

Councillor Karl Bodin

Proportional Representation

Member: Mayoral Advisory Committee on Water Quality
of Wetlands, Waterways and the Coastal Environment

Member: Finance Portfolio Committee

Member: Sub-Council 7

M: 082 4659814

E: Karl.Bodin@capetown.gov.za

CAPE INDEPENDENCE PARTY (CAPEXIT)

MEDIA STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

10 September 2026

**CAPEXIT DEMANDS ACTION IN MELKBOSSTRAND: "THE CITY CAN NO LONGER
IGNORE THIS COMMUNITY"**

Cape Independence Party (CAPEXIT) Councillor Karl Bodin has demanded urgent action from the City of Cape Town following the formal handover of his comprehensive memorandum, a community petition signed by more than 450 Melkbosstrand residents, residents' comments, an independent structural engineering report and the City's applicable nuisance by-law.

Cllr Bodin was approached by **Mr Johann Steyn, a Melkbosstrand resident and community activist**, to intervene after many years of residents raising concerns about deteriorating public infrastructure, the occupation of bus shelters, homelessness and the growing use of public spaces for tents and makeshift structures.

Mr Steyn said:

"The residents of Melkbosstrand have been raising these issues for years. We have knocked on doors, made complaints and repeatedly asked the City to listen. We have now put more than 450 residents' signatures on the table. We are simply asking the City to do its job and ensure that our public facilities are safe and that our public spaces remain accessible to the community."

ENGINEER WARNS OF "VERY REAL RISK OF SUDDEN COLLAPSE"

The seriousness of the bus shelter issue has now been independently confirmed.

An independent Structural Engineer inspected **11 bus shelters in the Duynfontein/Melkbosstrand area** and found extensive deterioration. The report records that concrete has **“spalled away”**, leaving the internal reinforcing steel exposed to the elements and describing this as an indication of **“advanced structural fatigue.”**

The report further warns that the harsh coastal environment is accelerating corrosion of the exposed reinforcement and states:

“Given the structural fatigue currently observed, there is a very real risk of sudden collapse.”

The Engineer has advised the City to **intervene immediately** and address the structural fatigue before a sudden collapse occurs.

Cllr Bodin said:

“This is no longer a matter of residents simply complaining about ugly or neglected bus shelters. An independent professional has inspected them and warned of a very real risk of sudden collapse. The City has now been formally notified. If these structures are unsafe, the City must act immediately – whether that means repairing them, securing them or demolishing and replacing them. Waiting for somebody to be injured before acting would be completely unacceptable.”

THE BUS SHELTERS CANNOT BECOME DE FACTO HOMES

The safety concerns are compounded by the fact that some of these public transport facilities are reportedly being occupied by street-based persons, effectively preventing their proper use by members of the public.

Cllr Bodin said the issue must be approached **firmly but lawfully**.

“This is not about criminalising homelessness. It is about the City enforcing its own laws while dealing humanely with people who are living on the street. There is a very important distinction between being homeless and occupying a public facility, obstructing public access, using drugs or alcohol in a public place, urinating or defecating in public, or erecting an unauthorised shelter.”

The City's **Streets, Public Places and Prevention of Noise Nuisances By-law** prohibits a person from blocking or occupying a public place in a manner that denies other members of the public freedom of movement or use of a public facility. It also prohibits urinating or defecating in public, consuming liquor or drugs, being under their influence, and – critically – **sleeping or camping overnight or erecting a shelter unless the area has been designated for that purpose or the City has given written consent.**

The By-law also gives authorised City officials and SAPS powers to direct a person to stop prohibited conduct, remove obstructions and leave and remain out of a specified public place, as well as to issue compliance notices and take further enforcement steps where appropriate.

BEACHFRONT AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACES CANNOT BECOME DE FACTO CAMPSITES

Cllr Bodin has also raised the growing problem of tents and makeshift shelters being erected on the **Melkbosstrand beachfront and other public open spaces**.

The By-law's definition of a public place expressly includes **parks, recreation grounds, open spaces and beaches**.

Cllr Bodin said:

“The beachfront is a public space. Our parks, open spaces and public facilities belong to the public. They cannot simply be surrendered because the City has failed to enforce its own rules.”

“If the City wants to establish designated areas or provide alternative accommodation and social assistance, that is a matter for the City to address. But it cannot simply turn a blind eye while tents and makeshift structures spread across public spaces and residents are told that nothing can be done.”

The By-law provides a specific process where the prohibited conduct involves overnight sleeping or erecting shelters: after a compliance notice, suitable shelter must be offered; where that offer is refused, a social worker must consult with the person and explain the alternative shelter and why acceptance would be in their best interests before further enforcement under the By-law.

“THE CITY MUST ENFORCE ITS OWN BY-LAWS”

According to Cllr Bodin, the central question is no longer whether the City has the legal tools to respond.

“The City has a By-law. The City has enforcement officials. The City has social services. The City has a Law Enforcement Department. The City has Urban Mobility and City Health. What it needs now is coordinated action and political will.”

“Residents should not have to organise petitions, commission independent engineering inspections and repeatedly fight for years simply to get the City to maintain a bus shelter or enforce its own By-laws.”

The petition, residents' comments, engineering report, By-law and Cllr Bodin's comprehensive Memorandum have now been formally submitted to the **City Manager's Office**.

The City Manager has confirmed that the documentation will be referred to the relevant Executive Directors and departments, including **Urban Mobility, Safety & Security, Health and Community Services**, among others, for consideration and response.

Cllr Bodin said:

"Today marks a turning point. The Melkbosstrand community has spoken with one voice. The evidence has been placed before the City. The engineering warning is on the City Manager's desk. The petition is on the City's desk. The By-law is on the City's desk. There can be no excuse for saying that the City did not know."

"I have agreed to assist this community because these residents deserve to be heard. I will not allow this matter to disappear into the City's bureaucracy. We will scrutinise the response, we will hold the relevant departments accountable and, if necessary, we will continue escalating the matter until meaningful action is taken."

A MESSAGE TO THE CITY

Cllr Bodin concluded:

"Melkbosstrand residents have been patient for long enough. They have stood their ground for years. They have now demonstrated that they are organised, determined and united."

"The City must protect its infrastructure, protect the public's right to use public spaces, enforce its own By-laws and deal humanely and effectively with homelessness. These objectives are not mutually exclusive."

"But doing nothing is no longer an option."

ENDS

Media enquiries: Councillor Karl Bodin (CAPEXIT)

Cell: 0824659814

Email: karl@capexitparty.com

Press Officer: Jeanne Martins

Cell: 0837377388

Email: press@capexitparty.com