# Prioritizing Political Banditry than Good Governance: Rethinking Urban Governance in Zimbabwe

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## Abstract

*Zimbabwe local government system between 1980 and the late 1990's was robust and envied by many in Africa. However, the birth of multiparty democracy and the fight to remain dominant changed the political landscape and result in the recentralization of administrative authority and political power. Political banditry was still borne and was nurtured in various types of incubators until the year 2000 when the Zimbabwean urban communities begun to be victims of a system they failed to condemn at its adoption. The aim of the research is to describe the concept of political banditry, how it is experienced and its effects on the application of democratic good governance in Zimbabwe. Content review was complimented with primary data in this qualitative research. It was found out that political banditry is there and it is perpetrated through, political appointments, restructuring of local institutions, violence, political parties also are supporting informal violent interests groups and recentralization of administrative and political authority and power. The agony is that the urban communities have been marooned or raped by these political violence and administrative aptitudes. Urban communities now cannot tame the beast they helped to create over the years (political banditry). It was indicated that representative democracy seems to be a failure in Zimbabwe. The structures are there but they have been captured by political bandits to serve their individualistic interests. Representative democracy needs to be complimented by deliberation so that the people who own government and the ensuing democratic processes could be involved in determining and reviving the institutions, the will, the commitment and the application of democratic good governance in Zimbabwean urban areas.*

## *Introduction*

Zimbabwean urban areas are governed by one law, that is, the Urban Council Act and this legislation has bee changed continuously since independence from the Urban councils Act (Chapter 214), Urban Council Act (Chapter 29:15) and finally to the Local Government Laws Amendment Act, 2008. There is currently effort to change again this Act because the stakeholders believe that the existing piece of legislation gives unlimited powers to the Minister of Local Government. It can also be pointed out that the new constitution under design will attempt to describe the type of local government system good for and applicable in Zimbabwe. The definition of Zimbabwean local government system in the constitution may help to control the authority of the minister concerned. An example is that the Minister responsible for local governments may not be conferred the power or authority to change the Local Government Act without a referendum or approval of parliament. This system of control will greatly bring sanity to the area of local government administration which has become illusive for many years. The changes that were effected so far were dictated by both administrative and political pressures. However, politics has played a considerably big role in changing the dynamics of urban good governance in Zimbabwe. From the 1980 to about 1995 the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) (ZANU-PF) dominated the politics of Zimbabwe. I mean Zimbabwe was basically a defacto one party state and not a de jure not by because the citizens wanted the approach but because of fear of the political system or environment and also because of the previous brutality of the colonial regimes. ZANU (PF) was a better devil politically and administratively than political occupation and colonial racial discriminations that were ultimately portrayed in non-development, segregation in provision of health, education, residential areas in urban areas and the division of the areas outside urban areas into Tribal Trust Lands for Africans and larger Commercial areas for whites colonialists.

The urban areas and commercial farming areas because they were demarcated for profitable commercial activities, were under direct white colonial administrations and the poor Tribal Trust Lands (later renamed District Councils) had poor soils, rainfall and were tsetse fly infested and these areas were allocated to the blacks. It was this political and administrative segregation that provoke the war of liberation that ultimately end up with the creation of the state of Zimbabwe. Thus from the beginning the majority of Zimbabweans supported the war of liberation with the intension of getting freedom – freedom from all oppression from the political systems and institutions that had enslaved them for many years. Freedom was the binding alternative to say the least. However, it seems as if after independence freedom has become evasive as ever. The ZANU-PF Government has changed colours by replacing freedom and development with political banditry, centralization of power, murder, concentration of land and economic privileges in the hands of few ZANU-PF Party cronies and eradication of freedom of speech and association. To sum the political situation it is befitting to say that Zimbabwe has a dictatorship government. This dictatorial approach to governance has left many institutions in limbo either because of financial bankruptcy or administrative incapacity because of too much interference from central government. This research is focusing on how the interventions of the Ministry of Local Government in the local affairs of urban councils has influenced or affect the implementation of good governance in such institutions. What seem eminent is that the Ministry of Local Government has left the decentralization approach in favour of recentralization and political banditry in the administration of local authorities.

Democratic decentralization has been preferred for reasons that include administrative, fiscal, and political decision-making. Decentralization is justified if it promotes democratic good governance and furthermore participatory approaches to development. It is also argued by experts that decentralization depending on the specific type adopted can bring government closer to the people and can also enhance communities' participation and interaction with local government officers in the affairs of the locality, (Mawhood, 1983, Sharma, 1995, Matlosa, 1998, Olowu, D, and Wunch, 2004, Cheema, 2005). Moyo (2010) expresses that decentralizing governance should not be seen as an end in itself; it can be a means for creating more open, responsive, and effective local government and for enhancing representational systems of community-level decision making. By allowing local communities and regional entities to manage their own affairs and through facilitating closer contact between central and local authorities, effective systems of local governance enable responses to people's needs and priorities to be heard, thereby ensuring that government interventions meet a variety of local social needs. Zimbabwe's local government system was considered worldwide as one of the best systems in Africa, (Government of Zimbabwe, 2004). It was an immaculate and robust local government system cherished by many in the sub-region before disaster form ZANU-PF political machinations struck.

In many developing countries, for example, Uganda, Ethiopia, Zambia, South Africa, Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, the Philippines and Mozambique and including Zimbabwe, the ends of local government are often unclear and multidimensional including the promotion of local democracy and participation in national politics and development; providing structural framework for the provision of local services, promoting local administrative efficiency and in rather few cases, providing a framework for local economic development, (Rambanapasi, 1992). Fundamentally therefore, local authorities (and their lower tier structures) are a creation of the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ), created to execute its efforts in terms of reaching out to the people at the very grassroots of society.

The performance of these sub-national institutions has continued to deteriorate over the past years as the country continued to witness signals of administrative ineptitude on the part of councils, (Institute for Democratic Alternative for Zimbabwe, 2010). The daily complains or criticisms of the performance of urban councils by communities, local and national politicians and civil society organizations especially in the media could be an indication of stakeholders' reservations with the current governance performance of these institutions. The need to improve good governance in urban councils has continuously irked both the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) (ZANU – PF) and the Movement for Democratic Change dominated local governments between the years 1980 and 2010, (Institute for Democratic Alternative for Zimbabwe, 2010). Continued political banditry from the Ministry of Local Government has left opposition politicians, the lay man, civil society and civil organizations and scholars worried but with a deem view of what will happen to the local government system of Zimbabwe.

**Dialoguing political banditry in urban areas of Zimbabwe**

The concept is born from two words, that is, politics and bandit. However, politics is a normal and acceptable way of life throughout the world. Politics generally indicates competition for political space. It is also competition for control of a constituent through use of propaganda and truthful information. Thus politics could be viewed as platform provided by the government to allow politicians competing to communicate their policies, programmes and projects to society so that ultimately society or communities can choose the political structure that will more likely their perceptions and interests. It is like showcasing some thing good that will come in future or that has been done and that will be improved on. A bandit on the other hand is an unwanted individual. He/she is someone who is against a legal system that is existing even if that system does not necessarily mean is wrong. The idea is that the bandit will use violence like murders, destroying communities' shelter and livelihoods and community structures to cause mayhem.

The issue of political banditry is special for Zimbabwe because the bandit is not an outside force but a political party, government and the politicians the urban communities were supporting yesterday. They have become political bandits because the aspirations now contradict normal country or Zimbabwean communities' aspirations. They party or parties are now murdering or killing the innocent individuals to force these communities to support them. If readers could be taken back to "Murambatsvina" WHEN even the United Nations felt remorse to the extent of deliberating the issue and sending a representative to Zimbabwe despite the fact that that representative was received with utter animosity. The Zimbabweans know and understand democracy. They vote every four years for their representatives.  They problem is that these representatives, political structures, government and certain interest group are no longer accountable to the people, transparent in their political dealings, do not respect the rule of law or political and social freedoms and some of them no longer represent people's interests.

This is a fiasco where the institutions that are tasked with supporting and defending people's rights are the very institutions now oppressing the greatest majority of the Zimbabwean society. The people now do not now what to do. They are afraid of the state repressive security department, the intelligence, the army and the police who are openly compromising the country laws for the benefit of specific interests that include political parties, individuals and political interests groups. The perpetrators are not hiding anything but they are using political structures and system that are available to them. They are political bandits because they are manipulating these structures corruptly to advantage the selfish interests. Society has been maroon by government for the benefit of individuals in government. Political banditry like this is dangerous because even if it is easy to see to deal with it needs cautiousness, international support and meticulous system that collect information and train communities to regain control of their rights and freedoms.  The research was thus motivated to write this paper because he had viewed the situation in urban Zimbabwe and concluded that what is happening is not democracy at all but political banditry that is humiliating the citizens in a parochial form and political machinations portrayed by ZANU-PF Party and other political groupings as democracy at work. Thus in this cases political banditry is a situation whereby the politicians could do certain wrong things knowingly bout they do it for their personal objectives or gains. It includes, corruption, stealing, fraud, violence, murders and killings, manipulation of laws, disrespect of rule of laws, non accountability to the constituencies, lack of transparency and so on. These mentioned aspects are generally against the establishment of good governance at the local and national sphere of Zimbabwe.

**Research problem and objectives**

The current situation of highly charged political tense and a situation were central government intervenes willy-nilly is tantamount to a fiasco situation that deserves immediate salvaging from the neutral, affected and infected Zimbabweans and related civil organizations. The focus of the research is to unveil the different strategies employed by central government to intervene into local affairs and in addition to analyze how this intervention is hampering local good governance implementation.  The current public management of urban councils is like a satire in the book "Animal Farm"  were George Owel portray the powerful individuals in a society like the pigs specifically like Napoleon (in the Zimbabwean Situation those in ZANU PF Party)  could urinate on other people's plans (Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the impoverished).  The question is 'How is this theatre unveiling?"

**Research methodology**

The analytical research data was derived from four Provinces' biggest cities of Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare and municipality of Bindura. Primary data gather through a questionnaire and secondary data from content reviews was used to deveop the research article. Content reviews included reading and analyzing data from internal urban councils' documents and media reports.  A target population of 98 was used from which a sample of 48 respondents was drawn using simple random sampling technique.

**Reflections on the definition of democratic good governance**

Citing the United Nations (UN, 1996), Dool (2005) articulates the definition of urban good governance as the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, plan and manage the common affairs of the city. It is a continuous process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action can be taken. It includes formal institutions as well as informal arrangements and the social capital of citizens. Ferlie, at al (2007) summarized the different definitions of governance in an attempt to show diversity and divergence of views. Governance is the structure of political institutions. Governance is the shift from bureaucratic state to the hollow state or to third-party government (Milward and Provan 2000; Salamon 2002, Rhodes 1997). Governance is market-based approaches to government (Kettle 1993, Nye and Donahue 2000). Governance is the development of social capital, civil society and high levels of citizen participation (Hirst 2000, Kooiman 2001; Sorensen 2004). Governance is the work of empowered, muscular, risk-taking public entrepreneurs (Osborne and Gaebler 1992).  Governance is Tony Blair's "third way", a political packaging of the latest ideas in new public management, expanded forms of political participation and attempts to renew civil society (Newman 2001). Governance is the new public management or managerialism (Kernaghan, Marson and Borins 2000). Governance is public sector performance (Heinrich and Lynn 2000).

Governance is inter-jurisdictional cooperation and network management (Frederickson 1999; O'Toole 2003; Peters and Pierre 1998). Governance is globalization and rationalization (Pierre 2000). Governance is corporate oversight, transparency and accounting standards (Monks and Minow 2004; Jensen 2000; Blair and MacLaury 1995). Kigongo-Bukenya (2011) on the other hand states that good governance generally connotes how public institutions conducts public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee human rights, accountability, transparency and  public participation in decision-making. Good governance emphasizes interaction among people, structures, processes and traditions in providing sound leadership, direction, oversight and control of an entity in order to ensure that its purpose is achieved and that there is proper accounting of the conduct of affairs, the use of resources and the results of the activities. Good governance is the corner stone of transparency, integrity, honesty, loyalty, commitment to genuine profit of humanity. Good governance is ethical behaviour in public and private life, (Ibid).

Khandakar Qudrat-I Elahi (2009) explains that while governance is understood as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authorities to manage a country's affairs, good governance are the processes and structures that guide political and socio-economic relationships. The absence or extent of good governance is implied by several characteristics, for example, participation means all men and women have voices in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions. Rule of law refers to fair and impartially enforced legal frameworks. Transparency indicates the processes, institutions and information accessible directly to those concerned. Responsiveness means the reactions of institutions and processes to the demands and the concerns of stakeholders. Good governance is consensus-oriented meaning it creates broad consensus through mediations among different stakeholders. Equity means all men and women have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being. Effectiveness and efficiency indicates that processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources.

Accountability means decision makers in government, the private sector and civil society organizations are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. Strategic vision expresses that leaders and the public have a broad and long-term perspective on good governance and human development, along with a sense of what is needed for such development. There is also an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which that perspective is grounded. Interrelated, these core characteristics are mutually reinforcing and cannot stand-alone.

The UNDP (2000) posits that one survey in Zimbabwe discussed good governance in terms of attaining a good society characterized by, positive relationships at all levels based on equity, understanding, cooperation and mutual respect, respect for the citizens' political, economic and social rights, fair distribution of resources, maximum development of individuals and communities, a strong and committed leadership as well as peace and democracy. It is further stated that good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on a broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources. In urban development and management, the future is not some place the nation is going to, but one the nation is creating. Therefore, good vision, planning and capacity building on the part of city fathers and managers are necessary. Political bickering and destruction by ministers and political parties at the detriment of forward planning and good governance is an unfortunate tolerance on the part of the residents.

## 2.3 Dialoguing the philosophy of good governance

Saltzstein, Copus, Sonenshein and Skelche (2008) indicate that Woodrow Wilson (1887) looked favourably upon governance in England and Germany, where he found greater efficiency and professionalism. He argued that the superior techniques of management found in Europe could be applied directly in the United States by separating policy and administration and by employing professional, non-partisan administrators rather than individuals appointed through the spoils system. The intentions of Wilson's reform movement were epitomized in the council-manager plan. This was intended to increase the efficiency and economy of the internal operations of the city administration and promote decision -making in the overall public interest of the city rather than the partisan agendas of particular groups. When a researcher views Wilson's ideas in the 1880's and then compare with Zimbabwe's leaders in the 2000's the issue of nation building and perceptions on development comes into play. In Zimbabwe, the politicians have openly supported bureaucrats who are political by supporting the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF). To these leaders or politicians, a good bureaucrat is a ZANU- PF supporter meaning that there is no distinction between politics and administration. In addition, ZANU-PF Government because of this stance has appointed only ZANU-PF supporters or politicians to positions of power at national and local levels. They despise the ideas of Max Weber, Herbert Simon and Chester Barnard and many other scholars who treasured the neutrality of bureaucrats in performing public business.

The politicization of the public offices that include urban councils has incited controversy and acrimony and ultimately resulted in the dysfunctioning of the local governments. In Zimbabwe urban councils, 'full council' debates and the conduct of councils' business in general have been politicized. Policy making and management of councils' public goods and services have a political party connotation or ingredient in their outlook. It is unfortunate that when urban council business is divided on party lines the local politicians (councillors) adopt an individual goal as opposed to community or constituents goals and objectives. This is the major reason why the councillors become selfish and corrupt because they become accidentally bigger than the constituents that elected them. They trade ethical behaviour for selfish and immoral individual desires of becoming permanent councillors or national politicians even if it means murdering or supporting murders within communities they represent. The collusion of such politicians and those who are supposed to be bureaucrats has left many urban councils in Zimbabwe bankruptcy financially, policy and good governance wise. The bureaucrats in this situation cannot advise the politicians in council chambers because their tenure or survival as council employees is dependent on rubber stamping or ordinarily supporting Zanu-PF or Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) councillors' policies or political machinations.

Mugabe (UNDP, 2000:86) defined local governance as a process of involving people in the making of decisions, which affect their livelihood in a transparent and accountable manner. It entails the devolution of power and responsibilities upon lower levels of society, encouraging participation, recognizing the diversity of communities and societies, and the promotion of openness and elimination of corruption in managing public resources. It is further reiterated in this report (Ibid), that the issues related to training of elected and permanent officers of urban councils relate very well to the subject of good governance. It is assumed that an informed councillor or executive officers will implement and support the principles of good governance than otherwise. Despite the above definition by the Zimbabwean President he has adopted a dictatorial governance system both at national and local levels.

This only indicates that good governance is not a monopoly of democratic governments but that even dictators can achieve efficiency and effectiveness (sometimes referred to as good public administration) through application of ruthless means. Many Zimbabweans have traded their lives for democracy. Despite death of many democracy activists many have also sort asylum in many countries worldwide. However, despite these observations Zimbabwean leaders particularly those from the ZANU-PF Party still use good governance as a word for and an instrument of propaganda. They portray themselves as champions of democracy and good governance even if their policies and political environment portray otherwise.

Transparency is a major characteristic of good governance. Hyden in Mehde, (2006) argues that governance is the conscious management of regime structures with a view to enhancing the legitimacy of the public realm. An aspect, which is always linked to good governance, is transparency. Transparency is strongly equated with the philosophy of openness. Wright in Mehde (2006) points out that improved transparency and effective mechanisms of evaluation could reveal disparities in the outcomes of benefit of certain groups of people, so that an upgrading of previously relatively badly-treated people is a possible consequence. It therefore, implies; participation in decision-making; involvement of citizens; accountability; answerability and political responsibility, (Du Toit, et al 1998:146). In Zimbabwe transparency has been replaced by autocracy and political banditry. Central Government through the Ministry of Local Government has intervened in local affairs attacking politicians and decisions that contradict ZANU-PF policies and specifically national politicians to the detriment of local democracy and development. In many cases, transparency and participation freedoms have been curtailed by Central Government that has unleashing terror or violence on local politicians through local thugs like Changano in Mbare Suburb of Harare.

Many urban councils have been condemned and dismissed and/or replaced by Management Commissions appointed by the Minister of Local Government. Except the council led by a ZANU-PF Mayor Solomon Tavengwa, many of the councils that were dissolved were led by MDC Mayors or were dominated by MDC Councillors for example, the cases of Mutare, Harare, Victoria Falls and Chitungwiza were under Commission administration by June 2006. In June 2006 all the technocrats in the Commission managing the City of Harare were dismissed but the politicians were not touched or harassed by the Minister of Local Government. This is political banditry because the ZANU-PF Government using its Minister of Local Government is manipulating the status quo at local level to advantage a losing party. These kinds of politics or public administration do not treasure good governance. It does not mean that when one is a MDC Party councillor his/her decisions are retrogressive. The punishing, persecutions, retributions or terrorizing of urban councils dominated by MDC councillors is a complete misnomer because good governance ethics of openness, freedom of communication and participation in decision making are being violated. Another indication of political banditry in the administration of urban councils are the many cases were legally elected councils are destabilized through the appointment of individuals who represent what is called "special interests".

The idea of "special interests group" has been even institutionalized by being included in the urban councils' legislations since the 1990's the time ZANU-PF Party started losing control of the urban constituents to opposition parties like now the ruling Party MDC. The banditry is in the fact that at an election all interests are represented through their political affiliations. Thus individuals are free to chose and elect a candidate from the political parties that represent their interests. The idea of remembering special interests after an election is theft, corruption, dishonesty or fraud that is only bent on benefiting regimes or politicians whose political traits include monocracy, autocracy, violence, thuggery, treachery and inconsistence. Many of the individuals who are being appointed to represent special interests are known ZANU-PF supporters and this can be interpreted to mean that the "special interests" covered by the piece of legislations are ZANU-PF – Party interests. This further contradicts the role of elections in a society or country. The question is "Why should urban councils in Zimbabwe have elections every four years if ZANU-PF Party can manipulate the process and appoint its supporters through back door?"

The majority of the respondents (90%) also argued that when councils are in session valuable time is spent on arguments based on political differences rather than on harmonizing useful and progressive ideas that could be nurtured to bring about development of these municipalities.

Walti, Kubler and Papadopoulos in Mehde (2006) state that it is no coincidence that the governance concept is closely related to the analysis of network structures and that it might even be defined as 'a shorthand for efforts aimed at creating networks and partnerships to enhance both interagency and public-private coordination. Laduer further indicates that the network theory above all indicates the rise of a new logic which accepts the potential of heterarchical inter-relationships to generate emergent patterns of coordination which may replace universal rules imposed from above, (Mehde, 2006).

The constant Central Government intervention into the affairs of urban councils has a centralizing effect. The space available to local politicians, administrators and individual community members becomes limited. Only the realization that opposition parties' supporters are being murdered or violently engaged curtails the space available for freedoms especially the freedom of speech and communications. Good governance in urban areas of Zimbabwe can never be achieved when torture and violence are not condoned. Respect of human rights is barometer to measure the level of civilization in a country. Civilization is an out come of tolerance, respect of human rights, freedoms and a desire to want development in general as opposed to destruction and killing. Networking of individuals and organizations is possible in a situation were freedoms are respected and communities desires are generally the same , that is, the desire for development meaning change from poor living conditions to a qualitatively better living style or situation. In a militarized situation like that of Zimbabwe were even investment meetings that are not initiated or sanctioned by the ZANU-PF Government need to be cleared by police institutions around the country, network is close to impossible. Networking for development is possible were a government creates an enabling environment and it becomes a facilitator of the process. Zimbabwe has lost all the gains it had accrued from decentralizing power and authority to lower level structures of government. Recentralization of power and authority because of fear of opposition political parties' political gains is a typical treachery to openness transparency and freedom of association.

To promote clean good governance, Goel, (2007) maintains that clearly defined ethical standards would also need to be adopted by the civil servants as well as politicians. Moral and ethical behaviour is essential for sustainability of dynamic relationships formed during the conduct of the governance, (Ibid). As a replacement of ethical behaviour Swami Budhananda talks of 'men of character'. The argument is that both those in governments and the public must be men of character. They should respect the laws and the laws they make must be created for the public good and not for the benefit of a few individuals who cherish corruption and individual gains against majority interests or public goals. Ethics are defined by the constitution and subsequent legislations that are designed from it. Too many changes to specific legislations may disadvantage the citizens who may fail to control the political structures that influence such changes. A good example of legislation that has continuously been changed but evaluations show negative advantages to communities and institutional development is the Urban Councils Act. The Act has been changed in 1980 bringing the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 214), again it was changed in 1997 bringing about the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29:15) and it was changed again in 2008 bringing about the Local Government Laws. Currently there is initiative to change again this law. This only indicates that changes to any legislation is not enough but society, civic organizations and various levels of governments need t commit themselves to implementing in full elements of specific legislations. These changes facilitated within short periods did not give enough space to allow for implementation and evaluations of the implications of such legislative changes. The changes in addition, influenced organizational structures, leadership systems and public management. An evaluation of the effects of changes of legislation shows that 80% of the respondents were not happy or did not perceive any direct advantages accruing from the processes.

Budhananda in Goel (2007) argues that when we do not have enough character, in society there will be more quarrel and fight, agitation and unrest, corruption and nepotism than peace and harmony, control and happiness, honesty and uprightness. Budhananda further reposes that lack of enough character will corrupt the taste of the people, nay, of our own children in order to make money by selling goods which would pamper their low and vulgar tastes.  This argument is true for Zimbabwe urban areas where the youth and other groups in society are using violence and murders to get money or certain properties. The youths are no longer industrious or hardworking like the previous groups. They now want easy wealth through dubious and unethical means. In situations where good character is lacking religion will be reduced to soulless ritualism, ethical code will be perverted into sophistry, altruism will become self-aggrandizing social work, and spirituality will be reduced to secularity to hedonism, hedonism to ruination, surer than death, (Ibid).

Dhaliwal (2004) further articulated that the establishment of good urban governance in the world's towns and cities is for only providing people with access to basic social services, promoting decentralized decision-making, improving city environment quality, but at the same time assuring economic growth, job creation, social cohesion, poverty alleviation and equity

Local democratic good governance entails the existence of ethics or laws that facilitate collective action that manage a locality's public affairs and are accountable to local residents. Local governance starts with some expansion of authority for local governments. Without local authority there is no local government nor is it rational for people with serious needs and limited resources to invest in formal local governments (Owulo and Wunch 2004). Ostrom (1997), E. Ostrom (1990), Hyden (1992) and Hyden, Oluwo and Okoth-Ogendo (2000) affirm that governance is developing and operating the "regimes" or the fundamental (constitutive) rules that structure and regulate the relationships among the populace in the management of the public affairs (Ibid). Respondents (78%) contacted on the same issue in urban areas of Zimbabwe indicated that the current laws are biased against certain groups or political parties. Respondents' perceptions were that local government laws lack coherence and are designed to protect short term political gains of certain political parties. Legislations should be crafted to support a certain vision or generally a long term strategic plan to develop a given community. On the other hand Berman (1998) elucidate that the very ethnic fragmentation typical of Africa seems to engender "big man" based patronage that sustains local fragmentation (Ibid).

They (Ibid) additionally reveal that when looked at comprehensively, rules create a structure of permissible and forbidden actions and a set of incentives and disincentives that structure the pattern of governance that occurs among people at the grassroots. It is then important to note that each level at which governance is intended to occur must be understood as a set of rules that do or do not sustain the behaviours and relationships necessary for it to be effective and sustained. Councillors and mayors must in this case be agents of those people (residents), but they remain accountable (and removable) by the people included in the local regime through procedures specified by laws. Oluwo and Wunch (2004) advance the opinion that intergovernmental relations are a key factor affecting the nature of any governance regime. Making rational choice is essential in a democracy and for a democracy to survive. Rationality is critical in discussing good governance because absolute freedom of choice may encourage mobocracy in a state or sub-national structure. Monocracy is eliminated by providing citizens with choice to make decisions currently and in the future and thereby determining their future destines.

Wilson (2011) reflecting on the British system of local governance specified that whereas local government is concerned with the formal institutions of government at the local level, local governance focuses upon the wider processes through which public policy is shaped in localities. It refers to the development and implementation of public policy through a broader range of public and private agencies than those traditionally associated with elected local government. He explains that partnerships, networks and contracts, along with quangos and task forces in Britain have become increasingly important parts of the local political scene during the last decade. This opinion supports respondents' (80%) views that participatory decision-making, networking and freedom of speech is only possible where a regime or a government promotes human rights and rule of law. As already been indicated, a major principle enhancing democracy is decentralization of power and authority. It seems there is a contradiction in Zimbabwe where formal institutions have been abandoned in favour of informal political and administrative organizations. This is done not to increase communications but the government uses the informal structures to evade responsibilities and to usurp power and authority from certain organizations or groups in society. Contrary to much of the prevailing wisdom, Stanyer (1996) reminds social scientists that problems of fragmentation and complexity are not new. Local governance, he argues, has always been a messy business. Local public functions in Britain and other Western countries have always been carried out by local quangos, field administration, local trusts, co-operatives and local firms and these have been noticeable elements in society, economy and political system since industrialization began. The use of organizational forms which are not local government and are narrowly defined has always been a feature of the British system of government, (Ibid).

## 2.5 The link between good governance and institutions

The World Bank (2000a) in Kjaer (2004) and in agreement with UNDP (2000), Hyden in Mehde (2006), Du Toit (1998) and Matlosa (1998) maintains that governance is the institutional capacity of public organizations to provide the public and other goods demanded by a country's citizens or their representatives in an effective, transparent, impartial and accountable manner, subject to resource constraints.

Despite too much party politicking, changes of legislations and dismissals of elected councils    and replacing them with Commissions, about 90% of the respondents in this study indicate that stakeholders in Zimbabwe urban areas are not satisfied with public goods and service delivery. The urban councils since the year 2000 have run bankrupt and thereby becoming seriously incapacitated to provide pertinent services for the urbanites. It is significant to mention that the Habitat Agenda advocates transparent, responsible, accountable, just, effective and efficient governance of towns, cities and metropolitan areas. It is doing so by enabling local leadership, the promotion of democratic rule and stressing the urgency for public authorities to use public resources in all public institutions to further these objectives, (World Bank, 2000a). North (1990) and Hall and Taylor in Kjaer (2004) illuminate the debate on governance by affirming that governance theory has a broad institutional grounding. It is significant then to note that good governance theory is mainly occupied with institutional change and it involves human agency. Thus Kjaer (2004) assumes that after having identified governance as broadly referring to the setting and management of political rules of the game and more substantially with a search of control, steering and accountability, some core concepts in governance theory should be clarified and as noted by other scholars already referred to, these are legitimacy, efficiency, democracy and accountability.

Tewdor-Jones and Mc Neill (2000) commenting on Britain's institutional and political restructurings of the 1990's quoted Jones, (1998) and Marks et al., (1996), who indicated that local processes of governance have assumed enhanced importance within emerging systems of multilevel governance, while Jessop (1997b) is of the opinion that unique forms of sub-national governance are a by-product of the decomposition of and devolution of powers and responsibilities from central government. In Zimbabwe, decomposition and recentralization of power and authority have introduced anarchy and mal-administration in local governments because of partisan conflicts that are violent. The institutions that monitor and regulate the implementation of laws have been compromised to the extent that the application of law has become selective and dependent on how the senior security agency chiefs feelings that are based on political views. Respondents (100%) involved in this research explained that there are cases of violence and murders that were reported as from 2000 and up to date despite overwhelming evidence the culprits are evading the courts  because they are supporters of ZANU-PF Party. Thus good governance in urban areas has been compromised by thugs, corrupt politicians, lack of respect of human rights, rule of law and violence on opposition politicians and their supporters.

This is also a sign of political banditry at work in urban areas. The citizens cannot get protection from the government they elected against law breakers.  It is important to note that Hood (1991) in Olowu and Wunch (2004) articulated certain core values in the management of public organizations like urban councils. The focus here is on transparency because no arbitrary procedures, no abuse of office and no bias are important. Success in good governance can be measured by the degree of trust or confidence and the ability to exercise citizenship effectively. Olowu and Wunch (2004) advance an argument that accountability through an open and broadly based political process is needed to steer decisions and actions as well as to legitimize local governance institutions. Thus effective institutions are needed to organize and structure the official and public actions needed and to assure that decision-making process are effective, reliable and legitimate.  Wunch (1999) promotes the idea under discussion when he stipulate that there must be an effective and supportive set of rules that regulate local affairs in general in order to rule out actions destructive to local governance (fraud, corruption, intimidation, violence) by partisans and others and to settle disputes that might otherwise paralyze or disrupt it  (Ibid). It has already been indicated that fraud, violence, intimidation and corruption are increasingly becoming common in Zimbabwe since the year 2000. Party politics has compromised objectivity in policy decisions, application of law and managing public goods and services. Political banditry is clearly portrayed in situations were , for example, supporters of the two MDC Parties are not given food handouts (even if they may be coming from a donor) or maize seed because the individuals overseeing the distribution have  ZANU-PF  Party links. Another example is where certain individuals are not allowed to vend in certain areas because they do not support a given party. Many individuals have lost houses, housing stands, flee markets space or stalk and so on because they belong to the wrong political party.

A further argument is that it is not rational to invest resources in governance processes and institutions that lack authority in making decisions in key areas of citizens' concern or in ones that lack the fiscal and human resources to implement their own decisions.  Fung and Wright in Tambulasi, (2010) point out that participation and representation are critical outcomes of local governance as they 'increase accountability and reduce length of the chain of agency that accompanies political parties and their bureaucratic apparatus.

Four factors that are crucial ingredients for effective local governance in Africa are: (1) a supportive national political context, (2) effective systems of intergovernmental relations that support the allocation and utilization of fiscal and human resources, (3) a strong local demand for public goods along with substantial levels of local social capital and (4) successful resolution of a number of local-level institutional design questions, (Olowu and Wunch (2004). Local councils that have representatives of more than one party are able to debate budgets and project priorities and compete for local power. A relatively stable political framework (Ibid) in Botswana has encouraged the development of a cadre of professionals skilled in managing local governments and in navigating its intergovernmental relations. Botswana stability affords local officials to be able to plan and complete projects, attract, employs and retains able personnel and responds to local needs.

Hoe (2005) has argued that, for good governance to prevail there must be effective institutional mechanisms that ensure accountability through the capacity to monitor and enforce rules and to regulate economic activities in the public interest, (Mgonja, 2010). Salapmeh (2009) quoted Clarke and Stewart, (1998) state that governance was a major factor in local government and that private and civil society organizations played major roles in local politics "shifting and sharing responsibilities among public, private and civil society organizations. Galison, (1994) states that alliances between central government bureaucrats and local leaders/local elites also have been used, revealing that democratic rule does not assure more responsive and accountable government (Ibid). Autocratic regimes can simply use force to command or intimidate citizens to support certain policies or laws.

## Acuity on the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and Urban Development's relations with urban councils

The objective of the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and Urban Development in Zimbabwe is to supervise or monitor the activities of local governments and also to monitor the services offered to the public by such public institutions. Questions evaluating the level of democracy and good governance in urban councils indicated that 86% of the respondents felt that there was too much external interference, 60% felt that debates on policy issues were stifled or low, that 60% of the respondents indicated that consultations with stakeholders was very low and that 72% felt that motivation to initiate constituents programmes was also low. The result just demonstrates that good governance was lacking in these institutions and therefore basic foundation work to introduce the principles of good governance was supposed to be engineered or re-engineered now. The Manica Post (6-12 January 2006:9) reveals a situation where the mayor and councillors of the City of Mutare resigned because of too much intervention by the Minister of Local government in the affairs of the city council. A Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) provincial secretary for information and publicity explained; "The decision was taken after realising that our elected councillors and mayor couldn't work under the newly appointed commissioners. It was the councillors themselves who pointed out that they were no longer able to effectively exercise their duties after Dr Chombo (Minister of Local Government) ordered them to consult with the Governor's office on all matters relating to finances and human resources." The conflicts were inevitable because the Governor of Manicaland were the City of Mutare is located was a ZANU-PF Party card holder.

The researcher also noted that despite 'firing of councillors' and 'hiring of Commissioners' in many towns and cities of Zimbabwe between 1995 and 2008, public management of urban councils did not improve. Stakeholders continued to complain about garbage collection, poor roads maintenance, electricity break – outs, inadequate clean water, and sewerage bursts and blockages, inadequate transport provision and slams developments because of inadequate housing projects developments. In the City of Harare mal-administration by the Commission surfaced through the conflicts between the chairperson of the Commission and the Town Clerk. On 27 June, The Herald (2006:1) reported that Sekesayi Makwavarara had fired the Town Clerk (Nomutsa Chideya) because of mismanagement of the City Council. Also the Minister of Local Government supported Sekesayi Makwavarara when she sacked the City of Harare Commission. Respondents interviewed also argued that Zimbabwe should amend its constitution and the Urban Councils Act so that the powers of the Minister of Local Government are reduced. This reduction could be done by inserting a close that requires the Minister of Local Government to carry out a referendum before making changes to any law or to consult stakeholders before dismissing a legitimate council. "The Revitalisation of Local Authorities" (2004:14) document explains; "The local government system in Zimbabwe is not entrenched in the constitution as in other countries like South Africa. This entails that Treasury cannot directly apportion a certain quota in the national budget to the councils. Year–in year–out, Treasury disburses funding for programmes in local authorities areas via sector ministries.

The bureaucratic entanglements attendant to the disbursement modus operandi prejudice councils in terms of project implementation. It is regrettable to note that the "rejected" draft constitution (2000) had made a vivid attempt to constitutionalise local government.  The point is if the opportunity arises the government must seek to entrench local government into the constitution; as the arrangement will ensure that a certain percentage of the funds raised by the central fiscus are deployed directly to the local government institutions."  Currently the minister's powers are excessive because he can fire any council without reference to any other body that may represent the citizens. The respondents felt that the current firing of the councils has unraveled many since those appointed by him have performed even worse in managing these councils.

The continuous firing of councils and changes to legislations show the levels of mistrust and political interference in the administration of urban councils. A respondent from the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) alleges "--- This animal called mismanagement has always been used against the firings of local governments". He further stated that it is difficult to defend oneself against allegations of mismanagement because the term can mean anything and there are no written rules used to dismiss councils. What we have in the Act are powers conferred on the minister when dealing with such institutions. Two respondents from UCAZ who were interviewed argued that the   Commissions appointed by the Minister are nonsense and were a symbol of political gimmick by central government. They are meant to divert ratepayers' attention from poor service provision to empty political issues. The respondents from UCAZ felt the Commissions have brought no new thinking and one respondent expressed, "How can the Harare City Council Commission create twenty five business units from ten previous ones. I cannot or I don't have interest to read or keep the Commissions Strategic Plan or the so-called 'Turn Around Plan' because it does not make sense." The respondents felt that the Strategic Plan has the effect of creating more vacancies and forces council to raise more revenue to implement strategic decisions but on the contrary the current revenue base cannot sustain the operations of the council. Therefore the respondent felt that the Commission was abusing public funds because it was not feasible during that time to achieve the stated goals. Currently under the MDC councillors' control, Harare City Council revenue base has not improved. Most of its functions have been manipulated and stifled by ZANU-PF Party and Government ministers' shenanigans. The interviewees accused the government of misusing power and taxpayers' money because the majority of the members appointed to the Commissions had no better experience of managing councils compared to the sacked councillors.

Political banditry can be depicted from the manner in which the approval of the Turn Around Plan of the City of Harare (2006) was approved.  All (100%) informants from the City of Harare stated that the Minister of Local Government did not follow proper procedures for the endorsement of the Turn Around Plan by the council because members were given ten minutes to read, digest the contents and to approve it. The informants felt that the document was thick and key to the effective and efficient administration of Harare City Council and therefore needed a longer time for consideration. An aggravating reason for demand of more time was that a sizeable number of councillors did not even have five O- Level subjects. They were semi-literate and therefore it was unfeasible that they could read and understand the contents of the document within that extremely short duration. The implication is therefore that at times improper decisions are taken as a result of the limited debate on critical items.

### Implications of political banditry on good governance

The previous sections have tried to elucidate on the different methods the national government and politicians have used and are continuously using to commit political banditry in local governments of Zimbabwe. Too much interference of central government in local affairs replaces decentralization with recentralization, autocracy and in certain circumstances tyranny of the majority against the few democrats. In the urban councils of Zimbabwe the nature of central governments interference through the Minister of Local Government demonstrates clearly a process of structural transformations that are bent on preparing these structures and local communities to support an establishing dictatorship. Dictatorships survive first by cultivating grassroots support through propaganda and restructuring local institutions to align them for the inevitable task of changing local communities and institutions into appendages of the national elite. The research agrees with Amoako (2000) who argues that before setting forth a clear vision of the future role of governance in Africa, one need to reflect on the past. Post-independence African states have tended to fit into one of the four categories and Zimbabwe seems to have acquired all the characteristics to be outlined. It means that governance in the country is generally pathetic.

The four categories are; the patrimonial state in which government officials treat the state and its assets as their own personal property; the predatory state, which sees its citizens only as prey for its greed; the shadow state, in which informal political networks run a shadow economy and engaged in many illegal activities and collapsed state, in which citizens are left to their own devices. The existence of these four kinds of states has burdened Africa and particularly Zimbabwe with post-independence history of repression and dispossession, far from the rhetoric of our constitutions and the promises of our countries' founders. However, a fifth type of state can be described as a state in which leaders impose sufficient repression to maintain power and keep their opponents weak while adhering to formalities that give the appearance of democracy. The characteristics of the states outlined before are rampant in Zimbabwe and they fit into characteristics the researcher is referring to as political banditry. Thus in Zimbabwe, the civic organizations and political actors and leadership should not be deceptive ingenious to the extent that they can afford to carry on like a piano player in a brothel who pretends not to notice what is going on upstairs.

The central government has usurped the power and authority of local institutions whose continued existence is being guaranteed by the Parliamentary legislation in the form of the Urban Councils' Act but in reality they have been reduced to mere organs of state power. They are supposed to unquestionably implement central government directives.

Political banditry has negatively affected governance. The principles of good governance that include, transparency, rule of law, freedom of speech, participatory decision-making, accountability and respect of human rights all have being ignored deliberately to benefit political 'destituteness' or political criminals that are being used to force the citizens to support the ZANU-PF Party. Legally appointed or elected local leaders lose political space to violent youths and ex-combatants (now commonly referred to War Vets and Green Bombers) who are supported by the main opposition party. A number of local leaders or activists were murdered in the process of trying to win control of urban constituents or public offices. Respondents indicated that despite overwhelming evidence against certain perpetrators of political crimes ZANU-PF Party supporters are never arrested or prosecuted. Exposing major ingredients of political intolerance to transparency, freedom of choice and speech and democracy or political pluralism, many supporters of the MDC Party are constantly harassed and imprisoned for providing an alternative to democracy. Data collected from respondents signify that public administration has seriously been undermined and therefore deteriorated because laws have been violated intentionally to acquire or promote political gains.

The discussions also exposed the possible political and administrative weakening of local political structure or institutions and individuals like the 'full council', mayors, councillors and even employee like the Town Clerks. The weakening comes as a result of constant changes to the laws governing the activities of such individuals or institutions or because of hostile environment or clients like the rate payers and because of political interference especially through the Ministry of Local Government. The Ministry of Local Government has been accused of deliberately delaying the approvals of urban councils budgets or appointments of certain senior council personnel, it has forcibly appointed committee/commissions to investigate issues considered to be within the urban councils domain, it has demanded that the urban councils pay the committee members even if in the first place the Urban councils would have rejected the manner in which the committee (s) were appointed, it has corruptly interfered in the awards of certain tenders like the tender for the construction of the road from the city centre to the Harare Airport, the Minister has been implicated in the corruption involving awarding of housing stands and the fact that most of the MDC Party supporters are in urban areas, in 2004 the Central Government through the Ministry of Local Government destroyed many houses considered to be informal under an infamous policy called 'Murambatsvina'. This scandalous destruction of shelter led the United Nations to send a representative Tybijuka to investigate the circumstances and impact of the policy on the homelessness. The "Murambatsitsvina Programme" is a clear sign of political banditry of those involved because construction of informal shelter is a result of the failure of legal political and administrative institutions like urban councils to provided houses or even serviced stands that could be developed by individuals. The implications resulting from lack of respect the rule of law are many and seriously disadvantaging the urban councils.

In Harare, a group of thugs calling itself 'Chipanagno' has taken over control of council business like awarding flea market stands at Mupedzamhamo, and Magaba and stands for selling vegetable and products at Mbare Musika.

The council authorities have failed to control this illegal activity because they are threatened with murder and the media has written stories or murdered especially of member of parties other than ZANU-PF in the area. This deterioration of public management is a serious threat to the service provision in the urban areas because the municipal administrations are illegally deprived of their sources of revenue.

The political conflicts and administrative ineptness in the management of urban councils could be an indicator of the limitations of representative democracy. In many instances in a representative democracy the candidates for an elections use propaganda and they promise to provide goods and services that may be even beyond their capability or legal right. After they have been elected into office, for example, as councillors many of these politicians never make an effort to collaborate with their constituencies. There are councillors who complete their terms of office without at any point bringing problems of their constituencies on council agendas. Some of them do not know how communities' opinions are turned into policy agendas and thus such calibre of politicians may be ignorant of procedures followed in deliberating agenda items in a full council. The point is that political banditry may be a result of illiteracy of many councillors who do not know their rights and the privileges allotted to the council institutions by the laws. Some councillors and employees join and survive their working career in urban councils because of patronage and boot licking.

This paper encourages public administrators and political scientists to look beyond representative democracy in policy formulation and management of local governments. Representative democracy is inadequate to facilitate good governance in urban councils of Zimbabwe. Sunstein citing Arrow in Dryzeck and Christian (2003) argues that it is doubtful that private desires or even aspirations can be well-aggregated through the process of majority rule and  thus proving the necessity for deliberation across those holding initially   different   preferences. I see political bandits hiding behind their political parties and illegal political structures in urban areas of Zimbabwe. The local political and administrative structures have been hijacked form providing public goods and services to providing covert support for ZANU-PF Party cadres to remain in power infinitely. An alternative strategy to establishing democratic good governance is the adoption of deliberative democracy.  I do not view representative and deliberative democracies and their principles as antagonistic but I want to project them as complimentary. My opinion is that deliberative democracy could be used as a graft to strengthen representative democracy. It can be a tool in the development or institutionalization of representative democracy.  Deliberative democracy in Zimbabwe can be a good strategy to bring awareness in the citizens to involve themselves in the activities of urban councils.

Deliberative democratic theory is a normative theory that suggests ways in which we can enhance democracy and criticize institutions that do not live up to the normative standard, (Chambers, S, 2003).  It is a talk-centric democratic theory that can replace voting-centric democratic theory (representative democratic theory). Voting-centric theorists and practitioners view democracy as the arena in which fixed preferences and interests compete via fair mechanisms of aggregation. In contrast, deliberative democracy focuses on the communicative processes of opinion and will formations that precede voting (Ibid). In Zimbabwe, the urban council does not need aggregation of views from communities but what is critically missing is coordination of individual opinions through democratic forums provided and supported by local and national institutions free of violence and intimidations. The individuals and then community wills are important because they determine the future of council resolutions and ultimately urban councils' programmes and projects irrespective of whether the individuals or communities are pro- or anti- Zanu-PF Party or any other political establishment. The will formation and realizations creates a bond for the possible support of councils' resolutions. This is a critical element that is currently lacking in the operations of urban councils because certain political parties and groups including informal and illegal interests groups try to force communities or individuals to adopt their ideas without providing deliberative communication. The principle of democracy realizes that individuals are different and they appreciate and desires difference needs. Therefore leaders and politicians should not view individual urbanites as their duplicates. They are stakeholders in the organizations and customers of urban councils.

In democratic urban good governance accountability replaces consent as the conceptual core of legitimacy. A legitimate political order is one that could be *justified* to all those living under its laws (Chambers, 2003). In Zimbabwe there is lawlessness, murders and violence. Local government institutions are dissolved willy-nilly by the Minister of Local Government and urban councils' legislations are also continuously changed to suit the wisdom and aspirations of specific political establishments rather than facilitating legislative and institutional changes to reflect communities' development and desires.

Thus, in deliberative democracy and more important with respect to the theory of good governance, accountability is primarily understood in terms of "giving an account" of something that is, publicly articulating, explaining, and most importantly justifying public policy. As far as I am concerned, deliberative democracy and good governance are opposite sides of the same coin. They have similar attributes and use almost the same characteristics when applied urban councils' management. della Porta (2005) in Tompson, (2008) states that but that would not overcome this persistent problem: the elements of deliberation are often run together, as in this definition: "...we have deliberative democracy when, under conditions of equality, inclusiveness and transparency, a communicative process based on reason...is able to transform individual preferences and reach decisions oriented to the public good". Habermas in Chambers (2003) correctly noted that consent (and, of course, voting) does not disappear in performing local government activities. Consent is giving the political leadership permission to lead. Consent is given a more complex and richer interpretation in the deliberative model than in the aggregative model. It means that citizens need to deliberate about and decide when and where bargaining is a fair and appropriate method of dispute resolution. The critical element that is missing in the administration of urban councils of Zimbabwe is availability of the space to bargain for preferences. This space is shrinking continually because of political banditry. The political play field is uneven and certain political parties like ZANU-PF have procrastinated and demand that there views are society's views basically just because the party was the revolutionary party during the war of liberation. It is a fixation approach to the disadvantage of changing and changed society.

The question of political banditry recurs because political parties and interest groups that view social policy, national politics and development from a parochial point of who led the war of liberation have failed the Zimbabwean nation to go beyond colonialism. Though not the focus of this debate but such kind of thinking has inevitably led to creation of regressive policy and laws and even groups in society that contributed to the economic meltdown that begun around the mid-1990s and become vivid in the year 2000 when the fast-track land redistribution allocated commercial farm to school children and peasants who could not acquire the capacity to economically and commercially utilize the pieces of land they got free. The point is Central Government had to mobilize national sources to support the incapacitated new farmer to the detriment of other development programmes. If one remembers that in 1982 the same government had amalgamated Rural and District Councils with a noble view of creating viable local authorities that were anchored by resources coming from the commercial farms. What happened is that the fast-track land redistribution brought the very poor peasants from communal areas into commercial farms. The programme ruralized certain commercial farming areas.

This policy thus impoverished the former wealthy commercial farming areas and the Rural District Councils that have become bankrupt to the extent that they are unable to provide needed public goods and services like schools, clinics, dip tanks and roads. Instead of using old men's wisdom, deliberation is debate and discussion aimed at producing reasonable, well-informed opinions in which participants are willing to revise preferences in light of discussion, new information, and claims made by fellow participants. Councillors in this case become facilitators of policy and development programmes. However, the councilors must attend all deliberative meetings to gather correct views of the citizens since they are also citizens. By being elected to certain political positions it does not mean that an individual is more intelligent than those who elected him/her. Citizens elect individuals through competition so that that they get a leader because everyone to lead is total impossible. Chambers (2003) further explains that although consensus need not be the ultimate aim of deliberation, and participants are expected to pursue their interests, an overarching interest in the legitimacy of outcomes (understood as justification to all affected) ideally characterizes deliberation.

Instead of the use of violence, force and any other clandestine methods of whipping citizens into accepting pre-determined goals as what is the norm now in Zimbabwean, urban councils Chambers (Ibid) argues that theorists of deliberative democracy are interested in such questions as: 'How does or might deliberation shape preferences, moderate self-interest, empower the marginalized, mediate difference, further integration and solidarity, enhance recognition, produce reasonable opinion and policy, and possibly lead to consensus? Deliberative democratic theory critically investigates the quality, substance, and rationality of the arguments and reasons brought to defend policy and law. It studies and evaluates the institutions, forums, venues, and public spaces available for deliberative justification and accountability. It looks at the social, economic, political, and historic conditions necessary for healthy deliberation as well as the attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs required of participants.' Where deliberation has been accepted as the norm of doing things by an urban council, there the beginning point is equality of all and the suggestions proffered by different individuals.

Representative democracy has failed to provide bargaining space because the councillors who are elected are elected on party tickets and the beginning is carrying to council chambers strong and undiluted party agendas. Usually discussions at constituencies' level divide communities on party lines and therefore when these councillors come to council meetings the discussions become a zero-sum or winner take all game.

Decisions need to be taken and fair decision rules need to be in place, but a deliberative approach focuses on qualitative aspects of the conversation that precedes decisions rather than on a mathematical decision rule. Gutmann & Thompson (1997) in Chambers (2003) correctly argue that in designing and proposing deliberative forums, scholars generally have four goals in mind: to augment legitimacy through accountability and participation; to encourage a public-spirited perspective on policy issues through cooperation; to promote mutual respect between parties through inclusion and civility; and to enhance the quality of decisions (and opinions) through informed and substantive debate.

Deliberative democracy should not be confused with direct democracy. For example, it might be suggested that citizen participation in local policy issues should not be encouraged because it will be dominated by parochial attitudes exemplified by NIMBY ("not in my back yard"). A deliberative model involves citizens at every stage of policy formation, including research and discovery stages. Thus, a deliberative model offers a way to overcome NIMBY by getting citizens to cooperatively solve policy dilemmas rather than simply vote on policy options. NIMBY seems to have corrupted and ruined management of urban councils in Zimbabwe.  It has been indicated that almost all urban councils are currently dominated by the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) Party councilors. However, ZANU-PF Party evokes NIMBY because it feels it is the revolutionary party and the MDC Party is taking orders from America and Britain so it has a 'regime change' agenda.  Considering the fact that all government ministries are located in Harare and that Harare is controlled by the MDC Party then the implication is that ZANU-PF Party and the current unity government are housed by MDC Party urban council. This is a source of political banditry where then the ZANU-PF Party and Minister of Local Government tries illegally and unethically to change this situation by firing councils, mayors and councillors and appointing special interest representatives. Estlund (1990) and  List and Goodin (2001) in Chambers (2003) further argue that regarding political decision*s*, deliberative democrats assume that decisions taken through deliberation will be superior to ones taken by a mere aggregation of votes. This superiority can imply instrumental rationality (decisions better suited to reach agreed-upon goals), moral justification or mutual tolerance and respect.

Administration ineptitude in the urban councils of Zimbabwe appears to be exacerbated by selfishness on the part of politicians and uninformed members of the communities. The councillors, for example, elected to urban councils tend to focus on accumulating wealthy in the form of houses or housing stands, business and returning their positions after expiry period. Landwehr and Bächtiger (2011) argue that regarding actors, deliberative theory lets us expect a set of attitudinal transformations, that is, after deliberation, actors are expected to be better informed, less selfish and more willing to cooperate than pre-deliberation. Empirical evidence is mixed, however. It is important to mention that deliberation is not a panacea for all the ills of representative democracy. In politically charged environments like that of Zimbabwe, deliberation if mishandled may result with negative results. Deliberation works very well in situations were other principles of democracy are respected. This is why the researcher believes that representative democracy could be a first step towards deliberative democracy. Hansen (2004) in Landwehr and Bächtiger (2011) expounds that while deliberation increases opinion consistency, it neither leads to landslide transformations nor increases stability of opinions. This sentiment is consistent with the view that deliberation is function or requires institutional preconditions to be successful. This insinuate the idea that institutions need to put in place clear rules and regulations that will define the space available to the institution in terms of  policy developments, provision of goods and services and coordination with central government policies and programmes.

Tompson (2008) convincingly articulated that at the core of all theories of deliberative democracy is what may be called a reason-giving requirement. Citizens and their representatives are expected to justify the laws they would impose on one another by giving reasons for their political claims and responding to others' reasons in return. If citizens or communities were honouring this, justifying the laws and behaviours expressed against other members in society then conflicts may be lessoned. In Zimbabwe, it seems powerful personalities manage to impose forcibly their will against the will of the poor and powerless. The powerful can murder and get away with it even if reports are made to police.

The laws or courts of law in urban areas of Zimbabwe are close to protecting these powerful individuals from being arrested and impartially prosecuted. The implications of the results are that the urban areas of Zimbabwe are nearer to anarchy or state of nature (Hobes) and were democracy has been traded for authoritarian rule. At the national level the country politicians have disagreed to the extent that they took these problems to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) amelioration. It is this unprecedented hostility at the national level that has been duplicated at local levels. A discussion does not count as deliberation at all if one person completely dominates; the discussion is better deliberation to the extent that the participation is equally distributed; and the discussion is more likely to be more egalitarian if the background conditions are more nearly equal. As citizens engage in deliberation, they learn more about the issues, gain respect for opposing views, employ more public-spirited arguments, and so on (Ibid).

Manson (1999) in Zwart (2009) states that while this concept has became a highly contested arena within democratic thought, it is clear that deliberative democracy began as a critique of representative democracy's emphasis on the formal procedures through which representatives, who translate voting preferences into policy, are elected. The engineering of representative government is such that it tries to protect popular government against tendencies to degenerate into populism or majoritarianism. Bohman and Rehg (1997) in Zwart (Ibid) thus concluded that the central institutions of governance exist to provide equitable opportunities for citizens to shape the exercise of power, with that influence assisted by a plurality of competing parties. A limitation of opportunities for citizens' participation is favoured and consequently a relatively passive role for citizens is advocated in the form of voting in the case of representative democracy. Deliberative democratic theory encourages open and free debate among and between citizens. It contradicts views of representative democrats like Schumpeter who suggest that the participation of an uninformed, apathetic and manipulable public could be downright dangerous. Sunstein (1997) (Ibid) further acknowledges that representative democracy does not sufficiently challenge the views of individuals and groups and fails to do what democracy should do, that is, to offer a system in which reasons are exchanged and evaluated. A well-functioning system of democracy rests not on preferences but on reasons (Jonga, 2011). In addition, Jonga (2011) also argues that a system of democratic decentralization has to be so organized such that a balance between centralization and decentralization of authority and functions characterizes the relations between the central and local government organizations. While the central government has to delegate some of its authority and encourage autonomy of local authorities, it has to retain some responsibilities relating to control, direction supervision and guidance particularly during the infant stage of development of local authorities. Central government has to retain the functions, which the local government may not be able to undertake due to the magnitude of resources or expertise required.

Adhikari (2000) in Jonga (2011) adequately and convincingly argues that the more equal the conditions of men become and the less strong men individually are, the more easily they give away to the current of the multitude and the more difficult it is for them to adhere by themselves to the opinion which the multitude discard. In Jonga (2011), Dryzek (1987) and Zwart (2009) quoting Harbermas argue that democratic legitimacy is thoroughly unconstrained; there are no restrictions on who may participate or on what kinds of arguments may be advanced, or on the length of deliberations. The only resource available to participants is argument, and the only authority is that of the better argument. Unlike representative democracy, deliberative democracy encourages the public thorough debate that brings products that are beyond individual interests. Zwart, (2009), Miller, (1993) and Dobson, (1996) quoted by Jonga (2011) confirm this idea when they state that 'It is good for me' is not an argument that many other participants could potentially accept. However, 'what is good for me' is not good for everyone. Citizens' visions, goals or interests differ in many ways and this divergence of opinions and interests must be respected. Therefore, while deliberative (or discursive or communicative) democracy stresses fair and legitimate procedures over particular outcomes, it is possible to conceive of the procedure as always giving rise to a special type of product, being a general interest or the common good which representative democracy could failing to achieve.

## *Conclusion*

The discussion has tried to portray that political banditry exists and in Zimbabwe it is happening without control. The culprits and especially politicians who also support informal interest groupings that are perpetrating violence and intimidations seem to be above the law. Deductions from the arguments presented in this paper seem to indicate that the scenario of political banditry has reduced the urban councils to mere organ of state power.

The administration of these urban areas has deteriorated continuously and it appears solutions are far from coming by. The major focus of many politicians is get control of the institutions by hook and crook.   Conflicts and thuggery has become the order of the day and politicians have turned a blind on them so that their parties could gain control through political banditry. It has contributed to the deterioration of the good governance in these institutions. Political banditry is venting itself through the institutions of central government like the Ministry of Local Government, councillors and political administrative structures. However, the reason identified to be creating and enhancing the circumstances is political hatred or differences and the need for the former ruling party ZANU-PF to want to remain in power. The researcher concluded that this political conflict and administrative incompetence could be blamed squarely on the inadequacy of representative democracy. Thus to strengthen representative democracy in the administrative and political performance of urban councils, deliberation could be adopted as an additional tool  for communication and creating adequate political space for individuals with divergent views to debate their options and come to a consensus on the best option to deal with local community problems. In this case deliberative democracy could be grafted at the end of representative democracy to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the operations of urban councils in Zimbabwe. Jonga (2011) argues that the thinking is that representative democracy is rigid; a bit old fashioned and takes citizens as secondary stakeholders in policy-making and other governance processes. It is then my assumption that deliberative democracy encourages participatory decision-making and thus appears more superior to the other. Berg and Rao (2005) perfectly indicate that the essence of democratic rule is that authority emanates from the people; from the citizens of a polity. The implication is that everyone by definition is competent, no particular skill, expertise or education is required in order to participate.

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