

To: Mayor Gary van Niekerk

Date: 11 January 2024

Subject: **Urgent Request for Investigation into Recent Tragic Incident and Sewage Infrastructure Concerns**

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Dear Mayor Van Niekerk,

I am writing on behalf of ActionSA and the community of Missionvale to express our deep concern and outrage regarding a recent incident in Missionvale, Gqeberha, where little Elviro Langford tragically lost his life by drowning in a manhole filled with sewage near Jacks Road, Missionvale. This distressing incident serves as a stark reminder of the municipality's apparent lack of care and urgency in addressing critical service delivery issues that pose severe risks to the health and safety of Nelson Mandela Bay residents. We find it disheartening that no adequate measures or steps were taken to secure the area and in particular to ensure the safety of children within this community. Albeit that this particular manhole has since been barricaded, we have witnessed firsthand other manholes and excavations that remain open and unsecured.

In light of these tragic circumstances, ActionSA urgently requests that a comprehensive investigation be conducted, and a report be compiled into the work conducted by the approved contractor or service provider in the aforementioned area. We further request that a comprehensive report, from your office and that of Cllr Khanya Ngqisha (MMC for Infrastructure & Engineering), on

1. The measures, if any, taken to secure not only the said site where the tragedy occurred but others where there are excavations as well.
2. The reasons behind the continued exposure of many other wastewater and stormwater manholes, left open and unsecured.
3. Detailed explanations for the municipality's delays in addressing critical service delivery issues related to sewage and wastewater infrastructure.
4. Information on the permanent solutions that the municipality plans to implement to resolve the ongoing sewage and storm water flooding issues in Missionvale and Motherwell but all other areas of the Metro where this occurs.

We believe that immediate action and transparency are crucial in addressing this matter and preventing any similar incidents in the future. The safety and well-being of our community members, especially that of our children, should be of the utmost priority. We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

**Athol Trollip**  
**ActionSA Eastern Cape Chairperson**