

Speaker's open letter to Knysna

To the residents of Knysna,

I am writing this letter to inform you, in my own words, why I will not be engaging Mr Mike Hampton (Wicked Mike) on any platform at any level.

I received a very threatening letter from Mr. Hampton on Tuesday 9th March 2015 (he calls it an ultimatum – one of six...). He has threatened me with publication of this letter to me, I believe, in order to use it as the post to which he will try to tie me, and the whip he will try to lash me with, in future. This is an old tactic of his, in which he throws every single demand/complaint of his, at his target of choice, for that blog, series of blogs or any of his multitude of social media platforms, in order for him to wag his finger in indignation, when the least of his “demands” are not met. In one fell swoop he has impugned my character as a Woman, a Mother, a Daughter, a Citizen, a Coloured, The Speaker, a DA member, a former representative of the ANC, and even as a teacher and a friend.

Mr Hampton has assumed the role of “sole-defender” of Knysna at all and any level, and his wrath aiming to make those that he perceives to stand in his way, quiver in their boots. Many have, but I will not. On his various public platforms, he has attacked myself, and my colleagues (past and present), on a very personal and bigoted level. For example: “...Eleanor Spies who is coloured on the outside but white inside, popular with white female voters.” – Who will win power in Knysna, KnysnaKeep 13 March 2015.

Mr. Hampton claims that all his activity is to ensure a better Knysna. As a town we have some serious issues that need serious attention, none of which will be helped by the divisive and distracting innuendos he spouts. He has the leisure of concocting all sorts of conspiracy theories from the various coffee shops and bars that he gets to spend his ‘working’ days in, while I have to get real work done, in real time. Most of the issues he has raised in his letter are already before the appropriate organs, or will get there, and will be dealt with in due course.

His issues with individual employees and councillors of Knysna Municipality are very confusing to me, and I’m sure that they are equally confusing to them. In my view, it is never clear from his writing and accusations, if the people are being attacked as employees of Knysna Municipality, or in their personal capacity as individuals. In other words, if you dare to respond as the one, you will suffer as the other, and vice versa.

The people who have taken him to court, in their personal capacity, are suffering his wrath on a professional and political level. Mr Hampton assumes the privilege of maintaining his quasi-political campaign, by attacking the personal integrity of individuals that he neither knows nor understands on that level. In my opinion, his actions do not help in any way. They sow doubt and suspicion, in order for his blog, and public reverence (in Knysna) to survive.

I have actual work to do, in my ward, as Speaker, and as a public representative. There are people I work for who need actual upliftment and relief in their communities, and I do not have the time nor the inclination to waste this time on his pulpit thumping, and character bashing.

I write this to you, the residents of Knysna, so that you understand that I am not ignoring YOU, or your issues. I believe that my time will be better spent on real work, rather than respond to the harassment Mr. Hampton has subjected so many to, without having to answer to anyone except himself.

I am not afraid of criticism, frank questioning or judgement before those I represent in my public life. I will not however stand for Mr Hampton’s constant insults to my citizenry as a woman, a member of the coloured community or a politician. I will not dignify his wide ranging smear campaigns, with responses that only further tangles our town in a web of time consuming e-mails and Facebook watching.

To Mr. Hampton I say: Approach me with the respect I deserve as an ordinary human being, and I might reconsider this decision. If not, I will see you at the next council meeting of whatever sort, and I will continue to greet you, while you wilfully ignore me.

Citizens of Knysna, I wish to thank you, with appreciation, for your trust, and I will endeavour to deliver to you all of what we as a town deserve.

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Posted on: 11:56 Thu, 19 March 2015

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