



Chairperson Report

Period Under Review: 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

Dear Overstrand Ratepayers and Citizens

It gives me pleasure to present OCAN's second Annual Report.

A Brief Reminder

The Overstrand Community Action Network is an apolitical data-driven civil society community coalition that exercises oversight and coordinates efforts to drive meaningful change, transparency and accountability within the Overstrand Municipality through a collective and legitimate voice.

Using data, OCAN paints pictures that tell stories. These 'stories' enable Overstrand-citizens to interpret information about the performance of the Overstrand Municipality regarding themes such as financial sustainability, infrastructure development and renewal, cost management, innovation, environmental conservation and civic partnering.

Value Proposition

With civic oversight as our foundation, OCAN offers a proactive, solution-driven partnership that enhances the capacity to deliver, builds trust, and accelerates progress. We are committed to working with the OM's senior leadership team and Council, to assist in turning vision into reality.

Looking Back

An AGM presents the opportunity to reflect on OCAN's role and performance during the past year.

What stands out is the fact that OCAN's dual role of scrutiny and constructive engagement has been reaffirmed. The section on Key Actions (page 3) provides a concise summary of our contribution during the past year.

The Need for Change

Change is not optional, neither can it be a political slogan. In the context of the Overstrand Municipality, change is a governance necessity, one that the evidence compels, and that the various communities deserve.

For too long, the response to structural weaknesses has been incremental adjustment rather than substantive reform. Budget processes have been conducted as compliance exercises rather than genuine exercises in public accountability and participation. Earlier a formal OCAN request for civic involvement in the annual budgeting process was ignored.

Senior posts have remained vacant not for months, but for years. An institution cannot perform at the level its communities require when the architecture of its senior leadership is hollowed out.

Investigations into serious governance failures (refer the Milkwood Festival and fuel card fraud) have either stalled or been passed on, with residents left to wait indefinitely for outcomes that should have been resolved swiftly.

A new administration must demonstrate, from the outset, that governance failures will be investigated swiftly, reported transparently, and where warranted, acted upon decisively. Accountability deferred is accountability denied.

The above is not the profile of a municipality on a sound trajectory. It is the profile of an institution that has grown comfortable with managed decline.

Residents have a constitutional right to meaningful input into how public resources are spent. That right has been treated as a formality. A new administration must make genuine civic partnering, not tokenistic consultation, a defining feature of its governance approach.

Long-term financial sustainability cannot be achieved through annual tariff adjustments whilst ignoring an assessment of the need for and quantum of the underlying costs. It requires a frank assessment of structural pressures.

Examples include infrastructure backlogs, escalating employment-related costs, water and energy security, bulk service cost escalation (think Eskom), revenue base concentration (being heavily dependent on a small number of ratepayers), and unfunded mandates.

Above all, the Overstrand Municipality should establish a strategic horizon that considers several important questions: What will the municipality look like in ten years? How will infrastructure investment keep pace with growth? How will financial resilience be built to counter economic shocks? What should a deliberate economic development strategy entail?

OCAN believes that the largely untapped wealth of expertise within the Overstrand presents the Municipality with a strategic opportunity to dramatically enhance its performance.

In the end, it all boils down to having the right leadership that will actively drive positive change.

Key Actions

During the review period, OCAN:

-
- ❖ Met with the Executive Mayor and his Mayoral Committee (14 October 2025)
-
- ❖ Held OCAN's inaugural Annual General Meeting (23 October 2025)
-
- ❖ Met with the Municipal Manager (MM) to explore civic partnering (5 November 2025)
-
- ❖ Conducted a virtual poll (7 November 2025) regarding Consumer Debt Write-Offs (<https://ocan.co.za/poll/>)
-
- ❖ Lifted the proverbial lid (20 January 2026) on the now infamous Milkwood Festival ([click here](#))
-
- ❖ Met with the Stanford SRA Steering Committee (30 January 2026)
-
- ❖ Joined the Hermanus Business Chamber (HBC) and the Hermanus Ratepayers Association (HRA) in a meeting with the MM and members of his team (19 March 2026). The purpose of this meeting was to reflect on strategic risks and practical interventions.
-
- ❖ Performed a comprehensive review (9 April 2026) of the Overstrand Municipality's performance based on the 2024|25 audited annual report ([click here](#))
-
- ❖ Performed a review (20 April 2026) of the OM's draft budget report for 2026|27 ([click here](#))
-
- ❖ Submitted a list of questions to the Budget Steering Committee ([click here](#))
-
- ❖ Attended a business breakfast with Minister Dean Macpherson (Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure) and Mr Tertius Simmers (Western Cape Provincial Minister for Infrastructure) – 16 April 2026
-
- ❖ Hosted a think tank (17 June 2026) to explore the possible establishment of an Overstrand Ratepayer Association Alliance ([click here](#))
-
- ❖ Produced several newsletters and fact sheets ([click here](#))
-
- ❖ Held formal and informal Advisory Board meetings
-
- ❖ Had regular contact with the Western Cape office of the Auditor General (AGSA)
-

Our Hopes

The future of the Overstrand municipality depends on a commitment to working together, spending wisely, and protecting our environment for generations to come.

We want the creation of much improved channels for public feedback, ensuring greater transparency in every decision made.

We want to see the current barriers between residents and local administration removed. We want to encourage the municipal leadership to transform municipal governance into a collaborative partnership where community voices guide its priorities.

By practicing strict fiscal responsibility and investing in sustainable, future-ready solutions, this municipality can become and remain vibrant, resilient, and financially healthy.

For several years the Overstrand Municipality has faced a leadership crisis. The November 2026 elections can be a turning point that creates the opportunity to reset agendas, priorities, relationships and practice.

OCAN does not endorse political parties, but we hold firm that a change of administration that does not translate into a change of governance culture will not serve the Overstrand well. What is needed is not a different set of people doing the same things. Rather, we need a fundamentally different standard of leadership, accountability, and strategic thinking.

The Overstrand has the potential to be a model of what good local government looks like. Realising that potential requires the courage to change, not at the margins, but at the level of culture, capability, and commitment that underpins everything else. In addition, there must be a willingness to make difficult decisions and trade-offs.

Governance – Changes to the Advisory Board

Simon Koch, one of OCAN's founding directors, resigned during June 2026. Jon Kark, a serving OCAN-advisor, was appointed in his place. Earlier Rod MacLeod was co-opted to the Advisory Board ([click here](#)).

Citizen Support

OCAN's strength lies in its support. A broad base of engaged citizens enables us to speak with legitimacy and authority.

We encourage Overstrand ratepayers and residents 18 years and older to register as OCAN supporters via the OCAN website. Registration is free of charge and open to anyone who shares our commitment to accountability and good governance ([click here](#)).

Close

As stated in our most recent newsletter, OCAN will continue to focus attention on governance failures, unfulfilled obligations, and on the strategic risks that demand urgent attention.

Simultaneously, we will continue to offer constructive, solution-oriented engagement. Scrutiny without solutions is insufficient. We aim to contribute to a municipality that is not only accountable, but capable.

Words of Thanks

The Advisory Board would like to express its gratitude to donors. Your financial support enables us to continue the work we do, and to build a reserve that will fund future initiatives.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members for sharing their wisdom in dealing with issues that fall within OCAN's mandate. Together we are busy laying the foundation of an institution that will play an important role during the years to come.

Finally, I would like to thank Corli Brits (Kleinmond resident) for her pro bono technical and administrative support.

Errol van Staden
29 September 2026

Mobile +27 83 637 0700 (WhatsApp preferred)
E-mail: errol@ocan.co.za