



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 2020/21 WESTERN CAPE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT

The Standing Committee on the Premier and Constitutional Matters, having considered the Annual Report of the Western Cape Commissioner for Children (WCCC) referred to it for the year ended 31 March 2021, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

Annual Reports are key instruments for the stakeholders to report on performance measured against performance targets and budgets as outlined in the Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans of the stakeholders.

As part of its oversight function, the Standing Committee on the Premier and Constitutional Matters considered the 2020/21 Annual Report of the Western Cape Commissioner for Children on 11 November 2021. This is the first Annual Report of the Western Cape Commissioner for Children, which was legislated in terms of the Western Cape Constitution.

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

2. Inputs received from the public

The Committee received written input from Molo Songololo. (See attached).

3. Key points emanating from the discussion on the WCCC 2020/21 Annual Report

- 3.1 As per Stats SA (2020), of the 19.7 million children living in South Africa, 2 012 781 children between the ages of 0-17 reside in the Western Cape, which makes up a third of the provincial population.
- 3.2 Two thirds of the three to five year olds attended Early Childhood Development Centers in 2017 and 100 000 attended school in 2019.
- 3.3 Not all children that enters Grade One to commence their schooling career, reaches Grade 12, some children have special needs or requires technical education.
- 3.4 One quarter of the children in the Western Cape Province live in poor households and are dependent on grant payments.
- 3.5 The number of infant deaths decreased to 29% and only 4% of children in the province tested positive for COVID-19.
- 3.6 Statistics have shown that 2.3 million households in South Africa reported child hunger.
- 3.7 The school attendance figures in the Western Cape Province increased from 67% to 95% in April 2021.
- 3.8 The office of the Commissioner for Children is in a temporary office provided by the Department of the Premier and the Department of Transport and Public Works.
- 3.9 The WCCC reported that the biggest challenge in the Office of the Childrens' Commissioner is resourcing.

- 3.10 The WCCC worked on her own in the office for eight months of the first year of its establishment, the delayed approval of the staffing structure led to late recruitment of core positions for staff 12 posts are proposed to establish the WCCC staffing structure but due to limited funding the office could only fill two full time staff members and one contract staff member. The WCCC applied for funding from Provincial Treasury for six additional posts to achieve critical mass resourcing in the office in order to achieve the WCCC's mandate.
- 3.11 Due to the limited budget for the Office of the Commissioner, one branch of the mandate of the office; investigations and advice is done by the WCCC office. There is no staff to do the monitoring and awareness campaigns.
- 3.12 The WCCC has constant child engagement and participation engagements through submissions and these submissions highlight issues of concern and provides insight for Child Government Monitors. There are approximately 50 Child Government Monitors across the province that constantly keeps in contact with the WCCC via WhatsApp.
- 3.13 64% of enquiries/complaints to the WCCC were linked to the Department of Social Development and 34% of enquiries/complaints linked to the Western Cape Education Department.
- 3.14 The total expenditure for the office of the WCCC was R1 412 819 million.
- 3.15 It was reported that the WCCC office should be resourced and supported to become independent and be set up as a Chapter 9 institution.

4. Resolution

The Committee RESOLVED to invite Molo Songololo to brief the Committee on the written inputs provided by their office relating to WCCC 2020/21 Annual Report.

5. Conclusion

The Chairperson thanked the Premier and the WCCC 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