



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

## **REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE PREMIER AND CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS ON THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

### **1. Introduction**

Annual reports are the key instruments for departments to report on performance measured against performance targets and budgets as outlined in the strategic plans and annual performance plans of departments.

The Annual Report Programme for the 2020/21 financial year was advertised in the newspapers, inviting stakeholders and members of the public to attend and participate in the discussions. Members of the public were present during the discussion of the Annual Report.

Members of the Standing Committee on the Premier and Constitutional Matters deliberated on Part A: General Information, Part B: Performance Information and Part D: Human Resource Management of the Annual Reports of the Department of the Premier.

### **2. Overview**

The Committee considered at a hybrid meeting the 2020/21 Annual Report of the Department of the Premier on 11 November 2021.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the Annual Report, the Premier and the Director-General were given an opportunity to make opening remarks. The Premier and the Director-General provided a synopsis of the successes and challenges faced by the Department of the Premier.

The Committee Report highlights the Committee's findings related to the performance of the above mentioned stakeholder during the year of review.

### **3. Key points emanating from the discussion on the 2020/21 Annual Report for the Department of the Premier**

- 3.1 The Department led the development of a provincial Recovery Plan with jobs, well-being and safety as the key policy priorities following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.2 The Western Cape Government's Contact Centre assisted with the humanitarian relief response by managing up to 15 000 calls per day. Due to the increase of calls from an average of 3 000 calls per day, the Department temporarily redeployed employees as call centre agents.
- 3.3 The Department incurred fruitless and wasteful expenditure for the amount of R43 000 during the 2019/20 financial year. A post was offered to an incorrect approved candidate and when the Department realised the error, four hours later after informing the candidate, the candidate already resigned from their current post in the private sector. The Department lost the arbitration case and had to pay a year's salary to the candidate; the amount for this error

reflects in the 2020/21 financial year. Disciplinary action was taken against the official and there is currently a deduction to the official's salary to recover some of the costs.

- 3.4 The Department had four cases of irregular expenditure; two cases amounting to R398 700.23 are still under investigation; one case amounting to R136 982.58 was condoned by the Provincial Treasury and one case amounting to R1 632.82 was condoned by Provincial Treasury subsequent to the 2020/21 financial year end.
- 3.5 The Department had an unconfirmed liability of R61.34 million owing to the South African Revenue Services in respect of outstanding taxes (VAT) on imported services transactions for the procurement of Microsoft software. The amount was incurred due to a weaker domestic currency and VAT payment becoming applicable to the procurement of Microsoft software when payment is made in foreign currency. Based on legal advice, the Department contested the requirement to pay the penalties and interest, of which the remission has subsequently been confirmed by SARS on 31 May 2021.
- 3.6 Due to some Cape Access e-Centers being part of Thusong Centres or buildings belonging to municipalities, the Department did not have control over the access to these e-Centers during COVID-19 restriction levels. The Department of the Premier is working with different stakeholders to provide equal access to services offered at the e-Centres to all citizens.
- 3.7 The Department of the Premier achieved 100% of the 58 indicator targets set out across their five programmes.
- 3.8 In October 2022, the Department will be increasing the broadband connectivity to one gigabytes per second, mostly to enable schools to deliver programmes like Robotics and Coding.
- 3.9 The Department's Contact Centre provides through a client relationship system, 14 digital channels where citizens can access government information and services offered by the Western Cape Government.
- 3.10 The Department has a Digital Transformation Plan that aims to optimize and transform citizen-centric services.

#### **4. Information Requested**

4.1 The Committee RESOLVED:

4.1.2 To conduct an oversight visit to the Western Cape Government Contact Centre.

4.2 The Committee further REQUESTED:


4.2.1 A report detailing the manner in which the Department plans to address the slow roll-out of Wi-Fi to municipalities;

4.2.2 A report that list the schools that does not offer Mathematics as a subject in the rural areas and the forthcoming plans to assist the learners in these areas;

4.2.3 A status report on the e-Centres that were closed during lockdown and the plan to provide the e-Centre services to the bigger areas such as Nyanga and Khayelitsha.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The Chairperson thanked the Premier and the Department for their preparation and responses to questions raised by the Committee members.



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**MR R ALLEN**

**ACTING CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE PREMIER AND CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**  
**DATE: 24 November 2021**