



Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement
Western Cape Provincial Parliament
IPalamente yePhondo leNtshona Koloni

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DRAFT COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development on its oversight visits to the Heaven Night Shelter in Green Point and the Sanitary Dignitary Project in Paarl on 4 May 2021

The Standing Committee on Social Development having conducted oversight visits to the Heaven Night Shelter in Green Point and the Sanitary Dignitary Project in Paarl on 4 May 2021, reports as follows:

The delegation

The delegation of the Standing Committee on Social Development included the following Members:

Democratic Alliance

Bosman, G (Chairperson)

Mackenzie, RD

Philander, WF

African National Congress

BakuBaku-Vos, NG

AL JAMAH

Brinkhuis, G

Additional Member

Bans, A (ANC)

Windvogel, R

Persons in attendance

The register for all attendees is available on request.

1. Background

The Standing Committee on Social Development conducted oversight visits to the Heaven Night Shelter in Green Point and the Sanitary Dignitary Project storage facility in Paarl on Tuesday 4 May 2021 as part of its oversight function.

The purpose of the visit to the Heaven Night Shelter was to assess the safety protocols that were in place at the Shelter. The Committee also wanted to inspect how the shelter was dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and to get a better understanding of the services that the shelter provides to the homeless people around the Cape Metropolitan Area. During its visit to the Heaven Night Shelter, the Committee was joined by Councillors from the City of Cape Town, Councillors Mahon, Jowell, and Mahango.

The Committee also visited the Department of Social Development's warehouse for the Sanitary Dignitary Project in Paarl. The purpose of the visit was to inspect the storage warehouse and to get a better understanding of how the sanitary pads were distributed from the warehouse to various schools across the province. The Committee also wanted to get a better understanding of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Sanitary Dignitary Project.

2. Salient points that emanated from the visit to the Heaven Night Shelter in Green Point

- 2.1 Mr. Khan, the CEO of the Heaven Night Shelter (the Shelter) in the Western Cape welcomed the Committee and proceeded to brief the Committee on the services and safety protocols of the Shelter.
- 2.2 He reported that the Shelter was established in 1978, registered as a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) in 2000, and as a Public Benefit Organisation in 2004. It caters for the homeless people.
- 2.3 The Shelter believes in the future where communities, organisations, and government can create a supportive network to ensure that no one is forced to live on the streets to survive.
- 2.4 The Shelter's core mandate is to provide temporal shelter, physical care, social welfare, and family reunification services to adult homeless persons and support adult people living on the streets who are committed to reintegration.
- 2.5 The Shelter is in partnership with religious institutions, community organisations, welfare bodies, service providers, businesses, the Department of Social Development, the City of Cape Town and individuals concerned with the care and welfare of the destitute.
- 2.6 The Shelter promotes community awareness of the social problems arising out of destitution and encourages the participation of the public in the alleviation of such problems and to reduce the opportunities for people to continue living on the streets.
- 2.7 The Shelter reported that it receives +-200 walk-in clients looking for a shelter per annum.
- 2.8 The Shelter caters for persons between 18-65 years of age.
- 2.9 It has a total of 96 beds of which 33 beds are allocated to females and 63 beds are allocated to males.
- 2.10 The Shelter has a manager, four supervisors, and one social worker as part of its staff compliment.
- 2.11 With regards to the admission process of the Shelter, on the arrival of clients, a social worker conducts an in-depth assessment and help the homeless person construct a Personal Development Plan (PDP).
- 2.12 The PDP conducted by the social worker specifies the best way the Shelter could temporarily accommodate its clients and what needs to be done.
- 2.13 The progress of its clients are measured regularly and the PDP is adjusted if necessary.
- 2.14 The social worker focuses on the case file and the shelter clients' reunification process with their families. The Shelter reported that it was in urgent need of a Social Auxiliary Worker and was in discussion with the Department of Social Development to assist the Shelter in this regard.
- 2.15 The Shelter has full-time field workers that are appointed to encourage people to come off the streets and get the persons back home. The process involves introducing the homeless person to a shelter like the Haven and Night. In addition, the fieldworker engages with property owners, business, and the City of Cape Town to reduce the "bed space" on the streets.
- 2.16 Mr. Mntuwempi, the Shelter Manager indicated that he was responsible for administration, hospitality, good order, and arrangements concerning work opportunities and the clients' exit from the Shelter.
- 2.17 The Shelter is part of a larger group of 16 shelters across the province in areas such as Bellville, Ceres, Claremont, District 6, Haven Old Age Home, Kalk Bay, Kensington, Kraaifontein, Moira Henderson House, Mossel Bay, Napier Street, Paarl, Swartland, Retreat, and Wynberg.
- 2.18 Mr. Mntuwempi also informed the Committee that part of taking responsibility is that clients have to pay R12 per day for services if unemployed or R750 per month if income exceeds R1400.00 per month and the clients who cannot pay the R12 admission fee can earn their stay by working in the Shelter.

- 2.19 Mr. Mntuwempi took the Committee on a walkabout of the facility and showed them the rooms, canteens, kitchen, and storeroom. He pointed out areas that were due for maintenance.
- 2.20 In response to the COVID-19, it was reported that the Shelter responded by introducing enhanced hygiene practices and social distancing following the World Health Organisations advice.
- 2.21 The Shelter used literature and talks to educate its clients about the COVID-19 screening. Furthermore, the client's movements were restricted when the country was on lockdown.
- 2.22 Mr. Mntuwempi highlighted that the shortage of space and lack of security on site were some of the challenges experienced by the Shelter.

The Councillors from the City of Cape Town also gave input during the visit. They informed the Committee that the shelters are the responsibility of the provincial government not the City of Cape Town. It was reported that the City of Cape Town works closely with the provincial government to identify City land. The City of Cape Town Councillors also informed the Committee that land which was earmarked for a shelter in Milnerton was unfortunately occupied by the land invaders. The Councillors mentioned that the City of Cape Town does not have funds for new safe places. They reported that the City of Cape Town gives the shelters a rebate on electricity and water services.

3. Visit to the warehouse for the Sanitary Dignitary Project in Paarl

The Committee conducted a visit to the Sanitary Dignitary Project in Paarl. The Committee was welcomed by officials from the Department of Social Development and the Western Cape Education Department.

- 3.1 Mr. Arnolds, from the Department of Social Development briefed the Committee on the Sanitary Dignitary Project.
- 3.2 He informed the Committee that the project aims to restore the dignity of schoolgirls who have poor school attendance and low self-esteem as a result of the lack of financial resources essential for affordable basic sanitary towels.
- 3.3 He reported that the Department has two warehouses for the Sanitary Dignitary Project, one in Paarl and the other one in the Cape Town CBD.
- 3.4 He reported that the social workers in schools determine the needs for the sanitary towels in each school.
- 3.5 The project started with a total of 222 schools. Some schools have requested not to be part of the project because they were getting the sanitary towels from the Dischem Sanitary Project.
- 3.6 A total of 110 schools were benefiting from the project in 2021. The Committee was informed that the numbers were growing.
- 3.7 The Committee conducted a walkabout of the facility and inspected the storerooms where the sanitary towels were kept.
- 3.8 In terms of the distribution process for the sanitary towels, the towels are brought from the production factory to the DSD warehouse. The Department then distributes the towels to the various schools in the province on a monthly basis.
- 3.9 The Committee was informed that the Department of Social Development was not paying for the warehouse at JJ du Preez Le Roux Clinic in Paarl. The building belongs to the Department of Transport and Public Works and it has been earmarked to be utilised as a local office for the Department of Social Development in Paarl.

4. Request for Information

The Committee REQUESTED the Department of Social Development to provide it with a detailed process on the application process for the Sanitary Dignitary Project by 27 June 2021.

The Committee successfully concluded its visits.



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MS WF PHILANDER, MPP
CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT
DATE: