



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

Ref Number: 11/4/6

---

Report of the Service Delivery Cluster Committees on its oversight visit to the West Coast, from 8 - 11 February 2022, as follows:

## **Delegation**

The delegation consisted of the following members:

America, D (DA); Baartman, D (DA); Dugmore, C (ANC); Makamba-Botya, N (EFF); Marran, P (ANC); Maseko, LM (DA); Mvimbi, L (ANC); Nkondlo, N (ANC); Plato, D (DA); Smith, D (ANC); and Van Der Westhuizen, AP (Co-ordinating Chairperson and leader of the delegation).

The following staff attended the visit week:

Adams, Z (Procedural Officer); Barends, A (Driver: Security and Facilities); Coetzee, J (Procedural Officer); Jones, S (Procedural Officer); Mshumpela, N (Committee Assistant); and Niekerk, S (Procedural Officer).

## **Service delivery cluster committees (Cluster B)**

The following Committees took part in the visit week:

Standing Committee on Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning; Standing Committee on Finance, Economic Opportunities and Tourism; Standing Committee on Human Settlements; Standing Committee on Local Government; and Standing Committee on Transport and Public Works

### **1. Introduction**

The Joint Visit Week is a key mechanism established by the Western Cape Provincial Parliament to achieve its constitutional oversight mandate within the province. The visit week is intended to ensure that Members of the Provincial Parliament, through its standing committees, continuously keep abreast with developments and service delivery issues in the province. It also affords the opportunity to undertake oversight visits and interact with communities and institutions in order to assess the needs and challenges they experience.

To this end, the Western Cape Provincial Parliament's Cluster B Committees undertook a Provincial Visit Week to the West Coast District to consult and interact with private stakeholders and provincial and local government stakeholders on projects and programmes in outlying areas as part of its oversight mandate.

During the week meetings were held with municipalities and relevant stakeholders in Darling, Yzerfontein, Vredenburg, Langebaan and Velddrif. Representatives of the Western Cape provincial departments were also in attendance.

This report highlights the delegation's findings and recommendations stemming from the visits.

## **2. Colenso Farm: Tuesday, 8 February 2022**

### **2.1 Overview and background**

A delegation from the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, including members of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, paid an announced site visit to Colenso Farm on Tuesday 8 February 2022.

Colenso Farm is a state farm located in Darling, on the West Coast of the Western Cape. Colenso Farm is an 871 hectare mixed farming enterprise. The farm includes a collection of 1 200 sheep, a piggery unit with the capacity to hold 300 sows and over 400 hectares of arable land.

Colenso Farm is managed by Mr Ivan Cloete. Mr Cloete became a land reform beneficiary in 2012 and has since been placed on, and subsequently moved from two other farms prior to Colenso Farm. He was placed at Colenso Farm in 2019, and has been provided with a draft 30-year lease agreement for the farm.

Mr Cloete provided the delegation with a brief overview of the history of the farm and his experience of the land reform process by outlining the difficulty he has undergone to obtain a lease agreement from the national Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). He further provided detail in respect of the support required from the Western Cape Department of Agriculture (DOA) to ensure that he emerges as a successful farmer. The Western Cape Department of Agriculture in turn provided the delegation with detail relating to the support it has afforded Mr Cloete.

The Municipal Manager of the Swartland Municipality provided the Leader of the delegation with a written list of concerns and/or issues that the municipality had with the DALRRD with regard to land reform in the Swartland area.

The delegation posed questions to which the Department of Agriculture and Mr Cloete responded. The briefing was followed by a tour of the farm.

### **2.2 Key issues discussed**

2.2.1 Colenso Farm is a Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) farm situated in Darling. Mr. Cloete is managing the farm as a registered legal entity under the name of Sheegra Agricultural Enterprises Pty (Ltd). Commodities include livestock and grains.

2.2.2 Although the farmer has been awarded a 30-year lease agreement contract, it remains unsigned as Mr Cloete is awaiting clarity from the DALRRD on certain aspects of the lease agreement. The farm was initially awarded to Mr Cloete as the sole beneficiary. However, due to his wife's involvement in the business, he decided to include her as an additional beneficiary in terms of the legal entity. It was reported that the process of effecting amendments in this regard was a tedious one and that no response has been received from the DALRRD to date.

2.2.3 Support provided by the DOA included assistance with the drafting of a farm management plan towards a Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) application. The support included assistance from specialists in the Department, i.e. Extension Officers, Economists as well as commodity groups. It also included emergency assistance for water storage such as water tanks, after the reservoir on the farm collapsed.

2.2.4 The CASP application request for the funding cycle of 2022/23 covered the immediate business needs in terms of ruminants and grains which were regarded as essential for the sustainability of the enterprises on the farm. The delegation was informed that, in the absence of a signed lease agreement, the DOA cannot approve CASP funding as this could be regarded as irregular expenditure.

2.2.5 Challenges on the farm included four windmills that were not in working order, a truck still registered in the name of the previous owner of the farm, thus making it difficult for the expired licence to be renewed, a tractor without an engine and the costs involved with the maintenance of worn equipment and vehicles on the farm. The agreement with the DALRRD was that the farmer is responsible for the servicing of vehicles and equipment, once the farm has been handed over. The problem was that some of the essential machinery were not in working order and/or in a bad condition at the time of hand over. Mr Cloete was also concerned that the proposed lease amount and escalation clause may result in annual expenses that may be too high to sustain in the long run.

### **2.3 Recommendation**

2.3.1 The delegation RECOMMENDED that the DOA engages with the DALRRD to resolve the issue of the proposed, unsigned lease agreement, to give attention to the transfer and licensing of the truck still registered in the name of the previous farm owner and to investigate options for possible support to the farmer, specifically for the transport of wool bales to Malmesbury after the March wool shearing period.

### **2.3 Information requested**

2.3.1 The delegation REQUESTED that the DOA provides it with a list of the:

2.3.1.1 Options to circumvent the requirement that CASP funding will only be considered once a signed lease agreement is in place; and

2.3.1.2 Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) farms in the Western Cape, as well as a list of the remaining Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) farms.

## **3. Visit to !Khwa ttu “Food from the Ancestors” Experience: Tuesday, 8 February 2022**

### **3.1 Overview and background**

The second visit for the day was to !Kwha ttu San Heritage Centre, a San cultural experience based in Yzerfontein. !Kwha ttu is a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO), which has been in operation since 1999, directed jointly by the San and the Swiss-based Ubuntu Foundation. The NPO is committed to the preservation of traditional knowledge and the development of practical skills to equip the San to thrive in the modern world.

Before the engagement, the delegation partook in a “Food from the Ancestors Experience”, where Members were introduced to modern dishes prepared with traditional plants and other ingredients commonly used by the San, which could be foraged or sourced from surrounding areas. All products used, including beverages, were sourced from local suppliers.

The !Kwha ttu San Heritage Centre, which the delegation toured, opened its doors in September 2018 and continues to expand as a busy hub of ongoing community initiatives. The Centre enables the San to share their heritage with local and international visitors. The aim is to share the history, knowledge, spirituality and values of the San in order to make a positive contribution to the social and environmental challenges that affect people across the world.

The delegation received a guided tour of the facilities with a professional tour guide, who focused on the history of the San people and the San way of life. Thereafter, the delegation was briefed by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism on the Tourism Product Development Fund, the !Khwa ttu Food from the Ancestors Experience and the Department's involvement in the Project, the impact on local tourism and the benefits for the local community. The delegation also engaged with the beneficiaries of the Project and discussed the successes and challenges experienced so far.

The following persons were present:

- Mr Jacques Stoltz, Director: Tourism at the Department of Economic Development and Tourism;
- Mr Michael Daiber, General Manager of !Khwa ttu;
- Ms Bianca Tango, Marketing and Sales Manager of !Khwa ttu;
- Ms Baby Rose Vilander, Tourism Manager of !Khwa ttu;
- Ms Nashada Ndango, San Tour Guide employed by !Khwa ttu; and
- Ms Donique Dala, !Khwa ttu San Storyteller.

### **3.2 Key issues discussed – Briefing by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism**

- 3.2.1 In 2019, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (the Department) realised that it was not fully optimising tourism and that there were structural constraints around growing tourism in the Western Cape. Research conducted in the sector indicated that the Province was not seeing investment in new experiences and there was a perception that the tourism products were becoming staid. The Department then proceeded to analyse a year's worth of "social conversations" (approximately up to 300 000 social conversations) via Instagram, Facebook and other social media platforms, for each of the six districts in the Province to understand what people were saying about each district. The Department identified the strong points, the gaps and the opportunities for future growth for each district. This led the Department to identify product opportunities for further development. This was how the Tourism Product Development Fund (the Fund) was conceptualised.
- 3.2.2 The Fund was developed to incentivise investment in tourism products and experiences in districts in the Western Cape that travellers had indicated they were interested in. When COVID-19 came about, the Department realised that they could not expect organisations to match the funding it would receive and this requirement was amended. Another original requirement was that the Department wanted to fund tourism products and experiences that would result in job creation. Due to the impact of the pandemic, this requirement was amended to include retention of jobs.
- 3.2.3 The Fund was launched in mid-2020, inviting organisations to submit proposals in response to specific district product gaps. Eleven projects were shortlisted for the 2020/21 financial year, of which two projects were withdrawn, and an additional four projects were selected for the 2021/22 financial year. The Fund assisted with tourism recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic by boosting investment in supply to counter the impact of supply losses due to the pandemic. However, due to current budget constraints, the Fund will not continue in the 2022/23 financial year.

- 3.2.4 The Department has funded 15 projects over two financial years – three projects in the Cape Winelands, one project in the Central Karoo, five projects in the Garden Route, three projects in the Overberg, and three projects in the West Coast District. The Department spent approximately R3,8 million on these projects in 2020/21 and approximately R4,1 million in 2021/22. Despite amending the requirements of the Fund to indicate that it was not a “matching fund” in terms of investment from both parties, the Department found that it was able to unlock matching funding at times, either from the beneficiary or a third party. More than 300 jobs were sustained/created outside of the Metro.
- 3.2.5 The Department had identified culinary tourism in the West Coast as one of the key talking points amongst visitors. The Department had also identified !Khwa ttu as world-class heritage attraction. However, !Khwa ttu had underperformed in terms of their visitor numbers prior to the pandemic, and this was further exacerbated by the pandemic. Nevertheless, the project spoke directly to the Department’s vision for the West Coast as a sophisticated gastronomy and cultural heritage destination.
- 3.2.6 The Fund aimed to improve the attraction value of the !Khwa ttu facility by introducing a gastronomic experience, boosting awareness of !Khwa ttu through increased marketing that targeted trade, media and consumers, and establishing better partnerships with other strategic partners such as the West Coast Fossil Park. The !Khwa ttu “Food from the Ancestors” Project was launched to give visitors the opportunity to join local guides on a guided tour of the surrounding landscape while foraging for, and learning about, indigenous plants and the manner in which food was traditionally prepared by San communities. Guests are then able to sample the traditional food at the restaurant.
- 3.2.7 The Department funded the project to the value of R390 000, while !Khwa ttu contributed R210 000. The funding assisted with the following: An upgrade to the restaurant’s facilities, the development of a new restaurant menu, the development of a new “Food from the Ancestors” self-guided trail and guided tour, the production, printing and distribution of a “Food from the Ancestors” trail map, the conceptualisation and execution of collaborative marketing activities with various marketing and trade partners, the production of promotional materials, and the conceptualisation and execution of promotional campaigns.
- 3.2.8 To date, 12 870 tourists have visited the Project and made use of the new facilities and activities. This is a 30% increase from the previous financial year. Almost 100% of these visitors were local tourists. The gross profit of the restaurant was just short of R600 000, which was 30% more than the previous year. 2 341 persons participated in the “Food from the Ancestors” experience, which generated a profit of R327 000. !Kwha ttu employed 52 staff members and interns, of which 29 were women. Of the 29 women, 62% were youth and 80% were previously disadvantaged. Of the 23 men, 70% were youth and 96% were previously disadvantaged. !Khwa ttu also supports 39 local suppliers, which is four times more than the original 10 that were targeted for this period.
- 3.2.9 The Department indicated that !Khwa ttu spoke to global trends such as wellness tourism, transformational tourism/travel and regenerative travel. Regenerative travel was for visitors who wanted to experience how communities are being revived. This has become particularly important since the COVID-19 pandemic, where visitors want to travel in an ethical manner, making a difference for people and the environment.
- 3.2.10 The Department acknowledged that more could be done for township tourism, and more broadly speaking, community tourism. However, most township-based businesses applied for

the business relief funds and not the Tourism Product Development Fund. The Department has provided much assistance to small enterprises within the hospitality and tourism space. However, research showed that local travellers did not partake in township tours; this was a sector that was driven by international tourism. Many of the townships in the Western Cape did not have the kind of attractions that drew the attention of local visitors, such as Vilakazi Street in Soweto. The Department further acknowledged that there was a lack of transformation in tourism, which needed more attention.

### **3.3 Engagement with !Khwa ttu on the successes and challenges of the Project**

- 3.3.1 The delegation noted that the signage for !Khwa ttu at the main entrance did not indicate what the facility was about and therefore, did not particularly pique visitors curiosity. One could see the signage at the main entrance along the R27, but there was a long road leading to !Khwa ttu where one could not see any of the facilities. The signage did not inform visitors about the cultural experience.
- 3.3.2 The idea for !Khwa ttu was initiated by the Working Group for Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA), who identified that the San needed assistance in unlocking potential tourism opportunities, showcasing San culture to the world, and telling San stories from a San point of view. Swiss anthropologist, Ms Irene Staehelin, agreed to assist with this initiative. Initially, the project started out in Scarborough, however, the Project depleted its funding shortly after. In 1999, Ms Staehelin bought an 850 hectare wheat farm on the West Coast (Grootwater) for the !Khwa ttu project and donated it to the San. Ms Staehelin's vision was that !Khwa ttu would become an "embassy for the San", where the San would be able to express the stories of their culture and way of life. In 2018, Ms Staehelin also donated the heritage museum to !Khwa ttu.
- 3.3.3 Before the Fund, there were very few visitors, however, there has been a complete turnaround for !Khwa ttu. Employees have been overwhelmed with excitement and enthusiasm to welcome new visitors and tell them stories about San life.
- 3.3.4 In the previous menu, most meals would cost visitors between R100 and R200 each. The tour used to be priced at just over R400 per person. At the moment, all meals except one (the Eland Burger) are priced at under R100 each. Each meal comes with a unique story, traditional San ingredients and locally sourced products. Now, there are five tours that are priced at R160 each. The idea behind the pricing was that families would be able to come by on a weekend, enjoy the tour and still be able to enjoy the cuisine.
- 3.3.5 !Khwa ttu has been exceeding its targets in all departments, including the restaurant and tour sales. The facility has not received international tourists yet, but is receiving assistance with marketing its story to tour operators, which might assist with bringing in international visitors.
- 3.3.6 !Khwa ttu has switched to using local produce and beverages. The facility supports agri tourism, sourcing products locally and supporting small-scale farmers.
- 3.3.7 The delegation noted the unique experience of the tour and the exceptional culinary experience, which could easily be marketed to potential visitors, especially schools and universities. !Khwa ttu indicated that there were private schools that were aware of the San cultural experience, however, the organisation struggled to get public schools to tour the facility due to lack of transport. Transport was a challenge as it was the biggest expenditure for public schools. This was unfortunate as !Khwa ttu's educational tours were in line with what was being taught in the school curriculum.

### **3.4 Guided tour of the !Khwattu facilities**

The delegation was given a tour by local San tour guide, Ms Nashada Ndango.

During the tour, the delegation observed the following:

- 3.4.1 The delegation was taken to the “First People” exhibition building, which provided Members with information about San stories, art, religion and beliefs. This facility provides visitors with an interactive learning experience about the San’s way of life.
- 3.4.2 Objects were found in Southern Africa that predated what people thought were first signs of civilization. Objects found deep underground showed how the San had to adapt their lifestyle to environmental changes and how they were able to survive and thrive for centuries.
- 3.4.3 The “Way of the San” exhibition building provides visitors with an immersive experience in respect of San life, from hunting to healing and dance. The tour allows visitors to experience how the land, plants, animals and the elements are connected. This is how the San learnt how to live and survive through different circumstances.
- 3.4.4 The “Way of the San” exhibition boasts areas where visitors may learn about indigenous plants, areas where visitors may learn about hunting and tracking, and a room that plays videos about the daily activities of the San.
- 3.4.5 The San children, through their elders, learnt about indigenous and medicinal plants and how to identify poisonous plants, as well as hunting and how to identify animal footprints and signs of danger.
- 3.4.6 Ms Donique Dala, !Khwattu’s famous story teller, demonstrated San medicine and jewellery making using ostrich eggs, springbok horn as a chipping tool and a stone, while speaking to Members in indigenous San language about daily San life. These skills are taught to the San children. The ostrich shell is ground into a powder that can be ingested to cure upset stomachs as it contains calcium.
- 3.4.7 In the San culture, a bow and arrow is used for hunting. Poison is applied to the tip of the arrow and animals are caught this way. However, small bow and arrow, without poison, is also used to propose marriage. A San male will aim the arrow towards a woman that he is interested in. The woman may either keep the arrow to indicate interest, or she may give the arrow back or break it to indicate that she is not interested in the proposal.

### **3.5 Information Requested**

The delegation REQUESTED that:

- 3.5.1 The Department of Economic Development and Tourism provides the delegation with the “close-out” reports for each Tourism Product Development Fund project as they are completed;
- 3.5.2 The Department of Local Government provides the delegation with a brief report on what Local Economic Development units within municipalities are doing for local tourism, and what they are doing to assist these units; and
- 3.5.3 The Department of Economic Development and Opportunities provides the delegation with a brief report on the potential of indigenous medicinal plants and whether there are any opportunities to expand these initiatives.

### **3.6 Recommendations**

The delegation RECOMMENDED the following:

- 3.6.1 The Western Cape Department of Education should engage with !Khwa ttu and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism on the possibility of educational indigenous and cultural tours for public schools;
- 3.6.2 The Department of Economic Development and Tourism should engage with the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport on their initiatives to promote indigenous languages and cultural tours, and what they are doing to assist young learners to access places such as !Khwa ttu; and
- 3.6.3 The Department of Economic Development and Tourism should engage with the Department of Transport and Public Works on options or programmes to facilitate transport for public schools so that they may access places such as !Khwa ttu.

### **3.7 Resolutions**

The delegation RESOLVED that:

- 3.7.1 The Standing Committee on Finance, Economic Opportunities and Tourism should invite the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to brief it on:
  - 3.7.1.1 All 15 projects that were funded through the Tourism Product Development Fund; and
  - 3.7.1.2 The way in which the Department will continue to support tourism development and tourism product development once the Tourism Product Development Fund has been discontinued; and
- 3.7.2 The Department of Economic Development and Tourism should be invited by the Standing Committee on Finance, Economic Opportunities and Tourism to brief it on the challenges experienced with township tourism and rural tourism development, and the potential that they see for those sectors.

## **4. Human Settlements Wednesday 9 February 2022**

### **4.1 Introduction and background**

The Standing Committee on Human Settlements conducted an oversight visit to the Saldanha Bay Municipality (the Municipality) in Vredenburg on Wednesday, 9 February 2022. The Municipality briefed the Committee on:

- 4.1.1 The current status of the Housing Demand Database for the various towns that fall under the Municipality, including how the Housing Demand Database aligns with the Provincial Housing Demand Database;
- 4.1.2 The housing typologies in terms of the area's needs and how the typologies are integrated;
- 4.1.3 The challenges experienced since the inception of the housing projects;
- 4.1.4 The housing business plans/projects in the pipeline including projects that generate revenue e.g. social housing;
- 4.1.5 The Municipality's 10 year Strategic Plan with specific reference to the anticipated housing demand that the Saldanha IDZ will stimulate; and
- 4.1.6 The Municipality's spatial planning for the financial year.



The delegation did not conduct a site visit of the Louville Integrated Rural Development Project due to time constraints. Members resolved to continue with the briefing as opposed to conducting the site visit.

## **4.2 Overview**

The delegation was received by Mr H Mettler, Municipal Manager: Saldanha Bay Municipality; Mr R Groenewald, Senior Manager Housing: Saldanha Bay Municipality; Mr P Chandakar, Director Planning: Department of Human Settlements; Ms R Tiry, Director Regional Support: Department of Human Settlements and Ms A Van Der Walt, Manager: Genesis Hub.

## **4.3 Key issues discussed - engagement with the Saldanha Bay Municipality**

The Saldanha Bay Municipality briefed the delegation on the current status of the Housing Demand Database for the various towns that fall under the Municipality. The information provided by the Municipality included details of how the Housing Demand Database is updated according to beneficiary needs, the challenges experienced since the inception of the housing projects, the housing business plans and projects in the pipeline and the geographical locations of those projects. Further discussions were held on the Municipality's 10 year Strategic Plan with specific reference to the anticipated housing demand that the Saldanha IDZ will stimulate and the Municipality's spatial planning for the financial year. The delegation also allowed the Genesis Hub (the Hub) to contribute to the briefing by providing more insight of the work that is being done at the Hub.

### **4.3.1 Municipal housing demand**

The total demand for housing in the West Coast in accordance with the Western Cape Demand Database is estimated to be 47 369. This records approximately 77% of the total demand in the West Coast, which is allocated as follows:

- Swartland with the highest demand is recorded at 32%;
- Saldanha Bay records 25%; and
- Matzikama 20%.

The Saldanha Bay Municipality's Housing Demand Database recorded a total of 12 781 applicants in need of a housing opportunity by end December 2021. The increased demand is attributed to in-migration into the area.

### **4.3.2 Housing needs register**

The housing need in the Municipality is captured on the centralised Western Cape Demand Database in order to create a single unified list of those who have registered for a housing opportunity. Applicants are assisted with the completion of their application forms by the Municipality. The completed forms are then captured and uploaded onto the centralised web based programme also known as the Western Cape Demand Database (the Database). The Database groups the beneficiaries according to e.g. town, age and need per town. This data is later used to establish the housing need and typologies required for a specific area.

### **4.3.3 Town Level Waiting List**

The Saldanha Bay Municipality in its Town Level Waiting List indicated a need for low-cost housing and an acceleration of service delivery in the informal settlements areas of Vredenburg

and Saldanha Bay. The Town Level Waiting List provides the salary scale of applicants which alludes to the housing typologies that applicants could be categorised in. Approximately 10 798 applicants on the list earn a salary below R3 500 and 761 applicants earn a salary of R7 000. Applicants who earn a salary between R7 000 and R22 000 are recorded as 496 in total and applicants who earn a salary of R22 000 are recorded as 55 in total.

The majority of the beneficiaries recorded on the Database were aged between 30 and 40 years. Only 891 persons aged 60 and above were registered on the Database. The Municipality was granted a waiver of the national criteria to include persons less than 60 years old in accordance with a circular issued by the Department. A provincial circular was sent out to all municipalities advising them to have proper evidence that older individuals have been provided with an opportunity prior to prioritising younger age groups. A total of 1 155 backyard dwellers and 47 farm residents have been recorded.

#### **4.3.4 Funding and provisional business plans**

The total funding allocated to the Saldanha Bay Municipality over the current and coming financial years spanning (2021/22 - 2024/25) is an estimated R122 314 000, which constitutes 31% of the total District's allocation. Due to the budget cuts, a reduction in the size of the projects have been implemented. The reduction in the size of the projects have created challenges for the contractor due to a rise in costs per unit, because of the low yield of the projects. The Municipality has motivated for additional funds for these projects.

#### **4.3.5 Priority human settlements and housing development areas**

No housing projects were planned within the Saldanha IDZ area. All current planned projects fell within the Priority Human Settlements and Housing Development Areas (PHSHDA) that were Gazetted in 2020. The objective of the PHSHDA was to redevelop and restructure towns to overcome past spatial disparities. The two PHSHDA areas earmarked for development were located in the Saldanha Bay SEZ and Vredenburg. The National Department of Human Settlements in collaboration with the Housing Development Agency appointed service providers to draft a Development Plan for the PHSHDA areas. The aim of the Development Plan would be to direct human settlement development towards strategically located land parcels to achieve the objectives of the PHSHDA initiatives. The Development Plan is anticipated to be completed by the end of the 2021/22 financial year. The plan will be incorporated into the Saldanha Bay Human Settlement Plan as a guide for capital expenditure for the next five year Integrated Development Project cycle.

#### **4.3.6 Land invasion**

The Municipality advised that illegal invasion of land earmarked for future housing projects and occupation of serviced sites and completed houses has become a huge challenge. This resulted in protests, disruptions and disputes pertaining to the allocation of subsidies to beneficiaries. The cost implication for improved risk management and implementation of risk reduction strategies in collaboration with other land invasion stakeholders has created an additional cost for the Municipality. To mitigate the risks the Municipality has developed and improved its Standard Operating Procedures of the monitoring of sites; the response to threats and community mobilisation initiatives.

#### **4.3.7 Title deed transfers**

Challenges pertaining to the slow completion of title deeds transfers were reported by the Municipality. The Municipality was provided with additional support to mitigate matters.

#### **4.3.8 Proposed social housing projects**

The Saldanha Bay Social Housing Projects and the Vredenburg Urban Regeneration Social Housing Projects were planned for implementation from 2025. The Saldanha Bay Municipality submitted a Business Plan in 2019, which proposed a mixed income business approach for the Vredenburg Urban Regeneration Project (VURP). VURP allows for financial cross subsidisation to affordable housing precincts. Well located land near the central business district will be utilised for human settlements and social facilities. The housing typologies will consist of social housing, GAP housing and breaking new ground projects. There are currently ownership constraints on the land parcels identified for social housing. Ownership of the land parcels reside with other entities and must still be acquired.

#### **4.3.9 Bulk services**

The Municipality informed the delegation of insufficient bulk services for planned projects. They indicated that all projects would be aligned with municipal infrastructure funding.

#### **4.3.10 Louville 155 Integrated Residential Development Programme (IRDP) Housing Project**

The Louville Housing Project was established in the 2016/17 financial year. The project made provision for 155 IRDP sites, three public open spaces and one institutional zone for a crèche. Westland Construction was appointed as the contractor for the Project in October 2021 after funding approvals were obtained. The housing typologies for the Project would comprise of a combination of freestanding, semi-detached, and row houses due to the site's topography and the flexibility that the erf size provide. The project promotes passive surveillance through visibility, energy efficiency through reduced energy usage and has a quality interface between the development and the adjacent watercourse to strengthen its legibility.

The beneficiaries of the Project were derived from the community of Vredenburg, wards 2, 10 and 13. They consist of backyard dwellers and employees of local businesses. The Project makes provision for the elderly, disabled, military veterans and child headed households in accordance with the National Directive. The Vredenburg Municipal waiting list dates back to 1988. The oldest person recorded on the waiting list is 89 years of age and was registered in 2004.

The Project promotes the spatial integration between recipients in the new development as well as the existing community members in Louville. The development is within walking distance of amenities. Previously housing projects were predominantly focused on low-density, free-standing single storey units. Urban design has since changed to allow for increased densities and a wider range of housing options. This is achieved through the utilisation of smaller erven to build semi-detached duplexes and single-storey row housing comprising of three and four connected houses.

#### **4.3.11 The Genesis Hub**

The Genesis Hub (hereinafter the Hub) was launched in September 2020, with various skills development programmes in place. These programmes ranged from Drone Academy, Culinary Academy, the Green Engine (Urban Farming), the Digigate Lab (Technology Centre) and a micro-manufacturing programme which produces biodegradable sanitary towels. The Hub currently hosted 62 unemployed youth from the surrounding local areas. The youth at the Hub were taught specialised crafts of respective programmes, as well as work readiness skills and fundamentals.

COVID-19 was construed to be a huge inhibitor to community engagement, training, and operations. The pandemic further negatively impacted on potential funding, which forms the Hub's greatest challenge to date. Plans are in place to attract a substantial amount of funding so that the Hub's positive impact on youth and the community can increase and benefit the Saldanha Bay Municipality.

The West Coast District Municipality embarked on a pilot project with several local government departments, as well as the Genesis Hub's Programme Implementation Partner and Drones Operations, to use drone technology to assist with the following:

- Land invasion issues;
- Monitoring compliance of COVID-19;
- Apprehension and arrest of criminals;
- Tow request of jet ski with mechanical failure; and
- Person in difficulty in Yzerfontein harbour.

There is a restaurant and coffee shop on the Hub's premises through which the youth obtained their practical experience. The Genesis Hub restaurant, SMAAK, received its certificate of compliance from the Department of Health in March 2021. The restaurant and coffee shop were open to the members of the public.

#### **4.4 Information requested**

3.3.1 The Committee REQUESTED that the Saldanha Bay Municipality provides it with:

3.3.1.1 The Municipality's Strategic Economic Framework;

3.3.1.2 The Municipality's land audit for human settlements which contains confidentiality clauses; and

3.3.1.3 The Municipality's grant funding plan for the R90 million grant provided to the Municipality.

3.3.1.4 The strategies implemented to mitigate housing project delays; and

3.3.1.5 A report on the number of private contractors and how many woman and youth have been employed in projects in the current financial year.

#### **5. Visit to Mykonos Casino - Wednesday, 9 February 2022**

##### **5.1 Overview and background**

The second visit for the day was to the Mykonos Casino where the delegation received a briefing from the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board on the various sectors in the gambling industry and the compliance requirements for each of those sectors. Thereafter, the Committee received a briefing from the Mykonos Casino on its social responsibility initiatives, contributions and projects, and the utilisation of local businesses by the Casino. The delegation also had the opportunity for a brief engagement with a beneficiary of Mykonos Casino's social responsibility initiatives, the Green Engine.

## **5.2 Key issues discussed – Briefing by the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board**

- 5.2.1 The Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board (the Board) indicated that there were various legislated gambling licences that were offered, such as casino licences, limited gambling machine operators licences, limited gambling machine premises licences (partially offered), manufacturer licences, totalisator operator licences, totalisator premises licences, bookmaker licences, bookmaker premises licences, key employee licences and gambling employee licences.
- 5.2.2 There are six sectors within the Western Cape's gambling industry, namely, casino, betting, Limited Payout Machines (LPM), bingo, junkets and manufacturers. There has been partial roll out of LPM's in the Province for slot machines with limited bets and payouts in brick and mortar establishments. Currently, only five machine licences were offered.
- 5.2.3 In the Casino Sector: There are five casinos located in the Metro, the West Coast, Breede Valley, Overberg and Mossel Bay. Over the past five years the turnover for these casinos has accumulated to approximately R192 billion. The Gross Gaming Revenue totalled almost R13 billion, gaming taxes amounted to approximately R1.85 billion, and corporate social investment amounted to approximately R91,5 million.
- 5.2.4 In the Betting Sector: In the last five years the Board has issued 49 Operator Licences (48 Bookmaker licences and one Totalisator licence) and 211 Premises Licences (148 Bookmaker licences and 63 Totalisator licences). The total turnover has amounted to R99 832 309 335, Gross Gaming Revenue amounted to almost R9,72 billion and Gaming Taxes amounted to almost R5,85 million.
- 5.2.5 In the LPM Sector: In the last five years, there have been two Route Operators. Total turnover for this period amounted to R53 729 171 539. Gross Gaming Revenue amounted to approximately R4,1 billion, gaming taxes totalled approximately R565 million and Corporate Social Investment amounted to approximately R25 million.
- 5.2.6 The downturn in the economy reduced the disposable income of persons, thereby affecting the gambling sector. The COVID-19 regulations and restrictions had a major negative impact on the sector. There was a definite increase in revenue generated by casinos as the restrictions were lifted. To date, there has been an improvement in revenue but this was not close to where the casinos were pre-pandemic.
- 5.2.7 The Board is also subject to specific advertising requirements that gambling boards in other provinces are not subject to. Licence holders in other provinces have to ensure that they are compliant with the National Gambling Amendment Act (Act 10 of 2008) and they are allowed to place their adverts, however, the licence holders in the Western Cape are required to get approval from the Board in order to place their adverts. This may cause delays for licence holders.
- 5.2.8 The Board has placed much of its focus on eradicating illegal gambling, ensuring that these cases are investigated within a certain time period. The Board held regular meetings with relevant role players in the sector and has a good working relationship with the South African Police Service and other agencies. The Board indicated that the Western Cape does not have the challenges experienced in other provinces such as illegal online gambling. The Western Cape was the first province to successfully prosecute an illegal online gambling case.
- 5.2.9 The Board has established a specific Responsible Gambling Committee that convenes with licence holders to direct and oversee responsible gambling initiatives. Previously, the Board took

a reactionary approach to responsible gambling, now the focus has shifted to a preventative approach. Licence holders are now being required to develop internal control procedures in respect of responsible gambling. Various measures will be mandatory, failing which may lead to sanctions. The aim of this campaign would be to give greater attention to player protection and creating awareness before there is a problem.

- 5.2.10 The Board indicated that the gambling industry within the Western Cape was well-regulated, however, there were a number of legislative provisions that made operational activities more onerous in the Province such as licensing (some provinces did not have the requirement that owners had to renew licences every year), advertising as indicated in 5.2.7, suppliers to manufacturers (the Regulations indicate certain suitability requirements for manufacturers, but this requirement is not found in other provinces), and the “return to player percentage” (the return to player in the Western Cape is 85% while, internationally, it is 80%. This limits the number of opportunities and games that comes to the Province).
- 5.2.11 Problem gambling was a difficult issue to navigate. In order for one to be declared a “problem gambler”, it had to be done through a court order by a dependent or a provider. In other countries there was a type of ombudsman process that these issues could be taken to.
- 5.2.12 There was a concern that some gambling facilities utilised facial recognition software or technology to identify gamblers, which may not be in line with the Protection of Personal Information Act (Act 4 of 2013).
- 5.2.13 There was a concern that the current responsible gambling slogan, “Winners know when to stop”, created by the South African Responsible Gambling Foundation, was not quite clear enough for people. The slogan needed to be more direct so that it would tell people that if they did not stop, they would lose their money and they would not free themselves from debt.

### **5.3 Key issues discussed – Briefing by Mykonos Casino**

- 5.3.1 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic: Gaming revenue for the Mykonos Casino declined from R180 million in the 2019/20 financial year to R87 million in the 2020/21 financial year, indicating a 107% reduction (year-on-year) in gaming revenue. Visitors to the Casino declined from 329 775 in the 2019/20 financial year to 112 003 in the 2020/21 financial year.
- 5.3.2 Mykonos Casino is a Level 2 B-BBEE rated company with 140 direct employees and 32 outsourced employees. In respect of the demographics of their staff – 68% are classified as Coloured, 16% are African, 15% are White and 1% is Asian. 2% of the staff is classified as disabled.
- 5.3.3 Social Responsibility Contribution by the Casino to the West Coast Community Trust (the Trust): The Trust was established when the licensing agreement was created. It is made up of three trustees; one representative from the Casino and two members of the community. The Trust meets quarterly and once they are aware of the contribution that they will be receiving for the year, they request Corporate Social Investment (CSI) proposals from the public. The Trust assesses the proposals and makes its choice, and the Casino is responsible for the administrative duties in respect of that CSI, with no cost to the Trust. The Casino stays engaged with the beneficiaries to ensure that the contribution is being used appropriately.
- 5.3.4 The CSI contribution is calculated at 5% of the Casino’s pre-tax profits. The Casino contributed approximately R2,75 million in 2017, R3,5 million in 2018, R3,2 million in 2019, R3,5 million in 2020 and R1,2 million in 2021. The contribution declined in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

where the Casino was closed during certain periods of the lockdown, or where trading hours were restricted due to the curfew that was imposed.

5.3.5 The Casino also supports local business, Pause Coaches, for staff transport services. This is a 70% black-owned business employed by Mykonos Casino since 2018. The Casino's support has allowed the business to expand its transport services.

5.3.6 Corporate Social Responsibility requirements are written into licensing conditions from inception. The only information that would not be found in these conditions are the names of the beneficiaries, as these would change from time to time. If requirements that are included in the licensing condition are not fulfilled, it is considered a very serious violation that could result in non-renewal or revocation of the licence.

#### **5.4 Key issues discussed with Mykonos Casino beneficiary – Field of Dreams at the Genesis Hub in Vredenburg (The Green Engine)**

5.4.1 The West Coast Community Trust (the Trust) was requested to provide Mr Alan Fleming's "The Green Engine" initiative with funding of approximately R1,63 million in order for the project to move to Phase 2 of its expansion plan. The Green Engine provides training and development of human capital for placement in the agricultural economy. The philosophy of the project is to grow local economies through economic, educational, nutritional and environmental advancement of involved communities.

5.4.2 Mr Fleming informed the delegation that he had requested a capital expenditure grant instead of an operational expenditure grant as it meant that they could improve and expand the facilities, which in turn meant that he would not have to approach the Trust for more money.

5.4.3 The Green Engine aims to have 40 well-trained, work-ready interns, who are ready to enter the aquaponics or aquaculture industries. Further expansion of the project would allow for more community members to be involved in the initiative. The initiative offers academic and practical (on-the-job) training for 12 months. The academic courses offered include Plant Production at NQF Level 1 and A2B Transformational Leadership. The interns would be involved in fish production, vegetable production and other agricultural experiences. The interns would also be exposed to budgeting, costing of inputs and outputs, loss control and overall farming financial management.

5.4.4 Phase 2 of the expansion plan included development of the adjoining field, providing 72 plots of 25 square metres each, which would be rented to 72 urban farmers from the local community at R50 per month. The Green Engine would provide farmers with training and cooperative provision of all inputs and outputs.

#### **5.5 Information Requested**

The delegation REQUESTED that:

5.5.1 The Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board follow up with GrandWest Casino and report back to the Committee in respect of whether GrandWest Casino uses facial recognition software and technology, and if they do, (a) whether it was reported to the Board and (b) what the facial recognition technology is used for;

5.5.2 The Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board provides the Committee with an update on Sun International's Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment status and level; and

5.5.3 The Green Engine provides the Committee with the presentation made at the Mykonos Casino briefing.

## **6. Integrated Traffic Operation on R27: Wednesday 9 February 2022**

### **6.1 Overview and background**

The delegation attended an integrated traffic operation on the R27 near Langebaan. The operation was organised in accordance with all legal requirements. The enforcement activity focused on driver alertness, vehicle roadworthiness and public transport. Being an integrated operation, Road Safety Management promoted education and awareness among all motorists in aid of road safety in the Western Cape.

Other role players that formed part of the integrated operation were the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, the Military Police, the Correctional Services Department, Home Affairs and the Saldanha Bay Municipality Traffic.

Traffic officers and the other role players conducted thorough inspections of stopped vehicles to ascertain their legal compliance. Traffic officers ascertained vehicle and driver fitness and the road safety officers engaged motorists and passengers on road safety awareness, while the SAPS searched persons and vehicles for anything illegal. The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment addressed illegal maritime matters, such as crayfish and abalone.

The delegation divided into two groups and was afforded the opportunity to attend the two stations at the roadblock as follows:

### **6.2 Vehicle Testing Unit (VTU)**

At this station all light motor vehicles and minibus taxis were tested for roadworthiness and if they were not in a roadworthy condition, the vehicles were suspended. Currently the VTU does not scan vehicles for unpaid fines; they only scan driver and vehicle licences to see if vehicles are stolen or if licences are suspended.

### **6.3 Law enforcement and driver-fatigue testing**

While providing enhanced visibility through high performance fully branded patrol vehicles with access to technological systems and data, an integrated operational approach enforces road-user compliance and safety strategies to ensure a reduction in road fatalities. Some of the main objectives are:

- 6.3.1 To promote a safe and reliable road-user environment on our road networks.
- 6.3.2 To prevent all possible loss of life and road-user crashes and fatalities.
- 6.3.3 To regulate pedestrian behaviour and reduce fatalities.
- 6.3.4 To encourage voluntary road-user compliance.
- 6.3.5 To apply the general rule of law in all aspects of traffic law enforcement.

Drivers are also tested to determine their level of fatigue and if there is an indication that the driver is not fit to drive, he or she will be pulled over to rest. The driver will be monitored until he or she is fit to drive.

### **6.4 Key issues discussed**



- 6.4.1 The main access routes to the Western Cape are the N1, N2 and N7, but the R27 is an equally important route for road traffic. Historical data and information play a pivotal role in the planning processes to integrate specific operational deployment to effectively control and monitor traffic operations. Constructive and meaningful planning, assistance and interaction among all three directorates of the Chief Directorate: Traffic Management and other key role players ensure a successful operation.
- 6.4.2 The safety aspect, such as space on the side of the road for vehicles to pull off the road and enough distance for motorists to stop, is also very important.
- 6.4.3 The utilisation of technology was demonstrated to the delegation by officers using the new-generation handheld devices and Bluetooth-enabled printers to enhance the work done in the operational environment.
- 6.4.4 It was highlighted that cameras only register the registration numbers of the vehicles that have offences registered against them or vehicles that were speeding.
- 6.4.5 The average speed-over-distance also assists officers with the identification of repeat offenders. Historic information of repeat offenders cannot be used to fine offenders, but only the transgression that happens on the day. Although the information cannot be used to act against the offender, it was also pointed out that Minister Mitchell intends to use the information to communicate with repeat offenders and to point out their transgressions and to start changing driver behaviour.
- 6.4.6 The handheld devices are also used to identify driver fatigue of public transport operators and drivers in general. When traffic officers commence their duties, they log in on the handheld devices from their residences and it is not necessary to travel to an office to commence their duties. The devices are also used to monitor the operations of the traffic officers.
- 6.4.7 The process to transport abnormal loads was explained to the delegation and the assurance was given that no load will be moved unless an application has been processed and approved by the Administration and Licensing Unit, and the necessary safety requirements are met.
- 6.4.8 It was highlighted that the Provincial Traffic Department is part of the Provincial Joint Operations Command, which includes the South African Police Service where intelligence is shared and potential problems are highlighted so that officers are aware of them.
- 6.4.9 The delegation congratulated the Department of Transport and Public Works on their role in the significant decrease in road deaths during the December 2021 festive season.

## **6.5 Resolutions**

- 6.5.1 The delegation RESOLVED to invite the Department of Transport and Public Works to brief the Standing Committee on Transport and Public Works on:
  - 6.5.1.1 The Western Cape 2021/22 festive season road safety statistics and the challenges they are facing with illegal foreign nationals who are transported with unroadworthy vehicles and the identification of foreign-registered vehicles with regard to their ownership, origin and offences; and
  - 6.5.1.2 The use of technology to assist traffic officers in the execution of their duties and the time frame for the phasing in of technology in all the traffic officers' vehicles.

## **7. Rocherpan Nature Reserve: Thursday 10 February 2022**

### **7.1 Overview and background**

Rocherpan Nature Reserve (the Reserve) is a coastal nature reserve known for its wide range of bird species and colourful wildflowers. The Reserve, which lies 25km north of Velddrif on the Cape West Coast, consists largely of wetland and a 4,7 km stretch of sandy Atlantic coastline. Rocherpan was established as a nature reserve in 1974 and the adjacent section of the Atlantic

Ocean was declared a marine nature reserve in 1988, giving the Reserve a total area of 1 081 hectares.

The delegation was welcomed by the Chief Executive Officer of CapeNature and her team. The visit commenced with an overview of the biodiversity and conservation matters linked to the Reserve, tourism and economic growth in the area and community involvement and educational programmes. The briefing was followed by a guided tour of the Reserve, where the visitor accommodation, bird hide and northern beach look-out point were showcased.

## **7.2. Key issues discussed**

- 7.2.1 The Reserve was regarded as a critical biodiversity area because of the unique type of vegetation conserved there. Rocherpan is one of only a few major pans along the West Coast of South Africa and the Reserve Complex offers protection and access to marine, freshwater and terrestrial habitats, which present good opportunities for tourism. The entire pan is under full conservation status.
- 7.2.2 The Reserve comprises of eight self-catering units, two bird hides, a circular hiking trail, a swimming pool, a children's play area and picnic and braai facilities. Apart from this, the Reserve also contributes to the recreational needs of day-visitors. It accommodates a wide variety of recreational activities such as bird-watching, photography and shore angling.
- 7.2.3 Challenges experienced included the shortage of water and illegal access. The Reserve is far removed from any municipal or bulk water connection. It relies mainly on rainfall for its water supply for domestic and tourism use. Water is harvested from the roofs of all buildings and the roofs of parking areas into various storage tanks. This however is dependent on rain and due to the recent drought conditions, water had to be transported from the local municipal reservoir at Dwarskersbos to fill the tanks on the Reserve. Each cabin is fitted with a water meter. A water management device has been introduced to limit the amount of water consumed, depending on the number of guests per cabin. Other technology used is that of an atmospheric water generator which enabled water to be harvested from the air. Access to the marine protected area by vehicles from Dwarskersbos along the beach especially at low tide is a challenge. Patrolling and monitoring this illegal access is difficult due to increasing resource constraints.
- 7.2.4 The Reserve provides nine contract job opportunities (mainly semi-skilled and unskilled jobs in the tourism and conservation sector) which forms part of the Expanded Public Works Programme to the Velddrif community.
- 7.2.5 All aspects of CapeNature are integrated into their Protected Areas Management Plan, a requirement as contained in the National Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act 57 of 2003). Approximately six years ago CapeNature adopted an international best practice, called the Conservation Open Standards, for the development of these plans. Conservation Open Standards now dictate that each nature reserve must perceive itself within the context of the landscape in which it is situated. In addition, the National Protected Areas Act dictates the establishment of a Protected Area Advisory Committee. The Rocherpan Protected Area Advisory Committee was established in 2012. It served as a platform to engage with and obtain community input into the management of the Reserve.

## **7.3 Information requested**

The delegation REQUESTED that CapeNature provides it with:

- 7.3.1 A written response indicating what happens to confiscated plants and wildlife and what the options are for utilising these for the benefit of the community;
- 7.3.2 The occupancy rate that must be obtained at the Reserve in order to break even;

- 7.3.3 A report on the evolution of the Rocherpan Protected Area Advisory Committee since its inception outlining its purpose, functioning, members and varieties of matters that it has dealt with; and
- 7.3.4 A report on the Expanded Public Works Programme, outlining the assistance and support afforded to the incumbents to find alternate employment once the fixed-term contracts of employment have come to an end.

## **8. Vredenburg Urban Renewal Project, Thursday 10 February 2022**

### **8.1 Overview and background**

The Vredenburg Urban Renewal Project seeks to develop 32 hectares of public and private land at the town centre. The successful completion of the Project will not only generate economic opportunities and better recreational facilities for residents but will serve to integrate Louville with the Vredenburg town centre.

The precinct will be structured around a number of government offices to centralise Vredenburg's municipal services and to make provincial and national government services more accessible.

The development will also create a mixed-used neighbourhood containing offices, retail, community and residential buildings and aims to be pedestrian friendly.

The following are key components of the Project:

- 8.1.1 Government walk: A slow pedestrian-friendly street;
- 8.1.2 A new road link between 6<sup>th</sup> street and Bester street;
- 8.1.3 Municipal offices, a walk-in centre, the new Town Hall and Civic square;
- 8.1.4 Provincial offices, a walk-in centre and a public square;
- 8.1.5 A historic square surrounding the historic railway station and historic railway shed;
- 8.1.6 A mixed-use precinct;
- 8.1.7 Kooitjieskloof street gateway: Health Clinic, proposed school and mixed-use retail/residential;
- 8.1.8 Lower density residential fringe adjacent to existing Louville neighbourhood;
- 8.1.9 A medium to high density residential core;
- 8.1.10 Public greenbelt and urban agriculture; and
- 8.1.11 Local Park with adjacent day-care centre, community hall and religious facility.

All the feasibility studies and costing were done during 2014 and the main priority was to acquire the land. There is only one piece of property, belonging to the Provincial Government, that must still be acquired. However, the Municipality is in the process of a land exchange to acquire the land.

The Project is split up into phases of which phase 1 is the provincial hub where all the provincial government offices are situated. Phase 1 is not yet completed. Due to COVID-19 the budget had to be reprioritised and the new completion date is estimated for 2025.

Phase 2 is the Municipal offices which will enable the Municipality to move away from renting buildings. The Municipality is currently paying R3 654 549, 24 to rent office space and the high cost of repairs and upgrades does not make it feasible to keep on renting.

Phases 3 and 4 is the human settlement part which will include a medium-density residential cluster and low-medium density row houses or duplexes.

The precinct is designed according to architectural guidelines to ensure uniformity of all the buildings.

## **8.2 Key issues discussed**

Although the community was informed of the development, the Municipality was careful to provide too much information as it is a long-term project that takes a lot of planning with major budgetary implications.

The delegation noted the timelines even though the delegation would like to see things moving faster the delegation noted the long-term planning and the vision of this Project.

## **8.3 Recommendation**

- 8.3.1 The delegation RECOMMENDED that the Municipality should explore ways to not only attract big businesses to the development but also the local small businesses and to utilise the expertise within the community.

## **8.4 Information requested**

- 8.4.1 The delegation REQUESTED that:

8.4.1.1 The Department provide the delegation with the expected time lines for the start of construction for various government buildings and the government departments that have committed to this Project; and

8.4.1.2 The Department and the Municipality provide the Standing Committee on Transport and Public Works with a biannual feedback on the progress of the Project.

## **9. Langebaan Thusong Centre, Friday 11 February 2022**

### **9.1 Overview and background**

The Thusong Service Centre is a one-stop service centre providing government information and services to communities based on the needs of the specific community. These centres are working closely with the national and local governments to ensure that all citizens have access to the services, facilities and information provided at every Thusong Centre.

The 32 Thusong centres, satellite centres and provincial and municipal outreaches in the Western Cape are owned and managed by the local municipalities. There are 21 fully fledged Thusong centres with a permanent structure where all the Thusong anchor departments are permanently housed. There are also 11 satellite Thusong centres, which are permanent structures where all the Thusong anchor departments have established periodic service delivery points.

Citizens living in rural communities no longer have to travel or walk long distances to access government services. Satellite and mobile offices from departments and institutions, such as Home Affairs, Labour, Social Development and the South African Social Services Agency (SASSA), are set up at the centres to help community members with information and services.

The Thusong Service Centre Programme aims to bring government information and services closer to the people to promote access to opportunities as a basis for improved livelihoods.

They also promote cost-effective, integrated, efficient and sustainable service provision to serve the needs of citizens better and to build sustainable partnerships with the government, business and civil society. It also allows them to create platforms for greater dialogue between citizens and government.

When the function was transferred to municipalities, it was an unfunded mandate but the Department contributed not only to the running operation of the centres but also to the employment of at least a Thusong manager or an officer.

The Department, with the assistance of municipalities, contributed to the maintenance of the Thusong centres to ensure they are viable and operational.

As part of the Local Government Support Grant, the Department utilised a part of it to assist economic development projects around the Thusong centres. The Thusong manager and the municipality would identify what kind of projects the Department can assist with.

There were various challenges, but the Department constantly strived to improve the operations of the Thusong centres and outreach programmes. The Thusong Centre Programme addressed the needs of the communities directly and assisted them to improve their lives.

The centre managers submitted quarterly statistics to the Department and approximately one million services were rendered across the province to communities.

Various Government Communication Information System (GCIS) offices have been established in Thusong centres across the country and, together with communicators from provincial and local government, they played a leading role in local information campaigns, the distribution of government information material and the branding of centres. This involved the Development's communication paradigm of putting the information needs of citizens first by, among others, facilitating face-to-face interaction between citizens and the government.

## **9.2 Key issues discussed**

The Thusong centres were transferred to municipalities and initially the Department assisted with the funding of the operational costs to get the centres operational. The municipalities now budget for the funding of Thusong centres. Where departments require office space or more space, the Department of Local Government will assist with the lease agreements as well as with the monitoring of the agreements.

When the Programme started, a skills analysis and needs assessment was done as the centre managers were new and the Department facilitated various training programmes for the centre managers to enable them to run the programmes.

A major concern was the capital funding for the expansion plan for the Programme. All government departments that use the office space form part of the rental agreements and as such are monitored by the Department.

The lack of Wi-Fi at the centres is a concern and it is one of the priorities to equip all the centres with Wi-Fi. What does assist in this regard is the provincial hotspots. Of the 32 centres in the Western Cape, 85% have access to Wi-Fi. The Cape Access E-centre provides access to computers (the use of these computers is free), the internet and email, and people may also print.

Concern was expressed that some of the departments do not render their service as is required. Staff arrive late and they leave early. The attendance of staff and the provision of the service are the responsibility of the line function department and the Department of Local Government cannot manage that. It is, however, monitored through the quarterly report by the centre manager to the Department.

Customer-care training was provided to the staff of the line departments and centre staff through the National School of Governance because of complaints that were received from communities about the way they were treated.

A decrease in grant funding and maintenance support and an increase in the population and services required are a major concern and the Department strives regularly to form partnerships and to find donor funding to enable the Thusong centres to render services to communities.

### **9.3 Resolutions**

9.3.1 The delegation RESOLVED that:

9.3.1.1 The Standing Committee on Local Government consider writing to the Minister of Local Government highlighting the irregular hours staff members of SASSA and Home Affairs were available to provide services to the community and that the Minister be requested to raise the matter at MINMEC and, if necessary, with the Premier, who could raise the matter at the President's Coordinating Council;

9.3.1.2 The Department of Transport and Public Works be invited to brief the Standing Committee on Transport and Public Works on the criteria and procedure for keeping government vehicles, which were issued to officials, overnight at depots or private residences;

9.3.1.4 The Department of Local Government invite the Standing Committee on Local Government to future training sessions of Thusong centre staff and, if available, provide the Committee with a copy of the induction manual for new Thusong centre managers.

### **9.4 Information requested**

9.4.1 The delegation REQUESTED that the Department of Local Government:

9.4.1.1 Provides the delegation with the schedule of all the mobile Thusong outreach programmes; and

9.4.1.2 Provides the Committee with feedback on the new site development at the Langebaan Thusong Centre.

### **9.5 Recommendation**

The delegation RECOMMENDED that the Department of Local Government ensure, as a matter of urgency, the rollout of Wi-Fi at all the Thusong centres in the Western Cape.

### **9.6 Gender-Based Violence**

During the visit to the Langebaan Thusong Centre the West Coast District Municipality presented their pledge on Gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence is a phenomenon deeply rooted in gender inequality, and continues to be one of the most notable human rights violations within all societies. Gender-based violence is violence directed against a person because of their gender. Both women and men experience gender-based violence but the majority of victims are women and girls.

Gender-based violence and violence against women are terms that are often used interchangeably as it has been widely acknowledged that men inflict most gender-based violence on women and girls. However, using the 'gender-based' aspect is important as it highlights the fact that many forms of violence against women are rooted in power inequalities between women and men.

Members of the delegation as well as the staff expressed their commitment and support to this campaign and signed the pledge to stop gender-based violence.

**10. Acknowledgements**

The delegation thanked the various councillors, managers, officials, individuals and institutions for their willingness to meet with the delegation and to share information.



---

**MR AP VAN DER WESTHUIZEN (MPP)  
LEADER OF THE DELEGATION**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ 30 March 2022 \_\_\_\_\_