

Help for Cato Manor schools

KIROSHA NAICKER and VERNON MCHUNU

AT LEAST 11 000 children are set to benefit from an ambitious venture that promises to revitalise 14 Cato Manor schools in the next five years. The Greater Durban Community Foundation, one of the city's development arms, has joined the provincial Education Department and several private sector partners to launch the venture. It has been dubbed the Whole School Development Project. Last year a foundation study identified a number of problems at the schools. These include crime, poor

nutrition among pupils, poor teacher development, inadequate infrastructure, a lack of sports and learning resources, and problems with governance and management. The project is a response to the study's findings. Speaking from London on the eve of the launch last week, leading business figure John Barton described the work that will be done as "ground-breaking in its approach". The study also found that absenteeism was as high as 20% at some schools in the area. Substance abuse, weapon abuse, theft and vandalism were rampant too. The study found that

despite high levels of poverty in the area, none of the schools were "no fee" schools. Only half the primary schools were participating in the Department of Education's nutrition scheme, and few of the schools were providing adult basic education and training. **Concerns** Other concerns included the number of pupils who came from child-headed households. There had also been an unexplained drop in the number of pupils at Grades 11 and 12. Njabulo Maseko, spokesman for the municipality's

Cato Manor Area Based Management, said: "With many municipal departments having a vested stake in this project and the department of education having prioritised it, there is no doubt that communities will be looked after." Foundation Director Margaret Winter said: "The quality of education is one of the single most important factors in determining the future development of Cato Manor and other transforming neighbourhoods." Programmes under the Whole School Development Project will be implemented by leading NGOs, including Business Against Crime.

Kevin Glen, Managing Director of Business Against Crime, said: "Safety in schools is vital if our children are to learn and become active and valuable members of society. "We are excited to be involved in this partnership of business, government and civil society to make schools safe and secure," he said. John Barton, Co-chairman of the Growth Coalition, said: "It will take a contribution from all of us if we are to build healthy communities as the foundation blocks of a world-class city. I encourage other business leaders to get behind this initiative." *NaickerK@durban.gov.za MchunuVernon@durban.gov.za*

IN BRIEF

New numbers for centres

CONTACT details for the city's regional centres head office have changed. The new details are: 031 311 6101 (tel); 031 311 6107 (fax); and *Sizakala@durban.gov.za* (email). The Sizakala Hotline is now: 0800 33 10 11. The new One-Stop-Shop numbers are: Hillcrest: 031 311 2716/2717 Kingsburgh: 031 311 5844/5868 Mpumalanga: 031 311 2680/2679 Customer Services managers can be reached on the following numbers: North areas: Harry Haripersad: 031 311 6112 South areas: Phindi Mdletshe: 031 311 5785 West areas: Lungile Khuzwayo: 031 311 6113

Language policy launch

THE municipality will launch its Language Policy on 23 March at the City Hall. The constitution and the Municipal Systems Act requires municipalities to take into account the language usage and preferences of their residents when communicating, including the needs of people who cannot read or write. The national Language Policy Framework requires municipalities, in consultation, to develop, publicise and implement a multilingual policy.

Business mentorship

A SMALL business mentorship support programme has been launched in Durban. Known as SAPLATO, it allows for businesses to meet regularly to discuss initiatives. The Deputy President of the Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Moses Tembe, told delegates that the initiative would equip businesses with skills to develop their businesses. "Remember, small businesses generates huge employment opportunities," he said.

Rates arrears: warning

RATEPAYERS whose accounts are in arrears for more than 90 days and who owe less than R100 000 have been sent final demands. After 14 days, summons will be issued. Ratepayers who owe more than R100 000 have been handed over to the municipal attorneys. Ratepayers are urged to make arrangements to pay or face a sale in execution.

Mariannhill landfill scheme scoops prize

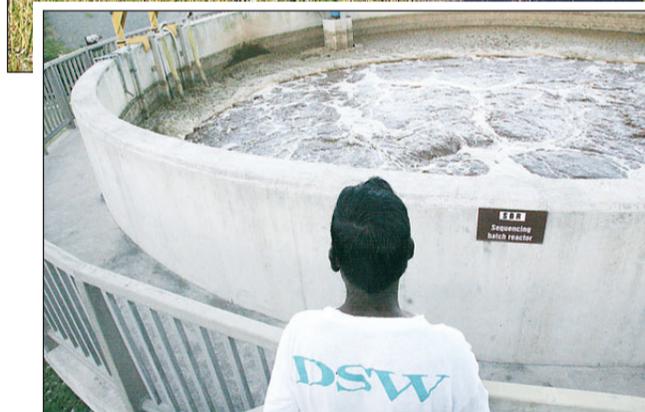
VERNON MCHUNU

DURBAN Solid Waste has won a Platinum Award and R50 000 in cash for its Mariannhill landfill site conservancy project. It received the prize from Impumelelo Innovations Award Trust at a ceremony in Cape Town recently. Every year the trust rewards 20 "exceptional public service projects", taking into account innovation, good governance and service delivery. The Mariannhill project's contribution to poverty reduction and community development helped DSW win the award.



CONGRATULATIONS: DSW's John Parkin receives the Platinum Award from Cape Town Mayor Helen Zille

and developing skills. Head of Durban Solid Waste, Raymond Rampesad, said: "The landfill conservancy fits in with DSW's principles and goals. "We contribute to a healthy environment and vibrant economy, through responsible solid waste management and by recognising solid waste as a useful resource wherever possible," he said. Rampesad said by combining "naturalistic" engineering with the daily operation of the landfill, the project had reduced harmful waste gas emissions by using it to generate electricity. The city recently undertook to use two additional landfill sites - at Bisasar and LaMercy - to generate electricity from methane gas emissions. DSW's Neeri Govender said landfill-gas-to-electricity generation projects, such as



ABOVE: The Mariannhill landfill gas-to-electricity generating plant

LEFT: A DSW worker monitors part of the process of transforming methane gas to electricity

Picture: BONGA MSIMANG

the one at Mariannhill, had become financially viable since South Africa's recent signing of the Kyoto Accord Host Country agreement. Govender said they would now be able to help cut global emission of methane - a gas which contributes to the greenhouse effect and global warming. Govender said the project involved extracting landfill gas - which has a 40% to 60% methane content - through gas wells and interlinking pipework

installed in the Mariannhill and La Mercy and Bisasar Road landfills. Spark ignition engines of 1 000kW and 500kW capacity, then burn the gas to generate electricity. Emission reductions are achieved through the destruction of methane gas and from the displacement of coal-derived electrical power by this "green energy". Over the period, the project is expected to yield a total income of R33.9-million for the city. Some R20.7-million

of this would be generated from the sale of carbon credits, and the balance, R13.2-million, would come from the sale of electricity. Through a "home grown expertise" initiative, which grants bursaries to young engineering professionals, the project also provides a social benefit. It will create two skilled professional-level jobs, three technician-level jobs, and five to seven semi-skilled or unskilled jobs. *MchunuVernon@durban.gov.za*

Renaming to begin soon

Continued from page 1

SHE said the consultation process (for phase 1) began two years ago after City Manager Michael Sutcliffe had been instructed by the council to invite proposals from the public. This included the Durban Chamber of Commerce which sought the views of the business community.

Gumede, who chairs the council's Masakhane, Grants-in-Aid, Non-racism and Non-sexism Committee which drives the renaming process, said her committee had received no objections from the public regarding the proposed renamings. She said the proposals which were received from the public had been tabled at a full council meeting in January this year.

"Except for Commercial Road, which will now be named after Dr A B Xuma, instead of Bram Fisher, no objections were received." The IFP abandoned a recent council meeting where the issue of renamings was discussed while the DA has hinted it might take legal action over the incorrect procedure followed in the first phase of renaming.

Imagine Durban

Continued from page 1

AS SUCH, the region's schools will be instrumental in facilitating the process. Painting and essay competitions, with prizes for pupils, parents, teachers and schools, will help to encourage interest in the project. Sustainability is at the

centre of Imagine Durban. If we are considering the shape and character of our city almost 100 years into the future, our plans need to be sustainable and they need to begin today. It is clear, given the ecological implications of non-sustainable practices, that we have no choice but to act sustainably.