



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

WCPP 11/4/7

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Standing Committee on Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport on its oversight visit to the Cape Town Central Library and the Nelson Mandela Legacy Exhibition at City Hall on 2 August 2022

The Standing Committee on Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport having conducted an oversight visit to the Cape Town Central Library and the Nelson Mandela Legacy Exhibition at City Hall on 2 August 2022, reports as follows:

The delegation

The delegation of the Standing Committee on Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport included the following Members:

Democratic Alliance

Bosman, G (Chairperson)

Baartman, DM

Plato, D

African National Congress

Windvogel, R

1. Background

The Standing Committee on Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport conducted an oversight visit to the Cape Town Central Library, as well as the American Corner, located within the Library premises. The Library is generally a hub of activity due to its location within the Central Business District and its membership ranges from school learners from neighbouring schools, tertiary education students, as well as both avid and casual library users. Ms R Hendricks, Chief Librarian, led the guided tour.

The American Corner is situated inside the Library. Although it is independent, there are several engagements with the Library. The United States of America Consulate in Cape Town funds the Corner, which is a space for innovation and business skills development. The guided tour was led by the Director, Mr M Klink.

The Nelson Mandela Legacy Exhibition commemorates the life of the late former President, Mr Nelson Mandela. The Exhibition details key moments of his life as well as vital periods of the apartheid struggle, and South Africa's transition into a democratic country. Mr M Smith, Assistant Heritage Education Officer, welcomed the Committee and led the guided tour.

2. Salient points that emanated from the visit to the Library

- 2.1. The Library collection also includes a special section for undergraduate students as well as for Technical; and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) students. This collection includes loan study guides.
- 2.2. During the national lockdown periods, there were concerns regarding the return of books. The restrictions imposed, spanning from transport to venue capacity, were the main factors to users not being able to return items.
- 2.3. User attendance is steadily progressing after the gradual easing up of national lockdown restrictions. The Library averaged 40 000 walk-in users monthly prior to the COVID-19 lockdown periods, and there are approximately 6000 to 7000 monthly walk-in users.

- 2.4. The Library does not receive any additional funding or donations from publishing houses. However, the Carnegie Corporation from New York, had previously made a sizeable donation that allowed for the procurement of a number of items of the music genre.
- 2.5. There are plans to extend the music library section, which already has a large collection of music DVDs (both series and popular music), music sheets and CDs. Despite the current sizable collection, efforts to source more items from abroad is a challenge.
- 2.6. The computer laboratory is funded via the City of Cape Town's SmartCape programme. There are roughly 64 computers. However, on average, 25 to 30 are operational. Some of the computers are reportedly older than 15 years.
- 2.7. These computers are allocated for once-off 45-minute sessions. However, extensions are allowed on request.
- 2.8. The Wi-Fi allocation per user is 500mb per month, although there are also daily 50mb tokens.
- 2.9. The Library also avails printing services as well as the use of discussion rooms.
- 2.10. Unofficial computer literacy classes are offered to empower those needing to learn the basic computer literacy skills.

3. Salient points that emanated from the visit to the American Corner

- 3.1 The Corner serves as a developmental space for arts and culture, alumni activities, conversations on human rights and dignity, enterprise and entrepreneurship skills.
- 3.2 The Corner serves as an apolitical and religiously neutral space.
- 3.3 The Corner also develops business minded cadets. Prior to the national lockdown periods, the Corner offered barista training.
- 3.4 Coding training, the free use of a laptop, the free use of an audio recording booth, a 3D printer and green screen for filming projects, are some other exciting services provided at the innovative hub.
- 3.5 The facilities are free for workshops and seminars providing that the content of these engagements is centred on developmental matters, and that the activities are offered for free.
- 3.6 During the period of May to July 2022, the Corner had a total of 4504 visitors, 232 events and 75 virtual events/programmes.

4. Nelson Mandela Legacy Exhibition, City Hall

Mr Smith led the guided tour through the small, but impactful exhibition. Some of the key items included a timeline of Mandela's early life, the 1940s and 1950s in Cape Town, the events leading to his imprisonment, as well as the time of his incarceration, the negotiations that led to his release and, the key moments of the democratic transition. The Exhibition is a popular attraction for not only tourists but also school visits. The informal walk-through culminated at the bronze statue on the City Hall balcony overlooking the Grand Parade, where Mandela delivered his infamous speech after his release from prison.



MR G BOSMAN, MPP

**CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY, CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT**