entertain them.'

The meeting collapsed into two small groups jammed between chairs and bookshelves; Campbell and Mike Maughan-Brown (the Knysna Town Planner); myself and Chris Mulder. People awkwardly jostled to and fro, trying to catch both conversations. I attempted to multi-task but had to give up trying to hear what Campbell was saying to instead focus on a visibly upset, Chris Mulder. Later, it was said that Campbell had asked excellent questions which Maughan-Brown failed to answer, and had instead ended by telling her, 'Take us to court.'

Chris Mulder was constantly raising his voice and, for minutes, prodded me in my chest. I pointed out what he was doing and looked around me so as to convey to him that there were witnesses. He took a breath, calmed down and I’m pleased to say that we eventually got to the point where we could shake hands.

My main question to him was how were the Public supposed to trust the ISDF process if we didn’t trust the awarding of the tender that started it? He wouldn’t answer that, insisting that it was the Knysna Municipality’s responsibility to do so. I disagreed, saying that the leader of such an important project does not shirk responsibility, and should want to step out from under the stormy cloud so
that the ISDF could move happily along.

He was at pains to say that he wasn't benefiting from the ISDF as he'd be busy with the Crossways development project, near Port Elizabeth, for the next 7-8 years. However, Mulder wouldn't state to me, as requested, that his company or his family would not be involved in future developments in Knysna.

It was an intense conversation filled with repetition that gained no answers.”

Despite loud opposition from the Public, the DA and Municipality were determined to proceed. It led to many questioning who the DA works for. It gave impetus to the the DA being the 'Developers Alliance'.

The size of that question mark grew when Campbell later revealed a long sought-after investigation by Provincial Treasury and Local Government. She'd gained it through the same Public Protector investigator who'd given me such a hard time. It proved what had long been suspected, that the ISDF tender process was fatally flawed. The findings were damning.

One of the first things you need to know is that MEC Local Government Anton Bredell is a big figure in the DA. Like MEC Tourism Alan Winde, he's part of Premier Helen Zille's inner circle. He's currently the Chairman of the Western Cape DA. It was obvious why Bredell had wanted to hide the report. He'd signed for it, defied it, and given the green light for the project to go ahead. He'd favoured property developers who'd never won the bid.

The DA and Bredell had long been mired in property scandals across the Western Cape but now, for the first time that I was aware of, there was damning proof.

Deepening the political mud was that it affected the recent elevation of Grant Easton to Municipal Manager, replacing Waring. He'd been Director Finance during the Knysna Tourism scandal.

I'll return to that report but let me first point out what was known long before its release.

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The ISDF tender is rotten.

In April 2013, the Knysna Municipality appointed Knysna Creative Heads (KCH) to prepare the ISDF for Knysna. KCH is led by Mulder and includes his company CMAI, Urban Econ and Marike Vreken, a planning consultant known to fight for rich
developments in environmentally sensitive areas. From the outset, it seemed as if the tender was being pushed their way.

Despite the importance and scope of the tender, bidders were only given three weeks to respond. KCH had an unfair financial and knowledge advantage over other bidders. The previous year, Mulder and CMAI had been appointed to investigate and obtain the necessary approvals for an intended residential property development by PG Bison, a forestry company that's the biggest private landowner in Knysna. The Knysna Municipality then appointed CMAI to make a Structure Frame for that area called Rheenendal. The deal was that PG Bison would pay CMAI the bulk of the money whilst Knysna Municipality would contribute a nominal amount that wouldn't need Council approval. The appointment was made despite the fact that the area would be reviewed as part of the ISDF process. They were being paid for work that would have to be done again.

CMAI had become known for various controversial development proposals outside the urban edge. As part of KCH, and with intentions to build a new waterfront alongside the Knysna Estuary, it possessed the most conflict of interest.

Despite their advantages, they came second in the bidding process. The winner was City Think Space which was based in Cape Town. But KCH was given the tender.

The ISDF tender was prepared and awarded under the watch of Director Planning & Development Mike Maughan-Brown. Before working for Knysna Municipality, Maughan-Brown advised PG Bison’s parent company, Steinhoff, on issues relating to their property and forestry settlements.

The value of the ISDF public participation was also in doubt as Pat Mulder, Chris Mulder’s wife, carried it out despite having no relevant qualifications or experience. In one meeting, she defended PG Bison, CMAI’s client, regarding the contentious issue of forestry communities.

Keeping it in the family was their son, Steff Mulder, who prepared the Human Settlement Plan for the ISDF.

Also defying fair and impartial approach were the municipal officials involved in awarding the tender.

Mike Maughan-Brown was a member of the Bid Adjudication Committee (BAC) that dealt with the ISDF tender. If there was a single person who should have pointed out the conflict of interest of having a local property developer head up the ISDF, it was
him. Previous to being a municipal official, Maughan-Brown’s town planning firm, wished to change the proposed urban edge of Knysna. Chris Mulder wished to do the same. They even wanted to include an existing nature reserve. Doing so would have favoured the profits of property developers wanting to build gated communities in sensitive areas.

In 2008, when Knysna’s first development framework was prepared, Mike Maughan-Brown, Chris Mulder, Marike Vreken and VPM all delivered objections which included opposing the proposed urban edge (which they wanted extended).

Ilse van Schalkwyk, Knysna Municipality’s Manager of Economic Development, represented the BEC (Bid Evaluation Committee) during the BAC meeting for the ISDF tender. The decision to award the tender relied on her evaluation of the bids. But Van Schalkwyk should have recused herself as she was associated with two of the companies forming the KCH bid – she used to manage the George branch of Urban Econ, and Chris Mulder had been a client of Urban Econ.

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According to Susan Campbell, 133 people and organisations objected to the awarding of the ISDF tender to KCH.

Municipal Manager Lauren Waring was obliged by law to appoint an independent person to deal with the objections. Instead, the Municipality’s Director Legal Services Melony Paulsen initially dealt with the objectors. Paulsen was for supporting the wishes of Council, not the Public who paid her salary.

After further outcry, the Municipality appointed CJ Ballan Attorneys.

Both actions suggested defence rather than helpfulness. Some objectors receiving no response at all. No hearings were held. Campbell, who was representing a large number of citizens, requested to address the Council. She was denied.

Bianca Currie, from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, released an independent, 21-page report that recognised that a:

“Significant issue emerging from the Knysna ISDF process is the unresolved conflict between the Knysna Municipality and civil environmental groups. The dispute is not being acknowledged and has been left to fester, breeding suspicion and mistrust in the process.”

The most detailed, critical and damning objection was Campbell’s 29-page report. By law, the Municipality was compelled to reply yet Municipal Manager Waring dismissed
it in a single letter that failed to address the serious allegations therein.

The Knysna-Plett Herald's 12 June 2013 edition stated that Mayor Wolmaran's response to the Public's frustration had been to threaten “that the Knysna Municipality may choose to take legal steps against persons and publications should they publish any information deemed defamatory about the municipality or its officials.” It was in remarkable contrast to her election campaign promises of transparency and an open door policy.

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The Knysna Municipality and Council, particularly the DA, were determined to push the ISDF tender to KCH – the politicians failed to fulfill their oversight role and, instead, looked the other way.

That the ANC weren't bludgeoning the DA with it, gave strength to the rumour (which I've never confirmed) that ANC biggies were seeking BEE shares from PG Bison. BEE, pronounced as the acronym B.E.E., is 'Black Economic Empowerment'. It's the robbery of South Africa, an elite few becoming appallingly rich instead of helping the poor. In return, companies, especially those established during the Apartheid era, trade wealth for a multi-racial curriculum vitae that's in turn traded for contracts for more business.

I made appeals to Premier Helen Zille, Mayor Wolmarans and many others – all ignored me.

Through my websites, I led an online campaign to promote Campbell's objection and educate the Public. The long-term challenge was to combat the Public's inevitable topic fatigue.

Public pressure stopped the ISDF from being implemented... but not cancelled. Millions were spent and municipal meeting after municipal meeting mentioned the ISDF as if it were imminent.

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In May 2014, Mayor Wolmarans sent a request to MEC Alan Winde for the ISDF allegations to be investigated. I assume he was still our representative to Parliament at that stage. The situation was odd because no facts had changed, and the DA or Municipality could've called for a local investigation any time the previous year.

As Wolmarans was a supporter of the controversial tender award, it was seen by some as a way of protecting herself whilst getting a green light from higher government which supported it too. One rumour was that she was ordered to send the request as
the DA leadership believed that an investigation by their loophole government would find a way around it. What happened was probably unexpected by both sides.

Wolmarans waited until August to announce to the Knysna Council her request to Province. The Council reacted as if they’d been bombed. It cannot be coincidence that Treasury and Local Government had completed their investigation the same month (something discovered much later). That's the investigation I mentioned earlier. There was a plan afoot and the Public weren't part of it.

MEC Anton Bredell’s department took over and kept delaying the release of the report without explaining why. A summarised version eventually arrived in Knysna in November 2014, but was only revealed to the Public in February 2015. No reason was given for Bredell not supplying the full document. But it was possible that the Mayor had lied and withheld it.

It’s importance compounded as it affected the appointment of Grant Easton as the new Municipal Manager. Mayor Wolmarans had stated that his appointment required Bredell’s full report before being enacted. That implied that Easton needed to be cleared of any wrongdoing regards the ISDF tender. Despite that, she conflicted with her own statement by appointing him anyway. Political lies had become a way of life.

Bredell’s summary, nevertheless, seemed to emphatically concur with the objectors – he listed 10 major points against the ISDF. It seemed like a conviction but-in total contrast, and without explanation, Bredell stated that he saw no reason why the ISDF couldn’t proceed as the discrepancies hadn't affected the process. The report, his email and decision blatantly didn’t add up.

Campbell pointed out that:

"For reasons best known to her, the Mayor has decided to annex only the letter from Bredell, rather than the full report, to the agenda for the meeting of the Mayoral Committee scheduled for 19 February 2015. Considering that the letter was sent on the 25th of November 2014 and it refers to ‘a report which is attached for your consideration’, we have to assume that the Mayor is in possession of the report."

Facing a blank wall that, according to her, made no sense unless it was to favour the interests of a few over the many, Campbell sought the full report. Her requests to Bevan Ellman (Knysna Corporate Services Manager), Anton Bredell and Graham Paulse (Chief Director of Municipal Performance, Monitoring and Support) failed for a
year. She applied through the George Office of the Public Protector which retrieved it half a year later.

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Halfway through the Council Meeting of 27 November 2015, just before she left the room, Campbell handed out copies of the full provincial report into the ISDF. It was damning, proof that Bredell had attempted a whitewash and that his contrary actions should be considered fraud.

Irony of ironies was that Mayor Georlene Wolmarans had just announced Knysna’s clean audit. And masochistically funny was that Grant Easton had requested a further R579,000 for the ISDF tender. Besides the irregularity of paying more money than contractually agreed upon, Easton was unable to explain what the money was for. No one on the Council, when asked, could state which councillors were on the ISDF Steering Committee. It was a classic meeting of incompetency and evil lunacy.

In Council on 10 January 2016, Easton's requested figure was mysteriously dropped to an even R250,000, and said to be for a community consultation session. Some agreement seemed to have been reached under the table during the holidays. Councillor Peter Myers had claimed to me that he’d become a politician because of his opposition to the tender process involving the ISDF. Now he agreed that the extra money should be paid. No one asked for a breakdown of how the monies would be used and why Easton had changed it from the previous amount of R579,000. The meeting was extremely confusing in that it wasn’t clear from the Public gallery whether the money was approved or not.

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The 16-page investigative report into the ISDF showed repeated compliance errors that made the choice of words in the conclusion seem tame:

"The assessment showed that there are procedural deficiencies in adherence to the SCM [Supply Chain Management] prescripts and regulations. Furthermore, the Municipality should guard against the possible future conflict of interest."

Summarily, the tender for the future of Knysna wasn’t awarded to the highest scoring bidder and wasn’t legally compliant.

The tender should’ve been shot down in flames. Instead, there was no move to admit wrongdoing or correct the problem. Instead, life continued as if it hadn't happened. We were understandably worried.
I lost reference notes and a computer in the Great Knysna Fire so I'm unsure whether I'm quoting or paraphrasing Campbell:

"Knysna’s most well known property developer, previously employed by the town’s largest land owner, was managing the process in which Knysna’s future would be determined. The process was been overseen by the Town Planner who was previously a consultant to the land owner. The DA was made aware of all the conflicts of interest but instead of investigating defied due process and seemingly white-washed the situation in favour of property developers over the Public they were meant to serve."

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Like a phoenix with a gimpy leg, the ISDF rose again. At the beginning of 2017, the DA made an anonymous post on their Facebook page. The request was for the Public to look at the ISDF plan.

I made the 'fatal' mistake of asking the following reasonable question:

"It's beginning was an illegal tender. The protest against that has led to the hold-up of ISDF implementation for years. Please explain where we stand with the investigation. Is MEC Bredell's, then Mayor Wolmarans', the Planning Department's, and the Legal Department's role being questioned too? Please show that this is no longer being whitewashed or conveniently (and only) dumped on suspended Municipal Manager Easton. Please identify yourself when answering. Thank you - www.knysnakeep.org/minister-anton-bredell-mayor-georlene-wolmarans-knysna-tender-scandal-1."

When the DA deleted my comment, I questioned them on it, saying that their poor actions would be reacted to.

They deleted that comment... and a third...

...and made a new post, stating, without mentioning my name, that I’d been banned for "grandstanding".

The screenshots can be viewed online.

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The ANC may rule South Africa but are entirely dysfunctional in the Western Cape. So what should've been normal was instead strange in August 2017.

ANC MP Richard Dyanti stood in the legislature with one of my corruption summaries
in his hand, questioning MEC Anton Bredell. He even read out the threats against me by Dr Martin Young who would soon become a DA councillor.

Dyanti had long refused to respond to me, hadn't spoken to me about what he was going to do, hadn't researched the topic, and did nothing thereafter. It was pure grandstanding, a politician pretending to be opposition. Thankfully, a junior ANC member in Cape Town told me about it afterwards. That person never understood why his/her leaders weren't capitalising on what had sensationally happened. The opportunity to take down one of the most powerful leaders on the other side was skipped. It suggested that, for all their dancing, the top brass in the ANC and DA in Cape Town aren't political enemies. I wondered if the likes of the ANC's Cameron Dugmore could ever “enemy” as he'd hidden in Helen Zille's cottage during Apartheid.

Through luck and persistence, I found the video of what happened. It was better than watching 'House of Cards'.

Bredell repeatedly perjured himself. He was the Father Christmas version of Pinocchio, looking fatter on YouTube with every obvious lie, sending me presents of evidence against him.

[Interruption: I have a complaint with Parliament that's had three hearings. They call it the 'Love Knysna Petition'. Cause I don't want to confuse you with my confusing life, I've been introducing villains and themes rather than a blow by blow account. But note that the complaint includes the topics of Knysna Tourism, the illegal appointment of Easton, intimidation and other stuff. The ISDF tender's in there too.]

When queried about Knysna corruption, and in particular the ISDF tender, Bredell lied that the Public Protector had cleared it. He claimed the impossible because part of the my Love Knysna Petition to Parliament was because the Office of the Public Protector failed to investigate my complaint, and refused to investigate their staff member, Bruce Wessels, who suspiciously failed to do so.

Bredell lied that Treasury and Local Government had cleared the tender which was blatantly untrue if you'd read the investigation he'd signed for and then tried to hide.

Bredell implied that Parliament had cleared it too which was also lie because the process hadn't finished. And a decision had yet to be made by the time this book was released, 20 months after his lie.

The DA Federal Executive and Premier Helen Zille ignored my complaint against MEC Bredell for committing perjury in Parliament, protecting himself and the property
developers he favoured against the Public. So I tried a different route, a step lower down the ladder of power.

Sharna Fernandez, the DA's Speaker for the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, acknowledged my complaint in November 2018. On the Provincial Parliament website, she states: "As Speaker, I hope to draw the attention of all citizens of this province to the rights and responsibilities our democracy has bequeathed them."

I ccied ANC members and Alan Winde who'd become the DA's candidate for Western Cape Premier.

But she has continued the DA's pattern of silence.... and since been placed at a respectable #6 on the DA's Western Cape candidate lists for the 2019 election. She's assured of a good job whilst Bredell keeps his – he's #8 on the list of 42 candidates.

Bredell is protected because the DA is a lie needing to protect those who lie for it.

And ANC leaders such as Richard Dyanti, Cameron Dugmore, Khaya Magaxa, Faiez Jacobs, Pierre Uys and Ebrahim Rasool are suspiciously slumberous. The constant protection of the DA by the ANC should be concerning for anyone believing in the need for opposition as a step towards honesty in politics.

As citizens, we are cursed to walk beneath the ladders of politicians.

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I shiver when the DA repeatedly tells national media that they're the party of good governance. They're rarely questioned on their claim. It's more likely that they'll be compared positively to the ANC's negativity. If we were the sleeping resident, we'd get burnt as much by a DA shack fire as we would by an ANC house fire.

The only time I recall the DA being seriously challenged was with regards Cape Town's water crisis in 2018. Until then, they'd been given undying support and a get-out-of-jail-free card. But the world's party metro suffering from drought was impossible for even international TV to ignore. Even harder after President Ramaphosa mentioned it in an interview from the World Economic Forum in Davos.

That residential and small business anger has combined with other rates charges to linger into today. The ratepayers, whose bills shot higher than Table Mountain, must have been angry in January of this year when it was announced that the City of Cape Town had over-collected rates by R900-million, and that the desalination plant wasn't operational.
Knysna isn't alone. The DA's referred to as the Developers Alliance in other places. Resident's of the Western Cape are well aware of controversies regards the Tafelberg School site, Philippi Horticulture Area, Clara Anna Fontein, Maiden’s Cove, Foreshore, Kommetjie, Glencairn, Bo-Kaap, Big Bay and Princess Vlei. The DA may pretend to be liberal whilst having a socialist base seeking votes, but is cruelly neo-liberal at the top. R3-million spent on the Knysna ISDF tender and six years wasted. Worth far more was Knysna’s unknown future. At least we learned that the DA didn't and doesn't care about us. Knowledge is power that can be used, whether by vote or writing a book.
Anton Bredell (WC MEC Local Government) & Georlene Wolmarans (Knysna Mayor)