



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

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Standing Committee on Local Government on the Annual Report of the Department of Local Government for the 2021/22 financial year.

The Standing Committee on Local Government, having deliberated on the Annual Report of the Department of Local Government for the 2021/22 financial year, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

The Annual Report of the Department of Local Government (the Department) for the financial year ended 31 March 2022 was tabled on 6 October 2022 in accordance with section 65(1)(a) of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), as amended.

As part of its oversight function, the Standing Committee on Local Government (the Committee) deliberated on the Annual Report of the Department on 4 November 2022. Annual reports are the key instruments for departments to report on performance measured against their performance targets and budgets as outlined in their strategic plans and annual performance plans. In addition, hereto, it accounts for the success of each programme that was implemented.

Standing Rule 111(1)(a) of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament provides standing committees with the mandate to consider departmental annual reports submitted in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999).

The Annual Report Programme for the 2021/22 financial year was advertised in newspapers to invite stakeholders and members of the public to attend and participate in the discussions.

The Committee deliberated on Part A: General Information, Part B: Performance Information and Part D: Human Resource Management, after which the Chairperson afforded an opportunity to the public to ask questions to the Department.

2. Overview

The Minister and the Head of Department made introductory remarks highlighting the challenges the Department faced after the 2021 Local Government Elections. The challenges related to the election of councillors and municipalities holding their first meetings to elect political office bearers. The fact that several municipalities did not have political parties with an outright majority contributed to the challenges. COVID-19 continued to exert short term financial and operational sustainability pressures on municipalities.

Notwithstanding these challenges during the 2021/22 financial year, the Department achieved 97% of its targets with only 3% not achieved. The Department also received its ninth consecutive unqualified audit opinion with no findings.

The Department highlighted that with the upcoming fire season Disaster Management always planned for the worst-case scenario to ensure that an effective service is provided to all communities in the Western Cape.

The Thusong Service Centre Programme aimed to bring government information and services closer to the people to promote access to opportunities as a basis for improved livelihoods. A cost-effective, integrated, efficient and sustainable service was also promoted to serve the needs of citizens better and to build sustainable partnerships with the government, business and civil society. It also allowed the Department to create platforms for greater dialogue between citizens and government.

The Department highlighted that during the President's budget speech in 2019 he called for a new district-based coordination model. The Western Cape Government endorsed the Joint District and Metro Approach (JDMA) as part of the District Development Model. The JDMA envisaged the three spheres of government to converge, using inter-governmental engagements, to develop similar Western Cape strategic, developmental and planning priorities with aligned budgets to accelerate service delivery.

The Committee proceeded to engage with the Department by asking questions on Parts A, B and D of the Annual Report. All questions were satisfactorily answered and the Committee was satisfied that the Department achieved its predetermined objectives for the 2021/22 financial year and that it was accurately reported on.

3. Information requested

The Committee REQUESTED that the Department provides the Committee with:

- 3.1 The date of the Thusong week, the services to be rendered, role-players involved and a report per Thusong centre on the transport of communities to the Thusong centres;
- 3.2 A report on how the Department assisted municipalities to identify water resources and whether there was a collaboration with the Department of Agriculture in doing so;
- 3.3 The proposed framework for coalitions at municipalities in the Western Cape;
- 3.4 The legal opinion on the deduction of arear amounts when purchasing prepaid electricity and water;
- 3.5 The following information on the two additional Mayco Members that were appointed at the Matzikama Municipality:
 - 3.5.1 How much was each Mayco Member paid?;
 - 3.5.2 Was the money paid back and who paid it back?;
 - 3.5.3 Was disciplinary steps taken against anybody in this regard?;
 - 3.5.4 A copy of the repayment agreement with the relevant councillors;

- 3.6 The number of councillors trained by the Department from 1 November 2021 to date and the type of training that was provided;
- 3.7 A copy of the Investment Prospectus developed in 2020/21 for the Garden Route District;
- 3.8 A list of all the female staff that terminated their service with the Department during the period under review, reasons for termination and whether an exit interview was conducted;
- 3.9 A report per municipality on the Community Development Workers Operational Support Grant indicating whether the money was spent by the end of June deadline;
- 3.10 A list of the areas where the Department envisaged to do further upgrades of ablution facilities;
- 3.11 A copy of the Human Settlements Emergency Grant policy for victims of fire disasters;
- 3.12 A copy of the advertisement calling for Khoi-San communities to submit applications to be recognised as a Khoi-San community;
- 3.13 Detail of the proposed Central Karoo Economic Summit; and
- 3.14 A copy of the discussion document on the small village development initiative to attract people to the rural areas.

4. Resolutions

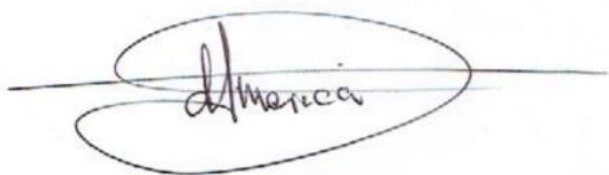
The Committee RESOLVED that it would invite the Department to brief it in future on:

- 4.1 The proposed framework for coalitions at municipalities in the Western Cape;
- 4.2 The research done to design a financial and operational sustainability model for municipalities in the Western Cape; and
- 4.3 The Joint District and Metro Approach in all the districts in the province including the City of Cape Town.

5. Conclusion

The Committee congratulated the Department on its ninth consecutive unqualified audit opinion with no findings for the 2021/22 financial year.

The Chairperson thanked the Members of the Committee, the Minister, the Head of Department and all the officials of the Department for their preparation and responses to the questions raised by the Committee.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. America', is enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval. A horizontal line passes through the center of the oval, extending slightly beyond its left and right edges.

MR D AMERICA, MPP

CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

22 November 2022