

*Thursday, 13 February 2025]*

No 10 - 2025] SECOND SESSION, SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

# PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

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THURSDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2025

### ANNOUNCEMENT

The Speaker:

#### **Provincial Notice 15 of 2025**

Publication of the Western Cape Public Library Services Bill [B 1–2025] in the *Provincial Gazette Extraordinary* 9032, dated 13 February 2025.

### TABLING

The Speaker:

**Submission of annual report for 2023/24 in terms of section 132(1)(a) and (b) of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003):**

#### **Stellenbosch Municipality**

Draft Annual Report 2023/24.

Copies attached.

## **COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development on its oversight visit to the Department of Social Development (DSD) Service Delivery Office in Langa on Tuesday 28 January 2025**

The Standing Committee on Social Development, having conducted an oversight visit to the DSD Service Delivery Office in Langa on 28 January 2025, reports as follows:

#### **Delegation**

The delegation consisted of the following Members:

##### **Democratic Alliance**

Kaizer-Philander, WF (Chairperson)  
Booyesen, M

##### **African National Congress**

Kamfer, F

##### **Patriotic Alliance**

Stephens, D R

##### **Economic Freedom Fighters**

Cassiem, A (EFF)

#### **Apology**

Van Minnen, BM (DA)  
Van Wyk, LD (DA)

### **1. Introduction**

The 2024/25 strategic objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speaker's priorities that have an impact on committees are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and  
Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

In line with its mandate, the Standing Committee on Social Development conducted an oversight visit to the Department of Social Development (DSD) Service Delivery Office in Langa on Tuesday 28 January 2025. The main objective of the visit was to assess the operational effectiveness of the local DSD office in addressing the welfare and social service needs of the Langa community.

The Committee's oversight visit to the DSD Service Delivery Office in Langa was part of the Committee Programme. The Committee also wanted to monitor the effectiveness of social service delivery across the province.

As part of its oversight responsibilities, the Committee evaluated the accessibility, efficiency and quality of services provided by the DSD, with a particular focus on child protection services and community-based welfare programmes. The visit also included a demonstration of the

SWIMS app, allowing the Committee to assess its functionality and evaluate its impact on service delivery in Langa and the surrounding areas.

## **2. Overview and background**

The Department of Social Development (DSD) is tasked with the responsibility of providing essential social services to vulnerable communities, including children, the elderly, people with disabilities and low-income families. DSD service delivery offices, located throughout the country, play a central role in the implementation of social welfare programmes, which are aimed at addressing social challenges such as poverty, unemployment and inequality.

The Langa township is home to a diverse community that faces a range of socio-economic challenges. These challenges include high unemployment rates, limited access to quality education and high levels of poverty. The DSD Service Delivery Office in Langa serves as a crucial point of access for residents to obtain various social services, such as child and child protection interventions and community-based support programmes.

Ms A van Reenen, Chief Director for Service Delivery Management and Coordination, and Ms S Cummings-Damon, Senior Social Worker Manager at the Department of Social Development (DSD), welcomed the Committee. Minister Londt also joined the visit. He informed the Committee of the pivotal role the SWIMS app is playing in enhancing service delivery and improving the effectiveness of social workers and social auxiliary workers in the Department. This report presents the findings from the visit, including an overview of the services provided by the DSD Service Delivery Office, key insights into the SWIMS app, and recommendations derived from the oversight visit.

## **3. Key findings**

- 3.1 The DSD Service Delivery Office in Langa provides childcare and protection services, probation services, substance abuse interventions and family and parenting support services to the surrounding community that includes Langa, Netreg, Monte Video, Charlesville and Malawi Camp. The office also supports the small satellite office in Bonteheuwel.
- 3.2 Additionally, the Langa office collaborates with Badisa in Elsie's River to extend childcare and protection services to areas such as Bishop Lavis (identified as a hotspot), Valhalla Park, Pinelands, Thornton, Nooitgedacht and Ruyterwacht.
- 3.3 A key feature of the facility is its particular focus on providing services to children.
- 3.4 The facility has a total staff complement of 23, which include one social work manager, two social work supervisors, 12 social workers, five social auxiliary workers, two probation officers and one assistant customer care.
- 3.5 The facility has two vacancies, one social worker and one social auxiliary worker.
- 3.6 Ms Van Reenen accompanied the Committee on a walkabout of the facility (the White House), which was reported to have world-class amenities for the public and was completely accessible for people with disabilities.
- 3.7 Security was reported to be an issue in the area. It was reported that before the facility was renovated there were many of break-ins, which have subsided after the renovations.
- 3.8 The facility is also surrounded by double fencing and the outside training rooms are fitted with security gates.
- 3.9 It was reported that the facility was the first in the province to be built with a Child Play Therapy Room and the room enables specialist child protection social workers to assist children who have been physically, emotionally and sexually abused.

#### **4. The SWIMS app**

- 4.1 The SWIMS app was launched at the DSD Service Delivery Office in Langa by Minister Londt in July 2024.
- 4.2 The Committee observed a demonstration of the SWIMS app, on which data is captured and saved seamlessly.
- 4.3 The Minister informed the Committee that the SWIMS app is a pioneering initiative developed through collaboration between the Western Cape Department of Social Development and the Department of the Premier and is aimed at enhancing the efficiency of field workers, including social workers.
- 4.4 The Department identified a need for system functionality to support the Alternative Care Management Process for children.
- 4.5 Field workers, including social workers, complete numerous forms in their daily duties depending on the nature of complaints or cases. These forms are traditionally stored in physical case files (brown files), which has posed numerous challenges.
- 4.6 Some of the key challenges faced by field workers include inefficient national systems, an overly paper-intensive process, the absence of a dedicated provincial system and complex administrative burdens.
- 4.7 The Committee was informed that social workers are struggling to manage the administrative workload, which contributes to high turnover rates in the Department of Social Development.
- 4.8 Since the SWIMS app was launched in Langa, the caseload for social workers has significantly decreased. Social worker supervisors can now monitor and allocate cases more efficiently, which helps expedite case resolution and improves overall service delivery.
- 4.9 The SWIMS app streamlines social workers' tasks, saves time, eliminates file duplication, and enables social workers to close a higher volume of cases since its introduction.
- 4.10 From April 2024 to January 2025, the facility assisted 1 896 walk-ins and screened a total of 625 clients, with the majority seeking child protection services.
- 4.11 From 1 to 28 January 2025, a total of 715 cases were captured in the SWIMS app, 90 of which were referrals from health facilities.
- 4.12 Despite the SWIMS app being used to capture new cases, the Department continues to rely on physical case files as the Department of Justice is not utilising the SWIMS app.
- 4.13 The total caseload of children in foster care under the supervision of the DSD Service Delivery Office in Langa stood at 848, with 28 Safety Parents Claims submitted for nine Safety Parents to a total value of R48 715,00.
- 4.14 The Department expressed satisfaction with the SWIMS app, noting ongoing improvements.
- 4.15 The APP will be rolled out across all DSD service delivery offices in the province once it is fully operational.
- 4.16 Minister Londt indicated that there are plans to gain buy-in from other government departments to use the APP, creating much-needed synergy because once data is entered into the app, statistics and relevant information can be easily accessed, thereby improving overall service delivery.

#### **5. Recommendations**

The Committee recommended that:

- 5.1 The Department of Social Development should evaluate the need to enhance security measures at the DSD Service Office in Langa.

- 5.2 The Department should explore the possibility of integrating security operations at the DSD Service Office with the Metropole Joint Operations Centre (JOC) for improved coordination and response.
- 5.3 Member Philander, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Development, should table a motion in the House to recognise the dedication, hard work and innovative initiatives by Minister Londt and the Western Cape Department of Social Development for the SWIMS app, which is designed to enhance service delivery and to improve outcomes for the community.

## **6. Acknowledgements**

The Committee expressed its gratitude to the Minister for his strong leadership and visionary initiative. It also extended its thanks to the DSD officials for their dedication and hard work, and for providing a comprehensive briefing, addressing all questions raised by the Committee during the visit.