RESPONSE TO THE MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN DEPUTY MAYOR RUBEN RICHARDS

Special Council Meeting held 24 June 2026 in Algeria – Cederberg Municipality

Response submitted by Councillor Ruben Richards

Speaker,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this Motion of No Confidence tabled against me in my capacity as Deputy Executive Mayor of the Cederberg Municipality – a motion signed 8 June 2026.

For the record, let me note that the proposer of this Motion of No Confidence is Democratic Alliance Councillor Joos Engelbrecht. The motion is seconded by the three other councillors of the Democratic Alliance, namely, Cllrs Paul Strauss, John Hayes and Yves Blaauw. The motion is also seconded by Patriotic Alliance councillor William (Josef) Farmer.

Speaker, I recall that barely a year ago, while serving as Executive Mayor, a similar motion, signed on 18 June 2025, was brought against me by the same opposition parties. I speak under correction, but I, including some of my fellow councillors, have now faced six motions of no confidence during this one term of office.

My response to the motion of last year (2025) remains a matter of public record. Regrettably, today's motion follows a familiar pattern: serious allegations are presented as established facts, despite the absence of any evidence whatsoever to support them.

I therefore reject this Motion of No Confidence and the allegations contained therein.

Allow me to address each allegation in turn.

MOSIE VAN WANTROUE IN DIE ONDERBURGEMEESTER RUBEN RICHARDS

Hiermee dien ons ‚n mosie van wantroue in teen die huidige onderburgemeester Raadslid Ruben Richards, ome te dien met die volgender geskeduleerde raadsvergadering op 18 Junie 2026 vir die volgende redes:

MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN DEPUTY MAYOR RUBEN RICHARDS

We hereby submit a motion of no confidence against the current Deputy Mayor Councillor Ruben Richards, to be served at the next scheduled council meeting on 18 June 2026 for the following reasons:

Allegation 1

Hy is verantwoordelik vir die huidige politieke ONSEKERHEID as gevolg 14 Februarie 2025 se onwettige raadsvergadering.

"He is responsible for the current political uncertainty as a result of the illegal council meeting of 14 February 2025."

Response

Speaker, my response to this allegation is to remind everyone – both councillors and the general public - that this matter is currently before the courts. It is therefore inappropriate for any party to present its version of events as an established fact while legal proceedings remain ongoing.

The circumstances surrounding the meeting of 14 February 2025 are disputed and subject to judicial determination. It is not for this Council, nor for the opposition, to pre-empt the findings of the courts. Suffice to say the CE coalition is of the opinion that the meeting was legal.

Allegation 2

Hy is bewus dat hy steeds 'n konflik van belang het met Clackson en het dus die wet verbreek, deur weerens deel te neem in n stemming teen opstigte van (tov) die Clackson settlement kontrak on 26 Julie 2025.

"He is aware that he still has a conflict of interest with Clackson and therefore broke the law by again participating in a vote regarding the Clackson settlement contract on 26 July 2025."

Response

Speaker, this allegation is similarly presented as fact despite remaining untested through the appropriate legal and administrative processes.

The opposition appears determined to act as investigator, prosecutor and judge simultaneously. Such an approach disregards the principles of due process and natural justice upon which our democratic system is founded.

If there are legitimate concerns, there are established procedures available to address them. Allegations alone do not constitute proof. Speaker, this allegation is denied.

Allegation 3

Clanwilliam se water probleem duur al jare voort en hy het die probleem ignoreer wat tans groot ontwrigting veroorsaak as gevolg van onvoldoende watersuiwerings kapasiteit.

"Clanwilliam's water problem has been ongoing for years and he has ignored the problem which is currently causing major disruption due to insufficient water purification capacity."

Response

Speaker, the motion correctly acknowledges that Clanwilliam's water challenges have existed for many years. What the motion fails to acknowledge is the fact that these challenges long predate the current administration and existed when previous administrations/political parties governed the municipality – long before I even arrived in Cederberg and long before the establishment of Cederberg Eerste

The question that residents should ask is not whether challenges exist—they clearly do—but what has been done to address them.

Under the current administration (and I refer here specifically to the period under CE-leadership), significant steps have been taken to improve water infrastructure, including the installation of new filtration systems and ongoing investment in infrastructure upgrades in sewage, electricity and roads.

More broadly, this administration has worked to address numerous long-standing service delivery challenges inherited from previous years of neglect.

Among the achievements of the current CE-led council are the following:

1) The provision of approximately 300 chemical toilets in the informal settlement of Riverview-Citrusdal, thereby improving sanitation for vulnerable residents.

2) The upgrade of the Clanwilliam sewage infrastructure and the prevention of sewage spillages into the waterways.

3) The establishment of a municipal law enforcement capability.

4) The acquisition of a new service delivery fleet to improve operational effectiveness.

5) The restoration of the municipality's financial position from severe financial distress to a funded budget with a surplus.

6) The achievement of a clean audit.

7) The reduction of inherited Eskom debt to zero - debt accumulate during previous administrations under *inter alia* the leadership of the Democratic Alliance.

8) A final achievement worth mentioning is the ability of this municipality under CE-leadership to fund a growing number of capital projects from municipal own revenue rather than relying exclusively on grants.

It bears repeating, that for the first time in many years, the municipality is in a position to utilise its own resources to repair and improve critical infrastructure.

While challenges remain, it is inaccurate to suggest that this administration has ignored them. On the contrary, we have worked continuously to address historical service delivery backlogs while simultaneously managing financial recovery and institutional stability.

Allegation 4

Hy meng in met die werkwyse van die administrasie en die Speaker, en vermy hierdeur aanspreeklikheid vir dissiplinere klagtes teen hom, deur beinvloeding van die Speaker, om hom nie te laat onderwerp aan n ondersoek nie.

"He interferes with the workings of the administration and the Speaker and thereby avoids liability for disciplinary charges against him, by influencing the Speaker not to subject him to an investigation."

Response

Speaker, this allegation is entirely speculative and unsupported by evidence.

The suggestion that I exercise improper influence over the Speaker or municipal administration is not only unfounded but fails to recognise the distinct roles and responsibilities assigned to office bearers within local government.

Decisions concerning investigations and disciplinary matters are governed by established legal and administrative processes, not by personal influence.

This allegation is denied.

Allegation 5

Hy gebruik Cederberg Munisipaliteit om regskostes op belasting betalers se koste om sy party politieke verskille te besleg.

"He is using Cederberg Municipality and legal fees at the taxpayers' expense to settle his party's political differences."

Response

Speaker, this allegation fundamentally misrepresents the situation.

Where legal proceedings involve municipal decisions or actions, the municipality has both a right and an obligation to defend its interests and ensure that due process is followed.

The legal costs incurred are not for the advancement of party-political interests but for the protection of the municipality's lawful decisions, governance processes, and institutional integrity.

It is concerning that the opposition seeks to characterise the defence of municipal processes as something improper merely because it disagrees with the outcomes of those processes.

Again this allegation is denied.

Conclusion of the Motion

Speaker, the concluding paragraph of the motion reads as follows:

Die raad moet 'n bevoegde onderburgemeester aanstel, wie na die belange van die Cederberg munisipaliteit en sy inwoners omsien.

"The council must appoint a competent Deputy Mayor, who will look after the interests of the Cederberg Municipality and its residents."

Response

Speaker, I reject the implication that I have failed in that responsibility.

Throughout my tenure in leadership, my focus has remained on strengthening municipal governance, restoring financial stability, improving service delivery and advancing the interests of all residents of the Cederberg.

The record of a CE-led administration demonstrates tangible progress despite significant inherited challenges and ongoing political instability fuelled by opposition party political agendas.

General Remarks

Speaker, allow me to conclude by response by saying that this motion appears completely unconcerned with facts and evidence and more concerned with political theatre.

At a time when residents expect us to focus on post-flood disaster recovery operations, service delivery, infrastructure development, financial stability and economic growth, Council is once

again being asked to devote its time to allegations that remain unsupported by any substantive evidence whatsoever. In fact, allow me to state my opinion as plainly as possible. Not only is this motion based on unsubstantiated allegations but blatant categorical lies.

It is interesting to note that the timing of this motion of no confidence in me occurs today, when that the results of the disciplinary hearing into the alleged misconduct by Democratic Alliance Cllr John Hayes is tabled.

The timing of the motion of no confidence notwithstanding, democracy requires robust debate and accountability. However, accountability must be grounded in facts, evidence, and respect for due process.

When allegations are repeatedly presented as facts before being tested through the appropriate channels, we risk undermining the very principles of fairness and justice that our constitutional system seeks to protect.

The opposition represented by a collaboration between the Democratic Alliance and the Patriotic Alliance are entitled to disagree with our policies and decisions. That is the nature of democracy. However, disagreement does not justify the presentation of allegations as facts, nor does it justify motions that lack evidence.

Speaker, I remain committed to serving the residents of Cederberg to the best of my ability and to working constructively with all councillors who place the interests of our communities above partisan political considerations.

Speaker,

I therefore reject this Motion of No Confidence.

Thank you.

Councillor Ruben Richards

Cederberg Municipality