MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY

Challenges of Sub-National Governments in Zimbabwe:

AN EXPLORATION OF GWERU CITY

Stephen Chakaipa & Vincent Chakunda

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DEDICATION

It would be folly and meanness on my part to leave out the people who sacrificed their time and work commitments to sit for hours to respond to my questions during data collection.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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BOOK SYNPOSIS

The study critically presented in this intellectual output, explores the service delivery system in Zimbabwe's sub-national levels using Gweru City Council (GCC) as a case study. It is guided by the following four specific objectives: (i) to examine the service delivery challenges of sub-national governments; (ii) to explore the political and administrative systems and mechanisms required to broaden the scope of sub-national governments for improved service delivery; (iii) to explore the indicators of efficient service delivery at sub-national level and; (iv) to identify and discuss options for addressing service delivery challenges at sub-national level. Guided by this set of objectives, the study engages a case study methodological approach. The study makes use of descriptive, interpretive and explorative research methods. Data were collected from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The focus group discussions were particularly focused on gleaning the perceptions of the communities on the quality of council services such as provision of water and refuse collection. For secondary data, the researcher collected council minutes, budgets and other policy instruments for over four years which were useful in understanding the operations of the GCC. The researcher utilised secondary information for service delivery: newspaper reports and journal articles that were considered important sources of information for the study. The study has brought to the fore the fact that while the structure of sub-national governments could be different, the majority of sub-national governments are designed in a way that advances the interests of the central government or respective political parties with the majority in the local government elections. Service delivery challenges range from institutional, policy-related, environmental and financial challenges. The study establishes that the following measures can be taken to address service delivery challenges; special service districts, inter-municipal cooperation, privatisation and the reform of legislation and improving service delivery governance. Issues such as corruption, mismanagement of funds, political interference and compressed fiscal capacities have been seen to be stifling service delivery in the GCC. From the responses, it is highlighted that the reasons behind failure of the public to pay service charges to the local authority was largely linked to the public's perception of the state of service delivery in the Gweru City Council. Furthermore, the public professed that

the local authority was reneging on their responsibilities in terms of service delivery and implementing unilateral decisions without consulting the residents on issues that affects their constituency. The study has found that the residents view service delivery as the responsibility of the local authority with the residents and the government assuming the watchdog positions. The study recommends that there is need for public participation and participatory budgeting. Furthermore, local authorities should be capacitated in all aspects while politicians could also be given the powers to monitor the operations of the local authorities without interfering with their processes through such acts as overriding decisions.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
AGPC	Australian Government Productivity Commission
DA	District Administrator
DFID	Department for International Development
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
EMA	Environmental Management Agency
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GCC	Gweru City Council
IDP	Integrated Development Planning
LGCDP	Local Government Capital Development Programme
LAHEC	London Assembly, Health and Environmental Committee
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change- Tsvangirai
MSU	Midlands State University
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCED	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PSIP	Public Sector Investment Programme
PHA	Public Health Act
RA	Resident Advisors
RTCPA	Regional, Town and Country Planning Act
RDC	Rural District Council
RDCCBP	Rural District Council Capacity Building Programme
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UCA	Urban Councils Act
USAID	United States Aid

WBG	World Bank Group
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZUCWU	Zimbabwe Urban Council Workers Union
ZIMSTATS	Zimbabwe National Statistical Agency
ZINARA	Zimbabwe National Roads Administration

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CHAPTER 1: THE CONTEXT OF MUNICIPAL SERVICES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPHERE

Local authorities in all parts of the world play an increasingly important role in the delivery of fundamental basic public services (Palmary, 2002; Resnick 2014; Bel *et al.*, 2018). However, most local authorities in developing countries are facing increasingly greater challenges as a result of rapid and chaotic urbanisation, recent global financial and economic crisis and varied socio-economic and structural fundamentals. This is further exacerbated by the widening gap between the availability of financial resources and municipal spending needs usually reflected in the increasing fiscal gap mostly explained by the rapid growth of urban populations that creates an ever-increasing demand for public services, new public infrastructure, and its maintenance. The decline in central government transfers conjoined with compressed revenues derived from property taxation and service charges has depreciated the capacity of not only Gweru City Council (GCC) but all local authorities in Zimbabwe's service delivery potential. Coupled with this, the more lucrative sources of revenue potentially suitable for financing urban services, such as income taxes, sales taxes and business taxes continue to be controlled by the central governments.

This study therefore seeks to examine the dynamics of sub-national service delivery, focusing on structural and non-structural factors and the brevity of the related challenges using the qualitative paradigm. Nyikadzino and Vyas-Doorgapersad (2022) observes that the devolution drive in Zimbabwe remains a fundamental plank in alleviating poverty and addressing regional inequalities by providing efficient service delivery. Dube (2017) observes that the central government centralisation strategies have crippled service delivery in local councils. Where local authorities are able to derive revenues from property taxes and service charges, meaningful tax increases are sometimes refused or delayed by central government for fear of eroding political support from the urban population; or even rejected by the local authorities themselves for fear of political backlash from local taxpayers. Generally, there are huge vertical imbalances in terms of sharing responsibilities and available

fiscal resources. Stated differently, central governments refuse to pay the political and financial costs of the decentralisation and devolution of roles and responsibilities.

Sub-national governments that are constitutive of the focus of this study, are urban local authorities or local governments provided for in Section 5 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number 20 of 2013 as the third tier of government below national government and provincial and metropolitan councils respectively. Section 274 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe and Section 4 of the Urban Councils Act [chapter 29.15] establish urban local authorities which are also referred to as urban councils. The terms local authorities, local governments and urban councils will be used interchangeably in this study. The powers and functions of urban councils are provided for in Section 276 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe and the Second Schedule of the Urban Councils Act. These powers and functions revolve around service delivery which is the focus of the study. The powers and functions of local authorities will be unpacked in the ensuing pages. Local authorities are also referred to as sub- national governments. City of Gweru, which is constitutive of the subject of this study constitutes one of the 32 urban councils in Zimbabwe. The enabling legislation, the Urban Councils` Act, classifies urban council's hierarchically into city councils, municipalities, town councils and local boards, based on population, revenue base, value of land and improvements on the land and the range of economic and social activities. Table 1 shows the hierarchy of urban councils in Zimbabwe.

Table 1:1 - Hierarchy of Urban Councils in Zimbabwe.

Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Total
Cities Harare Bulawayo Gweru Masvingo Kadoma Kwekwe Mutare	Municipalities Redcliff Chegutu Chitungwiza Victoria Falls Chinhoyi Gwanda Marondera Bindura Kariba	Town councils Chiredzi Norton Shurugwi Zvishavane Gokwe Beitbridge Rusape Mvurwi Karoi Chipinge Plumtree Lupane	Local Boards Ruwa Chirundu Epworth Hwange	
7	9	12	4	32

The study of local government service delivery in Zimbabwe presents a complex discourse with a dynamic institutional and constitutional context. Local government institutions in Zimbabwe are poised to foster development since their mandate is to address and meet public needs (Davey, 1996; Chirisa *et al.*, 2018). A Davey (1996) posits that in Zimbabwe comprehensive responsibility for urban services lies with local government as the undisputed lead agency. Thus, the capacity and ability of local government as a tier/sphere of government to provide services efficiently has been one central questions in the Public Administration discourse the world over. This is because the state of service delivery in council areas has a direct impact on residents' lives. Various reforms have been implemented by governments to broaden the service delivery scope of local government (Murimoga and Musingafi, 2014). Chukwuemeka *et al.*, (2014) have argued that it is, to a large extent, the zeal and need to reposition local government for greater and more effective service delivery that perhaps provides the impetus and imperative for the various local government reforms in most political systems.

In Zimbabwe, local government sector`s role is to stimulate good governance and development, courtesy of the decentralisation policy adopted by government at independence in 1980 (Dewa, Dziva and Mukwashi, 2014). Since then, decentralised local authorities strived to service all areas under their jurisdiction adequately. However, the new millennium saw deterioration in service provision by local authorities largely due to the socio-economic and political dynamics and dimensions enveloping Zimbabwe.

Since the turn of the millennium, there have been widespread complaints over municipal and local governance service delivery. Several stakeholders (among them residents' associations, the non-governmental organisation (NGO) communities, residents and the Ministry responsible for Local Government have also testified to the fact that there has been a general decline in municipal service delivery and capital development in local authority governed areas. The Ministry of Local Government (2001) has observed that:

> The situation of infrastructure and service delivery in all urban centres in Zimbabwe is in a state of 'crisis'. The most worrying aspect of this 'crisis' is that the accelerated demands for urban services is occurring against the background of increasing failure to plan, mobilise finance and make new investment in critical urban infrastructure, let alone maintain existing networks.

Further, the former Vice President Joyce Mujuru was quite categoric on the service delivery situation and bemoaned that:

> It is a pity that some local authorities are failing to perform key functions such as provision of safe water, refuse collection, infrastructure development, maintenance of roads, sewerage reticulation and street lighting among others. I challenge you to undertake serious introspection and see if, for the sake of your name and family, you are worth to continue sitting in those offices you presently occupy. (Zimbabwe Chronicle 2006).

In July 2010, the Sunday Mail Newspaper Zimbabwe, had this to say about Harare City Council`s Mbare suburb`s garbage and sewage predicament:

> it seems that raw sewage is no longer an issue in parts of Mbare, where it has been forming streams across homes and in front of houses... Apart from raw sewage flowing freely, rubbish heaps at road sides appear to cause their own fair share of problems for Mbare residents. The residents have to hop, skip and jump to avoid sewage on their way to different destinations (Sunday Mail Zimbabwe, July 25-31, 2012).

This is the story in virtually all towns through Zimbabwe. This contrasts sharply with the 1980s and 1990s when Harare used to be dubbed, the 'Sun Shine City' and services were available. Bulawayo was renowned for housing provision. Gweru, popularly known as the 'City of Progress' had high quality water which was available all the time.

In October 2010, the Minister responsible for Local Government declared that:

> Government will not stand aloof while councils go on corruption rampage. We will do everything in our power to stop all corruption and abuse of office by local authorities and promote service delivery. Government will never at any time allow service delivery to suffer at the expense of the rot that councillors and council officials are entangled in. The ministry will invoke all its powers to deal with such elements as we try to get rid of all the bad apples from among our local authorities (Ministry of Local Government 2010).

Jonga (2014) concurs with the above arguments and added that the local government system in Zimbabwe has experienced many changes and challenges during the colonial period and after independence in 1980. The Urban Councils Act has particularly been amended several times to initiate efficiency and effectiveness in local governance. The focus of such changes included the need to remove racial discrimination, abolish dual systems of development emphasising white and black areas, and develop democracy.

Good governance, and decentralisation and alignment of local governments institutions, politics and policies in such a way that they support national strategies and visions for development were also part of the reform agenda. Despite many strategies or policies initiated over the years, the commendable local government system inherited from the colonial period has continued to deteriorate (Mutizwa-Mangiza, 1990; Jonga, 2014). Varied challenges have been articulated that include lack of funding, too much central government interventions in local issues, recentralisation, alleged abuse of political power by the Minister responsible for Local Government on dismissal of councillors, councils and mayors and issuance of directives which in some instances have negatively affected Local Authorities.

The economic downturn, post 2000, broadly characterised by high rates of unemployment and hyperinflation, coupled in some cases with increased service demands has contributed to a growing fiscal crisis in Zimbabwe's local government entities (Mawowa and Matongo 2010; Sibanda *et al.*, 2017). An economic status survey conducted by the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (2012) revealed that at least 80% of industries in Gweru have closed due to acute viability challenges and an estimated 11% of those functional are operating at below 35% capacity utilisation. This has affected council in terms of both property and other taxes and has seen many employees being retrenched and hence compromising their ability to honour council tax obligations.

While these statistics highlight general fiscal stress across the nation in general, and Gweru in particular, notable symptoms of decay in the governance of city councils, have been a decrease in revenues, increased service demands, and general budgetary constraints (Kusena and Beckedahl, 2016). Income from service charges and property taxes has decreased significantly in many cases due in part to the increase in unemployment, the informalisation of the economy and the decrease in consumer purchasing power. Additionally, increased numbers of foreclosures contributed to a decrease in the assessed value of properties that have significantly reduced property tax collections. Cumulatively, these enmeshed factors have forced GCC to increase taxes, decrease expenditures, or in some case both increase taxes and decrease spending. With limited revenue options and the inability to deficit-spend, this crisis has significantly impacted and crippled council operations. These fiscal constraints, exacerbated by the decreases in state

funding and primary revenue sources (property tax and services charges), and increases in operational costs in particular labour costs and service expenditures, have created enormous challenges for GCC. Tables 2 and 3 are a presentation of the financial position of Gweru from a creditors, debtors and related expenditure accounts.

Table 1:2- Council Budgets 2009 – 2014 (US$) (Gweru City Council, Finance Department, 2014)

Year	Budgeted Amount	Actual Collected	Collection Efficiency
2009	5,711,610	3,419,301	59.87%
2010	15,634,240	9,537,146	61.00%
2011	19,872,819	10,941,416	55.06%
2012	26,030,532	13,024,460	50.04%
2013	34,045,611	11,952,536	35.11%
2014	36,408,333	14,073,411	38.65%

Table 1:3 - Council Debtors and Creditors 2009 – 2014   (Us Dollars)

Year	Council Debtors	Council Creditors
2009	$4,494,197	$2,279,920
2010	$8,339,419	$6,953,202
2011	$11,018,065	$9,738,862
2012	$19,931,122	$11,448,647
2013	$19,931,122	$14,208,323
2014	$25,611,159	$23,575,962

UNHABITAT (2015) concurs with the above argument and added that currently, many local governments in developing countries face the near-impossible task of funding the infrastructure and services required to meet the basic needs of growing urban populations, while forward looking capital investments are not possible for financial reasons. Equally, the population of

Gweru City has grown exponentially in the last decade due to many factors inter alia, the establishment of one of the fastest growing universities in the country, Midlands State University with an estimated enrolment of 20000 students and vast mining opportunities in the peri-urban (Table 4)

Table 1:4- Gweru Population by Ward (ZimStats, 2012)

Ward 1	7 028
Ward 2	11 117
Ward 3	2 319
Ward 4	8 502
Ward 5	13 953
Ward 6	7 191
Ward 7	7 344
Ward 8	12 091
Ward 9	7 643
Ward 10	11 822
Ward 11	6 864
Ward 12	7 710
Ward 13	9 428
Ward 14	6 650
Ward 15	13 625
Ward 16	8 445
Ward 17	8 269
Ward 18	7 863
Total	157 865

General population growth in Gweru has been propelled by the fact that the city possesses huge untapped economic potential that can and should be leveraged to create wealth and economic opportunities for all. Dzawanda *et al.,* (2024) alludes that Gweru has potential for economic growth that can be achieved through capitalising on untapped opportunities that arise from improved resource utilisation efficiency.

Helpap (2023) identified five key challenges for local government relating directly and indirectly to the fiscal crisis which this research contends have had significant impact on GCC. These are:

- managing the budgetary demands of decreased revenues, increased service demands and the costs of unfunded mandates;
- meeting the demands of infrastructure and its associated costs;
- understanding and addressing barriers for shared service agreements or voluntary mergers used perceived through PPPs;

- the ongoing fiscal problems related to recurrent expenditure; and
- balancing economic opportunities with environmental risks.

In addition to these factors, the budgets of local authorities in Zimbabwe are directly and indirectly affected by fiscal issues at the central government level. More specifically, as budget cuts have occurred on critical areas such as the health grant (T 5) health expenditures for local government have been left to be managed by local authorities while the authority to review health fees in line with prevailing economic trends is censored by the national government. This funding stream has historically provided support for affordable health services and hence the general sustenance of health service delivery in the absence of the health grant is under threat of complete collapse. These a classic case of an unfunded mandate.

Table 1:5-Health Grant Disbursements from Central Government to Gweru City Council (Gweru City Council Finance Department)

YEAR	AMOUNT (ZW$)
1994	721,971.00
1995	855,460.00
1995/96	266,900.00
1996/97	400,486.00
1997/98	809,789.00
1998/99	978,640.00
2000	5,266,540.00[1]
2001	7,148,315.00
2002	140,309,075.00
2003	155,879,600.00
2004	170,786,950.00
2005	165,887,960.00
2006	289,760,980.00

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[1] Inflation started picking up Constantly maintain the same font and text style (Californian)

2007	0.00
2008	0.00
2009	0.00
2010	0.00
2011	0.00
2012	0.00
2013	0.00
2014	0.00
2015	0.00
2016	0.00

Gweru City Council thus faces the daunting challenge of ever-increasing infrastructure and service delivery demands against dwindling revenue on-flows. Below are plates (photographs) showing symptoms of poor service delivery evidenced by uncollected garbage, damaged roads and non-functional street lights in Gweru.

The following picture illustrate uncollected Garbage in Mkoba Suburb Gweru

Plate 1.1: Garbage Dump in Mkoba Suburb Gweru
Uncollected garbage in a Gweru suburb a symptom systemic failure on the part of council.

While garbage collection was timeous and predictable. This is no longer the case. This city with almost 200 000 residents has only two functional refuse collection trucks.

The following illustration shows a damaged road in Ascot Suburb in Gweru

Plate 1.2: Damaged Road in Ascot Suburb

A damaged road in Gweru's Ascot high density suburb. City roads continue to deteriorate especially after heavy downpours during rainy season. Most of the city's roads are over 30 years old and have not seen much maintenance over the years.

Plate 1.3: Street Lighting in a State of Disrepair in Gweru East. Broken electricity lines indicative of non-functioning street lights with arrows

showing broken lines. Most areas of Gweru no longer have functional street lights.

Local financial management frequently suffers from lacking technological infrastructure and capacity, and opportunities for revenue generation are often restricted by inadequate regulatory frameworks and disadvantageous political structures (Mlambo and Chirisa 2023). Lagging public-sector spending takes a toll on urban efficiency and local economic activity, creating a vicious cycle of budgetary shortfalls, choking urban conditions, and economic stagnation (Shereni 2021). However, strategic governance and financing systems including government can provide hope for the struggling local authority (Chilunjika *et al.*, 2024). There are opportunities for matching local needs with institutional frameworks and revenue-generation tools. Appropriate financial management can tap into strategies that improve efficiency of revenue collection, win public support, capitalize on urban economies of scale, curb land speculation and sprawl, incentivize economic activity, and improve urban affordability for the poor (Chakunda 2023). The city also needs to right size its staff compliment which is consuming over 70 percent of generated income (Mudyanadzo and Nzwatu 2018). The resulting budgetary improvements can allow GCC to make strategic investments in the city, stimulating a virtuous cycle of growth, revenue generation, and prosperity.

While the municipal financial discourse is fundamental to local government service delivery in Zimbabwe, it is also vital to critically examine the political economy issues of sub-national governments (Marumahoko 2023). These issues are critical to understanding the consistent refusal of the central government to decentralise significant tax revenues, and the common refusal of local authorities to adequately use the tax revenue authority they are granted (Marumahoko, 2024). Local authorities need the capacity and political will to implement reforms. Additionally, they should generate political support among urban constituents to introduce the necessary legal and institutional changes with the aim of generating increased revenue through greater tax rates, improved tax collection and reduced tax evasion (Maibeki *et al.*, 2021). Moreover, central governments should offer municipal

authorities more financial autonomy to restructure their tax bases and greater jurisdiction over revenue collection (Kaponda, 2024).

To buttress the above, the quality of governance is one key aspect that prominently arises from discussions on the reform agenda and the political economy issues facing local governments in developing countries in general and Zimbabwe in particular. Regarding the political economy and local government service delivery in Gweru, a series of questions arise: what are the dynamics of the political economy of Gweru? What areas of the political economy are fundamentally affecting municipal and urban finance and the capacity of GCC to provide services? What are some of the successful experiences of tax revenue decentralisation in developing countries (for comparative purposes with Zimbabwe)? What are some of the successful experiences of local revenue enhancement through a greater utilization of tax revenue authority? What are the drivers or factors of success? This study addresses the range of questions raised in this paragraph to come up with concrete recommendations to reverse the current decline in service provision in Gweru.

The study is largely guided by the service delivery models especially the decentralisation service delivery model and alternative service delivery model (multi-level governance model). Using these two models, the researcher seeks to identify the following as crucial variables affecting the better service delivery at the lower levels of government: (a) constitutional and legal framework, (b) consistency politics, (c) institutional capacity, and (d) service delivery mechanism. Taking these variables as independent variables, an analytical framework will be developed. This framework will help to analyse the challenges faced by GCC in terms of service delivery and how GCC can overcome the challenges to deliver better services to the public? The study is based on qualitative methodology, particularly using the case study approach.

Although indigenous Africans were living in the Gweru area from time immemorial, its establishment as a colonial military settlement dates back to 1894. Dr Leander Starr Jameson came and chose the site of the present-day Gweru in June 1894 and thereafter the first 280 plots were surveyed and sold two months later (Ranger, 2011). This settlement had a European population

of 350. The site was chosen because of its proximity to the Gweru River. To get water from the Gweru River, 'umkwelo' in Ndebele or a ladder was required since there was a steep slope and slippery banks. The town got its name from the Ndebele word 'Ikwelo' which means steep slope.

A significant event in the growth of Gweru was the railway connection in 1902 as part of the development of a railway system that was being constructed by the British South Africa Company of Cecil John Rhodes (Grant 2024). Gweru became a major junction of the railway system to then Salisbury to the north, Bulawayo to the south and Masvingo to the East (Mhlahlo 2007). Gweru became an important trading centre. Some of the early traders included the Meikles Brothers whose store constructed in 1894 is still a major landmark in Gweru (Chakwizira 2021). Other landmarks from that era present to this day include the Midlands Hotel constructed in 1917 and Boggie's Memorial Clock Tower constructed in 1928 as shown below (Grant 1995). Gweru was granted municipal status in July 1914 and had its Centenary celebrations on the 8th November 2014 (Matsa *et al.*, 2021). The following is a map showing the location of Gweru in Zimbabwe and the eighteen wards of the city.
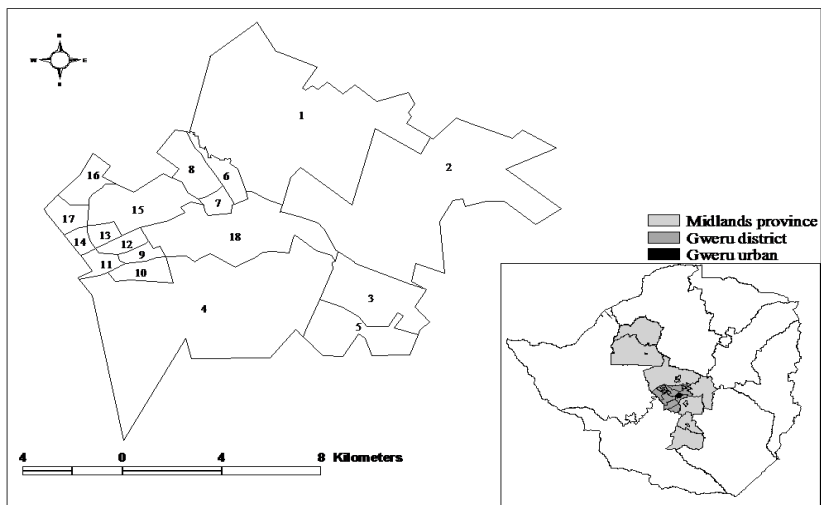
Map 1.1: City Of Gweru Wards and Location Nationally and Provincially

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Plate 1.5: Midlands Hotel, Gweru. Midlands Hotel constructed in 1917 is a major landmark in City of Gweru to this day. Like the city Midlands Hotel has deteriorated in quality and services in recent years.

Meikles Store was opened in 1894 and is one of the biggest departmental stores in Gweru up to this day. Recently Meikles partnered with South African supermarket giant Pick and Pay to bring better services to the people of Gweru. This is one of the few positive developments in the city.

Plate 1.6: Boggies Memorial Tower and Clock. The Boggies Memorial Tower was constructed in 1928 is another landmark in City of Gweru. The clock has not been functioning for many years due to lack of maintenance by the GCC.

Some of the major industries already alluded to above were established as the town grew into a major trading centre. Bata Shoe factory was established in 1943 and Rhodesia Alloys now Zimbabwe Alloys was established in 1950 (Grant 1995). Gweru attained city status in 1971 (Matsa et al., 2021). From its inception in 1894 the city was known as Gwelo and assumed its new name of Gweru after independence in 1980 (Gweru City Council 1994). The city now has over 33 000 housing units and 98% of them have reticulated water and sewerage. This is a far cry from the 240 plots and 350 settlers of 1894 (Mamboko et al., 2013). From three water wells and river water in 1894 the city now has 4 water supply dams with a capacity of 80 million litres (Nyathi 2022). **Plate 1.7**: City of Gweru Civic Centre/ Town House

Plate 1.7: City of Gweru Civic Centre/ Town House. This impressive building is indicative of city of Gweru`s past when council was performing well.

City of Gweru is the provincial capital of the Midlands Province. In this role, the city has offices of ministries of national government. City of Gweru's

central location and as a transport hub attracts a sizeable population from its periphery on a daily basis who come to access various types of services from government ministries, do business or simply visiting. This means the city's services are consumed by more than the resident population. The city is also surrounded by Vungu Rural District Council with a population of 91.000 (Zimstarts 2012), is close to Shurugwi District with a population of 77 870 (Zimstarts 2012) and Chirumanzi District with a population of 80 351 (Zimstats 2012). All three district impact on the city of Gweru from a service delivery perspective.

The Constitution of Zimbabwe Section 276 and legislation of Zimbabwe emphasises that local authorities have a pivotal role in service delivery and the various facets of development within their areas of jurisdiction (The Constitution of Zimbabwe 2013). This implies that local authorities must have policies and institutional frameworks that support and sustain the development of local people. The effectiveness of good local governance is therefore measured and benchmarked by the capacity of local government structures to provide an integrated development approach to social and economic development issues and to supply essential services congruent with the needs and desires of the local communities. In this regard, local authorities should be able to identify and prioritize local needs, determine adequate levels of services and allocate necessary resources to the public. In the same context good governance entails the existence of efficient and accountable institutions and systems and entrenched rules that promote development and ensure that people are free to participate in, and be heard on, decisions and implementation thereof that directly affect their lives.

Further, the materialisation of democracy at the local authority level implies giving citizens a role in these processes. This will lead to more accountability and responsiveness, and hence service delivery efficiency. However, it seems that the capacity of GCC to provide services in light of the above efficiency benchmarks is heavily riddled by a multiplicity of factors, inter alia, a limited fiscal space for optimal service delivery capitalisation. Such financial viability impoverishment implies that council cannot perform its functions due to fiscal distress. The symptoms of this are evident in uncollected refuse, water delivery constraints, poor road networks and street lighting among a myriad

of other problems. To add to this, residents have lost confidence in the general competences of council as manifested by widespread protests of various contexts and dimensions. Coupled with these are weak corporate governance structures and institutional frameworks evident in cases of violation of tender adjudication procedures, widespread corrupt tendencies and rampant abuse of council systems, procedures and resources. A seemingly complex intergovernmental relations framework has equally resulted in central government resorting to excessive punishment of local government officials as reflected through suspension and firing of councillors, dissolution of councils, appointment of caretakers and litigation. This thesis therefore explores the service delivery systems of GCC in relation to its current state, problems and challenges and possible strategies for improvement.

This study seeks to explore the service delivery systems of sub-national governments as epitomised by GCC in relation to its current state, problems and challenges and possible strategies for improvements. Using Gweru City Council as a case study the specific objective of the study are:

1) To examine the service delivery challenges of sub-national governments using Gweru City Council as a case study;
2) To explore political and administrative systems and mechanisms required to broaden the scope of sub-national governments for improved service delivery;
3) To identify indicators of efficient service delivery at sub-national level; and
4) To examine factors influencing sub-national governments from achieving their potential to enhance service delivery at sub-national level.

The research questions informing the study are:

1) What are the service delivery challenges of sub-national governments using Gweru City Council as a case study?
2) What mechanisms and processes are required to improve the service delivery capacities of sub-national governments?
3) What are the indicators of efficient service delivery at sub-national level?

4) What accountability mechanisms would be needed in allowing sub-national governments more room to define the scope of its service provision and how it engages with third parties in service delivery?

5) Why haven't sub-national governments realised their potential to enhance service delivery?

The Government of Zimbabwe with the support of the international donor community has made great strides toward establishment of a stable, effective and democratic structure of local government (Conyers and De Visser 2010). Zimbabwe adopted a new Constitution in 2013 with a clearly defined mandate for the three tiers of government. With this clear constitutional framework and administrative structure now in place, efforts are underway to consolidate and align primary legislation to the supreme law of the land. However, over the past years, the question of the state of sub-national administration competences has escalated. It has become the focus of much attention in central government policy commitments. Efforts, with support from development partners, have been targeted at the sub-national level capacity development, institutions and systems.

Sub-national governments have been justified for two fundamental reasons. First, representative democracy seems to work best the closer the government is to its constituencies (Helao, 2015). According to De Visser (2010) the presumption is that lower levels of government, for example, a local government, are better placed at perceiving the desires and demands of its constituents for public services than a distant centralised government. It is for this reason that most developing countries, Zimbabwe included, are championing decentralisation, a process of pushing responsibilities and resources to lower levels of government. Second, subsets of people in the country have the right to demand different types and quantities of public goods and services. There seems to be clear benefits from allowing subsets of residents to demand different arrays of services. Section 8 Subsection (1) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number 20 of 2013 guides the, "state and all institutions and agencies of government at every level in formulating and implementing laws and policy decisions that will lead to the establishment, enhancement and promotion of a sustainable, just, free and democratic society in which 'people enjoy prosperous, happy and fulfilling lives'. Effective service provision is at the centre of people's daily lives. The

urban dweller relies on local governments for the provision of life sustaining services characteristic of a "Good life" which inhabitants yearn for. Urban residents in Zimbabwe are perturbed by the state of their cities and towns.

Urbanisation represents one of the main demographic transformations confronting sub-Saharan Africa today, with attendant implications for the region's long-term development trajectory. Although debate exists over whether Africa can be accurately classified as the fastest urbanising region of the world (Potts, 2009; Satterthwhaite, 2010), it is undoubtedly true that many more Africans now live in urban areas than at any other point in history. The World Bank predicts that by 2030 Africa will finally be an urban continent, with more than 50% of its population living in cities (Kessides, 2006). Increasingly, much of this urbanisation is fuelled more by natural population growth in cities or urban-to-urban, rather than rural-to-urban, migration (Freund, 2007; Tacoli, 2001).

While African cities in general and Zimbabwe's urban centres in particular are undoubtedly vibrant locales that generate economic growth and make a significant contribution to the national GDP, this increase in demographic pressure places a strain on already weak service-delivery mechanisms. Garbage collection, the availability of potable water and sanitation, affordable and predictable electricity, and efficient public transport all remain in short supply. Without creating sufficient job opportunities in labour-intensive industries, 61% of urban employment is concentrated in the low-income and unstable informal sector (Kessides, 2006). In turn, this means that few urban residents constitute a viable tax base for funding the provision of key public services. Consequently, many urban agglomerations have become what Simone (2006) terms 'pirate cities', in which people must rely on pirate operators, such as mobile water vendors or illegal electricity and water connections, in the absence of genuine state engagement.

The thrust to improving service delivery is not simply a technical exercise but rather requires consideration of two inter-related dynamics relevant to governance contexts at both local and national levels. Firstly, as a consequence of decentralisation, the responsibility for the provision of key services has theoretically been transferred to sub-national authorities in many

African countries in general and Zimbabwe in particular (Sibanda 2013). Secondly, the design and implementation of decentralisation policies has often been erratic, however, with complex layers of government resulting in overlapping mandates and high levels of poverty depriving local governments of adequate resources. Although much has been written on decentralisation (for example, Madhekeni and Zhou, 2012; Crook, 2003; Conyers 2001; Olowu 2001), there has rarely been an exclusive focus on cities in particular. This thesis therefore examines service delivery competences of local government in the context of decentralisation. The decentralisation thrust in Zimbabwe has found legal expression in the new Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment number 20 of 2013 as provided in section 3(2L) on devolution and decentralisation of governmental powers. Further, the whole of chapter 14 of the Constitution provides for provincial and local governments including their powers and financing. This is a major milestone in local government reform. By being constitutionalised local government can now access funding from the fiscus as provided for in section 301. This section guarantees at least five percent of the national budget to provincial and local authorities. Although the Constitution was passed in 2013 the first transfer to provincial and local government has been provided for in the 2019 national budget where $310 million has been allocated. Could constitutionalisation then be the panacea to local government service delivery challenges? This study explores the implications of this major legislative reform in the context of service delivery and governance.

This study applied a single case study approach and hence was confined within the physical boundaries of Gweru city council. Whereas some aspects of the research might have been drawn from outside Gweru as the study applies the systems theoretical paradigm, the primary focus of the study was Gweru and the key research factors were drawn from within the local area.

The hyperinflationary situation prevailing before 2009 peaking in 2008 makes a budgetary analysis of the period prior to 2009 almost impossible as the inflation rate changed almost on a daily basis. Yet the same period from about 2002 is characterised by the general decline in services. This therefore limits the study in coming up with a comparative analysis financially for that period. The financial implications on service delivery during that period are difficult

to quantify. This research attached high regard to research ethical standards as the basis of maximising possible benefits and minimise possible harms. The following are the critical ethical dimensions underpinning this study:

1. Respect for respondents and confidentiality- the researcher treated views of respondents confidential and shall not disclose their identities or their contributions without their prior written approval;
2. Honesty in reporting data, results and methods;
3. Objectivity- emphasis will be on avoiding bias in all aspects of the research.
4. Integrity- the researcher acted with sincerity; striving for consistency of thought and action;
5. Carefulness- avoiding careless errors and negligence;
6. Respect for intellectual property- the researcher shall honour patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property and giving credit where credit is due; and
7. Legality- all the process and conduct of the researcher shall give high regard to relevant laws and institutional and governmental policies on research and scholarship.

Chapter 1 has established the context of the study giving both historical and conceptual perspectives and located the research problem within that particular context before outlining the statement of the problem. The chapter also provides the aim of the study and gave a comprehensive justification of the study stating the indispensability of the research and why the study should be conducted. It was further indicated that this was a qualitative study focusing on service delivery challenges at local government/ sub-national level with GCC as the case study. Other areas of the chapter are the objectives and research questions, limitations and delimitations of the study. The chapter also discusses research ethical considerations such as confidentiality, honesty, objectivity and integrity.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature. The chapter will focus on review of related literature divided into four distinct but related areas for purposes of systematic analysis, Global perspectives on service delivery with specific reference to Britain, South Africa, Australia and the USA. Justification for this

selection of countries is given in the chapter. Scholarly perspectives around the evolution of Local Governance in Zimbabwe and the legislature frame work upon which it is anchored Key concepts of this study are: service delivery, efficiency indicators, decentralisation and its various forms. The study is guided by the systems theory. Other theories to be examined in relation to the study are the efficiency services theory and the democratic participatory theory.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology. The study utilsed qualitative case study research using in depth interviews, focus group discussions and analysis of secondary data sources. The purposive sampling technique was used and data were tested for validity using respondent validation and the use of comparison. The confidentiality of respondents was considered as a cardinal ethical point among other considerations such as honesty, objectivity and integrity.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion. Data were presented using thematic analysis and critical discourse analysis techniques. Key areas of thematic analysis for the study were, the free line-by-line coding of the findings of primary studies, the organisation of these codes into related areas to construct descriptive themes, and the development of analytical themes. CDA was preferred here because it focuses primarily on social problems and political issues, reconciled with current paradigms and fashions. At the same time, it provides empirically adequate critical analysis of political and public administration discourse which is usually multidisciplinary.

The last chapter comprehensively summarises the study, drew conclusions and made commendations. Recommendations were focused on areas of further academic research and particular ways of improving the local government service delivery capacity of Zimbabwe's local authorities basing either on the views of experts and researched experiences of other countries.

CHAPTER TWO: LOCAL GOVERNMENT, MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND DECENTRALISATION: A REVIEW

The purpose of the chapter is to critically review literature related to the study in the canon of research. for the purpose of systematic analysis. The chapter further identifies gaps in the existing literature which will inform further research on the subject. Gerrish and Lacey (2010) contend that a conceptual framework identifies the researcher's world view and so delineates assumptions and pre-conceptions about the area being studied. For Baka (2017), a conceptual framework possesses ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions, and each concept within a conceptual framework plays an ontological or epistemological role. In the same context, a theoretical framework relates to the philosophical basis of the research linking theoretical aspects and practical components of the research by providing a particular perspective through which to examine a topic. The purpose and relevance of conceptual and theoretical framework to this study are multifaceted and include making scientific findings meaningful and generalisable, helping to summarise existing knowledge into coherent systems and stimulating new research by providing both direction and impetus. Key concepts of this study are: Sub-national government, local government, decentralisation, leadership and management, accountability service delivery and efficiency. In the same context, the related body of theories to be examined include the democratic participation theory, efficiency services theory and the systems theory.

A conceptual framework of a study as defined by Miles and Huberman, (1994) and Robson, (2011) refers to the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that supports and informs research. Miles and Huberman, (1994.18) further added that it (conceptual framework) is a visual or written product that: "explains either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied, the key factors, concepts, or variables and the presumed relationship among them" In a nutshell a conceptual framework is an analytical tool with several variations and context used to make conceptual distinction or a group of concepts that are broadly defined and systematically organised to provide a focus, a rationale and a tool for

integration and interpretation of information. The concepts are discussed in a thematic form in line with the research questions in the preceding chapter and also within the context of the Zimbabwe legal and governance framework.

Local government in Zimbabwe refers to the third tier of government provided for in section 5 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number 20 of 2013. Generally local government is considered to be the level of government closest to the people with responsibility for provision of local services and providing a platform for local representation. According Meyer (1999) local governments are local democratic units within a democratic system vested with prescribed, controlled governmental powers and sources of revenue to render specific local service. Local governments, because of their proximity to the people are better placed to execute those functions which central government is too remote to execute efficiently. According to Sebola (2015, 4), "local government, being at lower level, may appear insignificant but it remains the most significant sphere that deals with pragmatic political, social and economic affairs of a country." Teune, (1995) emphasises the same point by stating that: local government is where the day to day activities of politics and government gets done.

Definitions of local government in the literature are many and varied but have the following commonalities:
- it is a decentralised level of government;
- it is largely democratically established;
- it is a legal entity with defined powers;
- it is territorial in nature;
- it is largely self-financing;
- it is largely autonomous

Wunsch and Olowu (2004. 7) observe that "political science is relatively clear that local governments must meet certain basic requirements if they are to be able to solve problems effectively. They must be able to identify problems, set priorities, mobilise resources, implement programs, evaluate results, learn from those results and maintain popular legitimacy." The representation and

service delivery dimension are the most visible characteristics of local government.

Local governments understand the concerns of local residents as the leadership and operational staff is also local. Local Government is therefore intricately linked to the concept of decentralisation (Conyers, 2004, Shah and Shah, 2006; Oates, 1972, UNDP, 2008, Chigwata, 2015). Local government refers to specific institutions or entities created by nations in constitutions, by state constitutions, by ordinary legislation to deliver a range of services to relatively small geographically delineated areas (Shah and Shah, 2006). So from the works of early writers like Tocquiville there is general acceptance of the criticality of local government as a service delivery vehicle.

While local government in Zimbabwe is currently experiencing challenges, this has not always been the case, as noted by Adamolekun (2002; 57), "Examples of good development performance by local governments in Sub Saharan African countries are few. The decent quality of municipal government staff in Zimbabwe is a major explanatory factor for the fairly satisfactory performance of municipal governments in that country. One of the most notable achievements by Zimbabwe's local government is their ability to generate a significant proportion of their total revenue: 70-95 percent for urban local governments and 50-75% for rural and district local governments."

What has gone wrong in Zimbabwe's local government sector in the light of such positive comments is the subject of this study.

Shah and Shah (2006. 3) aver that "several accepted theories provide a strong rationale for decentralised decision-making and a strong role for local governments on the grounds of efficiency, accountability, manageability and autonomy". Shah and Shah go further to argue that Stigler (1957) identifies two principles to support this position, namely that: the closer a representative government is to the people, the better it works and that people should have the right to vote for the kind and amount of public services they want.

Oates (1972) has come up with the decentralisation theorem which observes how each public service should be provided by the jurisdiction having control over the minimum geographic area that would internalize benefits and costs of such provision because:

- local governments understand the concerns of local residents,
- local decision-making is responsive to the people for whom the services are intended, thus encouraging fiscal responsibility and efficiency especially if financial services are also decentralised unnecessary layers of jurisdiction are eliminated and inter-jurisdictional competition and innovation are enhanced.

The other theory is the principle of subsidiarity which evolved from the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and observes how taxing, spending and regulatory functions should be exercised at the lower level of government. This principle contrasts with the principle common in many unitary states where local governments are assigned functions that central government is unwilling or unable to perform. These principles point to the need for decisions to be made at the lowest level of government, consistent with the goal of allocative efficiency. The other accepted theory justifying the need for local government is the principle of democratic local governance. There is increased recognition that in examining issues of service delivery at local level it is important to consider the role of other players and actors beyond local government. This shift resonates more and more with the notion of a more inclusive approach in policy making and implementation. The concept of democratic local governance has become an integral part of local development approaches (UNDP, 2008). Local governance is thus a broader concept and is defined as the formulation and execution of collective action at the local level (Shah and Shah, 2006).

Local governance has also been defined as a variety of institutions and processes, government and non-government which collectively determine the way in which decision are made and implemented at local level. UNDP (2008. 5) posits that: "while local government is the essential building block for local governance, the wider governance sphere comprises a set of state and non-state institutions, mechanisms and processes through which public goods

and services are delivered to citizens and through which citizens can articulate and exercise their interests and needs, mediate their differences and exercise their rights and obligations."

By broadening the scope of analysis to include other players at local level, a more realistic picture of challenges of service delivery faced by local governments can begin to emerge. Such an analysis enables more realistic mitigation strategies to be crafted. Issues of intergovernmental relations and citizen participation have been cited as central to the prevailing service delivery challenges in Zimbabwe (Muchadenyika and William, 2016; Chigwata, 2015; Muchapondwa and de Visser, 2017 and Chatiza, 2010). The increased emphasis on good governance extends to the local level as citizens clamour for accountability, ethical conduct, integrity and honesty from the elected leaders and local governments staff. Usually, this results in the shift towards decentralised governance in Zimbabwe and other countries. The shift is part of the major public sector reforms aimed at tapping potential benefits from incorporating non-governmental actors particularly given the hypothesis that inclusion of non-government players, including civil society associations improves effectiveness of local government systems (Msyamboza, Ngwira, Dzowela, Mvula, Kathyola, Harries and Bowie 2011; Olowu, 2003; Pradeep, 2011; Mutema, 2016).

Local governments are generally established to achieve three broad objectives. The first objective is to provide public services at affordable cost to a heterogeneous citizenry particularly those services which can be provided more efficiently and effectively by local governments than by central governments. The second objective is to regulate the conduct of individuals and organisations in areas under their jurisdiction within the limits set by national legislation. Thirdly, local governments are established to promote public participation in government as a means of enabling and encouraging people to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens (Government of Zimbabwe, 1999).

Services provided by local governments are typically those which the private sector may not deliver at all or deliver in insufficient quantities. The delivery of such public services ensures inclusion of those who would otherwise not

afford the market price of such goods and services. Economists generally classify such goods and services as public goods and services whose production, because of their characteristics, results in market failure as contrasted to private goods and services where markets operate efficiently and the exclusion principle can be applied. Public goods and services are non – excludable, non-rivalry in consumption and jointed in use. Public goods and services are also subject to free riding, where non-payers can enjoy the goods and services without paying. Private goods and services on the other hand are excludable, rivalry in consumption and rejectable (Ostrom and Ostrom, 1991, Olowu, 2002). Whereas private goods and services are financed from user charges, public goods and services are normally financed from taxes because it is difficult to allocate costs to individual consumers, streetlights being a classic example (Olowu, 2002).

Although the public sector has been the main provider of public goods and services, increasingly now, through various partnership arrangements and technological advances the private sector is becoming a major player. However, the onus to ensure availability of such goods and services to the populace is on local government though it does not necessarily have to produce them. Local governments can provide the enabling and regulatory environment for provision of the goods and services. This is typical under the new public management school where the private sector and markets assume a greater role in the provision of goods and services. Under the new public management, the role of local government is limited to enabling and regulating service delivery to ensure the poor are not marginalised from accessing the services because the private sector's end motive is profit.

A case study in support of service delivery under the new public management is that of failure by local government in South Africa to deliver services resulting in protests erupting in municipalities (IDASA, 2010). Partnering the private sector has yielded positive dividends in terms of service delivery. Some of the common explanations of local government challenges in service delivery in South Africa include, institutional challenges, administrative tensions between councillors and management, lack of trust between citizens and municipalities, irresponsiveness of political leadership, incompetence,

lack of capacity and corruption (Koelble and LiPuana, 2008; IDASA, 2010). Such challenges are common in local government in Zimbabwe.

There is a huge corpus of literature supporting the view that although local government have the role of service delivery in many countries, Zimbabwe included, they are not performing to people's expectations and aspirations. There are service delivery slippages in both quality and quantity. Efficient and effective provision is lacking and accountability is weak (World Bank, 2004, UNDP, 2008; Smoke, 2015; Government of Zimbabwe, 2008; World Bank, 2017; Rogger, 2009; Resnick, 2014; Koeble, 2008; Chigwata, 2017; Muchadenyika and Williams, 2016).

Resnick, (2014) argues that the rapid urbanisation taking place in Sub Saharan Africa and some of the consequences arising from such rapid growth has contributed to the decline in service delivery. The World Bank, observes how by 2030, Africa will become an urban continent with more than 50% of the population living in cities. Resnick (2014p:53) further observes that "while African cities are undoubtedly vibrant locales that generate approximately 60% of the region's economic growth, this increase in demographic pressure places a strain on already weak service delivery". Much of this rapid growth is fuelled more by natural population growth in cities, rather than rural urban migration (Freud 2007). Cohen (2006) argues that rapid urbanisation in developing countries is seriously outstripping the capacities of cities to adequately provide services to citizens.

In the case of Zimbabwe, an area requiring further research is the rapid housing development in peri urban areas and the impact of such development on urban services. As the capacity of local governments to deliver housing has declined, this space is now occupied by housing co-operatives and private land developers. While this new initiative has provided much need urban housing, it has not been without its own challenges. Traditionally, before a new housing estate can be developed, there was need to have in place on-site services which included roads, water and sewer reticulation systems and electricity. The new trend in most cities and towns is that private developers will sell stands and the beneficiaries proceed to construct houses even before basic services are in place. This is the concept of parallel development

adopted by the ministry responsible for local governments to fulfil housing construction targets in line with the National Housing Policy thrust of 2004. The consequences of this policy have been disastrous as beneficiaries proceed to occupy their houses after construction with no water or sewer reticulation systems in place, exposing them to the risk of waterborne diseases like typhoid and cholera.

Developers have only approached local governments after houses have already been constructed and are occupied with beneficiaries putting pressure on them for services. The situation has been made worse by adjacent Rural District Councils and traditional leaders also selling stands envisaged to be eventually incorporated into the adjacent urban area. This has played havoc with the service design capacity of cities like Harare. In the case of Gweru, many new housing estates like Woodlands1 and 2, Hertfordshire 1 and 2, Ridgemont Heights, Tatenda Park and Northgate have emerged through stands sold by private developers like River Valley and Striations World Marketing with little or no consent from City of Gweru. In fact, in all these new housing estates there are no approved water, roads and sewer engineering designs. The new suburbs have added an additional 14 455 housing units on the current housing stock of 33 000, an increase of almost 50% with no upgrades in offsite water and sewer infrastructure. GCC is having challenges in servicing current housing in stock which means any additional houses create further pressure on GCC. Developers on the other hand are not contributing to offsite infrastructure upgrades. The residents of the new suburbs continue to pile pressure on GCC for services (Herald 19 December 2017) The pressure arising from unplanned demand for service has to extent compounded an already deteriorating service delivery system.

Another area noted by Rensick (2014) which is also mirrored in the Zimbabwe local government sector is that of vertically divided authority. Through political decentralisation and the consolidation of democracy on the African continent, elections at local level have not always reflected those at national level. Many African cities are now run by the opposition parties. In South Africa, cities like Cape Town and more recently Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth (Nelson Mandela Bay) are run by the opposition Democratic Alliance. In Zimbabwe, the opposition Movement for Democratic Change has

been running virtually all urban councils from the 2000 elections onwards (Dewa *et al.*, 2014) Muchadenyika and Williams, 2016; Chigwata, 2017). Rensick (2014.54) argues that historically, in Africa, cities are where opposition parties first gain a foothold in their countries political scene before potentially garnering national support because not only are cities economic hubs of their countries but they also have large populations and therefore voters. Cities become battle grounds for political competition. In the case of capital cities like Harare, this is also the seat of power. Ruling parties in control of central government have been observed to undermine and subvert opposition controlled local governments. Vertically divided authority has implications for service delivery and governance at local government level as it has a bearing on centre local relations including allocation of resources. The deliberate marginalisation of existing urban local authorities in housing development in Zimbabwe cities and towns bears hallmarks of the ruling party's desire to increase urban votes in its favour and in the process regain control of urban areas. In this thesis, vertical divided authority and its ramifications are further discussed in the context of the concept of decentralised governance. Suffice to say that there is ample evidence in Zimbabwe of centre local discord and tension regards some of the policy directives emanating from the centre which have service delivery implications (Chigwata, 2017, Muchadenyika and Williams, 2016).

In South Africa, service delivery protests have erupted in municipalities (IDASA 2010). Koelble and LiPuana (2008) in a detailed study of 18 municipalities in South Africa, conclude that institutional factors are more important in explaining lack of service delivery as contrasted with funding issues and centre local relations. IDASA (2010) posits that: in South Africa, local government is the least trusted of all public institutions in the country. It is argued that political leadership in local government lacks responsiveness to issues raised by communities. Local governments are further viewed as incompetent and corrupt (IDASA 2010).

To overcome the challenges of service delivery, in South Africa there is need to curb corruption, emphasise open government which should be accountable, transparent and open to public scrutiny (IDASA 2010). There is need to improve the culture of public participation. Municipalities should resolve

political and administrative tensions between the councillors and management. IDASA (2010) also highlights the need for capacity building.

All these recommendations are relevant for Zimbabwe. The World Bank, 2004; World Development Reports observes that too often services fail poor people in access, in quantity, in quality. The Accountability Triangle proposed by the World Bank (2004) provides a useful framework to crystallise and enhance service delivery. In this context local governments play a major role as politicians and policy makers and also as service providers. Accountability which is further discussed in this thesis is defined as a relationship among actors that have five features, delegation, finance, performance, information about performance and enforceability (World Development Report 2004).

Pradeep (2011) observes that major service delivery challenges in Matara Municipal Council Sri Lanka included shortage of sufficient and competent human resource, unclear powers and functions, poor public private partnerships and inadequate financial resources. Similar challenges are noted in the local government sector in Zimbabwe. The human resource challenge in Zimbabwe is particularly acute in technical areas of engineering and health services. In the case of City of Gweru, vacancies exit in these two services mainly because of difficulties with staff retention (City Treasury Report 2010). Zimbabwe suffered a massive skills flight during the hyperinflation period from 2005 to 2009. City of Gweru only recently (2016) filled positions of Director of Health Services, Director of Engineering Services and Director of Housing and Community Services which had been vacant for many years (City of Gweru Caretakers Report 2017). This obviously has implications for service delivery. The Housing and Community Services director's post had been vacant from 2008 to 2017.

The legal framework for effective service delivery is also an area which keeps coming up in the literature (Chigwata, 2017; Muchadenyika and William, 2016; Mushamba, 2010; Chatiza, 2017; Koelble, 2008). As already alluded to, in the case of Zimbabwe, the Constitution and other legal instruments define powers of local government. Some of the services local governments deliver are provided for as 'rights' in the Constitution of Zimbabwe. Sections 75, 76

and 77 observes how every citizen has a right to education, health care and water respectively. Municipal councils have had challenges installing prepaid water meters because residents consider water a right which they must have regardless of whether they pay or not. Local governments are owed millions of dollars by residents who are reluctant to honour their obligation including water charges. This weighs down on service provision. City of Gweru is currently owed $55 million by residents (Director of Finance Report, 2018).

For local governments to unlock there potential and overcome the myriads of challenges faced, it is necessary to consider the quality of leadership running this organisation and the management processes in place. How local governments are managed and led has a bearing on whether services are delivered efficiently or not.

Leadership is a central feature of organisational performance (Mullins 2013, 366). Local Governments as organisations have elected councillors and the appointed staff of council in leadership position. Their performance as leaders has a major bearing on the performance of council. According to Schermerhorn (2008, 320) "leadership is the process of inspiring others to work hard to accomplish important tasks; Leading in organisations is one of the four management functions which include planning, organising and controlling. In the current climate in Zimbabwe, where service delivery has declined, the quality of leadership in councils has come under increasing scrutiny. Cronje (2001) defines leadership as the ability to influence others to cooperate willingly for the attainment of an organisation's pre-determined goals. Bennis (1997) contends that the single defining quality of leaders is their ability to create and realise a vision French (1975) observes how leadership is the process of influencing the behaviour of others in the direction of a goal or set of goals is or more broadly towards a vision of the future.

Chapter 9, Section 194 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. 20 of 2013 outlines principles of public administration and leadership which should guide those holding public office. These include
- a higher standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained;

- efficient and economical use of resources must be promoted;
- public administration must be development-oriented;
- service must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias;
- public administration must be accountable to Parliament and to the people;
- transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely accessible and accurate information;
- Public officers in leadership positions must abide by the following principles of leadership provided for in Section 196 of the Constitution;
- Objective and impartiality in decision-making;
- Honesty in the execution of public duties;
- Accountability to the public for decision and actions; and
- Discipline and commitment in the service of the people.

From the foregoing it clear issues of honesty, integrity and transparency and accountability are key if councillors and officials are to earn public trust in the service delivery mandate. Council officials are there to serve not rule. Issues of corruption and abuse are anathema to service delivery and local governance. Local leaders must be accountable to their constituency, the residents. Effective leadership should influence both individual and organisational performance.

Mullins (2013, 3) quotes the Confederation of British Industries report which observes that "Effective leaders, who can inspire their people to realise their personal and collective potential are often the deciding factor between a company being good at what it does and achieving greatness." The performance of local Government management leaders in general and City of Gweru in particular needs to be interrogated from both perspectives.

It is clear in Zimbabwe that some local Governments are performing better than others. The service level benchmarking awards carried out by the ministry responsible for local government which have now become an annual event try to speak to these performance variations.

Concerning the transition in leadership theories, leadership today is increasingly associated not with command and control but with the concept of teamwork, getting along with other people, inspiration and creating a vision with which others identify with (Mullins, 2013.369). In this regard, council officials are there serve not rule. A massive body of knowledge on leadership now exists ranging from classical theorists including Fredrick Taylor, and his Scientific Management, Henri Fayol's Administrative Principles and Max Weber's Bureaucracy. The early theories focused on coming up with universal principles which would be applicable in any management situation. Later theories including Great Man and Trait theories, Transactional and Transformational Theories focus more on leadership of organisations, characteristics and behaviours of successful leaders and the role of followers and the contextual nature of leadership.

The table below outlines some of the main theoretical perspectives on leadership.

Table 2:1 Main Theoretical Perspectives on Leadership (Bolden R, Gosling, J, Marturano, A., and Dennison, F., 2003)

Greatman Theories	Based on the belief that leaders are exceptional people, born with innate qualities, destined to lead. Leadership was thought to be a male preserve hence the use of the term 'man'
Trait Theories	Developed from Great Man theories and list the traits or qualities associated with leadership.
Behaviourists theories	Concentrate on what leaders do rather than their qualities. This manifests itself in styles of leadership
Situational leadership	Sees leadership as specific to the situation. Some situations may require autocratic style while others may require participative approaches
Contingency theory	A refinement of situational approach where leadership response is contingent or depends on the situation at hand. There is no one best way to lead.
Transactional leadership	Emphasises relationship between leader and followers focusing on mutual benefits derived – where leader delivers rewards for commitment or loyalty
Transformational leadership	The central concept is change and the role of the leader in formulating and implementing the transformation of organisational performance

Trait theories are inconclusive as no consistent traits are identified. Behavioural theories, on the other hand, give little guidance on what constitutes effective leadership in different situations. Contingency theories take on board varying situations, the people, the task, the organisation and the environment (Bolden et al 2003). Transformational leadership theory which was first put forward by Burns (2008) was further developed by Bass (2009) into transformational leadership to enhance organisational performance through transforming the followers. For local governments to perform to the satisfaction of residents, leaders and managers need to bring themselves up to speed with the literature on leadership. Capacity building initiatives which take place with increasing frequency need to develop the leadership and management capacity of elected and appointed staff of council.

Leadership models like the Hamlias Generic Model of Managerial and Leadership Effectiveness can be a useful tool to improve performance. (Bolden et al 2003) The model distinguishes between positive and negative indications of management and leadership.

Positive indicators:
- Effective organisation and planning / proactive management;
- Participative and supportive / proactive team leadership;
- Empowerment and delegation;
- Genuine concern of people / look after needs of staff;
- Open and personal management approach / inclusive decision-making;
- Communicates and consults / keeps people informed

Negative Indicators
- Shows lack of consideration or concern for staff / ineffective autocratic or dictatorial style of management;
- Uncaring self-serving management / undermining, depriving and intimidating behaviour;
- Tolerance of poor performance and low standards / ignoring and avoidance;
- Abdicating roles and responsibilities;
- Resistant to new ideas / negative approach.

Closely related to the positive indicators of management are the principles of effective leadership to which public officers in leadership positions must abide by. These include objective and impartiality in decision-making, honesty in the execution of public duties, accountability to the public for decisions and actions and discipline and commitment in the service of the people (Karima, 2018). These principles are key if councillors and officials are to earn public trust in discharging the service delivery mandate. Local leaders must be accountable to their constituency and the residents (Bjuremalm, Molleda and Gibaja2014). The performance of local government management leaders, in general and the GCC in particular, needs to be interrogated from both perspectives. It is clear that some local governments in Zimbabwe are performing better than others. The service level benchmarking awards carried out by the Ministry of Local Government Public Works and National Housing speak to these performance variations.

Though the concepts 'leadership' and 'management' have generally been used interchangeably in literature, in a local government setting it may be necessary to consider the difference and similarities between the two. The term 'management' is normally ascribed to appointed staff of council while the 'leadership' is assigned to the politically elected representatives. However, in practical terms, the appointed staff of council, in their various capacities, have a leadership role.

The concept of 'leadership' has already been defined and it is pertinent therefore to define the term 'management' and further examine their points of divergence. Management is broad and varied thus "it is a function, a discipline, a task" (Peter Drucker, 1974: 6). As a task, management is the process of setting and achieving goals through the execution of the basic management functions using human, financial and material resources (Plunkett & Attner, 1983). Related to achieving goals, management entails a process of coordinating and integrating work activities so that they are completed efficiently and effectively with and through people (Schermerhorn,

2008). Therefore, management is the art of getting things done through people and assuming responsibility for the work performance of one or more persons (Stoner, Freeman & Gilbert,1996). Management activities entail planning, organising, leading and controlling the use of resources to accomplish certain performance goals (Robbins & Coulter, 1999).
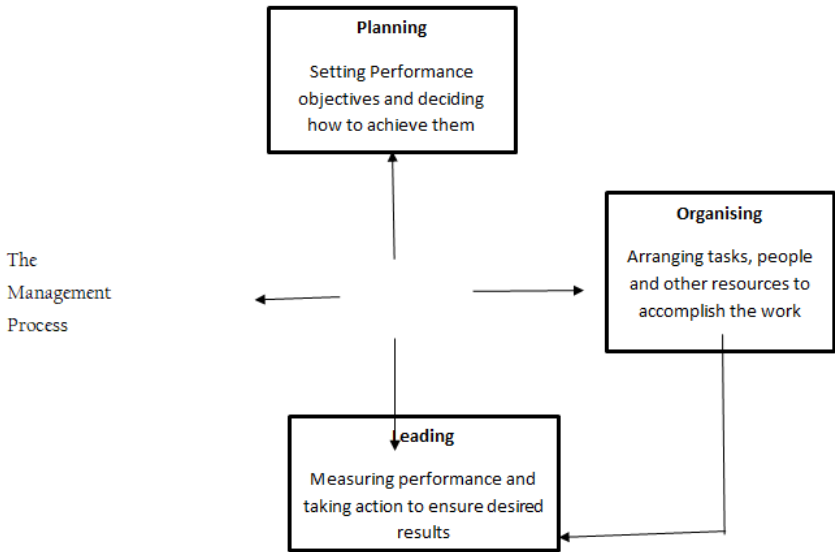
Figure 2. 1: The Management Process (Robins & Coulter, 1999)

Whereas the definitions of leadership and management have certain commonalities, there are also significant differences. A manager focuses on the management functions of planning, organising, leading and controlling as a result of the formal position of authority held in the organisation whereas a leader is any person capable of persuading other people to strive for certain goals, formal or informal, irrespective of position (Robbins, 1996). Some of the differences between management and leadership process are illustrated in Table 2.1

Table 2:2 Differences between management and leadership (Kotterman, 2006)

Process	Management	Leadership
Vision establishment	Plans and budgets Develop process steps and sets timelines Displays impersonal attitude about vision and goals	Sets direction and develops vision Develops strategic plans and achieve vision Displays very passionate attitude about vision and goals
Human Development and Networking	Organises staff Maintains structure Delegates responsibility Implements vision Establishes policy and procedures to implement vision Display low emotion Limits employee choices	Aligns organisation Communicates vision, mission and direction Influences creation of coalitions, teams and partnerships that understand and accept the vision Display drive and high emotion Increases choices
Vision execution	Controls processes Identifies problems Solves problems Monitors results Takes low risk approach	Motivates and inspires Energises employees to overcome barriers to change Satisfies basic human needs Takes high risk approach to problem solving
Vision outcome	Manages vision order and predictability Provides expected results consistently to leadership and stakeholders	Proactive useful and dramatic changes such as new products or approaches to improving labour relations

If local councils are to perform efficiently and effectively, it is clear from the comparison that they need both managers and leaders. The managers have to be clear about their roles, with the correct skills mix while the leaders have to possess requisite leadership qualities. Consequently, transformational leadership becomes the leadership style of choice as local government operating environment varies. The importance of high-quality managers and leaders (elected councillors and the appointed staff) for local government service delivery effectiveness is reflected in the concept of "productivity through people" where council members (managers, leaders and followers) are its source of quality and value (Peters & Waterman, 1982: 33). Not only are the managers and leaders necessary for productivity but they are also

critical for the survival of modern institutions (Drucker, 1974). This assertion invariably includes local government.

Elected councillors and the appointed staff of councils are at the coalface of service delivery in urban authorities. Effective and efficient provision of service hinges on the performance of these two groups of officials in their capacity as leaders, as representatives and as managers. It is also pertinent to argue that local governments are organisations and have an environment in which they operate. These concepts therefore are discussed in the next section.

Society depends on organisations for supply of goods and services. Schermerhorn (2008) defines an organisation as a collection of people coming together to achieve a common purpose. Individuals and groups interact within the structure of the formal organisation. Structure is created to establish relationships between individuals and groups, to provide order and systems and to direct the efforts of the organisation into goal seeking activities (Mullins 2013, 10).

Local governments are organisations established to provide services. To accomplish these tasks, local government have a structure which brings the elected leadership of council and the appointed staff of council. Because of the demand for uniformity of treatment, regularity of procedures and public accountability for operations, public sector organisations including local authorities are structured as bureaucracies (Mullins 2013). The management theory of bureaucracy was advanced by Max Weber. Schermerhorn (2008, 63) defines a bureaucracy as a rational and efficient form of organisation founded on logic, order and legitimate authority. In a bureaucracy there is clear hierarchy of authority, formal rules and procedures, impersonality and careers based on merit. The current criticism of bureaucracies centres around red tape and rigidity. This is not what Weber envisaged. Despite criticism however the bureaucratic structure continues to dominate public sector organisations to this day.

City of Gweru is structured as a bureaucracy with four committees of councillors: Finance committee, Environmental Management Committee, Health and Housing Committee and the Audit Committee. On the management side, council employees are divided into departments which include Finance, Engineering, Health, Housing and Community Services and Chamber Secretary's departments
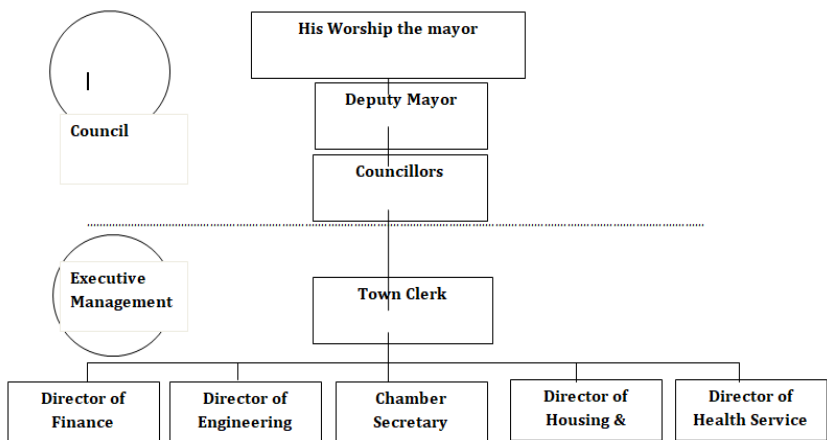
Figure 2.2: Council and Executive Management Structure

Council departments are there to provide technical and performance support and advice to council committees. Council departments also implement council policies and are at the coalface of service provision. Local Governments as organisations operate within an environment which influences their performance. To that end, the system approach has been embraced as an analytical tool in studying organisation because organisations are considered as open systems which interact with their environment and are composed of interrelated parts. The systems approach was developed by biologist Ludwig Von Bertanlarifty between 1930 and 1956 (Griffin, 2017). This marked a turning point from traditional theories which considered organisations as closed systems that were autonomous and isolated from their environment.
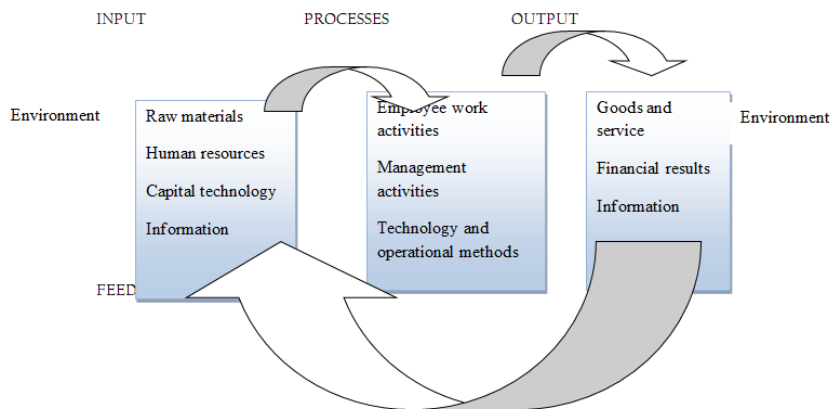
Figure 2.3: The Systems Approach

According to Schermethorn (2008.85), "the general environment consists of conditions in the external environment that forms a background context for managerial decision-making." The specific environment on the other hand consists of actual organisations and people with whom the organisations interact. These are also referred to as stakeholders.

The general environment issues affecting organisations include; economic conditions, socio-cultural conditions, legal political conditions and technological conditions. Local governments in their operations have to contend with all these conditions. In the case of Zimbabwe, the macro-economic conditions are generally adverse. In Gweru this manifests itself in de-industrialiSation and a ballooning informal sector. This has implications on residents' ability to pay for council services. Some decisions made by central government are construed by local government as political, for example the cancellation of all debts owed by residents in June 2013 just before a general election in July 2013. Technology conditions require local authorities to embrace information communication technologies including online debt payment platforms. Yet some local authorities are still on manual systems. City of Gweru is still to computerise its financial management and other operational systems. The city has no website to market opportunities available and to communicate with stakeholders (Town Clerk's Report 2016). Important stakeholders for City of Gweru in the specific environment include residents and ratepayers who are also the customers and clients of the city,

suppliers, government departments and the councillors and employees of council. All these impact on the governance of the city and on its service delivery mandate. Stakeholders especially the residents are best placed to assess and comment on the performance of City of Gweru and provide critical input into any research study of Gweru. Various research approaches utilised for this study which are outlined in Chapter 3 of this study focus on stakeholders as sources of information. The open systems approach focuses on inputs into the organisation, the processing or transformation which takes place within the organisation and the outputs from the transformation process, in this case goods and services into the environment.

In a study of City of Gweru, the inputs from the environment like financial resources, raw water, human resources are transformed through work processes in council departments to finished goods and services which are transmitted into the environment as potable water or trafficable roads. The stakeholders in the environment give feedback to council which can be negative or positive if the service is good or poor. Issues of efficiency, effectiveness and accountability which are the centre piece of this study then come to the fore.

Slack (2014) argues that without accountability there is no incentive to be efficient. Accountability can be defined as the obligation of an individual or organisation to account for its activities, accept responsibility for them and to disclose the results in transparent manner (Business Dictionary). Public Accountability is viewed as the obligation of a public enterprise entrusted with public funds to be answerable for fiscal and social responsibilities to those who have assigned such responsibilities to them. According to Olowu (2002) accountability has three crucial components, a clear definition of responsibilities, reporting mechanisms, and a system of review, rewards and sanction. Local governments are financed by the public through taxes and service charges they collect for service delivery and should be held to account for the use of or misuse of finances collected. The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. 20 of 2013 in its Preamble recognizes the need to entrench democratic, transparent and accountable governance. The whole of Chapter 9 of the Constitution focusses on Principles of Public Administration and Leadership. Some of the principles governing public administration for all tiers of government provided for in section 194 have been stated above. Local

government being a tier of government in terms of Section 5 of the Constitution is supposed to adhere to these principles. Section 196 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe goes further to outline responsibilities of public officials in leadership positions and the manner authority should be exercised. The Constitution states categorically that authority assigned to a public officer is a public trust which must be exercised in manner which 'demonstrates respect for the people and a readiness to serve them rather than to rule them'

Implemented, these provisions can impact positively on service provision. The Constitution Section 71(2) observes how an Act of Parliament must provide measures to enforce these provisions including issues of codes of conduct and regular disclosure of assets. That Act of Parliament is not yet in place although the Constitution was passed in 2013. If services are to improve measures of accountability, including sanction for non – compliant must be in place. The provisions of Chapter 9 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe have not received the much-needed attention in the local government sector. Emphasis and interest in the literature and in practise has tended to focus on section 301 which provides fiscal decentralisation that 5% of national revenue must be allocated to provinces and local government every year. Many of the provisions of Chapter 9 on principles for public administration and leadership noted above do not require an Act of Parliament Acts of or alignment to legislation to be implemented. Issues of efficiency, accountability, economic use of resources and recruitment on merit do not require legislation to be institutionalised in local government. It is therefore failure or reluctance on the part of the local government sector to institutionalise such principles in their dispose which has compromised service delivery. There is need for local government practitioners in Zimbabwe to familiarise themselves with the essence of constitutionalisation of local government instead of cherry picking seemingly favourable provisions only.

Section 309 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe implores the Auditor General to audit all local government. This is an area where many local authorities were found wanting since they were not undertaking annual audits timeously as provided for in the Urban Council Act chapter 29:15. This failure to audit

provided opportunities for financial mismanagement and corrupt practices. Qualified audit reports are beginning to emerge for many local government (Auditor General Reports, 2015 & 2016).

As Olowu (2002:141) points out, "where there is no accountability, the public administration system runs amok." Accountability is one of the basic tenets of good governance, the other being efficiency, transparency, predictability and legitimacy. Quality and effective service delivery by local governments, City of Gweru included, emanate from these basic tenets which should be the core values of the organisation. Perusal of Auditor General's Audits for 2015 and 2016 and the Special Audit Investigation report (2015) for Gweru indicate general failure to institutionalize these tenets as core values. Both councillors and their staff do not demonstrate a clear sense of responsibility especially in meeting residents' service delivery expectations. This also points to the need for more robust citizen participation in local governance. The citizenry through enhanced education and availability of information both print and electronic is demanding more accountability from those holding public office. The decentralisation reform agenda pursued by many countries the world over responds to the need for greater citizen participation by thus in decision-making and governance and points to the need for a more inclusive local governance approach. After all the whole concepts of good governance revolves around the need to embrace ethical leadership, accountability for actions, and honesty in the execution of public duties, integrity and honesty. This is what residents of urban local authorities have been clamouring from those who put themselves up for public office.

Decentralised governance is underpinned by the ethos of accountability. As noted by Yilmaz (2008), 'decentralisation (devolution) offers significant opportunities to improve government accountability. It creates the possibility of exerting stronger precious on governments' performance from below and from above. Decentralisation reshape power relations among the local residents, local governments, producers of local governments services and higher levels of government (including central government) Yilmaz et al. (2008) go farther to develop a conceptual frame work to better analyse the factors that improve local governments based on the following arguments.

Decentralisation reforms grant local governments new powers and responsibilities in three dimensions: political, administrative and fiscal. These dimensions provide local governments' discretionary space. Ensuring appropriate use of such discretionary space requires introducing effective accountability systems. Within their discretionary space, local governments would be accountable to higher levels of government (upwards accountability) and to citizens (downward accountability). Public accountability mechanisms safeguard against misuse and abuse of local discretion, but they have imperfections. New forms of social accountability mechanisms that enable direct engagement of citizens with government, emerge to compliment public accountability mechanisms.

Public and social accountability approaches must be bridged to ensure that citizens have the ability and opportunity to demand accountability and that local governments have the means and incentives to respond to citizen demands for accountability and better service delivery.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISCRETION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Public Accountability Approaches

Supply side

Political Accountability
- Local council oversight
- Electoral accountability measures (recalls, write-ins, campaign financing; independent candidates)

Administrative Accountability
- Bureaucratic hierarchy
- Civil service rules
- Procurement practices

Financial accountability
- Local public financial management (planning, budgeting, reporting, internal control/audit, external audit)

Political Decentralisation
Separation of powers: Local administration, parliaments, courts
Elections
Party systems / party

Local Governance Outcomes
Responsive, effective, efficient, sustainable services
Enhanced political, financial, and administrative accountability
Greater local control over economic development planning and decision-making
Strengthened accountability through greater citizen monitoring and vigilance over power holders

Fiscal Decentralisation
Discretion over expenditures
Revenue autonomy
Predictable and rule-based inter-governmental transfers

Community – Driven Development/Social Accountability Approaches

Demand Side

- Participatory planting
- Participatory budgeting
- Participatory expenditure tracking
- Citizen access to information

- Participatory monitoring and evaluation
- Participatory management of investments/projects
- Citizen feedback for services (report cards, social audits)

Administrative Decentralisation
Regulatory discretion
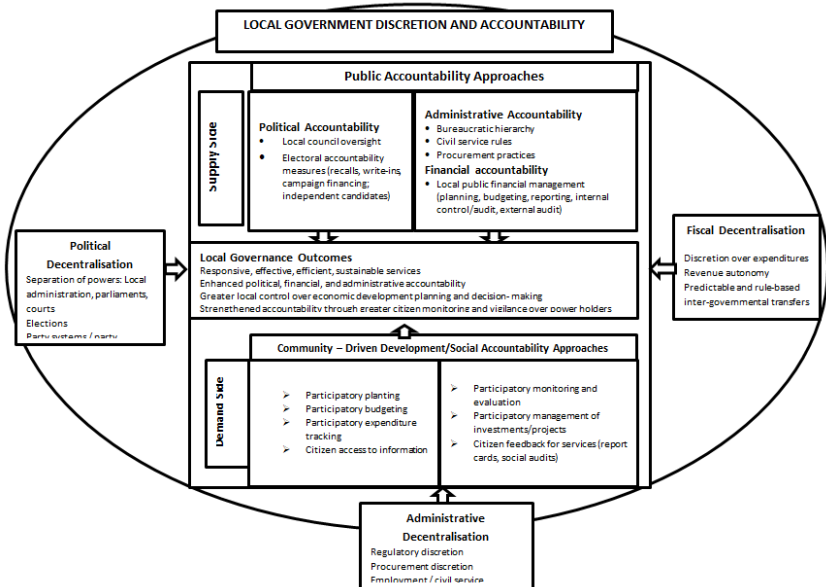Procurement discretion
Employment / civil service

Figure 2.4: Framework for local government discretion and accountability

This analytical framework can inform service delivery improvement and accountability in GCC within the context of decentralised governance as argued:

"Decentralised levels of governance have their raison d'être in the provision of goods and services whose consumption is limited to their own jurisdictions. By tailoring outputs of such goods and services to particulars preferences and circumstances of their constituencies, decentralised provisions increase economic welfare above that which results from uniform levels of such services that are likely under national provisions" (Oates 1999p 1112) This views propounded by Oates (1999) has been central in the decentralisation drive by many countries in Africa and the developing world. Decentralisation has gathered momentum in Africa as a key component of public sector reform and also as part of donor nation's conditionalities. As noted by Kathyola and Job (eds) (2011) two key objectives of decentralisation have been to improve public service provision and to empower local citizens and institutions for self-governance.

While decentralisation has been defined variously by different scholars in the literature many of these definitions seem to coalesce around the transfer of power, responsibilities, authority and resources from the centre to sub-national levels of government (Rondinell, Nellis and Cheema 1984, Conyers 1983, Olowu and Wunsch 2004, Bhatta 2006). Rondinelli (1983, 18) defines decentralisation as, "a transfer of planning, decision-making or administrative authority from central government to field organisations, local government or NGOs".

United Nation Development Program (2009) defines decentralisation as a process through which powers, functions, responsibilities and resources are transferred from central government to local government and/or other decentralised entitles. Bhatta (2006 p 155) defines decentralisation as, when the central or the centre cedes some authority and power to lower levels of government. Decentralisation seeks to redistribute authority, responsibility and financial resources for providing public services among different spheres of Government (World Bank 2011). Faquet (2011) observes how the most important theoretical argument concerning decentralisation is that it can

improve governance by making government more accountable and responsive to the governed. As noted by Cameron (2014), while the tendency globally has been towards greater decentralisation, African countries are still comparatively more centralised. This is further confirmed by Wunsch (2014 p.15) who observes that "African decentralisation has resulted in robust changes to legal frameworks but has been circumscribed by strong centripetal forces.

In many African countries, (South Africa, Uganda, Kenya, Mozambique) Zimbabwe included, decentralisation is now enshrined in national constitutions. To further strengthen the decentralisation drive, the African Union adopted an African Charter on Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development on the 27th June 2014. In this Charter, decentralisation is defined as, "the transfer of power, responsibilities, capacities and resources from national to all subnational levels of government with the aim of strengthening the ability of the latter to both foster people's participation and delivery of quality services." It is anticipated that all member states would align their legislation to provision of the Charter as provided for in Articles 18, 19 and 20. The African Union went further to declare the 10th August as the African Day of Decentralisation and Local Development. This declaration strengthens decentralisation as the centre piece of reform across Africa.

Despite this significant progress on the legal front, centralisation tendencies in terms of the functionality of local governments are still prevalent. This is especially the case when local governments turn out to be a base for opposition parties or ethnic factions (Wunsch, 2014, Resnick, 2008). Urban local governments are usually the entry point of opposition parties in the national political space, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Uganda being examples of this phenomenon. This loss of control creates situations where central government will pursue strategies to limit the effectiveness of local governments. In Zimbabwe in 2013, just before a general election, the Minister responsible for Local government directed all local governments to cancel debts owed by residents from 2009. This has had negative effects on the ability of local governments to collect revenue as residents waited for

another debt write-off before the 2018 general elections. This is cited by local governance as one of the reasons for their mobility to deliver services.

The literature on decentralisation normally emphasises three forms or strategies of decentralisation: deconcentration, delegation and devolution (Wunsch, 2014). Other authors add a fourth form which is divestment or privatisation. The literature also divides decentralisation into political, administrative and fiscal decentralisation (Kathyola and Job eds 2011). As noted by Devas and Delay (2006), at the heart of the decentralisation debate is the relationship between the various levels of government. In a study on decentralisation Commonwealth Africa. Kathyola and Job (2011) concluded that this relationship revolves around authority, responsibility, accountability and finances and the degree of control or authority that sub-national governments have on these dimensions defines the form of decentralisation that is practised. In a study to establish how decentralisation has fared in 10 countries, (Wunsch *et al.*, 2014) considered the dimensions, of authority, autonomy, accountability and capacity. The point to note from the two studies is the criticality of issues of autonomy and accountability in considering sub-national level governments. The dimension of capacity has often been cited as a major challenge at sub-national and has a direct bearing on the performance of these levels. Perhaps more important in considering the core business of local government which is service delivery, is this issue of efficiency and effectiveness. If decentralisation does not lead to improved service delivery, then the quality of life of residents will not improve. In the case of Zimbabwe, this is an area requiring further interrogation.

Deconcentration also referred to as administrative decentralisation is the transfer of responsibilities and functions to field offices or outpost of central government which maintains control over them (Bhatta, 2006; Adamolekun, 2007). The transfer of functions to field offices allows communities to access such services locally without having to travel to national capitals for services. In Zimbabwe central government services can be accessed in provinces and district with some like agricultural support services available at community level. Because of its upward accountability deconcentration may not respond quickly enough to local preferences and challenges.

The other form of decentralisation is delegation usually to state owned enterprises. These are normally function specific with Boards appointed and answerable to the line minister in the case of Zimbabwe. Delegation according to Kathyola and Job (2011) can be to semiautonomous organisations that are ultimately accountable to central government. Such organisations have a great deal of discretion in decision-making, financing and administration.

The most preferred mode of decentralisation is devolution where central government transfers authority, power, responsibility and resources to an autonomous body with separate political accountability, such as a local government, a state government or regional government (Adamolekun, 2002; Olowu and Wunsch, 2004). Such transfers are normally provided for in national constitutions or other legal instruments. The import of this mode of decentralisation is to bring government closer to the people and allow communities to participate in their own governance. Privatisation as a form of decentralisation is increasingly gaining traction. This is where national, state or local government enters into partnership arrangement to provide a service or infrastructure. Various arrangements exist, from simple contracting out of such services like garbage collection to massive infrastructure like roads, power stations and dams. Build operate transfer or joint ventures in infrastructure development are gaining prominence.

Ndengwa and Levy (2003) argue that there are traditionally two types of approaches to decentralisation; the 'big bang' reforms which create local political autonomy, centre-local fiscal systems are deployed and personnel is transferred from the centre in a massive roll out program across all sectors and regions within a short period. In other African countries, including Zimbabwe, the decentralisation thrust has been an incremental process and is usually accompanied by capacity building programs. Such capacity building has adopted 'learning by doing approaches'.

Many factors have attracted many countries to decentralise powers and functions to sub-national levels of government. As many countries, especially in the 1990s democratised, decentralisation through devolution was adopted to broaden political participation (Adamolekun, 2002). The other attraction

was the proximity of subnational governments to the citizenry compared to a more remote central government. In this regard lower levels of government tend to respond more timeously to local needs and are also able to tailor services to local needs and local capacity. Accountability is enhanced as local leaders in sub-national governments are under closer scrutiny for their actions. As Smoke (1999. 10) notes, "underlying most of the purported benefits of decentralisation is the existence of democratic mechanism that allow local governments to discern the needs and preferences of their constituents, and provide a way for these constituents to hold local governments accountable to them."

Decentralisation is also perceived as a way to ensure political stability and limit the risk of civil conflict (Caldeira, Foucault, Rota, Graziosi, 2012; Adamolekun, 2002; USAID, 2010). Devolution in particular addresses issues of distinct communities, be they religious or ethnically/linguistically inclined, as is the case with the Cantons of Switzerland (Adamolekun, 2002). The Comparative Assessment of Decentralisation in Africa Final Report by USAID (2010) found modest evidence that decentralisation may improve service delivery. For local communities, the existence of a decentralised level of government in particular, local governments is to provide services efficiently so that the quality of their lives can improve. Failure on this front raises questions about whether central provision is better than local provision. The issue of recentralisation is thus always looming. In many instances, national bureaucrats and politicians have used the argument of service delivery slippages by local governments to recentralise functions and responsibilities allocated to local governments. In Zimbabwe the water function was taken away from local governments and was given to Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA). ZINWA's inability to improve provision saw the same function being given back to local governments in a worse state. Centre-local relations can thus shape the trajectory decentralisation takes.

As noted by Wunsch (2014), decisions regarding decentralisation are also intrinsically involved in the political economy. Political economic interests of central government ministries that stand to gain or lose control over resources, appointments, budgets, personnel will lead them to block

decentralisation (Wunsch, 2014). Further if decentralisation turns out to be a base for opposition parties or ethnic factions the centre will limit it in practice or law as this creates vertically divided authority (Wunsch, 2014; Rensnick, 2014; Cameron, 2014).

One area which has been noted in the literature as a challenge to the decentralisation thrust in Africa is the lack of capacity at local levels (Wunsch, 2008; Adamolekun, 2002) At both political and technical managerial levels, local government capacity is limited. On the political front, many local leaders' calibre is questionable as they have limitations academically and professionally (Dewa *et al.*, 2014). Cases of corruption at local level have also been cited as a drawback to effective governance and service delivery. Other challenges to successfully decentralise include incomplete legal reforms, persistent emphasis on control by the centre, weak professional and technical support by the centre and weakness in local publics and civil society and failure by local officials to honestly and effectively supervise service delivery officials (Olowu, 1990; Smoke, 2008). Decentralisation should not create unfunded mandates or be used as a strategy to dump unwanted services by central government. Further, many central governments refuse to pay the political and financial cost of decentralisation of roles and responsibilities (UN Habitat, 2014).

Successful decentralisation requires adequate financial resources to carry out the decentralised mandates. Local government tend to have limited fiscal space to mobilise adequate resources. Higher yielding taxes are normally monopolised by the centre with local governments relying on revenue sources which are difficult to collect or are unpredictable. Fiscal decentralisation which may be enshrined in legislation is not always honoured by the centre. In Zimbabwe, section 301 of the Constitution provides for not less than 5% of National Revenues to be allocated to Provincial and Local Government but since the Constitution was passed in 2013, this transfer was only honoured in 2019, six years later.

Over-reliance on central transfer can also compromise the autonomy of sub-national governments as they are compelled in instances to follow central dictates not local priorities in terms of spending. Decentralisation can also

bring high risk of capture by local elites for their own benefit. This is particularly noticeable in the awarding of tenders awarded by local or state governments. Beneficiaries of such tenders would normally be well connected to those in control at local level or even at higher levels although the work or service to be carried out will be paid for by local or state government. To overcome some of the challenges of decentralisation (Kathyola and Job, 2011) noted five actions which can advance decentralisation:

- Constitutional protection and clear assignment of responsibilities to local authorities;
- Financial and human resource provision to match assigned mandates;
- Reconciliation of development planning to local planning;
- Mobilisation of local resources - financial and human;
- Empowerment of citizens and local councils to contract and cooperate with other stakeholders in the governance arena

The USAID Comparative Assessment Reports (2010) argues that decentralisation is increasingly entrenched in many African countries. They also argue that legal authority has been transferred to sub-national government to a considerable degree. While local elections are being conducted, issues of accountability and autonomy are limited. Public services, according to this report, seem to have modestly improved. For successful decentralisation, Adamolekun (2002) outlines some of the strategies African countries can adopt, bearing in mind each country`s 'unique institutional conditions and its historical political, economic realities to include:

1. the need to articulate a coherent and comprehensive policy that enjoys public support;
2. ensure commitment of central government's political and administrative leadership to deemphasise control, transfer adequate resources and appreciate complementarities;
3. devolve adequate powers to sub-national levels to ensure that qualified persons are attracted to those levels;
4. Provide training programs on decentralisation for civil servants at all levels and skills building for those in sub-national government;
5. Promote associations of local government including twinning.

Noting the above, one would also add that capacity building should not be confined to civil servants and local government employees only but should include the elected leadership of sub-national governments. In addition, civil society organisations participation in the decentralisation process should also be a crucial ingredient for success. In the case of Zimbabwe, the inclusion of such groups as resident and ratepayers' association is an imperative for the smooth functioning of local governments.

The issue of intergovernmental relations or centre- local cited by several authors (Adamolekun, 2002; Conyers, 2003; Chakunda, 2015) has a bearing on service delivery. Adamolekun (2002, 61) observes that "in the existing literature on intergovernmental relations, three topics are usually given prominence: the allocation of jurisdictional powers among levels of government; the administrative mechanisms for managing intergovernmental relations and intergovernmental fiscal relations." Bevir (2009.44) defines centre-local relations as the political and administrative relationships that exist between a central state and the local governments within its territorial boarders. Local authorities, on the other hand, are decentralised lower tiers of government which are closer to the people under the control of locally elected councillors. The study, conceptualisation, theorisation and analysis of the relations between local and central governments have proved to be a difficult task and expectations on the part of several government officials, academics and political analysts. Chatiza, (2010) prefers to stereotype this relationship as "disconcerting" given the differences in political and socioeconomic ideologies of the central government on the one hand and the local government on the other. Ogborn, (1991) questioned the orthodox dualist analysis of the relationships between local and central governments of the nineteenth century and argued that local power was not based on the communal conception or the ideology of local possessive pluralism that is characteristic.

While the above arguments may have stereotyped ideals, it is important to rationalise that decentralisation is a creature of state governments that retains the prerogative to determine the quality and quantity of authority to delegate to local governments. If the general assumption that the state exists for the good of its people implies, among other efforts, the decentralisation of

sufficient power for local governments for the efficient provision of services to citizens, this can be contradicted by overestimation and simplification excessive. Some bureaucracies have tried to concentrate power at the national level, leaving local governments as mere extensions of central government authority. Therefore, it is questionable whether decentralisation in the sense of government policy theory has strengthened local autonomy or whether there is a greater propensity for recentralisation.

Crook (2001: 12), in his attempt to criticise decentralisation as a mechanism for vertical and horizontal diffusion of central government power to its various agencies, pointed out that:

> Different governments have different political objectives and motivations for introducing decentralisation that are incorporated in the structure and form of decentralisation or, more subtly, in the functioning of the system after its introduction, but the political variables determine the results of decentralisation (in terms of greater response capacity and poverty reduction), not only because of the variations in the formal structure or the technical failures of implementation, but also because of decentralisation resources, both between the different levels and between the territories, the state and between different interests in their relations with the governing elites. The policy of relations between the centre and the local authorities explains what interests could be gained or lost with any set of institutional opportunities, political initiatives and so of resources, and associates these factors with the political objectives of decentralisation.

However, Boone (1998) makes an interesting analogy with Crook (2001)'s observations when he postulated that similar decentralisation reforms could have diametrically opposed objectives, depending on whether they are aimed at reinforcing vested interests in the models. Existing sponsorship and local-to-local coupling, or challenge local elites of groups that use decentralised institutions to "mobilise" central resources to strengthen local struggles for power. In the African context, the ethno-regional conflict policy is particularly important in shaping the decentralisation structure and even insofar as it is accepted by the ruling elite.

Smoke (2006), analysing the horizontal integration between central and local government in the decentralised systems of Kenya, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, argue that the first two examples are systems dedicated to maintaining the power of the ruling party at the level of local government, while the Nigerian

government has used it since 1983 as an instrument of successive military regimes to create "bosses" and loyal local agencies for the distribution of central clients that avoid federal states. It is difficult to find positive evaluations of these countries in the research literature. In the search for Smoke (year)'s observations, it may be necessary to analyse Ogborn's views at this point. Ogborn (1991) believes that understanding the relationship between central government and local governments as part of an extension of state government oversight is explained and supported through an analysis of the shape of these relationships, especially rationality and returns. Vincent-Jones supplemented this argument by arguing that the legitimacy of the state's regulatory objectives and the manner in which they were determined must be confronted as part of a broader task of evaluating government practice, including technical evaluation of regulatory effectiveness.

In Zimbabwe, section 5 of the Constitution provides for three tiers of government; national government, provincial and metropolitan councils and local authorities. Chapter 14 of the Constitution focuses on provincial and local government. Section 264, in same chapter, provides for devolution of governmental powers and section 265 outlines general principles of provincial and local government.

The legal system allocates powers to both central government and local government. An issue not sufficiently discussed in the literature on local government in Zimbabwe is how this relationship actually plays out. Section 110 of the Constitution outlines the executive functions of the President and Cabinet. Section 110 (3) outlines the responsibilities of Cabinet of which the minister responsible for local government is a member and these are: directing the operations of the government, conducting government business in Parliament, preparing, initiating and implementing national legislation, developing and implementing national policy. Due to these functions, in their jurisdictional relationship, central government expects local governments to be guided in their operations by national policies, to be accountable, transparent, efficient and effective in the delivery of services. Central government, hence, has an oversight, supervisory, regulatory and facilitatory role. Local governments, in terms of sections 264 on devolution and section 276 on functions of local authorities expect a high degree of autonomy within

their space where they exercise initiative and tailor functions to local needs and local capacity however it does not give clear indication on the powers allocated to in local authorities. This leaves the central government taking over in all grey areas.

Local governments have frequently complained about the interference by the minister responsible for local government in their space (Muchadenyika and Williams, 2016; Chigwata, 2017). Issues of directives by the minister in terms of section 313 of the UCA have attracted many criticism from local governments and the media. The minister's intervention in local governments has also been considered as interference (Chatiza, 2010). Hlatshwayo (1998) cites about 200 instances where the minister can intervene in Rural District Councils Suspension and dismissals of elected councillors and appointment of caretakers and commissioners have often been construed as victimisation of opposition party politicians (Dewa, 2010, Muchadenyika and William, 2016). The paradigm that some studies do not seem to explore further is one of final accountability. The question is, "who is finally accountable to the Executive, Parliament and the people for the local government function? Considering section 110 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the Minister of Local Government has final accountability if things go wrong, just like the Minister of Health or the Minister of Education. Although decentralised and devolved, with a high degree of autonomy, it is important to strike a balance between the centre and the local to minimise mistrust and polarisation. Role clarity is fundamental in this regard. It should be noted that decentralisation succeeds where the legal framework for intergovernmental relations is clearly defined including assignment of mandates and the requisite resources.

Though commercially defined as intangible objects only, in the context of this study, services include both intangible and tangible goods (roads, health, water infrastructure, sanitation, housing, natural disasters management, environment, public spaces, and land-use management) which are required to satisfy human needs and wants and improve the quality of life. Service delivery is, therefore, a process concerned with planning, provision and management of these services. Service delivery can, therefore, be conceptualised as a system comprising of inputs, process, outputs and outcomes to enhance the quality of life (World Bank Group , 2016).

Service delivery typologies vary and include the beneficial service jurisdiction model, monopoly government provision and PPPs. The beneficial service jurisdiction model proposes that for each municipal service, there exists a geographical limitation of the spatial size over which a particular service can be delivered efficiently. Therefore, the efficient service boundaries for a particular municipal service can be drawn and this may extend beyond the legislative boundaries or falls below the legislation boundaries of a municipality (Dillinger, 1995). In addition, the efficient service boundary is not the same for all services but vary with the type service- transport, water supply, physical planning, public amenities, and safety. Based on this observation, it is therefore rationale to observe that to improve overall welfare of service beneficiaries, decision-making for service delivery is made at different levels of government– some services are better delivered at local levels whereas some are efficiently delivered at higher levels of government (Dillinger, 1995).

The thesis of beneficial service jurisdiction justifies an organisational framework where sub-national governments enjoy autonomy in making decisions for delivery of particular services whereas they are controlled by or depend on the central government or a higher or other jurisdiction external to it for provision of services which extend beyond its territorial boundaries (Dillinger, 1995). One model emanating from this theory is special districts. Other typologies of service delivery include the public sector provision (municipalisation) where local authorities assume the overall responsibilities. Contemporary models include public-private partnership arrangements where local governments partner the private sector to augment capacity deficiency in service delivery. Beyond partnerships, other models include outsourcing services.

Special districts can be defined as inter-jurisdictional authorities, catering for a single service across different territories. These either come under metropolitan governments or exist as independent inter-municipal arrangements. Special districts are independent and autonomous, not depending on government grants but are self-funded (Brown, 2009). Therefore, special purpose districts are often immune from excess political control in service delivery which explains their historical development in

South Illinois, in the 1960s where they were initiated to hedge service delivery against political interference (Advisory Committee on Inter-organisational Relations, 1964). However, the financial autonomy powers are usually declared by state legislature (DiNapoli, 2007; Hamilton, 2012). Similarly, in Poland, special districts are a product of government legislation over concerns of poor service delivery and high costs of services in independent small authorities (Hamilton, 2012) whereas in Vancouver, the intention was to coordinate and cater for the growth needs of Vancouver and other urbanising peri- urban areas. Purposes of the special districts vary and can include water, sanitation, health, land-use planning services, housing, transport planning and environmental management.

Concerning service delivery challenges of special districts, in New York, one of the challenges is the population growth and the settlement urbanisation where some lower tier towns are expanding the boundaries for services (DiNapoli, 2007). In addition, some of the special districts in Nassau, New York were overcharging service users. Likewise, there issue of equality in charge of transport infrastructure by special transport districts in the United States is a contentious issue. Lack of standard pricing across districts is pervasive in the setting of charges to consumers of transport infrastructure services (Mathur, 2015). Consequently, in the rest of the United States, property owners feel they are paying more than the fair share of the costs of transport infrastructure under special transport districts (Mathur, 2015). This erodes popularity of the special transport districts among property owners and other service consumers. On the other hand, special service districts in Vancouver and Florida also grapple with competition over loss of both autonomy and responsibilities by local municipalities (Hamilton, 2013). The effect is a further reduction of political support for special districts by smaller municipalities.

Other than financial and inter- jurisdictional equity concerns, absence of uniform zoning regulations across cities made environmental management complex affecting the capacity of the metropolitan environmental authority in New York (Rizzo, 2001). In addition to this, climate change and natural factors also constrain service delivery by special districts. For example, though London is considered to be one of the cities with advanced water

infrastructure systems, water supply systems in London are threatened by climate change where the city has longer dry seasons, negatively affecting the natural water availability (London Assembly, Health and Environmental Committee , 2012).

Service challenges in Australia include a stress over the financial resources under shared responsibilities at metropolitan level. This emanated from poorly structured to lack of inter-municipal financial responsibility sharing. This burden is transferred to the local municipalities negatively affecting service delivery (Dollery and Robbotti, 2008). Contrary to this state of affairs, in some states, the metropolitan government has the ability to raise substantial funding across different cities and accumulates more financial resources than it demands for financing own projects (Tomlinson &Spiller, 2018). However, this excessive capital accumulation at the metropolitan level occurs at the expense of municipal governments (*ibid.*). Though there are alternative explanations to financial challenges at municipal level, they all point to the outcome of a deficiency of financial resources for municipal governments.

One of the challenges the social housing sector has been grappling with has been the population composition dynamics where the housing facilities have formerly been provided to non-working populations (housing supply was more important than quality Australian Government Productivity Commission (AGPC, 2016). Therefore, the clients of social housing services have changed from the non- working citizens to include the elderly, government workers and low-income residents (Jordan, 1984). These changes in the clients of social housing imply the need to repackage the social housing component to suit the diversity of interests and make the same service affordable to all the clients.   However, there is a contrast between the social housing services provided by the local government versus expectations from the social housing market (AGPC, 2016). Therefore, unaccounted social dynamics can negatively affect delivery of housing services. Furthermore, since housing services are self-financed under State Housing Departments, further contradictions also emanate from the charges and cost expectations of producers versus what can be afforded by citizens (ACG, 2016). As such, financial capacity challenges are one of the challenges of the state housing

departments in extending affordable social housing units in Australia (Pawson, Milligan & Martin 2019). However, this varies across states.

Service delivery challenges in some local authorities in South Africa range from lack of human capacity (Sekhukhume District) to political interference where political ideologies and the need for votes undermine the thrust for rational service delivery and financial challenges (Beyers, 2016). The reason for this comparison is that Zimbabwe just like South Africa faces the same challenges in the decentralisation of being done halfway through with political elites interfering with service delivery (Sibanda 2013). Lack of effective human capacity has been accelerated by the devolution of responsibilities to local and metropolitan councils without the development of the necessary resources including finance (Smith &Morris, 2008). In such instances, the responsibilities and service delivery expectations from both the central government and the community is beyond the methods and techniques employed by municipal tiers (Pakaya, 2014). In some cases, service delivery responsibilities like waste management overlaps within the internal municipal departments- the sanitation, public health and the Department of Environment (Pakaya, 2014).

Regarding financial capacity, municipalities in South Africa also grapple with financial challenges which range from limited internal finance generation capacity, excess regulatory control of financial raising, reduced financial wavering (Beyers, 2016; Ndebele &Lavhelani, 2017). This affects not only the municipalities in Limpopo but also metropolitan authorities. However, financial capacity challenges vary across municipalities since municipalities in 'black areas' have generally more financial challenges in delivering services than those in former 'white areas' even in post-apartheid South Africa (Palmer *et al.*, 2017).

In cities across Zimbabwe, service delivery covers transport, land-use, health, housing, public services, the environment, water, health, sanitation, public spaces and parks. Transport service challenges include inefficiency and fragmentation of service delivery (Mbara, 2015). These problems in the case of Harare are related to poor institutional capacity in terms of the requisite human capacity coupled by financial challenges of outsourcing (Mbara, 2015).

Other than fragmentation of institutions, financial challenges are another setback. Financial challenges emanate from limited financial generation capacities as local authorities' financial generation capacity and borrowing powers are restricted and subject to central government approval (UCA [Chapter 29:15]. Furthermore, unwillingness of citizens to pay rates for services as in Chegutu further weakens the financial capacity of municipalities for funding service delivery (Sifile, Madzorera and Chavunduka, 2015).

Concerning delivery of water in Harare and Masvingo, politicisation is a challenge (Mumvuma, 2016; Murimoga and Musingafi, 2014). Politicisation also affects the delivery of social housing facilities under the Zimbabwean government's *Operation Garikayi/Hlalani Kuhle* Programme. This was a rationalisation programme that was done to rehabilitate the victim of Operation Restore Order that came as a move to deal with informality. It was intended to provide low-cost housing for the restore order victims (Tibaijuka, 2005). Politicisation and contamination of service delivery with political ideologies is a challenge across all service spectrums in Zimbabwe's urban councils. This emanates from an organisational structure where politically appointed councillors have the discretion for making service delivery policies at local level whereas professional experts' role is limited to recommendation of options (de Visser *et al.*, 2010). An example is water supply in Kadoma where lack of political will to implement reform in water pricing negatively affected financial sustainability (Remigios and Never, 2010). Therefore, generally politicians do not sympathise with rational service delivery policies that undermine their status among voters.

Other than conflict of ideologies, the other challenge in environmental service delivery in Zimbabwe cities is rapid urbanisation where municipalities such as the City of Harare fail to align waste management services supply to cover rising demand (Tsiko and Togarepi, 2012). In addition, since they are marked differences in the state of sewage infrastructure between the affluent northern suburbs and the low-income areas of the south, the environmental challenge in the City of Harare may be colonially inherited (Togarepi and Tsiko, 2012). The other challenges in effective sanitation and water provision in the City of Harare emanate from the absence of inter-municipal

cooperation despite dependence on the same resources. A typical example is the delivery of potable water in Greater Harare. Though Chitungwiza depends on Harare's bulk water and waste treatment infrastructure, there are no cooperative arrangements for sharing the cost (Manzungu, 2008). This negatively affects supply of water in both Harare and Chitungwiza.

The service delivery challenges in Zimbabwe closely tally with those in African regions and beyond – financial, political intrusion, organisational challenges, urbanisation and policy challenges. Therefore, not only is service delivery challenges policy, financial or institutional-related but like in the case of water delivery in London, physical conditions and climate change is also a challenge particularly in the delivery of water services. It appears service delivery challenges have a common calibre, though the intensity of the problems varies.

The World Bank Group (2016) classifies service performance indicators into groups related to components of the service delivery process. Service delivery performance can be assessed on the basis of inputs where concern is on factors including funding, human capital and technology (World Bank Group, 2016). Other than assessing service delivery based on input indicators, it can also be assessed based on service implementation indicators determining the implementation capacity of Sub-national governments. These factors include the service delivery contexts, policy, political environment and the institutional context (Mizel, 2008). Implementation indicators also consider issues of accountability. In addition to assessment of service delivery based on assessing the implementation process, service delivery can also be assessed through output-oriented indictors (World Bank Group, 2016). These are mostly quantitative measures of how much of a particular service is produced usually for purposes of measuring efficiency (when the output is compared to inputs) or for assessing service supply gaps (Shah, 2006).

 The other group of indicators are outcomes-oriented methods where consideration is given to accessibility, affordability, service reliability, equity and service-user satisfaction (World Bank Group 2016). The outcome indicators are discussed in detail. One of the outcome indicators is accessibility. Accessibility defines the ease with which citizens (different

citizens) can access transport, public services, and any other services provided by local authorities (World Bank Group, 2016). Accessibility takes into consideration issues of geographical proximately, time to access the services and any other costs that citizens may incur in trying to access a service. From the sociological and equity point of view, accessibility can be assessed in terms of how easy it is for different population groups or age groups to access a particular service provided by local authorities (Papa *et al.*, 2015).

The other indicator is affordability. Affordability deals with the cost consideration of service relative to average income levels of the population. To minimise the financial burden in assessing services be they transport, water and sanitation and housing the local government took certain steps. Affordability of service determines both the consumption, (who consumes the service) as the public trust in the municipal authorities (OCED, 2013). However, the concept has no universal approval to setting the affordability level for pricing services since community, employment level and income levels vary (Gutorovia, Schellekens & De Groot 2018). The argument is that affordable pricing levels cannot be determined through mere numbers (low or high but has to be justifiable economically). In addition, the affordability level must balance not only the demand side but the supply side service pricing interest for financial sustainability. In addition, just like the concept of affordability has multiple facets including the ability of all citizens, specific groups or the low-income citizens to pay to access a service without disruption on their enjoyment of access (GutorovIa *et al.*, 2018). This reveals that service affordability is a subjective issue.

Service performance can also be assessed using reliability indicators. Generally, reliability deals with the probability of failure of the service delivery systems to respond to shocks and risks without negatively affecting the delivery of services. Such risks may include climate changes, unanticipated population growth and demand dynamics, natural disasters, economic or political dynamics. However, one of the challenges is the absence of a universal measure of service supply reliability (Xu and Powel, 2007). Some of the indicators of reliability include the frequency of breakdown of the systems and service supply shortage, rate of restoration after breakdown, days

per given time with or without services (Shar, 2007). Where the service consumers and interests are diverse, equity is an important measure for assessing service delivery. Equity measures can be used to ensure fair distribution of services. It includes equal payments, and equal outputs. The other measure of service delivery is customer satisfaction, where satisfaction is a matter of citizens realising value from consumption of municipal services. However, this value is subjective and depends not only on individual traits but also on the consumer's experience and expectations (Zakaria, 2013). As such, the level of satisfaction varies across different social groups and age groups as so does tastes and expectations.

On the other hand, the performance of service delivery systems can be assessed based on effectiveness, that is; the extent to which service delivery targets set in the municipal service delivery plans are met within the desired time frame. However, whereas both systems efficiency and effectiveness measure productivity (Shar, 2005), it is pertinent to argue that a service can be provided (Savas, 1978). However, it is important to argue that the issue of equity can become contentious over the pricing of the same services and provision of services across districts – equal number of schools, equal street lights, and equal transport infrastructure can be applied for equality (Savas, 1978) though contentiously. Since the term equity does not necessary refer to similarly but per need.

Practically, these service delivery performance indicators are adopted and modified depending on the type of service targeted and the area. Though using the broad indicators, sub-national governments build their own objectively verifiable indicators in local development plans or strategic plans. Furthermore, depending on the level and purpose of service delivery performance (either reporting to the national government or improving service delivery in future), sub-national governments across the globe either adopt process-oriented, output or outcome-oriented indicators. However, there is extensive use of outcome-oriented indicators. For example, in Australia and Afghanistan, outcome-oriented indicators are widely used (Mizel, 2008; Integrity Watch, 2017). In South Africa, these performance indicators are developed at metropolitan levels though further service targets are also developed in the IDPs at local level. For some indicators like

affordability and accessibility, there is need for contextually- derived definitions since what they mean is subjective and depends not only on geographical areas but also vary depending on who is defining them. In addition, the measurable indicators also tend to evolve with time (what is affordable today, to whom, may not be affordable tomorrow as the economy and social demographics evolve. After considering the various concepts underpinning the study, the next section discusses theories informing this study.

While it may be possible to profile a range of theories that can underpin a study of sub-national government service delivery, the researcher has approached the issue of theoretical framework from a relevance and applicability point of view. This indicates that the theory and related issues discussed here are not just exploratory but are focused to ground the thesis herein specifically as challenges of sub-national government service delivery in Zimbabwe and inevitably involve elements of both efficiency and effectiveness. This study is informed by three theories which are, the democratic participatory theory, the efficiency services theory and the systems theory. While it may be possible to profile a range of theories that can underpin a study of sub-national government service delivery, the researcher has approached the issue of theoretical framework from a relevance and applicability point of view.

The Democratic-participatory Theory of Local Government holds that local government exists to bring about democracy and give opportunities for political participation, educating and socialising the local citizenry (Ola, 2007). The view is rooted in John Stuart Mills' utilitarianism in which the good form of government is representative and promotes liberty, equality and fraternity, makes men look beyond their immediate interest, recognises the just demands of other men, and promoting political education, participation and communication (Noun, 2012). The democratic role of local government is to create accessible opportunities for political activity, representation of all interests and social interaction which help inculcate the ideals of democracy. Consequently, advocates of this theory view local government as a prime element of democracy.

While this theory explains an important paradigm of local governments in lubricating the wheels of democracy at the local level, the theory has a limited focus centred only on democracy and hence cannot be applied to explore the complex multifaceted aspects of service delivery. While democracy remains a pillar for citizen input in local government processes, there are many factors outside the democratic paradigm that influence the overall performance of local government. These, among others, include policy and administrative competences and structural functional factors. The Efficiency Services theory provides the major criticism to the Democratic-participatory Theory of Local Government.

The Mackenzie *et al.*, (1928) proposed the Efficiency Services Theory believing that the idea of participatory democracy does not apply to different political systems in the same manner especially in modern societies. Contrary to the Participatory Theory of Local Government, the Efficiency Services Theory opines that the role of local government is to provide services to the local people on the grounds that it is the most efficient agent for providing local services. This is because delivery of some services is so compelling that it has to be done at local level. As such, local government must be judged on success achieved in service provision as measured by national standards (Ola, 2007). This study will therefore develop a framework to measure and assess the quality of services delivered by local authorities using national standards and international best practice established in chapter 3.

This has culminated in the development prescriptive approaches, one of which is the Systems Approach. Using a Systems Approach, the basis for understanding political and public administration systems is to study the functioning or properties of its individual parts (Chikere and Nwoka, 2015). The Systems Theory focuses on the relations between the parts (Flood and Jackson, 1991). Rather than reducing an entity, the Systems Theory focuses on the arrangement of and relations between the parts and how they work together as a whole within a particular environment (Schoderbek and Schoderbek, 1985). The way the parts are organised and how they interact with each other, determines the integrity of the whole system. This provides a holistic approach to understanding phenomena. As such, the model can be applied to human activity and public policy (Checkland, 1981).

The Systems Theory, that is; the interdisciplinary study of systems in general and of the dynamic properties that they exhibit has been long applied in many fields of scholarly inquiry, including biology, ecology and engineering. Yet, the use of a Systems Theory to public policy has been relatively modest to date. In part, it would be fair to acknowledge that theories of the policy process are systemic in nature, in the sense that they build on ontology of component parts (including policy-makers, constituencies, lobbies, target groups and various other stakeholders) and on an epistemology that posits attention to mutual influences between them. Theories of the policy process, however, make relatively little use of the conceptual resources of Systems Theory, such as the importance of feedback loops, the cascading effects of small perturbations and the emergence of aggregated behaviour out of interactions between component parts.

The exploration of complexity is an intriguing contemporary development in the field of public policy (Marsh, 2017). While undoubtedly still a specialist interest, there have been several notable recent contributions to the literature. The Systems Theory presents a symmetric method that can be applied to public policy research, analysis and practice. The method encapsulates the combinatorial complexity of the policy problem with little simplification, selectivity and skewness.

To define sub-national government, it is necessary to define the term government. Government refers to all organisations operating in an institutional environment where sovereignty is invented and the officials have the authority to make binding decisions (Raadschelders *et al.*, 2015: 18). Sub-national governments can be defined as, "organisations not located at the centre of the administrative system" (Gray, 1994, p.12). However, not all organisations below the centre are Sub-national governments but, only those, 'elected through universal suffrage, have general responsibilities and some autonomy with respect to budgets, staff and assets" (OCED, 2016, 14). Likewise, the issue of legal existence is prominent where Sub-national governments are products of national constitutions or provincial legislation (Shah, 2006). Responsibilities of Sub-national governments vary as defined by statutes, and include, providing services or "public goods" over defined jurisdictions (Watt, 2006: 4). This thesis explores the service delivery

systems of the GCC in relation to its current state, problems and challenges and possible strategies for improvement.

This section presents the theoretical bases for sub-national government. This is followed by an exploration of the typologies of sub-national governments across the global, regional and local level. Particular focus is on understanding the structure, functions and relations with the central point or other sub-national governments and the evolution of such sub-national government structures. After reviewing the definitions of sub-national governments from different sources, this study adopts the OCED definition which defines sub-national governments as organisations that are legally declared, with own budgets, staff and responsibilities that are in most cases defined by law and occur below the central government (OCED, 2013). As such, not all sub-national authorities are sub-national governments.

Theories and typologies are largely based on economic efficiency arguments for local as opposed to central government (Bailey, 1999). Decentralising management to local governments improves allocative efficiency through allowing for the requisite adjustments to the local/ contextual market failures (Bailey, 1999). This economic argument for sub-national governments is expressed in the Oates Decentralisation Theorem. However, this theory is critiqued by the Theory of Economies of Scale where administering development at national levels or through consolidations results in economies of scale by eliminating unnecessary duplications (Fox &Gurley, 2006). The size of sub- national governments (population size, geographical size) has implications on the economic effectiveness, particularly in service delivery (OCED, 2013).

Systems Theory of Governments, though formulated in the 1970s, is relevant given the globalisation of nations and the need for place competitiveness. Since government units exist as a system with dependent and interlinked units, effective management should therefore consider needs and policies at different levels, that is; the local scale and needs of adjacent authorities (Beetham &Weir, 2002). Similarly, policies implemented by one sub-national unit within its defined jurisdiction should not infringe the interests of adjacent jurisdictions, in so doing, creating a system of interrelated and

harmoniously coordinated units of sub-national governments to uphold the interests of governments at different levels. The role of the central government, in this context, is to ensure that the needs of all sub-national governments are in harmony (Chandler, 2010). Therefore, while sub-national units know interests of own citizens better, an oversight authority is necessary to regulate negative externalities of adjacent authorities on service delivery. In addition, as policies of one unit of government are made to satisfy needs over defined territories, there is need to consider service delivery concerns of communities outside a government's intermediate territorial boundary (Chander, 2007). The Systems Theory has implications on the outcome sub-national governments structure as it creates an interlinked, multi-tiered and complex organisational structure where all units are harmoniously interrelated (Chandler, 2010). Contrary to the common understanding that sub-national governments are a competitor with central governments, the Systems Theory calls for complementarily and co-existence of sub-national governments and the central government (Katz and Nowak, 2018). As such, sub-national governments are not competitors but complements of the central government.

The Bulprit Dual Polity Theory is another theory that explains the structure and functions of sub-national governments. The model has implications on the division of roles and relations between the central and Sub-national governments. It also defines the structure of sub-national institutions. The model proposes that the central government concentrate on high polity responsibilities, usually policy areas whereas other low tier government structures concentrate on the minor responsibilities – usually lower polity, lower value responsibilities duties (services, spatial planning or health). However, the role of sub-national governments is not only lower tier but also distinct from those of the central government (Gray, 1994). Central government set priorities that impact on roles and structures of lower tier governments. Therefore, Sub-national governments have structures, methods and policies distinct from those of the central governments (Gray, 1994). This provides a model where Sub-national governments are semi-autonomous and there are no responsibility overlaps between the sub-national governments and central government.

The Weberian Theory explains the power relationship between the central and local governments. Sub-national governments are instruments used by the powerful state to maintain political power and control in local jurisdictions. As such, they are run and centrally controlled by centrally crafted policies governing financial resources and policies to ensure that sub-national governments continue to serve the ideologies of political elites. Therefore, power remains centred in central governments (Gray, 1994).

Britain was chosen as a case study in this study because the colonial administrative system of Zimbabwe was derived from that of Britain. As such, the structure of Sub-national governments in Zimbabwe shares characteristics to that of Britain up to 1980 when Zimbabwe became independent. The sub-national government systems in Britain evolved from the 1800, during the industrial revolution when the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 was promulgated which promoted the formation of municipalities to regulate commercial and social development concerns in the industrial city in Britain (Chandler, 2007). The rise of liberal democracy (through the Labour movements) and a civil society calling for equal representation of community interests further prompted the rise of local government institutions (Chandler, 2007). This had implications on the development of the administrative structure in Britain, where rather than having a monopoly, local authority is a hybrid of institutions and the private actors- the Guango state (Weir & Beetham, 2005).

Concerning the structure of the sub-national governments in Britain, they are multi- tiered. Not only are functions of Sub-national governments different but the population sizes and geographical territories also differ (Gray, 1994). From the central government some of the common sub-national government structures are the regional governments and local authorities. Regional governments are mainly a central government administrative tool responsible for overseeing implementation of central government policies at the regional level. The functions of the regional governments are defined by the Constitution. However, the Constitution often serves to ensure subordination of regional governments to the central government interests (Henig, 2002). Therefore, the central government agencies and development agencies were mostly active at this level, these being appointed by the central

government to serve the regional interests though being accountable to the central governments (Henig, 2002). However, interest in regional authorities has been declining since 2007 with more interest focusing at planning at the sub-regions (Smith nad Wistrich, 2016).

Interest in planning at sub-region level was stimulated by the realisation of wider variations within the declared regions in both natural resource endowment and interests. Furthermore, interest in sub-regional governments was stimulated by the need to improve local autonomy in economic growth, urban regeneration and service provision (Smith and Wistrich, 2016). Consequently, central government appointed regional authorities have been abolished in the post-2010 era (Garnett and Lynchn, 2016; Willet, 2015) and replaced by city regions focusing specifically on urban management policies and multi- regional cooperation in areas of transport, health, environment and housing among other areas (Smith and Wistrich, 2016). This indicates continuous adjustment to improve the relevance of the regional governments in mediating between the local, and the central government development interests.

Other than the regional council, the other sub-national government structures are local authorities or boroughs. These evolved from the 1835 Municipal Act. There are rival explanations for the rise of municipalities in Britain. These include the economic and political imperatives. Economically, municipalities were meant to expand services at the expense of the tax payers (Chandler, 2007), whereas politically municipal governments were a strategy through which liberal industrialists wanted to overthrow the partisan based city administration structure. Some of the functions of the local authorities include responsibilities over health services, roads and sanitation (Gray, 1994).

In terms of the relationship between the central government, regional governments and boroughs, the central government control policy making and spending at local levels. Spending at local level is controlled through condition attached grants from the central government (Weir and Beetham, 2005). Other than controlling policy and spending decisions, the central government also has, *"power to life or death over local authorities* (Weir and

Beetham, 2005:235). This implies that there is unrestricted control of all the other activities of local authorities. Though functions of local authorities are defined by the constitution, the central government has the discretion to exercise negative limit on local authority functions. As such, reform or no reform, local authorities remain objects of the state.

The American administrative system is organised in terms of federal states. America is one of the countries that had been attempting to promote decentralisation under the government decentralisation policies. Australia is also a federal nation like the United States of America. Sub-national governments in Australia include states and municipal governments (Sawer, 2018). Though the roles of states are defined by the national constitution, states enjoy different levels of decision-making powers and have different roles and responsibilities (Ward Murphy-Gregory, Kefford, Jackson, Cox, and Carson. 2018). In addition, the states have different local government arrangements – which reflect local and state specific interests. Furthermore, the legislation guiding municipal authorities is designed by the states. These states also enjoy the discretion to amend statutes guiding municipal activities in their jurisdictions when need arises (Dollery and Byrnes, 2008). This indicates some level of autonomy for states in Australia.

The other type of sub-national government is municipalities. These operate under the guidelines of respective states from which duties are assigned or withdrawn (Ward *et al.*, 2018). Though responsibilities vary by state, municipalities are generally responsible for managing social, economic and environmental concerns within their respective areas (Dollery and Marshall, 1997). In terms of the relationship with the state, the local authorities are monitored by the state department in various departments- transport, housing, water and energy (Dolley and Brynes, 2008). The municipal roles though traditionally tied to property related services, have been extended to human welfare services such as health, education, public safety in the 1990s. The change in the scope of responsibility was due to growing demands for more human welfare services at the local level by civil society and privatisation of some services which altered the traditional functions of municipalities (Dolley and Bynes, 2008). In line with the changes in service functions and roles for local authorities, some states adjusted municipal

legislation to separate the policy-making and administrative roles between elected and appointment council members (Marshall, 2010) in the process, depoliticising the municipal system. However, in other municipalities in South Wales, the change in responsibilities was not accompanied by any structural adjustments to re-capacitate municipalities (Grant and Drew, 2017).

In the case of India, the administration of urban areas is structured in the form of states and districts. This is typical of the Weberian model where sub-national governments are used to advance the central government interests at local level and therefore, the functions are similar to those of the central government. Districts are a replica of the functions of the state but at a local level (Le Roy and Saunders, 2006). However, numerous reforms have been affected particularly on the composition of these Sub-national governments. Concerning the relationship between states, local authorities and the national government, local authorities are regulated by the central government in both policy and financial matters. The central government also has the discretion to approve or suspend such authorities (Islam, 2015).

One form of sub-national government in South Africa is the provincial or metropolitan governments. The political argument is that these larger metropolitan governments were made in the interests of the African National Congress (ANC) party for political influence at larger scale (Dicovick and Wunsch, 2014). Provincial authorities enjoy discretion to policy-making in their provinces (Siddle and Koelble, 2013), though the legislation is subject to approval by the national government (Federico, 2014). Though the national government still makes policy in different areas of interests, functions of provincial governments are not uniform but vary across provinces. Some of the functions include responsibility over health, housing and education.

Below the metropolitan tier are local authorities or municipalities. These are classified into A, B and C categories depending on population size. Responsibilities of local governments are spelt out in the White Paper of 1996 and include infrastructure services, improving livelihoods, economic improvement and delivering liveable settlements. The preserve of the national government remains over policy-making (Siddle and Koelble, 2013). Some of

the White Paper reforms of local government included reformulation of boundaries and reform of legislation to improve the capacity of local authorities in service delivery through integrated development planning (IDP) and improving financial autonomy (Shah, 2006). Adding to these is the reform of local governments in the "black areas" after 1994.

The reform of sub-national government, after apartheid, was meant to promote democracy, public participation and development. However, by default, the local government systems suffer from elite capture by the political elites of the ANC and DA parties. The infiltration of political ideologies in the institutional structures of municipalities partially translates to the inability to meet demands of citizens (Siddle and Koelble, 2013).

Most of the sub-national governments are closely related to the Weberian model where they are controlled and are guide by the political ideologies of the state. Some of the Sub-national governments in developed countries resemble the bipolar- dual polity model where they have responsibilities that are divorced from those of the central government and enjoy some autonomy in policy-making (states in Australia). These are more autonomous than the local authorities in Africa where they are merely administrative arms of the local government. Whereas the Systems Theory claims for the need for interlinked multi-tier government is true and has been experimented through inter-municipal cooperation, empirical studies examined reveal that there is competition rather than complementarily where the functionality of metropolitan governments is a threat to the survival of municipalities.

Concerning reform of sub-national governments, there are mixed imperatives for reform. Whereas reforms across the globe are commonly dressed in the name of improving policy and financial capacities of Sub-national governments, they are also motivated by other hidden political agendas. As such, the influence of political ideologies in shaping the functions and reforms of sub-national governments is not restricted to Zimbabwe or Africa but permeates across the globe.

Privatising or outsourcing services to the private sector has been one of the attempts that have been taken to improve delivery of services such as

transport, water and housing in the global context. This was meant to cover the financial challenges of local governments by bringing services under the market. Whereas in some cases there has been success, there are wider issues and citizens' concerns over affordability of privatised service, particularly in Africa. The other option has been the creation of inter-jurisdictional special service districts. In New York, with over 6000 town special districts, special districts raise a considerable amount of funds for towns as compared to the smaller municipalities (DiNapoli, 2007). Owing to this, special districts have been tapped for developing rail and other roads transport infrastructure in Los Angeles and Washington (Mathur, 2015). Infrastructure Districts were effective in the provision and maintenance of transport, water supply infrastructure provision faster than local governments (Scutelnicu, 2014). Likewise, in New York, the special districts are important for delivering environmental services across cities (Rizel, 2001). Though in New York, consolidated authorities could raise more financial resources than their counterparts, in Netherlands, inter-municipal cooperation had no effect on reducing service spending for larger municipalities whereas spending for smaller authorities ironically increased under municipal cooperation (Allers and de Greef, 2018). Furthermore, though special infrastructure districts in Florida provide infrastructure development and maintenance services faster than local authorities, the services are neither cheaper nor of higher quality than those of the local governments (Scultenicu, 2014). This indicates contrasting views surrounding the implementation of inter-jurisdictional service districts to improve service delivery across neighbouring municipalities.

In South Africa some attempts are made towards total de-politicisation to promote what they term a professionalism government for service delivery (Madumo, 2016), some political input is necessary. However, it has to be reduced to levels which do not undermine efficient service delivery (Reddy, 2016). Since the end of the apartheid era efforts to restructure local governments to improve local government capacity have also been attempted to improve service delivery in South Africa (Reddy, 2016). The other option taken to improve the governance of service delivery planning is through the use of IDP where citizens, the private sector jointly cooperate in shaping service delivery. However, in the Limpopo Valley, local authorities are ill-

capacitated to manage and mobilise effective public forums ending up adopting council-perceived service delivery goals (Mathebulaet *et al.*, 2016).

Various attempts including special districts (particularly in global region), privatisation, contracting out services, policy reform, institutional reforms, IDPs are among some of the strategies that have been taken to enhance service delivery across the globe. However, these strategies have varying degrees of success where, like in some context, special districts and inter-municipal governments for service delivery wielded some achievements in consolidating financial resources and improving the economies of service delivery, in some contexts like Netherlands inter-municipal governments, arrangements for service delivery rather increased costs for service delivery. In addition, as social, economic, and environment conditions evolve, formerly effective strategies continue to lose effectiveness. Consequently, there are no permanent solutions.

The next chapter focuses on the Zimbabwe experience on decentralised governance and service delivery.

CHAPTER 3: TRACKING THE DECENTRALISATION PROCESS IN ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe was colonised in 1890 by the British South Africa Company of Cecil John Rhodes, through a Royal Charter (Ranger 2010). Upon their arrival, white settlers established institutions of local governance in their new settlements (Matikiti and Hlabangane 2020). The Town Management Ordinance of 1894 was the first statute promulgated which led to the establishment of Sanitary Boards to manage the new settlements (Muzorewa et al., 2018). Through the Municipal Ordinance of 1897 present day Harare, then called Salisbury, and Bulawayo, become municipalities with wholly elected councillors unlike sanitary boards which had both elected and appointed members (Chitofiri 2015). In the African Areas, the 1923 Constitution provided for the establishment of Native Boards with some management and advisory role in Native Reserves (Musemwa 2012). The 1937 Native Council Act led to the establishment of Native Councils whose membership included traditional leaders but falling under the white Native Commissioner (Bhatasara 2021). Further changes in African Areas come in 1957 with the passing of the African Councils Act (Koke and Ncube 2023). The African Councils established through this piece of legislation were formed around each chieftainship area with the District Commissioner of the district as President and the Chief of the area as Vice President (Tshuma 1995). There were also a few elected members. This was the situation in African areas up to independence in 1980. By then 241 African councils had been established. In the white areas however more and more municipalities were being established to run the growing towns (Mlambo 2023). Smaller towns had Town Management Boards later upgraded to Town Councils; Municipalities had Mayors and Town clecks while Town Councils and Local Boards had chairpersons and secretaries respectively (Mutsindikwa 2020). This chapter is critical and central to the study as it tracks the decentralisation of service delivery in Zimbabwe.

The dual system developed had a devolved system in white areas and deconcentrated system in African areas (Ranger 2010). The white District Commissioner (the title was changed from Native Commissioner to District Commissioner in 1953) was the ultimate authority (Musemwa 2012). District

commissioners were civil servants under the Ministry of Internal Affairs while urban councils were under the Ministry of Local Government and Housing (Manganga 2014). Urban councils were largely autonomous and self-financing while African councils had to rely on central subventions (Mutsindikwa 2020). This was the scenario at independence in 1980. Africans could not vote or become councillors or mayors in urban councils prior to independence in 1980 (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). In short Africans had no say or role in urban governance. In commercial farms and mining areas, a separate council, the Road Council later changed to Rural Council in 1966 was established. Again, Africans could not vote and had no role in the affairs of Rural Councils (Mutekwa and Gambiza 2017). Given the above background, the post-independence reforms focused on establishing a non-racial decentralised system. From 1980 Africans in urban area became part of urban governance and could vote and get elected as councillors or mayors. The Urban Councils Act Chapter 214 had to be amended to incorporate these provisions.

In African Areas the District Councils Act of 1980 amalgamated the 242 African Councils into 55 District councils and the 1988 Rural District Council Act combined the separate Rural Councils for largely white commercial farmers and the district councils into one Rural District Council (Kurebwa 2015). The District Councils from 1981 had a central government employee the District Administrator who had replaced the District commissioner as Chief Executive Officer with District councils electing their own chairperson (Muringa and Zvaita 2022). The role of the District Administrator ended in 1993 when the amalgamation process was finalised (Koke and Ncube 2023). The resistance to combine the two councils from white commercial farmers stalled the process from 1988 when the Act was passed to 1993 (Gaidzanwa 2020).

Despite the challenges, the new government of Zimbabwe had started the process of decentralisation in rural areas from 1980 (Muchadenyika and Williams, 2016). The point which does not quite come out in the literature on Zimbabwe is that the decentralisation thrust had a rural focus. This so because from 1897 urban councils had become largely autonomous with

devolved power, functions and financing responsibilities (Wekwete 1989). The African areas in particular only started to enjoy some degree of autonomy post 1980.

The Prime Minister directive of 1984 established Ward and Village Development Communities which became planning units at that level (Macheka and Masuku 2019). This was a paradigm shift from the top-down planning of the colonial period to a bottom-up planning process. The 1985 Provincial Councils and Administration Act established the office of Provincial Governors and Provincial Councils the same Act also establishes the Provincial Development Committees chaired by Provincial Administrator (Zinyama and Chimanikire 2019). The focus of these policy changes was on development planning with village plans feeding in toward plans, and wards plans consolidated into District plans (Kurebwa 2015). These would then be forwarded to the Provincial Development Committee made up of Provincial Heads of Ministries to prepare a Provincial Development Plan to be submitted to the Provincial Council (Chirisa *et al.*, 2019). All chairpersons of Rural and Urban councils including mayors were members of the Provincial Council. The Provincial Plan so adopted would then be forwarded to central government for funding (Wekwete 1989). This process was a complete departure from colonial times (Chatiza, 2010; Mushamba, 2010; Chagweta 2014; Conyers 2004).

Whereas these efforts were a process of decentralising powers and functions the actual policy on decentralisation in Zimbabwe was only adopted by Cabinet in 1996. Cabinet adopted 13 Principles on Decentralisation to guide the process and provide the necessary institutional framework and focus. The principles were meant to provide a common platform and understanding for all players in the decentralisation process. Key among the principles were that decentralisation is necessary and desirable based on the clear understanding that it promotes and strengthens democracy and civic responsibility as citizens participate in their governance and development. It also helps in minimising bureaucracy by reducing levels of decision-making and thereby achieving greater efficiency of operations.

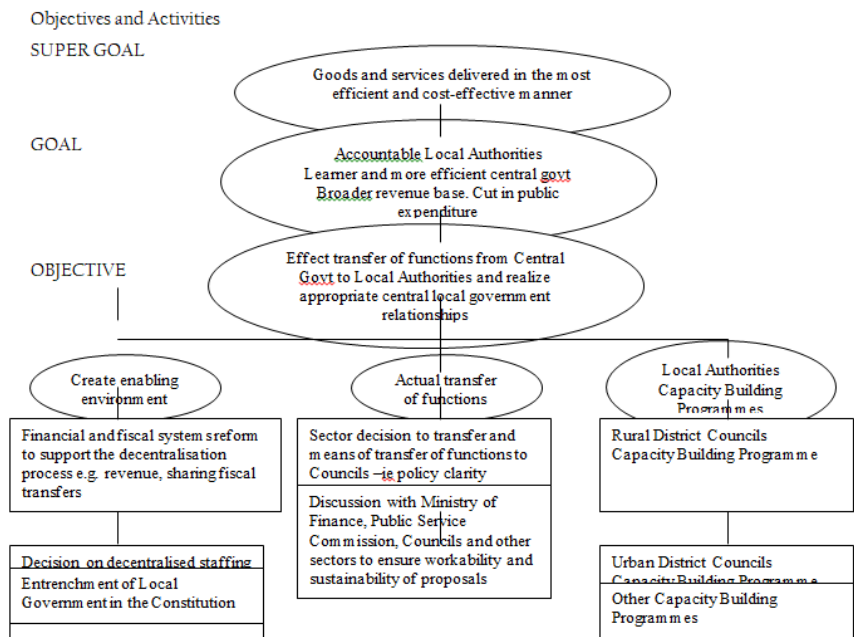The illustration below shows the decentralisation programme in Zimbabwe in 1997.

Objectives and Activities

SUPER GOAL

Goods and services delivered in the most efficient and cost-effective manner

GOAL

Accountable Local Authorities
Learner and more efficient central govt
Broader revenue base. Cut in public expenditure

OBJECTIVE

Effect transfer of functions from Central Govt to Local Authorities and realize appropriate central local government relationships

Create enabling environment

Actual transfer of functions

Local Authorities Capacity Building Programmes

Financial and fiscal systems reform to support the decentralisation process e.g. revenue, sharing fiscal transfers

Sector decision to transfer and means of transfer of functions to Councils –ie policy clarity

Rural District Councils Capacity Building Programme

Decision on decentralised staffing
Entrenchment of Local Government in the Constitution

Discussion with Ministry of Finance, Public Service Commission, Councils and other sectors to ensure workability and sustainability of proposals

Urban District Councils Capacity Building Programme
Other Capacity Building Programmes

Figure 3.1: The Decentralisation Programme (Government of Zimbabwe 1997)

Some Notes
- MOF – Ministry of Finance ;
- PSC – Public Service Commission ;
- Political will is central to the successful implementation decentralisation. The setting up of the:
- Ministerial Committee on decentralisation;
- The working Party of Permanent secretaries;
- Capacity Building Coordinating Committee ;
- Provincial Support Teams indicated commitment to decentralisation at the highest level of government.

Capacity Building Programmes and decentralisation received significant funding from external support agencies and donors. About US$100 million was budgeted for the programmes for 5 years up to 2000 in Rural District Council (PlanAfric 2000). The government has constantly reaffirmed its commitment to decentralisation and is signatory to such protocols as the Victoria Falls Declaration of 1999 which reaffirmed the region's commitment to decentralisation (Makuvaza 2012). This recognition of decentralisation is crucial for effective local government can only bear fruit if there is commitment by not only the political leadership but the bureaucracy in various sector ministries. Protection of turf by the bureaucrats can be a major stumbling block and has tended to slow down decentralisation efforts even when funding support is available. To support decentralisation, Government of Zimbabwe with support from cooperating partners instituted capacity building programmes in both the urban and rural district councils.

The Rural District Council Capacity Building programme. Embarked on in 1996 was a response to the newly created Rural District Council which becomes operational 1993.

The RDC brought together Rural Councils which were largely white dominated and District Council in black areas. The programme followed a "learning by doing" approach, aimed at enhancing the capacity of RDCs to plan, implement and manage their own development on a sustainable basis.

It had three main components.
1. Institutional Development funded by DFID up 2001
2. Capital Development funded by SIDA, Netherlands and World Bank up 2002,
3. Human Resources Development funded by SIDA up to 2003.

The thrust of the programme drew synergy from its three main components.

Capital funding exposes whatever challenge RDCs were facing in planning managing and implementing their development. Challenges exposed would be addressed through facilitation by teams of District facilitators in each of the 8 non-metropolitan provinces.

Training for both appointed and elected officials would ensure sustainability. The programme generated many interest and exposed major challenges in RDCs regards planning, under costing of projects and implementation slippages among others. Significant gains were made through increases in infrastructure stock, institution building, computerisation and preparation of council's accounts. All councils also got reliable vehicles to carry out their task.

Government of Zimbabwe and the World Bank had put in place a Local Government Capital Development Programme to commence in January2003 as a successor programme. This was meant to ensure gains made would not be lost. Unfortunately, the Rural District Council Building Programme ended prematurely. Challenges on the political landscapes arising mainly from the land reform programme resulted in the withdrawal of financial support from Zimbabwe by most external support agencies including the World Bank. The envisaged Local Government Capital Development Programme that would have taken decentralisation to a higher level, was still born; it never took off.

It should be noted that the decentralisation policy and strategy had a rural focus. In urban areas the government thrust was to strengthen their capacity to deliver services. Many programs to achieve this objective were rolled out. As already indicated above decentralisation in urban areas in Zimbabwe has a long history. From 1980 onwards through collaboration with the World Bank, significant efforts were made to strengthen the operations of urban governments. The Urban I project co-funded by the World Bank under Loan No. 2445-ZIM was implemented between 1984 and 1989. The programme covered four towns: Harare, Masvingo, Marondera and Mutare. The programme focussed on the provision of serviced residential stands to allow for construction of low-cost houses. In all 18185 stands were delivered against a target of 11349. This programme was succeeded by the Urban II project co-funded by the World Bank and Nordic Development Fund. The timeline for Urban II was from 1992 to 1999 and covered twenty-one urban councils. It focused on:
- Primary Infrastructure (offsite services);
  - (Sewage, water works and roads);
- Housing infrastructures;

- Urban services;
- Institutional Development;
- Housing Finance;
- Electricity ;
- Regional Development Programme.

The programme raised urban councils to a higher level. The provision of much needed equipment including refuse trucks, dozers, excavators, *et cetera*, resulted in an increase in infrastructural stock and enhanced maintenance of the same. Many houses were constructed, roads surfaced, waterworks upgraded and sewerage systems modernized. Provision of offices equipment including computers and the relevant software resulted in speedier processing of bills. A project management unit in the Ministry was responsible for overseeing the project.

The project helped strengthen financial management systems through timeous production of final and audited accounts. Some council went on to have themselves credit rated to qualify for loans from financial institutions beyond the ordinary government loans. The project had set the stage where councils could go out and borrow money to execute their mandate further strengthening the decentralisation thrust. A successor programmes the Local Government Capital Development Programme was to commence in 2000 to 2002 at a cost of US 85 million. The project was to be funded by the World Bank, Government of Zimbabwe and bilateral assistance. The arrearage of government to the World Bank coupled with withdrawal of external support since 2000 put paid to the programme, slowing down decentralisation in Zimbabwe. As funds local dwindled, inflation escalated, interest rates hiked, many of the gains Zimbabwe had made were threatened. The challenges the country has faced since 2000 have been many and varied. Local authorities have not been spared. Decentralisation efforts since then have been largely internally driven. The Central Bank, Government, Pension Funds, the private sector and council's own resources have sustained decentralised functions to date. Expectations are high that with the constitutionalisation of local government and new dispensation now in place solutions to major challenges faced by local authorities may be forthcoming to harness declining services provisions.

CHAPTER 4: THE LEGAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN ZIMBABWE

Decentralised governance in Zimbabwe assumes legal status through the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No 20 of 2013, Urban Councils Act Chapter 29:15, the Rural District Councils Chapter 29:13 and the Provincial Councils and Administration Act Chapter 29:11. These pieces of legislation allocate powers, functions and sources of finance to sub-national government. Further functions are derived from other pieces of legislation which includes the Regional Town and Country Planning Act Chapter 29.12 which makes local Governments Planning Authorities, the Public Health Act Chapter 15.09 empowers them as Public Health Authorities, the Education Act Chapter 25.04 makes them Responsible Authorities for Education and the Shop Licences Act Chapter 14.17 makes councils licensing authorities.

The challenging aspect of powers allocated through Acts of Parliament is that they can be recentralised. A simple majority in Parliament is required to amend a provision. Zimbabwe had Executive Mayors from 1995 but the Urban Councils Act was amended in 2008 to bring back ceremonial part time mayors. Many consider this a step backwards (Chatiza, 2010; Machingauta, 2010; Muchadenyika and William, 2016; Dewa, 2014).

The Constitution of Zimbabwe adopted in 2013 has now enshrined decentralisation through devolution in the Constitution. The whole of Chapter 14 is dedicated to Provincial and Local Government thus constitutionalising Local Government unlike in the past where Local Government was provided for in Acts of Parliament only. Chapter 1, section 3 (2) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe enshrines founding values and principles and states among the principles of good governance, the devolution and decentralisation of governmental powers and functions Section 5 provides for the three tiers of government which are national, provincial and metropolitan councils and local authorities. Section 264 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities and observes how "whenever appropriate, governmental powers and responsibilities must be devolved to provincial and metropolitan

councils and local authorities who are competent to carry out those responsibilities efficiently and effectively". Sub- section (2) of the same section goes further to outline the objectives of devolution to provincial and metropolitan councils and local authorities which are:

1. to give powers of local governance to the people and enhance their participation in the exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them;
2. to promote democratic, effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government in Zimbabwe as a whole;
3. to preserve and foster the peace, national unity and indivisibility of Zimbabwe;
4. to recognise the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development;
5. to ensure the equitable sharing of local and national resources; and
6. to transfer responsibilities and resources from the national government to establish a sound financial base for each provincial and metropolitan council and local authority.

Section 276 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe observes how a Local Authority has the right to govern, on its own initiative, the local affairs of the people within the area for which it has been established, and has all the powers necessary for it to do so. Sub section 2 of the same section observes how:

a. (2) an Act of Parliament may confer functions of local authorities, including-
   i. a power to make by-laws, regulations or rules for the effective administration of the areas for which they have been established;
   ii. a power to levy rates and taxes and generally to raise sufficient revenue for them to carry out their objects and responsibilities.

The Second Schedule of the Urban Council Act allocates 54 powers to urban councils. The Third Schedule of the same Act outlines matters in respect of which councils can make by-laws (Annexure 1 and a2). The powers and by-laws largely revolve around service provision.

Section 268 and 269 provide for the establishment of Provincial and Metropolitan Councils. Although the Constitution was adopted in 2013,

Provincial and Metropolitan councils have not yet been established. In his 2017 Budget the Minister of Finance indicated that there is need to revisit the Constitution on whether this level of government is necessary given the tight fiscal space. Being a country of 14 million people, does Zimbabwe need a Provincial level of government given not only the cost implications but also the functions this level is meant to perform? This is an area requiring further research considering that many of the Provincial and Metropolitan councils will have over sixty members including members of the National Assembly and Senate. Ministers and Deputy Ministers from the respective Provinces also become members bring members of the Executive in to these bodies this blurring the supervision of powers. Indications by new government which took over in November 2017 are that some provisions in the 2013 Constitution will need to be revisited to make devolution work. This government has made devolution a central issue in governance and development to show its commitment government has now for the first time implemented Section 301 of the Constitution which observes how not less than 5% of national revenues raised in any financial year must be allocated to provinces and local authorities. $310 million has however been provided for in the 2019 budget for transfer to sub-national governments to kick start the devolution process.

It is also worth noting however, that the legal instruments operationalising local government, the Urban Councils Act of 1995 and the Rural District Councils Act of 1988 are still to be aligned to the 2013 Constitution. This has implications for effective decentralisation and service delivery

The Constitution in section 278 provides for procedures of removing a mayor or councillor. This section resolves an area of serious contestation with regards to the powers of the Minister to suspend and then dismiss councillors and mayors and appoint Commissions or Caretakers. Harare was run by a Commission from 2004 to 2008 with the Minister continuously renewing the term of Commission. Many mayors have been dismissed especially in opposition-controlled councils; Chitungwiza, Mutare, Gwanda and Gweru suffered this fate. The opposition MDC party considered the dismissals as politically motivated Section 278 now states the grounds on which a councillor can be dismissed and the need for an independent tribunal to be

established to exercise the function of removing mayors and councillors from office.

The debate around powers of the Minister responsible for Local Government cannot be wished away given the frequent reference to the Minister in the Urban Councils Act. The Minister still has powers to suspend a councillor before consideration of the charges by the Tribunal appointed in terms of Constitution Sections 313 and 314 of the Urban Councils Act give the Minister power to issue directives and reverse, suspend or rescind council resolutions respectively.

A major shortcoming of the Constitution of Zimbabwe is that it does clearly spell out the functions exclusive to each tier of Government or those powers which can be exercised concurrently by more than one tier of government as is the case in South Africa, Kenya and South Sudan Constitutions. Section 276 only states the two aforementioned functions for local authorities. This leaves room for higher levels of government to encroach into lower levels of government. In June 2013 a month before general elections in July the Minister of Local government directed local authorities to cancel all debts owed by residents from 2009. Over US$500 million was lost to councils through that move Councils have not yet recovered from this loss which Central Government through the Minister of Finance has now acknowledges and intends to rectify (Herald November 2017) The implications of removing vehicle licencing fees from Local Government to a central Government Agency ZINARA have become especially noticeable after the 2016/2017 rainy season and the damage to roads and bridges because of the heavy rains (Muchadenyika 2018). Local authorities' failure to maintain and repair the damaged infrastructure is a result of the loss of these key funding stream to ZINARA.

While there has been some improvement regards the legal environment for decentralisation, the need for alignment of local government laws to the Constitution is an imperative. If one were to apply the USAID dimensions of authority, autonomy, accountability and capacity some of the following observations can be made. On the USAID dimensions of autonomy and authority some progress has been made, but decentralisation continues to

have present and imminent danger. On accountability, more needs to be done. Local officials are virtually not accountable to the public and the syndrome of vertically divided authority with the opposition in control of urban local authorities has resulted in polarised relationship and these limits upward accountable.

On the dimension of capacity, it has been noted that in urban councils there are vacancies in the professional and technical staff grades. Engineers, technicians, doctors have left urban councils' employment for greener pastures. Senior staff positions have remained vacant for many years. City of Gweru had no substantive director of Housing and community service, director health services, chamber secretary and director of engineering services for close to four years. All these posts were only filled in 2016. City of Harare has not had a substantive town clerk since 2015. The capacity issue in urban councils also includes the calibre of councillors which is less than desirable (Dewa *et al.*, 2014; Muchadenyika and William, 2016). Since 2000 the majority of urban councils are dominated by councillors coming from the domain of political activists and the current service delivery challenges could be a manifestation of deficits on issues of capacity, accountability and authority. But as noted in the 13 principles on the decentralisation by the Government of Zimbabwe 1996, decentralisation is a process not an event. Decentralisation is about potential, it guarantees nothing (USAID 2000).

While there is a growing body of literature on local government and service delivery in Zimbabwe (Wekwete, 1992;Davy, 1996;Conyers, 2006 ; Chirisa and Jonga, 2009, Machingauta, 2010; Muchadenyika, and Williams, 2016; Mushamba, 2010; Chatiza, 2010; Chirisa, 2013,). Muchadenyika and Williams (2016) conclude that economic and political contestation between central and local government is largely to blame for the poor performance of urban local governments

The harsh macro-economic environment is also cited as a major challenge regards efficient and effective service delivery as it impacts on the ability of local governments to raise revenue (Chigwata *et al.*, 2017). According to Chigwata *et al.* (2017), another impediment to raising significant revenue are issues of corruption, embezzlement and mismanagement. However, Chirisa (2013) attributes the poor state of service delivery to weak institutions, urban

mismanagement and the reluctance of central government to promote good urban government. Chirisa and Jonga (2009) also posit that service delivery is compromised by weak administrative institutions, unaccountability and corruption.

As a councillor in City of Gweru for four years and therefore a participant observer in this study, the issues raised by cited authors have indeed contributed to the decline of service deliveries in local government. However, it is important to also interrogate the role played by senior staff of council in service provision. More often than not councillors have taken the blame for service delivery challenges (Dewa *et al.*, 2010; Chidziva and Mukwachi, 2014; Machadenyika and Williams, 2016). It has generally been argued that the majority of urban councillors have low academic and professional attainment and as such they lack the required depth or understanding of urban governance issues, (Dewa, 2010). After all, it needs to be noted however that councillors are part time and subject to the electoral cycle. Not much attention seems to be directed towards to full time employees of council, in particular the Town Clerk. It may be necessary to begin by examining what the law provides for in terms of the roles of the mayor and the town Clerk as representatives of councillors and managers respectively.

From 1995 to 2008 municipal councils had Executive Mayors and Executive Committees composed of chairpersons of committees of council and chaired by the Executive Mayor. The Executive Mayor was full time. The functions of the executive Mayor and the Town Clerk are shown in Table 1.

Table 4:1 Functions of the executive Mayor and the Town Clerk

Functions of mayor	Function of town clerk
The mayor shall be responsible for	The town clerk shall be responsible for
The supervision and co-ordination of the affairs of the council concerned and the development of the council area and	The proper administration of the council and
Through the town clerk, controlling the activities of the employees of the council concerned	Managing the operations and property of the council and
2. In addition to the responsibilities referred to in sub-section (i) a mayor of municipality shall have the following functions	Supervising and controlling the activity of the employees of the council in the course of their employment
Presiding over all meetings of the council at which he is present ; and	For the purpose of sub section 1) the town clerk, in addition to any other duties that may be assigned to him by

	the council, the executive or the mayor, as the case may be, shall
Presiding over all meetings of the council's executive committee at which he is present and,	Direct, supervise, appraise, develop and report on the work and conduct of all council employees; and where so authorised by the mayor or chairman, as the case may be; and
Presiding over all ceremonial functions of the council, and	Recommend to the executive committee the measures necessary to safeguard the finances and
Signing orders, notices and documents that require execution of authentication by or on behalf of the council and,	take such steps as he considers to be necessary for the purpose of giving effect to any resolution of the council or of any decision or directive of the executive committee; and
When necessary, causing investigations to be conducted into allegations of misconduct, whether on the part of councillors or employees of council; and	Make such recommendations to the council or the executive committee, or any committee of the council as he considers to necessary or desirable to effect economies, improve the operations of the council or committee concerned; and
With the approval of the council, fixing the conditions of services of employees of the council, and	Introduce, implement and monitor adequate control systems and
Exercising any function that council may delegate to him in terms of subsection (3) and	Be responsible for the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation of the council and the coordination and where necessary, the integration of its activities and for such purposes, he may after consultation with the head of the department concerned, inspect, inquire into and investigate the working and administration of any department or section thereof, either by himself or through any person authorised by him: m
Exercising any other function that may be conferred or imposed upon him, whether in terms of this ACT or any other enactment	Provided that – nothing in this subsection shall be deemed to derogate form the personal responsibility of a head of department for the proper, efficient and effective management of his department;
3) A municipal council may and, if so directed by the Minister, shall delegate to the mayor any of its functions	Where a head of a department disagrees with any directive of the town clerk, he shall carry out such directive of the town, he shall carry out such directive, and record any reservations he may have, in writing, and lodge them with the town clerk and the mayor;

Section 64 of the Urban Councils Act which provided these functions to the executive mayor was repealed in 2008 and was replaced by section 104 of the same Act which limits powers of a mayor. The mayor is no longer an executive mayor elected by the whole town but a part time ceremonial mayor elected by fellow councillors. In short, the mayor who is also a ward councillor is now only first among equals. The new functions in section 104 of the Urban Councils Act Chapter are that

> The mayor shall preside at all meetings of council at which he or she is present and the event of an equally of votes on any matter before the council he or she shall, have in addition to deliberative vote, a casting vote.

That's about it for the mayor. Other administrative functions have to do with suspending a Town Clerk and immediately reporting to council in terms of section 139 of the Act. The Town Clerk should notify the Mayor after suspending a member of staff section 140 signing estimates for the year section 288 and authenticating council documents in terms of section 317.

While the mayor has lost most of the functions, those for the town clerk have remained intact. Although the majority of mayors spend many time at Town House or Civil Centre, they do not have much to do. Some have continued to act like executive mayors, while it is no longer the case. Many of the functions presently carried out by mayors are out of inherited practice rather than the law.
As one discusses services delivery the question which arises, is

> where does the buck stop when things go wrong?

The mayor and councillors have their generic functions of policy making, decision-making attending and contributing in council and committee meetings and representing their wards. All these functions have a bearing on service delivery but this researcher`s view is that the service delivery mandate is spearheaded by the town clerk as the chief executive officer, accounting officer and chief advisor of council.

It is the role of the town clerk to carry out the management functions of planning, organising, leading and controlling the operations of a local government council. However, it is necessary to unpack the functions of councillors in their representative role in the light of the leadership and

management concepts interrogated above. The concept of accountability looms large in any discussion on the roles of councillors and the appointed staff of council service delivery and should also be discussed as it has a directive bearing on the efficiency and effectiveness of local government.

Councillors in Zimbabwe are elected concurrently with the President and Members of Parliament. Their term of office is five years. Each councillor represents a ward. Gweru has 18 wards and therefore 18 councillors. At their first meeting municipal councillors elect one of their numbers to be a mayor and another to be deputy mayor. They also constitute themselves into committees and elect chairpersons and deputies for these committees. Local Government is basically committee governance as most of the work if council is conducted in committees.

Councillors have personal, individual and collective responsibilities in council's activities (Shar 2007). Councillors are sponsored and belong to political parties and will also try to push the agenda of their political parties to fulfil election promises. According to the United Kingdom Local Government Association (2017), the primary role of a councillor is to represent their ward or division and the people who live in it. The councillor has a role to lead and champion the interests of the local community. UN Habitat (2004) has gone further to outline some of the roles of a councillor which include, the policy making role, the decision-making role, the enabler role and the communicator role. The appointed staff of council's primary role is policy implementation. A policy is defined as a course of action by a public body (Stevenson, 2010).

Effective policy making requires some level of competency on the part of councillors and evidence-based input from the staff of council. The calibre and quality of councillors and officials becomes a major determinant in the crafting of implementable policies. Current legislation in Zimbabwe and perhaps in many other jurisdictions does not prescribe minimum academic or professional qualifications for councillorship, as it is presumed the democratic process and political party selection will bring forth competent individuals into council. This is not always the case, as lamented by former Harare Mayor Masunda (2012), 'democracy does not always provide the best'.

As observed by the current researcher in City of Gweru, some councillors do not have what it takes to contribute effectively to the policy process. Although no conclusive empirical studies exist in Zimbabwe linking academic and professional attainment to enhance performance, there has been a general sentiment to have some minimum academic qualification for councillors (Dewa, 2014; Jonga, 2014; Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe, 2012).

The repealed Urban Councils Act of 1976 had a stipulation that to be a voter or to be voted as a councillor one had to be property owner. This meant that those who participated in urban governance had some stake in the local authority and contributed to the revenue base through taxes and levies. This is no longer the case. One can be a councillor or even a mayor without being a ratepayer in the city or town. Lodgers have assumed the highest office in cities and towns as mayors. This negates from the concept of local governance as those who assume office with nothing of note will prioritise owning their own property before they leave office. This has led to the abuse and fraudulent of allocation of stands by sitting councillors, Gweru being a case in point (City of Gweru Investigation Report, 2015).

Councillors come from political parties and any improvement in the calibre of councillors rests in the sponsoring political parties. Political parties tend to consider party loyalty as more defining than what the prospective candidate can contribute in improving service provision. Most urban councils in Zimbabwe have been characterised by councillors with low academic and professional attributes. Out of the 18 councillors voted in 2013 in Gweru, only one councillor had a tertiary academic qualification (City of Gweru Report 2013). Out of the 18 elected in 2008 none had a tertiary education. However, the four appointed councillors all had post 'O' level, qualifications including two with masters' degrees.

The other challenge pertaining to councillors elected since 2000 in Zimbabwe is that many of them were lodgers with no residential properties of their own. This therefore means that they were no ratepayers with very little or no contribution to the tax revenue of the cities and towns they were running.

Some councillors were either unemployed or in the informal sector, meaning that councillorship became an important revenue stream in their day to day lives.

All these issues have a bearing on what councillors will focus on and prioritise during their terms of office. The current multi-party era in Africa, including Zimbabwe has brought a new dimension onto the urban landscape. Opposition parties have been elected to major cities and towns across the continent. In the case of Zimbabwe all cities and towns were won by the opposition MDC T party in 2000 and have remained under the opposition party's control since then. Harare, the capital, and all cities including Gweru are under the control of MDC T. This has created what is now referred to as 'vertically-divided authority' (Resnick 2014). The same trend is the case in South Africa with cities like Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban, (Nelson Mandela Bay) controlled by the opposition (Resnick (2014). Nairobi has only recently been taken over by the ruling party.

This phenomenon, it is argued, creates challenges with the ruling party trying to undermine the party in power in the city and to discredit its performance. In Zimbabwe, some actions taken by government seem to point in that direction and the opposition has always complained of too much power being wielded by the Minister. The Minister responsible for urban local government has removed many mayors including Mudzuri of City of Harare (2001), Shoko of Chitungwiza and, Kagarabadza of Mutare. More recently (2015) Kombayi of City of Gweru was sacked although this time through an Independent Tribunal as provided for in Section 278 of the Constitution: The other pointer to this dynamic of weakening the opposition was the amendment of the Urban councils Act in 2008 to remove the office of executive mayor and replace it with a weak ceremonial party time mayor.

It June 2013 a month before the general elections the Local Government Minister cancelled all debts owed to local authorities by residents since 2009. This move has continued to affect councils' ability to collect revenue since those who were paying religiously did not benefit from the debt cancellation and are no longer paying waiting for the 2018 elections. Council debtor's lists have grown exponentially since the cancellation. Whether this was by design

or populist on the part of central government, this has had a negative impact on councils in terms of service delivery.

The GCC has been seen to catch headlines as one of the worst in terms of service delivery in Zimbabwe. The quality of roads, shortage of water, discharging of raw sewage in water bodies among other service delivery issues have been evident in Gweru. This section looks at service delivery in Gweru giving attention to specific sectors in the GCC.

The Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Development once pointed Gweru as the worst- run local authority in Zimbabwe judging from the condition of the roads. In a meeting, the Minister observes that: the GCC had been misusing road funds from ZINARA implicating the council employees in corruption and poor work ethics. His final statement was that GCC should learn from Kwekwe and Bulawayo as they are managing ZINARA funds well. He further argued that service delivery was a priority rather than council fights at the expense of ratepayers. The corruption in the transport and works department was pointed as unbearable as the minister further pointed to the case where the local authority failed to account for the 2000 litres of fuel that had been given to them by the Traffic Safety Council of Zimbabwe. The Minister observes that:

> Gweru, is in a deplorable state, there are potholes everywhere yet they received funds from ZINARA. We want to see how the money you received from ZINARA was used... The other time we left 2000 litres of diesel for road maintenance but that has not been accounted for. (Interview, 2019).

In an attempt to improve the condition of roads in Gweru, ZINARA has dispatched $2.6 million to GCC for the improvement of road infrastructure. In a confirmation, the Mayor of Gweru observes that:

> We have been allocated 2.6 million or rehabilitation of roads by ZINARA. They are happy with what we have done so far in terms of road rehabilitation that is why we are getting this amount...so far, we identify the contractor who we will work with and ZINARA will deposit the money into their account... (Interview, 2019).

This statement by the mayor speaks volumes in terms of ZINARA's operations with regards to corruption and management the potential

mismanagement of road infrastructure funds. The resources are no longer allocated to the local authority but are paid direct to the tenderer of the service to ensure accountability and delivery of the road infrastructure. Furthermore, joining the two statements with that of the minister, it can be noted that the current state of Gweru's road infrastructure was directly linked to the council behaviour. This is evidenced by the fact that roads like that of Senga and Mkoba that the council has been failing to rehabilitate for years are not rehabilitated due to this programme. The allocation by ZINARA however is still inadequate to fund the whole city and the engineer in GCC gave an estimate of $40 million dollars that is needed to fully rehabilitate the roads in Gweru which have outlived their life spans (New Ziana of November 17 2023). Of the total 1200 kilometres road network, the city has only managed to rehabilitate 27 kilometres of the roads under the government programme of Emergency Rehabilitation Programme (NewsDay Zimbabwe of October 27 2024). Gweru is not immune to one of the current urban challenges in Zimbabwe, namely; water shortages. The local authority has had water-related ailments linked to various issues ranging from finances, technical expertise to consistent sources of water.

Notice is hereby given for general information and in accordance with section 290 (3) of the Urban Councils Act [Chapter 29:15] and that subject to consent of the Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing being obtained in terms of section 290 (4) of the said Act, the City of Gweru proposes to borrow a maximum of $115 215 000 for the Gweru water and sanitation infrastructure upgrading and rehabilitation programme through and EFC-model (Makaya 2017).

All these efforts evidence the attempts by the GCC to improve on the service delivery particularly in the water and sanitation programme.

Refuse collection has been one of the areas where the GCC has been failing to deliver. This can be evidenced by the fact that GCC has been famous for failing to collect refuse in high density suburbs as such Mkoba, Ascot and Senga. The issues of failure to collect refuse in the Gweru City are largely linked to the obsolescence of council trucks and insufficiency in terms of number. The mayor observes that: the city had only two refuse trucks that

were covering the whole area under the GCC's jurisdiction. This was also worsened by the fact that the local authority of Gweru had been duped of $300, 000 United States Dollars by an organisation called Deven Motors that saw the case going to court (Chadenga, 2018).

To try and manage issues of refuse collection in Gweru, The GCC in 2018 November called for tenders for people who would be subcontracted to collect refuse in the different parts of Gweru (Dzawanda 2022). This call for tender did not attract any takers and refuse collection continues to be an issue. Diseases caused by poor hygiene continue to threaten the well-being of Gweru residence. In that regard, one of the council officials observes that:

> We are aware that most residents have no bins and they are failing to properly manage waste disposal. On fears of a malarial outbreak – Gweru is a non-malaria zone. We, however, have a rapid response team which is always ready to investigate any cases of possible disease outbreaks.

In trying to manage issues of refuse collection and the dangers associated with waste collection, the GCC made efforts to engage the public to manage waste collection in Gweru jurisdiction (Dzawanda 2022). The GCC began advocating for the 3R's concept where residents were asked to 'reuse, reduce and recycle' (Pande and Makonye 2023). This was done through council's basic awareness programme through road shows, notices and flyers in some cases. One councillor observes that:

> We only have two trucks on the road servicing the whole of Gweru and they work on double shifts so that they can collect garbage from all areas of the city but we have been failing to meet the demand. That is why we have turned to the 3R's concept to manage the waste.

This highlights how the authorities in Gweru are trying to continue giving services to the residents and ratepayers in the city. To cement the idea of wanting to fully collect the refuse in the area, the councillor observes that: while the trucks were inadequate the GCC will not continue to sit and watch the situation going out of hand. Furthering this zeal, in a council meeting after the advice by the councillors to hire refuse collection trucks, the Mayor of Gweru was recorded by a Newsday journalist fuming over failure by the council to collect refuse. The Mayor advocated for a follow up to ensure that

the council administration prioritise refuse collection over personal salaries. One councillor observes that:

> The way management is operating is now sabotaging and, from our view as councillors, it is a political game.

This introduces a different perspective in relationship to service delivery in Gweru. From this statement, it could be noted that politics was also playing a part in ensuring or undermining service delivery.

Budgeting in the GCC has been an issue of contention with residents advocating for pro-poor budgeting. Recently, the Government of Zimbabwe has approved the GCC budget with a condition of 30:70 ratios between salaries and service delivery. The issue of budgeting in Gweru was largely focused on salaries as the local authority had been converting most council resources into wages with the council having a monthly wage bill of $1.4 million. Budgeting continues to be the local authority mandate. However, it is done under the lenses of the government to ensure accountability. Gweru council has been infamous for not availing council financial data.

In terms of public participation in Gweru, like any other city in Zimbabwe, is provided for by the planning legislation. This ranges from preparation of plans RTCPA. [Chapter 29:12] to issues of development control and Urban Council Act [Chapter 29:15]. To further cement issues of participation in urban decision-making in Gweru there exist organisations that are meant for the development of the city as well engagement of the citizens. There are various groups of organisations that include the Gweru Residents and Ratepayers Association which have been engaging the GCC demanding accountability particularly during the budgeting processes.

Citizen participation is a central tenet of democracy and good governance at local government level. It enables local citizens to exercise their rights and responsibilities and consequently impact on access to public services. It is an indispensable necessity for sustainable governance and promotes improved information flow, enhances transparency and accountability; consolidates civic capacity and leads to an increased buy-in and better understanding. Madzivanyika (2014) stresses that there is a growing realisation that among the three levels of government, local government is strategically positioned to

promote public participation because of its proximity to the people. In essence, citizen participation and local government processes are intrinsically linked as local government efficiency entails citizen input in policy formulation, implementation and decision-making in key service delivery areas. This section sought to analyse the level of citizen participation in council processes and the dividends to both parties of such participation. Key council processes used as yardsticks for measuring the level of participation are strategic planning, budgeting, monitoring of council resources.

In the current dispensation, it can be realised that the GCC master plan is not up to date (Gweru City Council Budget Performance Review, 2018). Technically, what this means is that some of the rateable properties are not on the billing system yet they continue to receive council services such as water, sewer and refuse collection without contributing anything to the council's fiscus. This continues to drain council financial resources on projects that do not contribute to the financial well-being of the city. On issues of public engagement on accountability and governance issues, it seems there is no citywide engagement of the generality of the residents by the authorities in the provision of services. In this regard, the elected leaderships seem to mobilise residents on political grounds hence the poor attendance of council meetings by the residents. This is clearly reflected in the Ward Development Committees which are prescribed in the Urban Council Act (UCA) [Chapter 29 :15] and the Rural District Councils Act [Chapter 291:13]. In essence, the councillors should be a community builder and a community advocate for and on behalf of all residents regardless of their political or religious affiliation. However, it seems this is different from what is obtaining on the ground. The ability of a local authority to provide a service depends on the revenue it collects. This is the basic fundamental fact that residents, business and government need to appreciate. In this view one research participant argues that:

> Normally, when we invite people for budget consultation it's a process, where first of all, we come up with our performance budget for the previous year, like now we want to come up with our 2016 budget, we have to come up with our 2015 performance budget. We invite people. The first people we invite at the first stage are the representatives of the various people out there. We talk of the business community, we talk of the residents and rate pays association, we talk of the

vendors, we talk of the industry, we talk of the ward development committees in our 18 wards representatives, we also have the NGOs, we invite the institution. You know invitations go to all those people but now some people normally don't respond, but those who respond, they come we sit down together, we spent a day in our city parlour there, they ask questions then we come up with the budget at that level.

The amount of people who attend these budget consultation meetings exhibits the extent of the failure to address the fundamental issues that affect the residents in terms of the service provision agenda. This is shown through the poor turnout of the residents in attending these meetings. This has resulted in poor civic engagement and lack of communication on the part of council. This development contributed to the poor turnout of residents in engagement meetings. Closely related to the above, the council seems to have instituted a piecemeal kind of citizen engagement on governance and service delivery issues for administrative and legislative fulfilment without full commitment to consult the residents on issues that affect their livelihood, hence, the poor attendance. To improve public confidence in the budgeting process, councils are therefore urged to pursue steps such as; incorporating suggestions raised during budget consultation meetings into final budgets and disseminating information on the performance of previous budget before consultation meetings and budget performance reports (monthly, quarterly and annually) to residents (We Pay you Deliver Report 2017, p.9). In this regard, there is need for the commencement of genuine city-wide engagement forums on non-partisan basis improving public access to council processes and systems. This development may go a long way in improving revenue inflows and improve the service delivery thrust of the council ultimately improving the quality of life of the residents. In the same vein, one local government expert said;

The relationship between elected and the appointed is such that: again like I said earlier on, these people appear as if they are conniving to defraud the local authorities and there is a major weakness. One weakness is that the two do not know their boundaries, they dot know where they start and where they finish. As a result, there is an overlap of responsibilities or duties and it then ends up being interference.

This development seems to suggest that in the Gweru City, there is a deliberate connivance between the councillors and the council management to misappropriate public resources meant for public service provision for their personal use. This arrangement, if practiced, might result in the failure by the council to provide public services to the heterogeneous citizenry. To this end, failure by the council management and the elected leadership (councillors) to stick to their core mandates in the council business has the potential of distracting council business within their areas of jurisdiction characterised by dwindling service provision thrust. In essence, looking at the Go-Beer debacle, it can be seen that there was a direct connivance between the 2013 elected officials and the city management and in some instances, council-owned cattle were sold at a paltry US$69 and the majority of them were bought by council officials (Dewa, 2014).This development shows the intensity of the corrupt connivance situation that was grappling GCC at that time and this directly hampered the delivery of public services to the heterogeneous citizenry. This situation was 'inherited' from the previous council. The effectiveness of the budgeting process from local authority perspective is hampered by the following factors; failure by residents to raise substantive issues during budget consultations; lack of coordinated voice from residents when commenting on draft budgets; inadequate dissemination of consultation dates & venues; failure by local authorities to disseminate monthly, quarterly and annual budget performance reports to residents as a way of accountability and also preparing residents for budget consultations. Another research participant argued that:

There is need to rationalise the parking fees and not the current arrangements whereby there is need for the automation of the system to minimise losses due to theft and connivance by council employees continuously bleeding the council yet the employees are on the payroll yet the money does not reach council coffers. Gazing critically into the traffic management system and revenue collection, it appears there is an organised syndicate between the elected leadership, council management and the employees who ironically emanate from the wards and who were employed at the behest of the councillors making the issue of transparency difficult to penetrate and analyse. This complex narrative requires a clear analysis on the key players and their roles in the governance realm in GCC. There is need to streamline

and redefining each actor's role with a view towards improving the public service provision thrust of council.

In terms of the sources of revenue, the major ones are rates and water charges. Coming second to these two are sewerage fees and the refuse fees. In this view, the by-law on City parking as prescribed in the Statutory Instrument 60 of 2012, promulgated by the Minister of Local Government in Schedule 1, II and III outlines that the exorbitant amounts being charged by the GCC for traffic offences, among them an offence within town is US$30, for towing the vehicle it is US$40 and the storage fee is US$30 per day which is t unaffordable to the ordinary citizen. This might have been arrived at a council resolution without consultation with the citizens and this has fuelled corruption in the City Parking Department with employment costs exceeding the monthly collection of city parking rendering it a loss-making venture. This is as a result on non-consultation of the citizen and hence the exorbitant fees being charged to the residents and ratepayers. Then, there are some other sources like the parking fees and the vending (hawking) fees. Another research participant in terms of the key cost drivers of the GCC noted that:

> The major cost driver as I have said earlier on is manpower and as I said it's because, from my opinion, the labour force is too high, it's too big and then secondly, I believe also what happened like what happened in 2014 where, in fact, our budget could not sustain the levels in terms of pay levels but council went on to give the employees packages higher than what was in the budget. So, since then, it has become the biggest post driver. Then, after that: we have the coming in of our electricity particularly for pumping water from Gwenhoro. That one is another major cost driver...

In this regard, a bloated council structure with a workforce more than the council capacities result in the failure to pay the council workforce resulting in recurrent salary deficits being experienced by the council. This development seemed to have emanated from the situation whereby the councillors recruited excess personnel as part of the election promises which the council did not need to perform its service delivery agenda rendering some employees underutilised. While the employees are underutilised, they are supposed to be paid by council without optimum performance   being experienced. In 2018 from January to August, 70 % of the actual collected revenue was dedicated towards the payment of salaries and allowances and

the rest (30%) was channelled towards service provision and the money was channelled towards salaries because employees are a critical resource (Gweru City Council Mid Term Budget Performance Review, 2018, p.3). This development contributes directly to the council's failure to effectively discharge its mandate due to high employment costs, low staff morale to discharge their duties ultimately resulting in a dwindling service delivery to the heterogeneous citizenry. In relation to the above, one other research participant was quick to argue that:

> The relationship has been cordial, it has been cordial but also there are some, you find that there are some instances where you were talking of interference and maybe it's not interference, I don't need to put the policy implementation. For example, we talk of disconnections and you get from central government that you should not disconnect water, that kind of thing. It has some implications on our operations and then central government also you will find for example, this collective bargaining. You bargain at local level and you say as employer what the employees are requesting is not feasible, it's not sustainable. They go to labour; you find labour turns around what you are saying and it's in favour of the employee even though budget can't sustain that you get a rule in that you pay what they are requesting.

This assertion is true considering the Zimbabwean local government is highly unionised and, as such, collective bargaining actions usually benefits the employee at the expense, at times, of rational economic and efficiency decisions that need to be undertaken by council to achieve timeous service provision to the residents. In this respect, the labour bodies that represent the urban councils fall under the ambit of the Zimbabwe Urban Council Workers Union (ZUCWU) an affiliate of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) which lobby for the remaining of the status quo in terms of employment despite the operational inefficiencies that the councils are experiencing despite the minimal service delivery challenges that they will be facing. Other snippets from the key informants with regard to the key political and administrative systems broadening the scope of sub-national governments include the following:

> Today most of them are above the first degree, most of them masters and you name them. But if you check the quality of work that is interpreted as the quality of service which you are supposed to give the Gweru community is different. If you were to compare the employees of the time, I am speaking of and the employees of

today, the mechanisation which has been since introduced we are missing the point really and this development has seen the state of service provision in Gweru City depleting to alarming levels.

One of the managers in the Engineering Department noted that:

> It's an issue of planning and the issue of resources. In the area of road infrastructure every local authority was collecting taxes for the vehicles then. And the taxes were made to service ad improve the road infrastructure. But currently, the arrangement is slightly different. The tax collection that is being done by the central government which intended are portions a certain percentage back to the local authority and that certain percentage I doubt very much meets the requirements. It surges, to a certain extent, I agree but not to the level. Planning aspect yes is one of the factors, but the truth of the matter is the plans are there but possibly the financing of the plans is the major harbour.

The aim of the chapter was to review literature and to provide the conceptual and theoretical frameworks informing the study of local government service delivery. Thus, theories and concepts related to sub-national governments, the issues they raise and how such issues relate to either performance or structure of sub-national governments or to the effectiveness of service delivery were discussed. Leadership, management and focal points of accountability in sub-national government institutions were analysed in the context of service delivery challenges in various jurisdictions. Case studies of jurisdictions and indicators of efficiency service delivery were also excellent. The chapter concluded by looking at theories underpinning the study. These include the democratic participatory theory, efficiency services theory and the systems theory. Other theories emphasise the role of leadership and management in fostering effectiveness in the delivery of services. Progressive principles and values of leadership such as responsiveness, accountability and honesty of sub-national government personnel have implications on performance of local governments in discharging mandates. One critical issue emanating from these theories is that besides appointed council staff, elected councillors' capacities have key effects in shaping service delivery visions and achieving mandates. The implication on this study is on the need to interrogate the roles and capacity of both staff members and elected councillors to better understand service delivery in GCC. The next chapter focuses on the research methodology and design.

CHAPTER 5: STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the research methodology and design. A qualitative research approach is adopted because qualitative research allows for inquiry from the inside (Osphina 2004). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) posit that qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach allowing a researcher to study things in their natural setting and attempting to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them. The thrust of this chapter is to present the research design that is the blueprint of the research while also providing the outline for the data collection.

Qualitative research is about exploring issues, understanding phenomena and answering questions. It is also about gaining a deeper understanding of a specific organisation or event rather than surface description of a larger population sample. To achieve this objective, a case study strategy is adapted for this study. According to Yin (2009), a case study method is a more appropriate strategy when the research questions seek to explain some present circumstance based on "how" and "why" questions. Yin (2009) goes further to state that the case study method is also appropriate if the questions require "an extensive and in-depth description of some social phenomenon. This study is on declining service provision by urban local authorities in Zimbabwe with specific reference to City of Gweru.

Creswell (2003) and Stake (1995) also point to case studies as an appropriate method of inquiry when the researcher explores a programme, an event, an activity, a process or one or more individuals. The chapter further discusses the research design including case selection units of analysis and data collection instruments. The research questions are restated to align them to the research design, because, as Yin (2003) posits, "a research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the research questions of the study."

To address the issue of validity, multiple data sources are utilised including interviews, archival sources, visual images and observation. The researcher has been a councillor for City of Gweru and Town Clerk for Redcliff Municipality. The researcher has also held various positions in the ministry responsible for local government as District Administrator, Provincial Administrator and Deputy Secretary for local government administration for the whole of Zimbabwe. Participant observation in the case of City of Gweru becomes an important data collection approach. Personal experience in the local government sector in Zimbabwe also becomes a source of information for this study in the light of positions occupied by the researcher in the local government system in Zimbabwe.

The term 'research methodology' has been handled differently by different scholars. There seems to be diverse scholarship opinion on the general conceptual elasticity of the term, its delimitations and general theoretical boundaries. Some scholars have restricted the term to imply a general research strategy, some equating it to a research philosophy while others have tended to focus more broadly on methods, tools, techniques and approaches for conducting a scientific investigation. According to Howell (2013), the term methodology refers to the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. Howell added that research methodology comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge and it encompasses concepts such as paradigm, theoretical model, phases and quantitative or qualitative techniques. Marume (1982) defined methodology to mean a science which concerns itself with the totality of methods, procedures, approaches and techniques of acquiring and establishing reliable and valid systems of knowledge of a particular phenomenon or a group of phenomena. To Monday and Ray (2006), the term methodology simply refers to the description, explanation and justification of various methods of conducting research.

While the sum total of the above schools presents a general conceptual view of methodology, it is important to stress that: a methodology does not set out to provide solutions. It is, therefore, according to Creswell (2003) not the

same as a method but rather broader than methods. Franklin (2013) also concurs with Creswell (2013) adding that methods, described in the methodology, only define the means or modes of data collection or, sometimes, how a specific result is to be calculated which is simply an aspect of methodology. Creswell added that instead, a methodology offers the theoretical underpinning for understanding which method, set of methods, best practices can be applied to specific case, for example, to calculating a specific result. Therefore, the views by scholars such as Bruce (2009) confining methodology as the general research strategy that outlines the way in which research is to be undertaken are restrictive and unfair in articulating the intend and extent of the term research methodology. In a nutshell, methodology does not necessarily focus on defining specific methods, even though much attention is given to the nature and kinds of processes to be followed in a particular procedure or to attain an objective. More broadly, Herrman (2009), argued that research methodology refers to the theory of the research and the reasons for the way the research has been designed. Herrman added that methodology explains the research question and why the question is important. It explains the starting point of the research, the directions of the research and the possible implications of the research when it is completed.

A research design according to Yin (2009 p.26) is the blue-print of the research dealing at least with four problems: what questions to study, what data is relevant, what data to collect and how to analyse the results? Maxwell (2005 p.2) observes how "a good design, one in which the components work harmoniously together, promotes efficient and successful functioning; a flawed design leads to poor operation or failure." Maxwell (2005 p.3) goes further to say "design in qualitative research is an ongoing process that involves 'tacking' back and forth between different components of the design, assessing their implications of goals. Theories, research questions, methods and validity threats for one another." The interactive model he proposes indicated below will be model of reference to throughout this study.
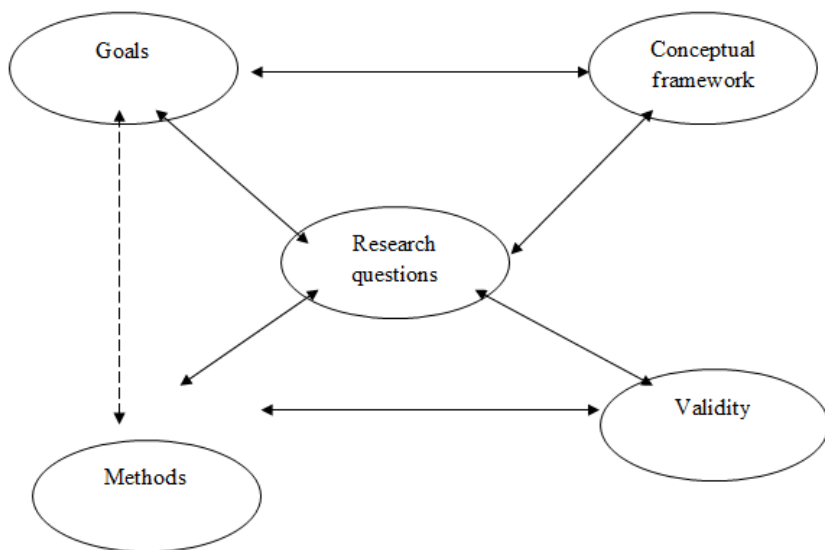
Figure 5.1 - The interactive model

The upper triangle links goals, conceptual framework and research questions while the lower triangle comprises research questions, methods and validity. Research questions thus occupy a central position in this model and equally so in this study.

The goal of the study is to find out why services have declined and how this trend can be halted and reversed. Many organisation theories are referred including the competing values framework. A case study strategy of inquiry is adopted focusing on City of Gweru. Participant observation, interviews and document analysis are some of the methods adopted in the study as they allow for triangulation in addressing the validity issue. .

In this study a case study approach was utilised as there are specific started cases by the researcher. Johnsson (2003) argues that a case study should have a "case" which is the object of study. In this view the case should be a complex functioning unit, be investigated in its natural context with a multitude of methods, and be contemporary. In line with this study, it can be realised that establishing the relationship between service delivery and the

current economic dispensation and environment hence falling within the whims of the case study approach which focuses more on contemporary issues. Moreover, a prerequisite of the development of case study methodology was the focus on contemporary events characteristic of the social sciences.

Yin (2009 p.19) has a two-part definition of case studies, the scope of case studies and the technical characteristics of case studies.

Case study is an empirical inquiry that:
Investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

Yin (2009) goes further to state that:
> The case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence with data needing to converge in a triangulation fashion and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection.

This definition resonates with Maxwell (2005)'s model as it captures the essential features of the model including the issue of methods and validity. This study is on service delivery, a contemporary phenomenon requiring in-depth investigation in its real-life context. People in cities and towns have erratic water supplies, mountains of garbage and pot holed roads. The causes of this state of affairs cannot be clearly discerned. There is need for evidence from multiple sources to begin to understand why services were efficiently provided ten to fifteen years ago but have now deteriorated.

Yin (2009) observes how the case study is needed "to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organisational, social, political and related phenomenon." In this study, the focus is on the City of Gweru as an organisation providing services to residents. City of Gweru is also a decentralised, devolved political entity with elected councillors making a case study research method more appropriate.

Yin (2009 p.9) further argues that the case study method is more appropriate in answering the "why" and "how" questions which are more explanatory. Such questions according to Yin (2009) deal with operational links which need to be traced over time. Other than the "why" question Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) further posits that: case studies, other than answering the question "why" also generated "what and how" questions. In this instance, service to people   like water, garbage collection, street lighting and roads have deteriorated over time.

Creswell (2003 p.105) observes how "in qualitative study inquiries state research questions not objectives (i.e. scientific goals for the research) of hypothesis (i.e. predictions that involves variables or statistical tests). But however, for the study the research design proposed by Yin (2009) is considered appropriate. Yin posits that for case studies, the components of research design are important:

- a study's questions;
- its position, if any;
- its units of analysis;
- the logic linking the data to the propositions; and
- the criteria for interpreting the findings.

The research questions assume two forms: "a central question and associated sub-questions."
The central question which inclines this research to the case study method is, "Why has service delivery in municipal areas deteriorated?"

Associated sub-questions in the study are:
"How can the elected and appointed staff of council impact positively on service delivery?"
"What aspects of the legal framework militate against service delivery?"
"How is revenue collected, allocated and controlled to enable effective service delivery?
"How can service delivery deterioration be halted and reversed?"

The propositions guiding the study include the following:
- Policymakers lack knowledge on how local government works;

- Policymakers prioritise personal interest over citizens' need;
- Service providers (offices) mis-manage councils;
- Financial resources are inadequate;
- Public accountability is minimal;
- The legal framework is flawed;
- Citizens have minimal input in council officials;
- There is too much central government intervention in council affairs

Stake R. In Denzil and Lincoln (1998) identifies three types of case studies, intrinsic case studies, instrumental case studies and collective case studies. Intrinsic case studies are a better understanding of a particular case while instrumental case studies are examined to provide insight into an issue of refinement of a theory. Collective case studies are done jointly to inquire into the phenomenon, population or general condition. This study of City of Gweru is inclined towards instrumental case study to provide insight into service provision in municipalities. A single case study is thus used in this study.

The case according to Stake (1998) is "looked at in depth, its context scrutinised, its ordinary activities detailed, but because this helps to pursue an external interest, in this case, service delivery deterioration by municipalities. The case in this instance is seen as typical of other municipalities mainly because the core business of all municipalities in Zimbabwe is service provision. They are established by the same statutes, have the same functions, the same powers, and the same revenue sources.

The strengths of the case study strategy of inquiry according to Chadderton and Torrence (2012) is that: "it can take an example of an activity and use multiple methods and data sources to explore and interrogate it." In this instance, the activity is service delivery.

Punch (2001 p.145) goes further to identify four characteristics of case studies, namely that the case is:

1. A bounded system, it has boundaries;

2. A case of something and by identifying that the case is a case of something this helps in determining the unit/s of analysis;
3. There is an attempt to preserve the wholeness of the unit and integrity of the case;
4. Multiple sources of data and multiple data collection methods are likely to be used typically in a naturalistic setting;
5. In this study data sources include interviews, archival records, government and municipal records and minutes, legislation, questionnaires and the researcher as a participant observer.

A single case which is representative of municipal councils in the Midlands Province is purposefully selected. According to Creswell (2003 p.185), "the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (documents or usual material) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and research question." Going by Yin (2009) a case is not only representative but also revelatory in that the researcher, as a councillor in City of Gweru from 2009 to 2013 was able to observe and analyse phenomenon which has not been accessed before for inquiry. The researcher set in council and committees of council where he participated and contributed to council deliberations including observing the internal dynamics in council.

City of Gweru, like all urban councils in Zimbabwe, is established and allocated mandates by the Urban Councils Act. The city gained Municipal Status in June 194 and is the third largest city in Zimbabwe with a population of 300 000. City of Gweru has a staff complement of 1 200 employees in the six departments of council namely Engineering Services which is the largest and at the centre of service delivery, Health Services, Housing and Community Services, Finance, Chamber Secretary and Town Clerk's Department (Gweru City Council 2023).

The city is divided into eighteen wards each represented by a councillor. There are four special interest councillors appointed by the Ministry of which the researcher is one of them. The major service provider by the city are provided for in Appendix 2 of the Urban Councils' Act and the Act allocates the council fifty-four powers and also powers to make laws.

Other functions arising from other statutes include, planning authority status from the Regional Town and Country Planning Act, health Mandate from the Public Health Act and Licensing Authority from the Shop License Act. For the purposes of this study emphasis was on water and sanitation, refuse collection, roads, street-lighting and recreational facilities. The organisational structure mandates, financing and powers of City of Gweru are the same as in other municipalities in Zimbabwe.

The new Constitution adopted in 2013 has strengthened local government in Zimbabwe by constitutionalizing local government which was not the case since independence in 1980. This means that local government now derives some funding direct from the fiscus where previously such subversions came through line ministries and were not assured. Now the local government sector is guaranteed at least 5% of the national income in terms of Section 301 of the Constitution.

As noted by Creswell (2003 p.185), the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (documents or visual material) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research questions.

To effectively address the case, the units of analysis for the study are the:
- Council Committees;
- Town Clerk's Department;
- Council Departments of Finance;
- Council Department of Engineering Services, Health Services;
- Council Department of Housing and Community Services;
- Academia;
- Civil society;
- Residents

The analysis focuses on the mandates of the various entities, their staff complements, financing and challenges. The legal and institutional frameworks are also considered. Residents as recipients of services are a major stakeholder and require consideration.
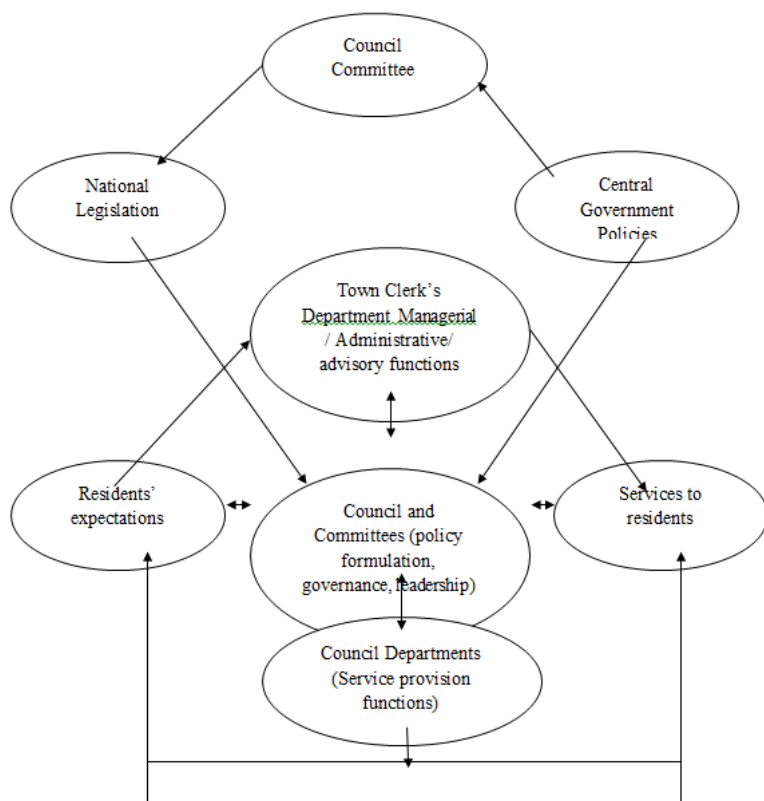
Figure 5.2: The Research Design

The choice of qualitative research as the more appropriate approach to this study on service delivery by municipalities is informed by the definition proffered by Danzin and Lincoln (1998 p.3) when they observe that "qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – a case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interviews, observations / historical, interactional and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter." The aim of this study is to unravel why service provision has declined in virtually all urban local authorities in Zimbabwe. This study is also

informed by Maxwell (2005 p.523)'s proposition that one of the strengths of qualitative research is in getting at the processes that experimental and survey research are often poor at identifying.

Maxwell (2005) goes further to observe that "quantitative research tends to be interested in whether and to what extent variance x causes variance y. Qualitative researchers, on the other hand tend to ask how x plays a role in causing y, what process is it that connects x and y." This basically is what the study tries to explore, why have services declined? The decline or deterioration in service provision is not an event but has happened over a period of time. Causal issues become important. The next question of course is how can this decline be addressed and reversed. Is it possible to identify the key variables at play? Is it a management issue? Is it a councillor-ship? Can civil society play a role? Or is the legal environment inappropriate for effective service delivery. These basically are the four core questions the research attempts to answer.

As noted by Ospina (2004), an inquiry from inside allows the researcher to explore and interpret what has happened in City of Gweru regards service delivery. Through a qualitative approach, it is possible to explore issues, understand phenomena and answer questions. Creswell (1998 p.22) observes that "a qualitative approach is exploratory and is useful when the researcher does not know the important variables to examine." This is the case in the study. The important variables emerge as the study unfolds and data is analysed.

Qualitative research has its criticism. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1998), qualitative research is considered unscientific and full of bias. Issues around validity have also been cited over the legitimacy of qualitative research. Maxwell in Huberman and Miles (2000 page 3) argues that "the concern of most qualitative researchers is into factual accuracy of their account." It is for this reason that the study draws extensively on City of Gweru council minutes and reports. Interviews with key informants are also mean to enhance validity of conclusions. The role of the researcher as a councillor in City of Gweru from 2009 to 2013 allows him participant observer status.

A population of study refers to the totality of the variables, objects or people which is the focus of the research and about which the researcher wants to determine some specified and particular characteristics. Ray and Mondal (2006) have defined population as any identifiable and well specified group of individuals whose behaviour the researcher is willing to observe. In the same context Polit and Hungler (1999) define a population as the totality of all subjects that conform to a set of specifications, comprising the entire group of persons that is of interest to the researcher and to whom the research results can be generalised. Therefore, in summary, a population can be understood as all the people or phenomena under study, from whom a sample will be selected for research. Table 1, below, shows the categorised population of the study.

Table 5.1: Categorised population of the study

Category	Target population
Mayor and Councillors	18
Management GCC Top management 6 Middle management 15 Low management 25	46
Officials of the Ministry of Local government in Gweru district	10
Households from wards Ward 3 - 638 Ward 6 - 1980 Ward 5 – 3884	6502 Households. This population represents the ward with the highest number of households (ward 5), the median (ward 6) and the lowest (ward 3)
Members of the academia and local government experts	40 (Only those strongly perceived by the researcher to hold expert local government views, i.e. lecturers from MSU's department of Local Governance Studies and retired local government service men e.g. former town clerks, mayors and those who once held positions in local government in Gweru)

The difficulties of interrogating the full set of research variables or to totality of the population or research variables requires the researcher to identify a sample or simply do sampling. In addition, time, costs and accessibility often prohibit the collection of data from all the research elements and hence justifying the need to identify a representative sample. Sampling is a method of selecting a fraction of the population in such a way that it represents the

whole population. A sample as defined by Ray and Mondal (2006) is a selected number of units from a population to represent it. In the same vein LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (1998) describes a sample as a portion or a subset of the research population selected to participate in a study, representing the research population. Three distinct sampling techniques (Purposive, stratified and random sampling) were identified as the most appropriate sampling techniques suitable for the quality of data relevant for this research.

Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling method in which the sample is arbitrarily selected because characteristics which it possess are deemed important for the research (Ray and Mondal, 2006). In purposive sampling, the investigator has some belief that the sample being selected is typical of the population or is a very good representative of the population. Thus only those people whom the researcher perceives to have appropriate knowledge of the research area will be selected using this technique and this will be based on factors such as position in government service, qualification, key contributions to local government service delivery improvement and other related factors. The researcher envisages enlisting the views of the following respondents using this approach.

In view of the various categories of the respondents that have been outlined above, a combination of the stratified sampling approach and the simple random sampling will be applied to select other respondents (not selected using purposive sampling) taking into cognisance the quality of the data relevant for this research. This entails that the population will be categorised into various strata (refer to table 1 above as this process has already been done) in line of a clearly delineated criterion. As Mugo (2002) outlines, stratified sampling illustrates characteristics of particular subgroups of interest and facilitates comparisons between the different groups. In view of this assertion it can be realised that the above mentioned population categories encompass unique and distinct characteristics and these have to be treated separately as different groups or strata. The entrenched belief is that the sample is typical of the population.

Simple random sample is a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (a population). Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by

chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process and each subset of individuals has the same probability of being chosen for the sample as any other subset of individuals. This technique will be used mainly to select 50% of the councillors (9), 20% of middle management (4), 20% of low management (5) and 5% of households (325). Focus group discussions will be organised to collect data from these various classes of respondents using the criteria developed under the section on research instruments.

A variety of instruments can be used in case study-based research, but this will be conducted using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions and analysis of secondary data sources.

- In –depth interviews
- Participant observation
- Questionnaires
- Focus groups and
- Key informant interviews

As indicated above, the researcher has been a councillor in City of Gweru from 2009 to 2013. The researcher has had the opportunity to participate in council deliberations and has first-hand knowledge of the operations of council.

Both structured and unstructured interviews are conducted including the use of questionnaires.

The researcher collected council minutes over four years which are useful in understanding the operations of City of Gweru. The decision-making process in City of Gweru is discernible from quality of resolution and recommendations made in council and its committees. The researcher also has the relevant legal instruments for service delivery: newspapers and magazines are also an important source of information for the study. Central government policies, memoranda, directives and policy documents are important sources of information.

The researcher used photographs of service delivery in Gweru which show the reality on the ground. The table below from Gweru (2003 p.188) summarises the strength and weakness of each of the data collection methods.

Table 5:2 Qualitative data collection types, options, advantages and limitations

Data collection types	Options within types	Advantages of the type	Limitations of the type
Observations	Complete participant: researcher conceals role. Observer as participant role of research is known. Participant as observer: observation role secondary to participant role. Complete observer: research observers without participating	Research had firsthand experience with participants. Researcher can record information as it is revealed. Unusual aspects can be noticed during observation. Useful in exploring topics that may be uncomfortable for participants to discuss.	Researcher may be seen as intrusive. "Private" information may not be observed that the researcher cannot report. Research may not have good attending and observing skills. Certain participants (eg children) may present special problems in gaining rapport.
Interviews	Face-to-face: one-on-one, interpersonal interview Telephone: researcher interviews by phone. Group: researcher interviews participants in a group.	Useful when participants cannot be observed directly. Participants can provide historical information. Allow researcher "control" over the line of questioning.	Provides "indirect" information filtered through the views of interviewees. Provides information in a designated "place" rather that the natural field setting. Researcher's presence may bias responses. People are not equally articulate and perceptive.
Documents	Public documents such as minutes of meetings, and newspapers.	Enables a researcher to obtain the language and words of participants.	May be protected information unavailable to public of private access.

	Private documents such as journals, diaries and letters. Email discussions.	Can be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher-an unobtrusive source of information. Represents data that are thoughtful, in that participants have given attention to compiling. As written evidence, it saves a researcher the time and expense of transcribing.	Requires the researcher to search out the information in hard-to-find places. Requires transcribing or optically scanning for computer entry. Materials may be incomplete. The documents may not be authentic or accurate.
Audio-visual materials	Photographs Video tapes Art objects Computer software Film	May be an obtrusive method of collecting data. Provides an opportunity for participants to directly share their 'reality' Creative in that it captures attention visually	May be difficult to interpret. May not be accessible publicly or privately. The presence of an observer (eg photographer) may be disruptive and affect responses

Ellenberger in Hycner (1999, 153-154) captures it as follows; whatever the method used for a phenomenological analysis the aim of the investigator is the reconstruction of the inner world of experience of the subject. Each individual has his own way of experiencing temporarily, spatiality, materiality, but each of these coordinates must be understood in relation to the others and to the total inner 'world'. Phenomenological studies make detailed comments about individual situations which do not lend themselves to direct generalisation in the same way which is sometimes claimed for survey research.

The procedures, illustrated by Moustakas (1994), Creswell (2003) and Parton (1990) will also be applied, consisting of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one's experiences, and collecting data from several persons whose experiences with the phenomenon is deemed fundamental. The researcher then analyses the data by reducing the information to significant

statements or quotes and combines the statements into themes. Following that: the researcher will develop a textural and structural description of the experiences of the persons and a combination of the textural and structural descriptions to convey an overall essence of the service delivery challenges at local government level.

In-depth interviewing, according to Boyce and Neale (2006) is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation. To Parton (1990), in-depth interviewing, also known as unstructured interviewing, is a type of interview which researchers use to elicit information to achieve a holistic understanding of the interviewee's point of view or situation. This type of interview involves asking informants open-ended questions, and probing wherever necessary to obtain data deemed useful by the researcher. As in-depth interviewing often involves qualitative data, it is also called qualitative interviewing.

Mugo (2002) stresses that: by means of a thorough composed interview guide, the interviewer ensures that the conversation encompasses the topics that are crucial to ask for the sake of the purpose and the issue of the survey. The goal of the interview, according to Boyce and Neale (2006), is to deeply explore the respondent's point of view, feelings and perspectives. Additional to asking questions, Mugo (2002) added that in-depth interviewing may often require repeated interview sessions with the target audience under study. the researcher is going to use this technique to gather data from only those respondents selected using purposive sampling. The emphasis on depth, nuance and the interview's own language as a way of understanding meaning implies that interview data needs to be captured in its natural form. As explained early, this means that interview data is generally tape recorded since note taking would change the form of the data. Additionally, this also means the interviews are going to be conducted face to face and not over the telephone. A physical encounter in this essence is considered an important context for both parties involves enhancing interaction and generation of new knowledge as meaning and language will be explored in depth.

The primary advantage of in-depth interviews is that they provide much more detailed information than what is available through other data collection methods, such as surveys. In-depth interviews are generative in the sense that new knowledge or thoughts, are at some stage to be created. The extent this is so, may vary depending on the research questions, but it is likely that the participants will at some point direct themselves or to be directed by the researcher down avenues of thought they have not expressed before. Participants may also be invited to put forward ideas and suggestions on a particular topic and to propose solutions for problems raised during the interview.

The process of transcribing data from a tape recorder is a rigorous and extensive process which must be carefully done with experienced professionals to avoid losing the original structure and meaning of data. In-depth interviews are often time demanding and a small fraction of respondents are covered relative to other instruments such as questionnaires and focus group discussions.

A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards a particular discourse. Focus groups differ from informal group discussions in many aspects. First, specific, pre-determined criteria are used for recruiting focus group participants. Second, the topics to be discussed are decided beforehand, and the moderator uses a pre-determined list of open-ended questions arranged in a natural and logical sequence. The moderator may even memorise the questions beforehand. Ray and Mondal (1998) defined a focus group discussion as a form of group interviewing in which a small group of usually 10 to 12 people is led by a moderator (interviewer) in a loosely structured discussion of a particular topic of interest. The course of the discussion is usually planned in advance and most moderators rely on an outline, or moderator's guide, to ensure that the topic of interest is comprehensively covered. To Harding (2013), a focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes towards a product, service, concept or idea. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to walk with other group members.

In the social sciences and urban planning, focus group allow interviewers to study people in a more natural conversation pattern than typically occurs in a one-to-one interview (Lindloff and Taylor 2002). The researcher is going to apply this technique to collect data from selected households and councillors. Each focus group will have at least 10 participants and the voice recorder will be used to capture the different views of the participant. The researcher will identify the leader of each group and discuss the key discussion points with him/her to enhance his/her capacity to maintain the deliberations of the group in with the interest of the research.

The strength of focus group discussion relies on allowing the participants to agree or disagree with each other so that it provides an insight into how a group thinks about an issue, about the range of opinion and ideas, and the inconsistencies and variation that exists in a particular community in terms of beliefs and their experiences and practices.

Responses in a focus group, are typically spoken, open-ended, relatively broad and qualitative. They have more depth, nuance and variety. Focus group can have a comparative strength of generating data that is closer to what people are really thinking and feeling, even though their responses may be harder or impossible to score on a scale.

Another advantage of focus group is depth and complexity of response, as group members can often stimulate new thoughts for each other that might not have otherwise occurred.

Group discussion produces data and insights that would be less accessible without interaction found in a group setting, listening to others' verbalized experiences stimulates memories, ideas and experiences in particular. This is also known as the group effect where group members engage in "a kind of 'chaining' or 'cascading' effect. (Lindlof & Taylor, p.182). Group members discover a common language or describe similar experiences. This enables the capture of a form of native language or vernacular speech to understand the situation. Focus groups help people learn more about group or community opinions and needs. In this respect, they are similar to needs assessment surveys.

A fundamental difficulty with focus groups is the issue of observer dependency and the results obtained are influenced by the researcher or his own reading of the group's discussion that may raise questions of validity. Focus groups can create severe issues of external validity, especially the reactive effects of the testing arrangement. Group think and social disability bias are also massive discounts of focus groups. Focus groups usually take more time per respondent than individual surveys because the group has to be recruited, and because the group itself takes time to organise. Some group members might feel hesitant about speaking openly.

Document analysis, according to Strauss and Corbin (1990) is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic. Analysing documents incorporates coding content into themes similar to how focus group or interview transcripts are analysed. The analysis of pre-existing record forms part of what Aricombe (2007:458) refers to as unobtrusive research methods. In this view the use of unobtrusive research methods is a process of studying behaviour without affecting it. Secondary sources of data should therefore be used to counteract the bias and loopholes found in the primary data collection procedure, therefore playing a complimentary role and driving the data towards validity and reliability. It is imperative for researchers to ensure that no errors should be made in collating and collecting data from documentary evidence. The documents can include archival records, published statistics, election or consensus reports and education data. Institutional publications, historical documents or other forms of scientific data also form part of this research.

Bless and Achola (1990: 106) have argued that in documentary analysis, the respondents are not aware that they are the subject of the study. The major weakness with the unobtrusive data collection methods such as documentary analysis is that the records to which the researcher will be allowed access might contain institutional bias. For example, a council might restrict a researcher to the documents in which it is certain paint a positive picture of the organisation opposite to objective and reliable data which reflects both positive and negative issues.

Given the role of political discourse in the enactment, reproduction and legitimisation of power and domination and for purpose of presentation and analysis of data the researcher is going to use thematic analysis and critical discourse analysis. A software, Stata Version 7 is additional going to be used to technically analyse relationships between coded data sets and in the process produce qualitative analytical tables explaining primarily the measures of central tendency and diversion from notable standards of efficiency to be developed by the researcher.

Thematic analysis is a qualitative analytic method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. This method emphasises organisation and rich description of the data set. Thematic analysis goes beyond simply counting phrases or words in a text and moves on to identifying implicit and explicit ideas within the data (Groanewald, 2004). For purposes of this research, coding which is the primary process for developing themes within the raw data by recognising important moments in the data and encoding it prior to interpretation will be used. The interpretation of these codes will include comparing themes frequencies, identifying theme co-occurrence, and graphically displaying relationships between different themes. Most researchers consider thematic analysis to be a very useful method in capturing the intricacies of meaning within a data set (Marume 2013). It minimally organises and describes data set in (rich) detail.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (Fairclough and Wodak 1997). Fairclough (1993) in his definition perceives CDA as discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of casualty and determination between (a) discursive practice, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power, and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor of securing power and hegemony. CDA tries to avoid positing a simple deterministic relationship between texts and the social. Taking into account the insights that discourse

is structured by dominance, that every discourse is historically produced and interpreted, that is, it is situated in time and space and that dominance structures are legitimised by ideologies of powerful groups, the complex approach advocated by proponents of CDA makes it possible to analyse pressures from above and possibilities of resistance to unequal power relationships that appear as societal conventions.

C.D.A is preferred in this research as it takes an explicit position, and thus wants to understand, expose and ultimately resist social and political inequality because of the following key tenets:

1. It focuses primarily on, social problems and political issues, reconciled with current paradigms and fashions;
2. Empirically adequate critical analysis of political and public administration discourse is usually multidisciplinary;
3. Rather than merely describe discourse structures, it tries to explain them in terms of properties of social and political interaction and especially social and political structure;
4. CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce or challenge relations of power and dominance in society.

This research attaches high regard to research ethical standards as the basis of maximising possible benefits and minimize possible harms. The following are the critical ethical dimensions underpinning this study:

1. Respect for respondents and confidentiality – the researcher will treat views of respondents confidential and shall not disclose their identities or their contributions without their prior written approval;
2. Honesty in reporting data, results and methods and avoid misinterpretation;
3. Objectivity – emphasis will be on avoiding bias in all aspects of the research;
4. Integrity – the researcher shall act with sincerity, striving for consistency of thought and action.
5. Carefulness – avoiding careless errors and negligence;

6. Respect for intellectual property – the researcher shall honour patents, copyrights and other forms of intellectual property and giving credit where credit is due.;
7. Legality – all the process and conduct of the researcher shall hive high regard to relevant laws and institutional governmental policies on research and scholarship of Midlands State University in particular and Zimbabwe in general.

This chapter has focused on methodological issues. Justification of the qualitative approach is discussed. The case study design is discussed. Maxwell's interactive model forms the reference point for the study. The research questions and propositions are restated. The chapter also discusses the units of analysis research instruments, population of study and sampling techniques and the data collection procedures. The chapter concludes by discussing data presentation and analysis. The next chapter focuses on data presentation and analysis

CHAPTER 6: EVIDENCE FROM GWERU CITY

This chapter focuses on presentation, discussion and synthesis of the findings. For purpose of systematic analysis, this chapter is divided into two broad areas: (i) lived experiences of Gweru residents and (ii) discussion and synthesis of findings. Two distinct but related techniques were used: thematic analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis is a rarely acknowledged yet widely used qualitative analytic method which is highly flexible and emphasising a rich description of the data set. In the same context critical discourse analysis as viewed by McGregor (2010, 2)'challenges us to move from seeing language as abstract to seeing our words as having meaning in a particular historical, social and political condition' and hence concerned with real, and often extended, instances of social interaction which take particularly in linguistic form. The justification for the selection of these techniques to this study is laid out in the previous chapter. The purpose of the study was to analyse service delivery challenges at sub-national level with particular reference to Gweru city council in Zimbabwe. Twenty in depth interviews complimented by 10 focus group discussions were conducted with respondents of varied experiences and from different tiers of government, civil society and the private sector. This meant diverse responses particularly reflecting the uniqueness of each sector and its leverages, constraints and opportunities in service delivery engagement. The findings are an expression of the views of the key informants on the basis of experience, researches and studies conducted and their general perceptions on local government service delivery in Zimbabwe complimented by secondary data sources.

An understanding of the first-hand data is very essential in understanding detail of what is happening (Marvel, 2015). Citizens and people who live and are on the sites help in understanding the position and needs of service recipients (Van de Walle & Bouckaert, 2003). This perception of the public also helps in understanding certain nuanced dynamics like failure of public to honour their debts and other kinds of resistance (Rule, 2000). It is from these opinions that public confidence on their government can be derived (Stoker,

2006). From institutional approaches and opinions on service delivery in Gweru, the chapter delves into the public opinion of `the operations of the GCC in the context of service delivery. It gathers evidence in relation to the situations and reactions of the public in light of how service delivery is rendered within the GCC jurisdiction.

This section articulates the demographic characteristics of study participants in terms of relevant experience (years in government service) (Table 6.2.1) and educational qualifications of the research participants (Table 6.2.2). Table 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 presents the respondents' responses. For the other category of respondents (Focus Group Discussions) the researcher wanted their perceptions on the services they got from councils as consumers. Their responses were, therefore, not influenced by their academic backgrounds or experience either in government or the private sector. The researcher only sought to establish the gender factors as it was found prudent to achieve a balanced gender mix. In the same context, the research also sought to establish the number of years they have stayed in Gweru. This influenced their responses particularly relating to the changes that have been brought by the different political parties running council and changes in the administration of council. The working experience of research participants is a fundamental factor in determining the extent to which they appreciate the changing contexts of service delivery in response to changes in the political parties and administrative systems at the GCC. Different political regimes had different approaches to the policy and administrative configurations of council and such differences had varied ramifications on the capacity of council to deliver services at any different time. For example, two research participants who worked under the colonial system gave a detailed insight and comparative analysis of service delivery under the colonial system, on one hand, and the range and quality of services under the independent government, on the other hand. This allowed for cross-referencing to determine major changes, conformities and departures that have happened to the system including the underlying philosophies and ideologies. Table 6.1 presents the years of experiences which is another talking point.

Table 6.1: Experience of study (interviews) participants (in years) (: Findings, 2019)

Experience of participants	Frequency	Percentage
Below 5 years	4	20
6-10 years	2	10
11-15 years	6	30
16-20 years	4	20
Over 20 years	4	20
Total	N=20	

As shown in Table 6.1, most research participants had more than six years' experience, with only four research participants having less than five years of experience. This wider experience allowed for the diverse articulation of the service delivery system, reflecting on changes that have occurred over years and the bearing of that historical context on the current state of services. On the basis of their experiences, research participants extensively articulated the transformation of the service delivery system of the GCC and the major drivers of the changes and suggested ways of improving the current state of the services.

At the same time, academic qualifications were found to be a key factor in influencing the quality of responses through broad articulation of the key variables of the research and extrapolation of the service delivery discourse beyond conjecture. In most interviews where research participants had a post-graduate qualification, the researcher noted that such research participants gave key insights into the study beyond asked questions, for example they ended up raising key methodological issues thereby helping to shape many aspects of the research. From Table 6.2, 85% of the research participants were holders of a university degree, with 10% having doctoral degrees while only 10 percent of the research participants are holders of a diploma

Table 6.2: Classification of interview participants on the basis of qualifications (Findings, 2019)

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma	3	15
University first degree	8	40
Master's degree	7	35
Doctoral degrees	2	10
Total	N=20	

The next table (Table 6.2.3) is of the findings in relationship to focus group discussions. It highlights the number and the gender distribution of the participants in the focus group discussions.

Table 6.3: Classification of focus group participants on the basis of gender (Findings, 2019)

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	54	45
Females	66	55
Total	N=120	

The analysis of the gender aspects factors of the research participants allowed the study to streamline the level of participation of women in the study. This is particularly important to the study given the size of the urban population that is constituted by women. National statistics places women at 52% of the national population. At the same time, gender studies have indicated that women are the most affected by the quality of urban services. The study also looked into the years' research participants have spent in Gweru. This allowed them to relate particular changes to the service quality and quantity to given times. There appears to have been notable changes in service quality with the changing political systems.

Table 6.4 Classification of focus group participants on the basis of years in Gweru (Findings, 2019)

Years of stay in Gweru	Frequency	Percentage
Below 1 year	15	12.5
1-5 years	30	25
6-10 years	40	33.3
Over 10 years	35	29.2
Total	N=120	

Service delivery in Gweru is an emotive topic. Most people who have lived in Gweru for a long period have various opinions of what the council is doing and how it should go about its business. Having experienced the failures and success of the council in terms of service delivery in Gweru, every respondent in this study had his/her opinion. This section seeks to explore the various

opinions of the general public in relation to service delivery in the context of water and sewer, waste management, public participation and road infrastructure services among others.

All research participants from FGDs confirmed erratic water supplies in the city. 30% indicated that they reside in places that do not receive water during the day because of alleged gravity issues against pumping capacity. These are residents particularly in Mkoba 19 and Ridgemont Suburbs. Mkoba 19 Suburb, for instance, receives water late into the night or in the early hours of the day usually before 3 am when water consumption in the city is low. 70% of the study participants from the FGDs complained about receiving dirty water that is not safe for drinking and falling below the minimum health standards. In June 2017, Gweru city was hit by a typhoid outbreak that was blamed on the poor quality of the water in the city. This was followed by a cholera outbreak that hit the entire country and again blamed on the quality of water and poor sanitary facilities. An interview with an engineer from the water section of the GCC revealed that the council was facing challenges with financing its operations and the problems also had repercussions on water delivery. He said that the water account was being used to sustain other areas of council such as the Health Services Department. Government has since directed that the water account of urban councils be ring-fenced to avoid abuse or diversion of funds from the water account to sustain other departments.

In the same context, the city has been facing challenges in reticulating sewerage. 75% of the study participants in FGDs confirmed experiencing a burst sewer leading to sewer overflow. This is rampant in high density suburbs where 89% of such cases have been recorded. The cases of burst sewer have been on the rise because of the exponential rise in the population of the city. The current sewer system was established for a small population whose growth was controlled by the restrictive urban laws of the colonial system. However, a surge in the city population after independence exceeded the carrying capacity of both the water and sewer system. The GCC has been blamed by residents and EMA for offloading raw sewerage into the Gweru River threatening aqua life.

The poor state of roads is one critical issue in Gweru. The quality of the roads and road infrastructure is disheartening. The city has become a haven for potholes with the local authority failing to providing adequate rehabilitated roads for the suburbs in Gweru. In a comment, one Gweru citizen observes that:

> "The city fathers have failed us. Imagine we pay taxes through licenses to use these roads. What do they do? They take that same amount of money and they squander it on salaries and we get nothing…"

This discussion did not end like that. The citizens were further enraged making emotional comments that could not be typed but another resident also raised a very important concern for most residents, he observes that:

> Due to the quality of the roads in some of the locations in Mkoba and parts of Senga, kombis no longer get there as they point the roads to be unnavigable…The area has pools rather than holes, you can hide in them.

This situation of quality of roads was not only affecting residents who did not own cars but also those that had cars. The potholes in the roads were very unfriendly to the kind of cars that most of Gweru residents owned. As such, one pointed out that car maintenance; particularly the suspension was one thing that had become so regular to them yet very expensive.

Housing shortages and a housing lag has befallen the GCC leading to the Gweru Residents Forum arguing that the city is no longer worthy of the name 'City of Progress'. Land developers have been known of coming in and allocating land but failing to service the land giving the pressure to the local authority. In a comment the director said that:

> Council is expected to provide amenities such as roads, water, sewer to a cooperative that enriched a land baron. The land barons did not pay to the local authorities to have the requisite infrastructure installed, for instance the State land surrounding hawks like River Valley. Suburbs like Woodlands do not have services yet they are now more than five years old.

Health provision in Gweru has not been spared from being one of the neglected services to be delivered to the residents of Gweru. In recent cases, Gweru hospital has been turning away patients who were in need of intensive

care if they do not have cash on them. One of the residents' association observes that:

> "A patient was turned away on the basis that he did not have cash but was willing to pay with Ecocash."

This situation highlighted a potential problem linked to negligence by the government and health sector employees in Gweru. Regardless of the attitude of the health sector employees, the GCC's health system is also ill-prepared for most health emergences. This could be evidenced by the typhoid outbreaks in Gweru that led to the death of 9 people. This led to a finger-pointing on who was responsible for the services and the health sector. A citizen asked to question on the preparedness of Gweru pointed out that the GCC has poor health systems, they do not have adequate hospital beds, medication, staff and the staff has some negative attitudes towards people seeking their services (humorously but seriously stated).

> The residents of Gweru did not appear happy about the council's approach to refuse collection and management. In a recent case in September 2018, a dumpsite in Gweru went ablaze posing risk to the residents of the area.

The residents who commented on the issue observes that: Woodlands suburb was covered by thick smoke which has potential harm on the risk of the residents in that area and parts of Mkoba. Furthermore, the GCC has also allowed a continuation of a system of not collecting litter with some areas going for a month or more without collection of litter. This has led to the disposal of solid waste in undesignated areas of Gweru. One resident observes that:

> "in areas like Ascot, Ascot extension and Woodlands, the garbage has not yet been collected in the past month. Therefore, residents are now dumping waste on street corners."

All the responses elicited from the interviews carried out were concerned with the poor capacity of most of council's systems of revenue collection largely due to the irregular revaluation of council property. This unfortunate situation deprives the council of sustained revenue. Council has not updated its valuation roll for over 10 years to date. While the financial reports show evidence of the shrinking revenue base, the urban dwellers are getting poorer by the day due to the current economic meltdown of the country. The

responses from both interviews and questionnaires attributed the declining service delivery in local authorities to declining revenue due to a wide array of factors, such as; the 'unfunded' mandate (20%), the disappearance of funding under the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) (28%), the failure by government to honour debts to local authorities (30%), legislative impediments (5%), broader city activities and weak management systems (17). While three academics interviewed argued that the major principles of taxation are fairness and equity, a significant number of research participants in FGDs (80) stressed that it is vital to mention that people should pay tax according to their capacities to do so. The majority of the residents are now in the informal sector earning an average RTGS$300 per month which is not sufficient to cover their wide tax obligations. This was cited as a factor behind high tax non-compliance among this category of research participants.

Urban Councils derive the bulk of their revenues from property, receipts from trading accounts, tariffs or fees for services rendered, education, health and road grants (Zhou & Chilunjika, 2013). While the above assertion reflects some truths in the management of urban local governments, it is important to realise that the sources of revenue for most urban councils have been stifled by the central government which in the last decade have 'rolled back' sub-national governments revenue sources including road taxes and the fact that vehicle licenses now under ZINARA and that the land development levy is now under the Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement. This development has starved urban local governments of the much-needed revenue to champion the public service delivery system including road construction. This comes amid the central government's reluctance to plough back to local authorities' sufficient resources earmarked for road construction. Revenue from central government is in the form of general and specified funds in respect of capital projects like water and sewerage reticulation, storm water drainage, among others (Chakunda, 2015).

Economic progress picked up as dollarisation truncated runaway hyperinflation and workers started receiving hard currency incomes. In the year 2008, the government of Zimbabwe engaged a unity government that was run by ZANU PF and MDC. This led to the uptake of a multi-currency system that saw the removal of the Zimbabwean dollar. From that period,

everything was paid and received inform of hard currency (United States Dollars and South African Rand). Schools and hospitals managed to resume operations despite staff shortages and inadequate salaries for staff. The situation then calmed to the extent that most local authorities managed to draft budgets which were not to be disturbed by the galloping inflationary environment. The most primary issues which the civil organisations cry for include public participation in preparing budgets, respect of human rights, accountability and improved service delivery among others.

Citing the example given above where an organisation contested the legitimacy of the government-appointed commission to ensure transparency, accountability and rule of law in the running of the affairs of Harare, the organisation threatened the local authority. It told residents and ratepayers to withhold payments of rates as there was need for a democratically-elected leadership at the Town House that respects the needs and will of the people. Apart from transparency and accountability, rule of law has been another burning issue that Gweru Residents Forum and Gweru Residents and Ratepayers Association have been more vocal on to have good governance in the management of the GCC, and the country at large.

The 2013 Constitution of Zimbabwe entrusts Parliament with the responsibility of an oversight role in holding the Executive accountable. Section 107(2) requires,

> every Vice- President, Minister and Deputy Minister must attend Parliament and parliamentary committees to answer questions concerning matters for which he or she is collectively or individually responsible.

Thus, there is a constitutional obligation placed on every member of the Executive to answer questions before Parliament. In their capacity as representatives of the people in their constituencies, parliamentarians should not simply toe the party line, but should represent the concerns and relay the questions of their constituents to hold government to account. Additionally, section 140(4), states the President must attend Parliament at least once a year to give an address on the state of the nation. This represents an improvement on the previous constitution, under which the President had no obligation to attend Parliament at all, but section 140(3) also observes how the President "may" attend Parliament to answer questions on any issue. This

shows that the President is not required by the Constitution to answer questions in Parliament. This still limits Parliament's ability to hold the Executive to account. This scenario compels the Ministry responsible for local government to supervise the operations of councils because their actions can be questioned in Parliament through the responsible portfolio committee on local government hence the 'people's voice and will' will be reflected in the accountability mechanisms since the legislature is elected by the people hence its operations cascade to the local authority level.

Looking at the responses and the opinions of the Gweru citizens of their council, it is mind-boggling as to why their opinion is so gloomy. Studies carried out have shown that citizen confidence is key to the success of the local authority and as such has ripple effects on service delivery in the area (Sims, 2001; Heintzman *and* Marson, 2005). As the citizens lose confidence in the local authority, they consequently lose their willingness to pay what they owe (Kampen *et al.,* 2006). This failure of citizens to honour their tax obligations implies that the local authority becomes incapacitated to be able to finance the services that they should render to the residents. This goes back to further damage the image of the council and the cycle of bad governance and poor service delivery becomes perpetual (Brewer, 2007). This idea can be evidenced by the fact that the GCC has accrued salary debts and fail to finance augmentation of roads, sewer and water. This can also be seen in the context of planning. Master Plans that are supposed to last for a maximum of 15 years have now stretched for more than 20 years making them less relevant. Plate 1 is a copy of the old but still operational Gweru Master Plan extracted from the City Planner's office. As such, emotions behind service delivery in the GCC jurisdiction can be justified and criticised. From the ideas above, Gweru residents have been digging their own graves by owing the GCC $52 million dollars.

The services that citizens are supposed to get are now clouded within the issues of funding. In the same vein, Gweru residents are doing injustice to themselves while the GCC has also been responsible for the failure to quench the fire they started. Issues of capacity are then pointed out in the failure of the GCC to respond to the needs of its citizens. In response to this, the GCC

officials brought about another interesting dimension to the issues of service delivery. One official observes that:

> Citizens of Gweru baffle us, they continue to expect feeding without having to work. When the government cancelled the debts, they were very happy and we lost more than $30 million of service delivery funds. That blow to our coffers continue to haunt the people of Gweru. If they had paid what they owed, we wouldn't be having this discussion…

This response by a city official further cements the idea of funding being the major blow to service delivery in Gweru. The GCC was supposed to fund services with resources they were deprived of by the government. This created the lag that the GCC is fighting to date.
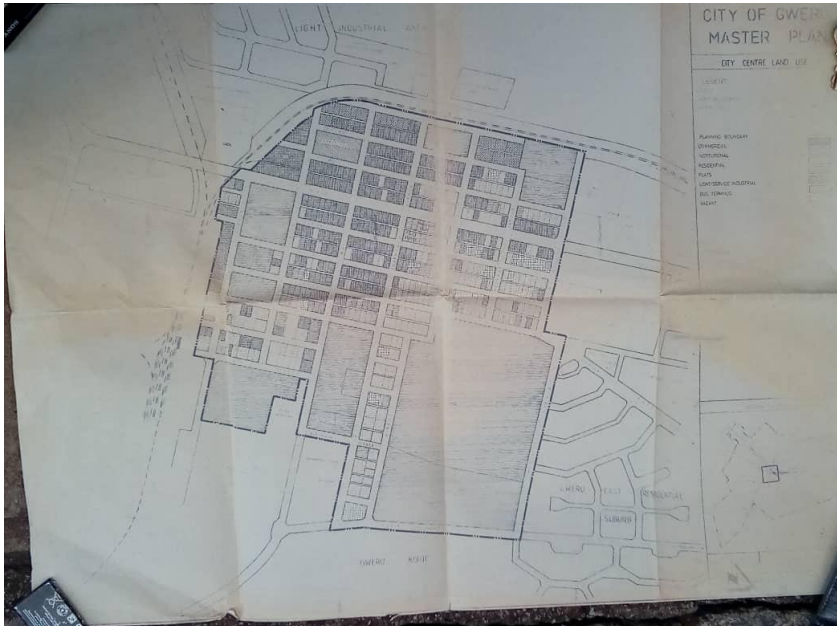

Plate 6. 1: Part of the CBD Master Plan (Gweru City Planner's office, 2019)

Chakunda (2015) argues that the hierarchical nature of the relationship between central and local government allows central government to supervise local government with a view to bringing it into harmony with national

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policies. Supervision enables the supervising authorities to prevent the unlawful use of the funds and other property of local authorities, to prevent corruption, or to improve the performance of local authorities, among others. However, in many scenarios, political supervision in Zimbabwean urban councils have become the order of the day with some decisions made by the state appearing to be political expedience at the expense of robust local government administration. A case in point is the the GCC's suspension of councillors and replacing them with a Tsunga-Mhangami-led Commission and after several months reinstating the majority of councillors after they were found not guilty with their monthly allowances paid in retrospect while the Commission, during its tenure, was handsomely being paid monthly (Mazorodze, 2017). This double expenditure has an adverse financial bearing on a council that is already reeling under a huge debt and ultimately hampers efficient service delivery. In addition, spending half of income generated on employment costs cripples the service delivery capacity of a local authority. Therefore, local authorities are urged to conduct employee rationalisation schemes pivoted on the fact that their core business is to deliver services in a cost-effective way (We Pay You Deliver, 2017).

Furthermore, there is need for political will from the city fathers, where there is will things move but where there is no will, there cannot be any progress. Thus, political will is necessary for the city fathers to execute their mandate satisfactorily. On the side of the civil society, specifically the residents associations, there is need for platforms for regular engagement, with the local government and all stakeholders, especially, residents and ratepayers to register remarkable progress. After those engagements there is need for ensuring that all the points raised and priorities identified during the consultations are considered in the general operations of the GCC, for example on budget and planning.

The ability of a local authority to provide services depends on the revenue it collects. This is the basic fundamental fact that residents, ratepayers, business and government need to appreciate. Council has been making frantic efforts to recover debts owed. However, the major challenge is that the most residents and ratepayers are incapacitated to settle their bills with the GCC.

In light of this situation, the GCC has made provisions for debtors to make payments plans spelling out how they intend to clear their arrears.

In essence, the reasons as to why residents do not directly participate in the budgeting process revolve on two things, namely; substantive and procedural issues. On substantive issues, residents require capacity development on budget issues, setting priorities, budget lines, reviewing budgets among others. This is the role RAs/CSOs need to do. For procedural issues, local authorities, RAs and CSOs need to invest in wide dissemination of dates and venues for budget consultations and the process of raising objections to the budget (Muchadenyika, and Williams 2018).

There is need to ensure some improvement in the attendance of the budget meetings being conducted by the GCC, since finance is the backbone of efficient service provision they should come and have an appreciation of the council's expenditure. Attending such meetings enables residents and ratepayers to give some input that informs policy and planning in the operations of the GCC. The Gweru City Director of Finance noted that:

> The challenge I see at the present moment is the people who are on some big organisations because when we invite, when I talk of the big people, I talk of the management in some organisations. I talk of the industry. When we call for a budget meeting, we wouldn't see a bank financial manager or Bata ichitumidzira their finance director apa and even with the MSU.

Regular reporting and regular consultation are very critical in the running of the affairs of the GCC or any other urban local government.

One research participant argued that:

> I see Bulawayo has been able to do is keeping constant dialogue with their residents. You see, keeping constant dialogue with their residents even when they want to do something their residents are quite updated, that like now we are doing this road and finances for this we have taken from this portfolio to do this... live dialogue between the residents and the city is always there. When you don't have dialogue and you don't know what your residents want, then they also hold scanners to your works so that you don't move forward.

Usually residents and ratepayers express their disgruntlement through non-payment of service charges and rates as the service delivery protests take a more practical way which cripples the service delivery thrust of councils. Muchadenyika and Williams (2018) argues thatmore than 75% of the research participants do not have confidence and trust in the budgeting process. Partly, this is because councils do not provide information concerning the performance of the previous budget (77.3%) (We Pay you Deliver, 2017).

Residents and ratepayers are disgruntled with the way the local authority conducts its business. Engaging residents and ratepayers in constant dialogue makes them feel included in the general operations of the GCC. This encourages the active participation of residents and ratepayers, and all stakeholders in council business. However, political interference impacted negatively on the way local authorities conduct their business. The GCC is no exception to this unfortunate development.

Discussing and synthesising issues is a process of outlining issues and mapping out issues during the study (Bell, 2014). When discussing issues, the researcher has to clearly iron out main issues that emanate from the study and the issues that are interlinked to it (*ibid*). This process then moves to synthesis where the researcher links the study to existing scenarios and studies. This section of the study presents the synthesis on how the GCC has been operating and how the issues interlink with existing theoretical stances. Service delivery in Gweru is a serious issue and various issues have been raised on service delivery in Gweru. The previous six chapters presented existing data on service delivery in Gweru. All the data that was presented maps certain patterns in relation to service delivery in Gweru. The chapter presents a synthesis of the findings guided by the findings in the previous chapters. It tries to map patterns, images and relate them to existing literature.

The study presents various issues that have been acting as stumbling blocks to service delivery in Gweru. This study is informed by four specific objectives that present various issues that relate to each objective. The issues, however, are not new to Gweru and neither are they unique to Gweru. The literature

presents how issues like those in Gweru have affected service delivery in other parts of Africa. As such, an understanding of the context of Gweru and the issue in other contexts can help highlight the implications of the matter at hand. Table 7 is a summary of the objectives and issues per objective in tabular form. It guides the synthesis as to issues that are to be raised in the discussion.

Table 6.5: Emerging Issues per objective (Author, 2019)

Objective	Issues Mapping
To examine the service delivery challenges of sub-national governments using the GCC as a case study	Corruption-Corruption is one of the major issues riddling the GCC. Corruption is bad as it enriches individuals at the expense of services Budgeting-Public budgets are done in closed offices such that priorities that are made are for individual benefits. Revenue Collection-Local Authority does not have enough capacity to collect revenue. Ratepayers' Trust-Rate payers no longer trust the local authority
2. To explore political and administrative systems and mechanisms required to broaden the scope of sub-national governments for improved service delivery	Devolution-Fiscal power centralisation is the major issue coming out. Local authorities become financially incapacitated. Political interference is also another issue as councillor's override decisions.
3. To explore the indicators of efficient service delivery at sub-national level.	Good governance-is one of the most efficient indicators of service delivery. This is absent in the operations of the GCC. Services-Not having informal systems operating is an indicator of efficient service delivery. The GCC is becoming a hub of informality.
4. To identify and discuss options for addressing service delivery challenges at sub-national level	Devolution framework is one of the most significant aspects to look at in service delivery.

In the context of service delivery challenges, various issues emerged from the discussion. The issues range from national issues affecting local authorities' ability to deliver services and the GCC specific issues. The study identified issues like national policies, national economy being the major challenges at

national level while corruption, budgeting, exclusion and resident trust being issues specific to the local authority. These issues have had their bit on the ultimate efficiencies in terms of service delivery in the City of Gweru.

One major determinant of performance in any business is the national climate both financial and political. The financial climate in Zimbabwe has been very turbulent. Since the year 1997, the economy of Zimbabwe has never been stable. Many austerities and economically detrimental decisions were made. This saw local authorities failing to properly sustain their roles of service delivery. The GCC, whose place nickname is the 'City of Progress' began to see pilling up of solid waste, council vehicles began to run without being serviced and this later led to what is happening today. In the year 2013, the Government of Zimbabwe, as a political move decided to slash all rates, transferring all service burdens from the residents to the local authorities. This had a detrimental effect on the quality of services. Most local authorities are yet to recover from that blow.

This kind of approach introduces what can be termed government's hand in service delivery. In theory, the government can come in business with an invisible hand that facilitates economy and ensures that the citizens are catered for and reduce market failure (Banana *et al.*, 2015). On the other hand, the government can come in to take away from the poor through corruption and other forms of bad governance. In this instance, it is termed the Grabbing Hand Model (Bevir, 2008). The Grabbing Hand Model entails a system where government intervention has a negative implication on the delivery of services. The government's political statement on the slashing of fees saw local authorities losing large sums of money. As such, the government took large sums of money from the local authorities indirectly and gave it to the residents.

At local levels, the GCC has been implicated on corruption from the lowest member of the employees. This has had a detrimental effect on the delivery of services. Corruption has been described as a cancer cell that grows slowly but once established is not easy to get rid of (Chirisa, 2013). This issue has also been discussed in the context of human factor decay. In this instance, when the ethical fibre of an organisation is depleted, it loses its essence and

becomes less efficient. Corruption can be good corruption or bad corruption (Mumvuma, 2016). Good corruption helps speed up processes that are marred by legislative bureaucracies whereas bad corruption is that kind of corruption that slows processes down to ensure that one pays to reinvent the efficiencies of an organisation (Resnick, 2014). This kind of corruption benefits individuals and stifles organisational development. The GCC has been having bad corruption where local authority employees have been slowing down processes to ensure that the residents pay to speed up processes. As such, in this context, service delivery becomes compromised. Local authority employees will not be willing to engage in the duties allocated to them by the local authority and focus on personal business.

Budgeting is one of the most significant components in service delivery particularly in local authorities. This is a process of ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently according to need. This is a public process as it entails the determination of the use of public funds (Beyers, 2016). This process, in countries like America, where there are high levels of devolution and participation are open to public input and this does not only happen on paper but practically (Rule, 2000). In developing nations, this is not the same, particularly in Africa. The levels of corruption together with bureaucracies make it hard for citizen to access budget documents, let alone, in making their contributions on the use of the funds. This has allowed local authorities to misuse public funds as they do not account for the resources to anyone (Chigwata *et al.*, 2017). The GCC has been pointed to be very secretive with budget documents. This has seen the local authority over spending on salaries and not delivering services. These issues point to issues of self-interests (Bevir, 2008). Not having to account to anyone affects the quality and even the delivery of services. The GCC can be seen to have less accountability in terms of service delivery that emanate from secret budgets. This reduces the services and the push for local authorities to deliver services.

Public participation is key in the delivery of services. Global institutions have been pushing towards increased public participation through policies like inclusivity in urban planning and service delivery (World Bank Group, 2016). Service delivery has been seen to be very effective if the public is involved. Furthermore, people can only participate in building the city if they are

included (The GCC, 2013). The GCC has been pointed out for excluding the residents as such failed to actually deliver the services. Developing without the people has been discussed as one of the most flawed development approaches in scholarship (Bratton, 2012). People slowly lose confidence if they are not included in the development of policies and programmes. This implies that: in most cases, they end up not participating. While participation is a broad and used word, there are various kinds of participation that included but not limited to tokenism and full engagement (Resnick, 2014). The other kinds all lie within the listed continuum. In most countries, participation is provided for in a tokenistic approach (legislation provides for participation as such we have to engage them). This is the kind of participation is the kind that most local authorities have. Citizens are not fully engaged and they are used as tools for legitimisation process rather than as the patrons. This kind has been seen in Gweru where the planning permits issued out at points do not concur with resident needs but are done and processes with the public in the periphery. In retaliation, residents withdraw participation in their own way (paying rates). This affects service delivery as the local authority will not be capacitated enough to finance the projects and the delivery of services.

Financial stability has also been seen to be another issue that has been affecting the efficiency of service delivery in African local authorities. Local authorities tend to be incapacitated enough to mobilise financial resources (Banana *et al.*, 2015). This is largely because of human resources and citizen trust. If the citizen trust is very low, residents do not pay and the local authority becomes financially incapacitated. On the same vein, a local authority can also fail to fund the process of collecting revenue. All this reflects on the services as the local authority becomes less capacitated. In Gweru, local financial management frequently suffers from lacking technological infrastructure, capacity and opportunities for revenue generation are often restricted by inadequate regulatory frameworks and disadvantageous political structures. Lagging public-sector spending takes a toll on urban efficiency and local economic activity, creating a vicious cycle of budgetary shortfalls, choking urban conditions and economic stagnation. However, strategic governance and financing systems can provide hope for the struggling local authority. There are opportunities for matching local

needs with institutional frameworks and revenue-generation tools. Appropriate financial management can tap into strategies that improve efficiency of revenue collection, win public support, capitalise on urban economies of scale, curb land speculation and sprawl, incentivise economic activity and improve urban affordability for the poor. The resulting budgetary improvements can allow Gweru City Council to make strategic investments in their cities, stimulating a virtuous cycle of growth, revenue generation and prosperity.

Informality is one issue that has been raised in Gweru in relationship to service delivery and efficiencies. Informal food vending provides a convenient space for the accessing of affordable and customised sources of food that meet their daily food requirements. In light of these considerations and issues, issues of hygiene also come into place some of the actors in the urban food vending cycle have no training in hygienic handling of food or even knowledge of the risks associated with urban food trading. At the same time, about 90% of the vending public are of the view that the council does not want to engage the vendors in mainstreaming their activities more formally. Accordingly, the vendors resort to hide and seek with the municipal police to survive the economic meltdown. Resnick (2014) argues that the importance of the informal food economy also varies between cities from a low of 29% of households sourcing food in Gaborone to a high of almost every poor household in cities such as Harare, Blantyre, Lusaka and Maputo. Nickanor (2014) further contends that in the informal settlements, the informal food economy plays a vital role. Without it, the food insecurity situation of these households would be even worse. Daily food needs are mainly met by the informal economy. In the Zimbabwean scenario, even in the formal settlements such as Highfield in Harare, Ascot and Mkoba in Gweru and Sizinda in Bulawayo, the trend has been that the generality of the population, over 64% prefer to purchase their food from the urban food vendors because the food is affordable and the vendors are found within their proximities.

Politics and administrative mechanisms in service delivery are some of the most enhancing or detrimental systems in service delivery in any nation. Studies have shown that nations with local authority autonomy, to some degree, have the highest efficiencies less or more than that can lead to reduce

inefficiencies. Local authorities need freedom in financial aspects but need to be kept to book to ensure accountability (Beyers, 2016). This introduces political and administrative mechanisms. In Botswana, there is the *Kogthla* system that allows residents to participate in the development of local authority systems, as such, influence planning within the local authorities. In Zimbabwe, the law that is used in planning and management of cities are the Regional Town and Country Planning Act (RTCPA) [Chapter 29:12], the UCA [Chapter 29:15] among other acts listed in chapter 3. All these give administrative systems parameters as to how local authorities should operate. However, the powers that the acts accord to local authorities are not sufficient enough to ensure efficiency in service delivery. Local authorities are not allowed to borrow substantial amounts of money and they do not collect road revenues. Due to these unfortunate circumstances, most local authorities lack substantial funding needed to operate and deliver services. This is proving that the current legislation that regulates the operations of the GCC is restrictive rather than progressive. The government legislations are milking rather than protecting public funds and incapacitating operations.

Politics has become the enemy of development in African countries. African politics has created what is termed "bigmanism" (Chirisa & Mavhima, 2018). In this case, political bigwigs permeate in all the processes in local governments. In this instance, political power is abused and it determines all processes. In the GCC, political power has been seen to be pervasive in all the processes. The politicians in council tend to override technical power and decisions affecting the local authority's ability to deliver adequate services to the residents in the process. Politicians in African cities, just like Gweru, tend to advocate for selfish projects. Research has established that whenever political power is abused, it becomes autocracy (Chimuniko & Chazo, 2016; Mumvuma, 2016; Bel *et al.*, 2018). This kind of abuse often leads to market failures and the poor and services are often neglected (Resnick, 2014). This can be evidenced in Gweru where political power has been determining development particularly in the context of land development (Chimuniko and Chazo, 2016). Land developers have been allocated land according to political affiliation than capacity. This has resulted in poor servicing of the land. Against these realities, there exist various indicators that have brought about by many organisations in relation to efficient service delivery. These

indicators also inform various service delivery models that have been developed across the globe. Indicators of efficient service delivery include good governance features such as transparency, accountability and citizen participation. The other indicators have been pegged against issues of liveability. This relates to questions like; how liveable is the area? If it is liveable then service delivery is efficient.

Good governance is one major indicator of efficiency in service delivery. Good governance entails a system of systems with high levels of accountability, transparency in operations and high levels of public engagement. This situation is largely ideal that real. In studies and articles written, all aspects of good governance have never been found in one place. However, there exists a level of skewing towards good or bad governance (World Bank Group, 2016). In African countries, bad governance is the order of the day. The area of study has been concerned with all aspects of bad governance from corruption, exclusion, among others. It goes against all the indicators of efficient service delivery (Chirisa, 2013). This system of service delivery creates a lag in services within the jurisdiction of Gweru. This also highlights how the GCC is operating in terms of services and service delivery. Transparent operations have been alien to the GCC with cases like failure to account for fuel given to the local authority by Traffic Safety Council of Zimbabwe on the rise. This also affects issues of accountability where the administration of the GCC could not account for the fuel. Participation is also an efficient indicator of service delivery. In a local authority with high public participation, service delivery is efficient. This can be seen in highly developed nations (Rule, 2019). Participation is one attribute of efficiency and is critical when it is highly skewed towards full engagement. Another indicator of efficiency in service delivery is the actual condition of services. In an efficient system, the technology is modern, the waste management is very sustainable while the general service delivery framework is generally laid out and open for public improvement. This system operates within a scope of its works and is largely informed by the need and demand of its citizens (Beyers, 2016). The GCC has had issues highlighting inefficient service delivery.

Having discussed the issues emanating from service delivery at Gweru sub-national authority, there are certain aspects and trends that emanate from the

patterns of service delivery. From that service delivery issues directs the city into certain issues that the city is to face and aspects that can change the operations in the GCC. This section indicates the issues that can are emerging from the discussion and that can be derived.

The first issue that emanates from this issue is that legislation in Zimbabwe has been playing a crucial role in undermining service delivery. Zimbabwean legislation is more inclined towards empowering the government and centralising fiscal power. This is an issue that has had effect on the delivery of services. Legislation implies that all the resources are collected by the government but local authorities are supposed to deliver services to the people. This presents an issue as the policies have finically incapacitated the sub-national levels. Legislation in Zimbabwe, therefore, is one of the major stumbling blocks to service delivery in Zimbabwe's sub-national levels.

The other issue that seems to be stifling service delivery is corruption. If the corruption is not dealt with, it has the potential of worsening the situation. The bad corruption that is happening in the GCC has seen enrichment of the council officials at the expense of services. A continuation of such behaviours can lead to outbreaks of diseases such as cholera, typhoid.

Furthermore, participatory budgeting is another direction that is emanating from the discussion. The GCC has been carrying out exclusive budgeting which has seen the loss of citizen uptake in services. This kind of budgeting has seen residents pointing to the local authority as irresponsible. This is because residents do not understand the need for finances as it is done in closed doors. The local authority will finally become financially grounded if the system continues operating this way. Another direction that is coming from this direction comes from informality due to service deficiency. The citizens can end up operating in a world that is open to them, the informal sector, if they experience systematic exclusion in the day-to-day operations of council. This will lead the GCC to continuously fail to deliver services. This is due to the fact that the urban residents who operate in the informal sector want to enjoy the services that local authorities provide without having to pay for them.

This chapter has constituted a synthesis of the existing situation in the GCC. It has presented a case on the issues that came up during the study. It identified that politics, corruption, and governance related issues have riddled the GCC leading to inefficiencies in service delivery. These issues include national policies, politics, sub-national government policies and the human factor decay. The chapter also identified that: of the existing indicators of efficient service delivery, the GCC have been failing across the board. This situation, if left unattended, will imply a continuation of the poor service delivery systems and might reflect in the health sector as the effects of the poor service delivery. To manage this, the next chapter provides the conclusions and proffer recommendations.

CHAPTER 7: STUDY SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTION

This chapter provides a summary of the study, the conclusions drawn and the recommendations made in relation to service delivery in the context of GCC. This chapter critically presents key issues raised during the study. It presents that GCC has been failing to provide adequate services as a result of financial capacity issues. This is largely linked to the issues of citizen participation and political decisions to slash debts. The chapter further presents other substantive issues in relationship to service delivery in Gweru. The chapter conclude the study paving the way forward with recommendations that focus on ways and approaches to improve service delivery in the City of Gweru.

The gist of the study was an assessment of service delivery in Zimbabwe with a specific focus on GCC. Informed and underpinned by a systematic analysis, the thesis was partitioned into eight chapters critically addressing different but interrelated themes. Chapter 1 was an introduction to the study. The chapter outlined the context and background of the study and giving the statement of the problem. The chapter also presented a comprehensive historiography of Zimbabwe's urban local government service delivery architecture. This was followed by an extensive analysis of the transformation of urban governance from the colonial era to date. The chapter identifies that projections highlight a 60% urban population globally by 2060 therefore giving urban local authorities to improve on service delivery. The chapter points on the significance of developing resilient urban areas and urban systems to fully benefit from the urbanisation rates and effects. This has been stifled in developing countries, for instance, in Zimbabwe; most local authority's substantial revenue is controlled by central government, financially incapacitating the institutions. This has seen various faces of urban problems coming up. The study problem therefore is derived from the evident reduced capacity of GCC to adequately provide services for its residents. From this position of understanding the research problem, the study methodology was also presented. The study was informed by the interpretivist design. As such, this study was largely qualitative. This was through in-depth interviews from key informants from the local authorities and relevant stakeholders. Justification of the qualitative approach is

discussed. The design adopted, the case study design, is discussed. The research questions and propositions are restated. The chapter also discusses the units of analysis, research instruments, population of study and sampling techniques and the data collection procedures. The chapter also discusses issues of data presentation and analysis. It concludes by presenting the architecture of the study.

Chapter 2 has presented the theoretical and the conceptual frameworks that the study is anchored on. The chapter looks into the existing local government and governance systems in the context of Zimbabwe. It presents the various capacities that the local authorities have in the context of service delivery. It identified that once the government fails to satisfy public and private interests, market failures occur. These market failures consequently lead to poor service delivery. As such, there is need to engage various management methods in reducing the potential of market failures. This is presented in feedback systems like systems approach, decentralisation, among others. The chapter provides problems riddling local authorities and service delivery in a broader perspective. As such, in understanding issues of service delivery, the study used four cases. These could be classified as two government systems; federalist systems (United States of America &Australia) and democratic systems (United Kingdom & South Africa).

Having laid the theoretical foundation of the study, chapter 3 focuses on the challenges of local authorities in their quest to deliver services. Firstly, it defines what a sub-national region is, demonstrating, in the process, that the concept has several definitions. The study however adopts the OECD definition of a sub-national region that defines the region as organisations that are legally declared, with own budget and staff and responsibilities that are in most cases defined by law and occur below the central government. From the definition, a discussion of the arguments that existed between advocates for centre and those for local in the context of IGR are presented. It is from this aspect that the first challenge of market failures is presented. Here, the common goods (services) are forsaken over central government interests. The study presents an example of the efficiencies of sub-national governments in United States of America. The study then presents various challenges and strengths of the four cases studies highlighted in chapter 3.

Having done that: the chapter narrows down to focus on the challenges in service delivery. The first aspect is the definition of services which are defined as both tangible and intangible goods and services like roads, transport infrastructure, roads, health, water infrastructure, sanitation, housing, natural disasters management, environment, public spaces, land-use management that are meant to satisfy human needs. It highlights existing challenges in countries like South Africa which range from issues of capacity (financial, institutional, technical and conceptual) and political interference among others. In Zimbabwe, service delivery covers aspects, such as; transport, land-use, health, housing, public services, the environment, water, health, sanitation, public spaces and parks.   The chapter raises challenges like inefficiencies giving the case of Harare's waste collection systems, financial challenges, economic environment, under-pricing of services among others. From the challenges, the chapter presents an important aspect of this study that is what efficient service delivery is all about. It uses the World Bank (2016)'s performance indicators on service delivery. After that: the chapter offered approaches to which service delivery could be improved in.

From the discussion of challenges, policy and legislative frameworks that guide service delivery in Zimbabwe were presented as chapter 4. The first mother body of law to be discussed is the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. 20 of 2013. The chapter highlights that the Constitution provides various rights to the governments, both local and central. The Constitution provides local governments autonomy that is not fully classified. The chapter also highlights the acts that are used to manage and provide services like the Urban Councils Act [Chapter 29:15]; Regional Town and Country Planning Act [Chapter 29.12], the Public Health Act Chapter (15:09), the Education Act Chapter (25:04), the Shop Licences Act Chapter(14:07) and the Public Finance Management Act [Chapter 22.19]. All these acts give local authorities rights to manage and provide services for their jurisdiction and to collect revenue. The ambiguity in the degree of autonomy in local authorities implies that local authority continues to operate without the rights over finances in their areas. This has reduced the capacity of the local authorities as institutions in service delivery. The chapter also presents the various roles of councillors in local authorities and the role and powers of local authorities as highlighted by the Constitution. The chapter further

presented various rights and responsibilities of the local authorities in Zimbabwe as stipulated in various acts.

Chapter 5 has specifically focused on the institutional submissions in relation to service delivery in the City of Gweru. The chapter presents findings as to opinions on why GCC has been struggling to provide adequate services. The chapter presents a brief context of Gweru's presentation in the context of Zimbabwe and in the context of its province. Being the Midlands Provincial capital, Gweru is argued to be shouldering the populations and problems of the whole province. Arguments from the city authorities present that the GCC has been stifled by capacity issues largely because residents owe them as much as $54 million dollars in revenue. The issues of revenue were also attributed to issues of capacity to collect the revenue. The GCC did not have adequate technology to collect its revenues. As such, most of their institutional capacity is depleted. The City Council has a 25-year-old Master Plan that no longer responds to the needs of the residents. The Council also operates with 2 refuse collection trucks for the whole city while in terms of water they have an unfinanced need to augment the two system. The city has only managed to resurface 27 km of their 1300 km road network. Furthermore, political battles between council and the administration have been pointed to as another issue in terms of institutional capacity. The GCC councillors pointed to the administrative unit as sabotaging their efforts due to political reasons. As such, the GCC was presented various capacity issues that could stifle service delivery.

Having understood matters from the institutional perspective, there was need to understand the residents' opinions on service delivery in Gweru. The study identified that the residents of Gweru were bitter in about the way GCC had been handling services delivery issues. Several residents raised issues of poor governance in GCC. They pointed out issues like corruption within local authority officials and this was supported by one of GCC's strategic plan documents (2017) that concurs with the public opinion. The public also blamed the city for misusing funds and overpaying its employees and not focusing on service delivery as its core mandate. This again was corroborated by the fact that the GCC had a wage bill of $1.4 million while their revenue collection was $1.2 million implying that they did not have even enough

revenue to pay employees. In return, residents were seen to be sabotaging the efforts as they retaliated by not paying their rates. This further incapacitated the local authority making service delivery hard, if not impossible, for the GCC.

Chapter 7 is constitutive of a synthesis of the whole study. It amalgamates the ideas from chapter 1 to the last chapter outlining relevant conclusions. It is presented through a recommendation matrix that highlights the key issues raised during the study. Issues of governance like budgeting, corruption and revenue collection, among others, were raised in the chapter. The discussions were done in the context and in relationship to existing literature. Possible meanings and potential problems and key indicators are raised in the chapter, the likely directions if change/no-change is taken in the management and service delivery in the GCC are presented as well.

Having raised the key issues discussed in the summary section, this section is dedicated towards making the conclusions of the study. Global developments have been steering towards a 60% urbanised environment in the next 40 years. The predictions imply a close to 40% increase in urban populations thereby exerting pressure on services. Service delivery has been an issue in developing countries. This can be seen in the context of Gweru, Zimbabwe. Services like waste management, water and sewerage systems, road networks among other services continue to be in a dismal state leading the Minister of Local Government Public Works and National Housing (Government of Zimbabwe) to call Gweru as the worst city in terms of service delivery in Zimbabwe in the year 2018. Local authority officials blame the politicians for cutting rates and incapacitating the local authority financially. Furthermore, issues like government control over most significant sources of revenue have also been blamed. This does not go well with the residents that point out to issues of poor governance with council officials being implicated in corruption, issues of budgeting being done in a less transparent manner. From this state of affairs, it can be seen that service delivery issues in Gweru are linked to a multiplicity of factors. Human factor decay within the GCC is one of the greatest dangers facing service delivery in Gweru. This has faced retaliation by residents through mistrust reducing the revenue sources. Furthermore, the government's central system has also taken

the Local Authorities' major sources of income leaving financial incapacitation as the major problem in service delivery in Zimbabwe.

With the problems and issues raised in the last seven chapters, it becomes essential for one to present opinion as to how the challenges can be managed to improve service delivery in the situation like that of GCC. The recommendations are a fusion of various ideas ranging from those given by research participants to those derived by the researcher from literature and scholarship. This section will proffer the recommendations of how service delivery can be improved in GCC. These range from improving the governance systems to strengthening the financial capacity of the local authority. Within this section, a recommendations matrix will also be presented, tackling issues as they are identified. Issues like corruption, participation, budgeting and citizen trust are highlighted and presented. However, before the presentation of the matrix, four specific recommendations are given which focus on capacity building. The issues of capacity then lead to the development of a more specific issue recommendation focus.

In the context of evident local government, institutional, organisational and strategy laxities, the study recommends structured capacity building programming targeting different grades at council. This should follow a comprehensive capacity needs assessment and mapping to ensure the building and development of requisite capacities that should trigger policy and administrative competence of council. Admittedly, many capacity building programmes have been developed and implemented. However, the extent to which such programmes improved council efficiency is yet to be scientifically proven. It is equally important to argue that much has been written about the essentiality of capacity development in the public sector but little empirical testing of the yields of capacity development has been conducted. GCC in particular and Zimbabwe's local government in general has been a beneficiary of many capacity building programmes inter alia, urban 1 and 2 and RDC Capacity Building Programmes. However, this study contends that the evaluation of the practical inputs of these programmes in the service delivery matrix has not been comprehensively undertaken. This study, therefore recommends structured formative and summative evaluation

of capacity development underpinned by a systems model with a clear definition of inputs, processes and outputs. This ensures that not only is relevant capacity targeted but that the results of the efforts should be scientifically tested.

There is a critical need to strike a balance between the demand for local autonomy and discretion and central government's transparency and accountability expectations. This study could not establish a positive correlation between the widening of local policy spaces and improved local policy and administrative competences. Central government should therefore retain a substantial role in the determination and execution of local public policies to ensure that local public policy passes the litmus test to satisfy the three fundamental values (traditionally framed in the three E's; efficiency, effectiveness and equity.) As such, there is need for the government to cede the revenue collection rights to the local authorities to ensure that they are capacitated enough to execute their core duties.

Political contestations around devolution are at the centre of a seemingly controversial political parties-led discourse that appears to lack an underpinning ideological and economic development agenda. The study strongly argues that the conception of devolution in Zimbabwe's political discourse sounds erudite and scientific. It seems the only available framework to achieve it then becomes federalism. However, it is empirically tested that young states often suffer the vagaries of 'over-devolution' which not only dislocates existing unitary infrastructures, as in the case of Zimbabwe, but may lead to state failure drugged either through secessionism or provincial parochialism. This argument becomes more critical considering that the current state of devolution in the Constitution seems more of a federative agenda morphed into the Constitution carrying the baggage of secessionism. While consequentialist and deontological arguments were submitted by scholars such as Ncube (2011) to justify the dividends of devolutionary frameworks, this study revealed that devolution in Zimbabwe is intoxicated by regionalised scholarship which appears to divorce it as a universal national development aspect. A broad modelling paradigm should therefore seek to give devolution a national emblem which soaks it in national value system

while framing it to promote equalisation, promote allocative and productive efficiency which are all hallmarks for national development.

Contemporary planning theories acknowledge the value of community participation in the urban development processes, suggesting that community involvement has the potential to achieve a more sustainable outcome. Research in this field supported by the findings of this study indicates that citizen participation can generate trust, credibility and commitment regarding the implementation of policies. The essential consensus among policy analysis professionals in the study is that the rational model of public policy-making represents the standard normative approach for developing and analysing public policy. The entrenched position now taken by participatory planning in urban planning practice has made the call for community participation in the planning process now higher than ever. Evidence of low participation in key council processes such as strategic planning and budgeting has rendered the outcomes mere management tools and less of community development instruments. Residents and experts raised a strong argument that councils seek participation to ensure compliance of processes with the law. It appears the community lack ownership of council budgets as the processes in developing such are exclusionary. The study recommends a standard input-output framework for community participation that is measurement-oriented with marked threshold per process. Table 8.1 provides a snapshot of the issues emerging and the recommendations needing to be implemented to achieve the desired outcomes.

Table 7. 1: Issue-Recommendations-Action Matrix (Author, 2019)

Issue	Description of Issue	Responsibility	Desired Outcome
Corruption	Local authority employees have been implicated in corruption. This has had an effect on the resident trust reflecting on the revenue and rate payment sheets.	GCC needs to improve on the ethics training of their employees.	Improved residents trust and increased revenues and payment of rates.
Budgeting	Budgeting has been largely focused on payment of local	GCC needs to improve on budgeting and focusing on core-	Citizen oriented and responsive budgets.

	authority employees' wages leading to negligence on the provision of services. Local authority failing to disclose their budgets to residents and has a clear lack of transparency.	business.	
Public Participation	The local authority has been blamed for failing to engage residents in planning and budgeting. Most developments are done with council authorities without the people.	GCC needs to start engaging the residents in all planning and budgeting related issues.	Public opinions and contributions fostering sense of ownership as such improving public trust on local authority.
Revenue collection.	The GCC has been failing to collect revenue from the residents and ratepayers leaving the local authority being owed up to $54 million.	GCC needs to improve on revenue collection strategies and improve on budgeting to enhance trust.	Improved revenue and income for the local authority.
Devolution	Local authorities are de-capacitated to collect revenue in the areas of jurisdiction with essential revenue taxes like roads being taken by the government.	Government of Zimbabwe needs to develop a devolution framework that empowers local authorities and give them autonomy over their areas of jurisdiction.	Financial and administrative autonomy leading to improved revenues and service delivery.
Ratepayers' Trust	The residents and ratepayers of Gweru have lost trust in the local authority thereby not paying the local authority what they owe.	Residents and ratepayers in Gweru need to respond to their debts to improve on the revenue and increase local authority funds to capacitate them into delivering services.	Increased clearing of debts and reduced council debtors.
Capacity	The GCC has been operating with two refuse collection trucks for the entire city	The GCC has to improve on its technical capacity	Improved service delivery.

The recommendations matrix presents six issues that are presented in this section. The first is the issue of corruption. Corruption has been pointed as

one of the major drawbacks in service rendering in the GCC. From this synopsis, there are many inefficiencies that have been attributed to corruption. The issuing out of permits, the failure to account for 2000 litres of fuel given to them for the rehabilitating of roads all highlights a huge issue around corruption. This was also be highlighted in the GCC 2017 strategic plan. To manage this issue, there is need to manage issues of corruption through introducing human factor improvement programmes. Furthermore, there is dire need for the tightening of financial and all possible systems weakness to reduce the chances of corruption. Paying council employees in time and adequately can also solve the problem of corruption.

The other issue that was raised was that of budgeting. The GCC has had serious priority issues when it comes to budgeting. It was highlighted that on the local authority budget, there was a focus on payment of salaries than the core business of the local authority that is service delivery. The government was forced to give conditions on the local authority grants of 30/70 ratio salaries/services respectively. In this regard, the GCC needs to reorient their efforts towards improvement of the budgeting process. Budgets should respond to citizen needs. This can be done through citizen engagement in the budgeting process rather than keeping budgets secret like they have been blamed for by some of the residents.

Public participation has also proven to be an issue within the jurisdiction of the City of Gweru. This was linked to issues of budgeting, permits and other processes that the local authority carries out. Local authority has done many the planning processes that require consultations but have been done within closed doors. This has left residents losing trust in the local authority and acting against council efforts. As such, to improve on services, the GCC has to engage the residents in the process of development. This can be done through holding consultations and actually engaging residents through various residents trust organisations. This will improve on the way the residents perceive the local authority. This has the potential of improving the rate payment on the part of residents and ratepayers and citizen responsiveness.

Furthermore, revenue collection seems to be a serious challenge in GCC. This is reflected through the levels of debtors that the City Council has. The local

authority can solve most of its rehabilitation projects if the residents and ratepayers pay what they owe to the city. This, however, is not materialising because the city does not have enough capacity to adequately collect their revenue. Furthermore, the history of the local authority in abusing funds has also been pointed as the reason behind the unresponsive nature of the residents and ratepayers. As such, there is need to capacitate the local authority to be able to collect its debts. The first is the increase of staff members and improvement on technology. While the issue of amount of money owed is clear, the distribution of debtors is not clear. Furthermore, the GCC needs to focus on restoring confidence as it is one of the reasons behind non-compliance from the residents and ratepayers. Residents and ratepayers are reluctant to pay for services that the local authority is failing to provide.

Another issue that affects service delivery in local authorities is the issue of capacity to raise finances to fund for the delivery of the services. The Constitution of Zimbabwe provides for devolution but does not give the disaggregation of power mechanisms. As such, financial powers are all centralised particularly of the significant sectors like roads. This has seen significant amounts that can be useful in the delivery of services going to the government. Consequently, this reflects on service delivery. As such, there is need to develop a proper framework as to how devolution should be done in Zimbabwe. This will help in improving the revenue in local authorities and also on the service delivery of the same jurisdictions.

One important element that the GCC has lost is citizen trust. Residents in Gweru do not believe in the local authority due to failure to provide services. With waste lying everywhere, sewage flowing into rivers and potholes all over the roads, the residents have no reason to trust the local authority. This has reflected through reduced participation both in terms of meetings and payment of rates. This has seen the council debtors increasing their debt by 2.4 million in a year. This implies further lag on services. Therefore, there is need for the local authority and the residents to work towards improving their trust and interaction. The local authority has to provide services and reduce focus on payment of salaries while the residents should trust the local authority.

Capacity building is another important area of focus for GCC. While financial capacity and institutional capacities have been discussed in the context of budgets and governance, GCC needs to work on the technical capacity as well. This can be seen through the machinery and equipment that GCC has. GCC has been operating with two refuse collection truck for the whole city. The city has also been failing to service other trucks that are not working proving how technically incapacitated GCC is. As such, there is need to improve on the technical capacity of the local authority through purchasing relevant machinery and equipment. Focus should also be on ICT to improve towards e-governance.

Following the discussion and recommendations made on how to develop a service delivery system that operates smoothly in the context of Zimbabwe, the following model was developed. It places service delivery as the duty of the local authority but under the spotlight of the citizens and government. This entails improving public participation and adding participatory budgeting. After that: local authorities should be capacitated in all aspects. Politicians should also be given the powers to monitor but not of overriding decisions (Figure 8.1).
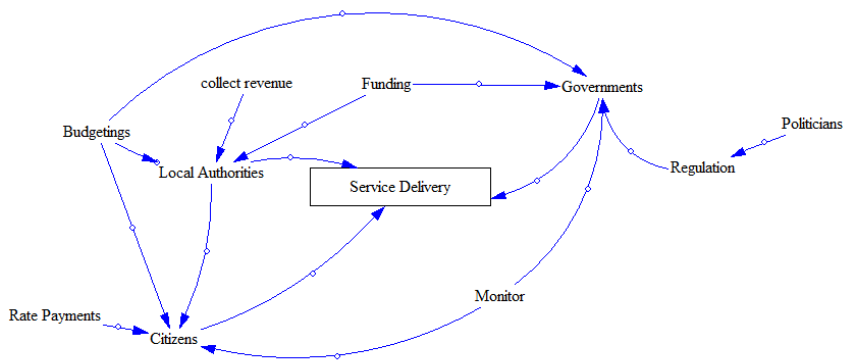

Figure 7. 1: Sub-national Level Service Delivery Model (Authors, 2019).

From the model, the citizens have the duty of paying rates, monitor developments and assess the extent to which services are rendered. The citizens are also expected to participate in budgeting and through payment of

rates and giving input on programmes to be implemented. The Government has a duty to provide funding through grants, monitor local authorities, regulate the operation of local authorities. The politicians play a part in managing regulatory frameworks and operate within the vicinity of the government away from local authority business. The local authority then delivers the actual services, fund for services, collect revenue and budget with the residents.

The issue of handling complaints is an important part of service delivery in local government. From the FGD results, the respondents indicated that they have not managed to institute complaints to council due to limited interaction with the council on pertinent service delivery issues that affect them. It is therefore pertinent for urban local authorities to put in place robust mechanisms to handle complaints from their stakeholders to champion inclusive service provision and enhancing citizen participation. Handling feedback and complaints is an essential part of any organisation's commitment to being accountable to its stakeholders. The process is, however, a learnt skill whose judicious application is a mammoth and daunting task. From the study results, of the marginal proportion of the respondents who had managed to register their complaints with the councils limited feedback was given to the residents rendering the complaints non effective and not relevant to the community needs for improved service provision. The study recommends the development of a software application to be used as an interactive application. This should provide a virtual platform for council to interact with residents and at the same time residents can institute their complaints on the application. Follow up tracking can then be used to track solutions on the application.

The study recommends council to review its budget framework in the context of the guidelines of the International Budget Partnership, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank guidelines. The ideal open budgeting process should encompass open citizen participation, accountability and transparency mechanisms that allow for the unfettered access to decision-making in the budgeting process continuum.

It is recommended that a study on measuring the efficiency of council be conducted. Local authorities, through their associations, have been ranking

councils in terms of their effectiveness in key service areas. However, experts have argued against the criteria as both unscientific and aprotic. This study recommends that a research should seek to develop a scientific instrument to measure and rank local authorities for effectiveness.

A study should be carried out to develop a model for intergovernmental fiscal equalisation. The model should be the basis upon which the national government should anchor its fiscal decentralisation. The model should seek to balance the objectives of devolution as provided in terms of section 264-266 and the low fiscal capacities of sub-national governments. The argument underpinning the desirability of this model is that vertical fiscal imbalance is a structural issue and needs to be corrected by reassignment of revenue and expenditure responsibilities among different levels of government. The vertical fiscal imbalance is descriptive of the variance between central government's revenues and expenditures against those of sub-national governments. Typically, the variance is in favour of the central government and is bridged by a framework for vertical equalisation. Furthermore, the existence of horizontal fiscal imbalances across provinces and local authorities within Zimbabwe results in capacity variations in the provisions of public services. The model should therefore be derived from a juxtaposition of the fiscal needs and fiscal capacities of sub-national governments against the national GDP in the context of key demographic factors as stated. The following 5 variables are recommended parameters within which the model could be developed: (i) Total amount to be allocated as declared in the national budget (ii) Poverty index (considered here as the equivalence of the Poverty Prevalence Rate), (iii) population of the area and (iv) the size of the local economy measured as a proportion of the national GDP (determined using the revenue/GDP ratio) and (v) estimated value of the natural resource endowments of the area.

It is further suggested that research to test the level of customer satisfaction with council services be carried out. Public services are rarely tested to determine customer satisfaction using scientific instruments as is the case with private entities. Private organisations, in pursuit of profit and as a mechanism to shrug competition, subject their products to a scientific check for customer satisfaction as the basis for product differentiation. With

increased calls for good governance, public managers are pursuing their organisational, professional and personal goals within an agency world characterised by tight money, uppity workers and cutting-edge competition that is threatening and, in some cases, breaking monopolies over traditional exclusive public service areas (refer to Chapter 3). The instrument should, therefore seek to measure the extent to which services provided are complying with minimum standards, for instance in health and meeting the quality and quantity specifications

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Annexure 1: Second Schedule (Section 198)
Powers Of Councils

1	Land, buildings and works
2	Open spaces
3	Recreational facilities
4	Show grounds
5	Trees
6	Conservation and farming
7	Cultivation and farming
8	Grazing
9	Clearing of land
10	Stock pens and dip tanks
11	Slaughter-houses
12	Markets and agricultural products
13	Sale of products
14	Conduct of liquor undertakings
15	Manufacture and sale of mahewu
16	Application of controlled moneys
17	Charges
18	Plant and machinery
19	Roads, bridges, dams ,etc.
20	Decorations and illuminations
21	Advertising and hoardings
22	Public conveniences
23	Effluent or refuse removal and treatment
24	Control of pests
25	Hospitals and clinics
26	Ambulances
27	Crèches
28	Maternity and child welfare services
29	Family planning services
30	Charitable institutions
31	Maintenance allowances
32	Funerals
33	Grants to charities, sports etc

34	Grant to local authorities
35	Educational institutions
36	Youth centres
37	Employment bureaux
38	Libraries, museums, public halls, botanical and zoological gardens
39	Orchestras and bands
40	Aerodromes and helicopter stations
41	Boats
42	Publicity
43	Public entertainment
44	Congresses
45	Coursesfor councillors and employees
46	Subscriptions to associations
47	Travelling expenses
48	Loans to employees for transport
49	Insurance
50	Mementoes
51	Coats of arms and seal
52	Freedom of the municipality
53	Monuments, statues and relics
54	General

Annexure 2: Third Schedule Sections 102 145 (1) 2, 27 And 2.32

Matters In Respect of Which Council May Make By-Laws.

PART I

GENERAL

1	Control of service, institution or thing
2	Control of collections
3	Inspections
4	Fees
5	Offences and penalties
	PART II PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL AND FINANCIAL MATTERS
6	Proceedings of meetings
7	Disclosure of documents and publication proceedings
8	Financial
9	Contracts
10	Tenders
11	Capital development fund
12	Estate account
13	Allowances for municipal councillors
	PART III CONTROL OVER PROPERTY
14	Protection of council property
15	vegetation
16	Conservation of natural resources
17	Congregation, entry and parking on council property
18	Permits for certain activities on council land
19	Removal of unauthorised buildings
20	Advertisements
21	Depreciation of property
22	Overcrowding
23	Regulation and control of occupation and use of land or buildings
24	Excavations
25	Masts and poles
26	Hedges and trees

79	Effluent and refuse removal
80	Cleansing of private sewers, streets and yard Cr0ps,vegetation,rubbings and waste material
81	

	PART XIV FUNCTIONS, PERFORMANCES, EVENTS AND MUSEUMS
111	Performance dangerous to the public.
112	Amusement.
113	Open-air events
	PART XV FIRES, COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS AND EXPLOSIVES
114	Fires
115	Bonfire and burning of rubbish.
116	Combustible or inflammable material and explosives

Synopsis

The study critically presented in this intellectual output, explores the service delivery system in Zimbabwe's sub-national levels using Gweru City Council (GCC) as a case study. The study has brought to the fore the fact that while the structure of sub-national governments could be different, the majority of sub-national governments are designed in a way that advances the interests of the central government or respective political parties with the majority in the local government elections. Service delivery challenges range from institutional, policy-related, environmental and financial challenges. The study establishes that the following measures can be taken to address service delivery challenges; special service districts, inter-municipal cooperation, privatisation and the reform of legislation and improving service delivery governance. Issues such as corruption, mismanagement of funds, political interference and compressed fiscal capacities have been seen to be stifling service delivery in the GCC. From the responses, it is highlighted that the reasons behind failure of the public to pay service charges to the local authority was largely linked to the public's perception of the state of service delivery in the Gweru City Council. Furthermore, the public professed that the local authority was reneging on their responsibilities in terms of service delivery and implementing unilateral decisions without consulting the residents on issues that affects their constituency. The study has found that the residents view service delivery as the responsibility of the local authority with the residents and the government assuming the watchdog positions. The study recommends that there is need for public participation and participatory budgeting. Furthermore, local authorities should be capacitated in all aspects while politicians could also be given the powers to monitor the operations of the local authorities without interfering with their processes through such acts as overriding decisions.

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