

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND
TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON OVERSIGHT
VISITS TO BUSHBACRIDGE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY DURING THE PRE TLP, 28 –
29 JANUARY 2016 – DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITY AND
LIAISON**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature (the Legislature) has a responsibility in terms of Section 118 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, (the Constitution) to facilitate public involvement in its legislative and other processes. Sections 114 and 133 of the Constitution, read with Rule 190(4) and Rule 131 of the Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature (the Rules) directs the Legislature to hold the Executive accountable for the exercising of powers and performance of their functions. Therefore, the Portfolio Committee on Public Works, Roads and Transport (the Committee) regularly conducts public hearings and oversight visits to projects of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport (the department) and other projects; in the various municipalities of the Province.

In terms of Rule 190(4) and Rule 131 of the Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature (the Rules) the Portfolio Committee has a constitutional mandate to oversee the performance of the department and to hold the Executive Authority accountable for the delivery of core mandated services.

One of the instruments that enable the Portfolio Committee to execute their mandate is to undertake oversight-visits to various projects in the Province.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE VISITS

The following objectives shaped the oversight visits to the projects of the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison:

- To evaluate the progress made on projects reflected in the Annual Performance Plan (APP) implemented by the department. The Legislature seeks to ascertain whether provincial government delivers services effectively and efficiently within the respective municipalities.
- To determine the extent to which public funds are efficiently, economically and effectively used by the department in the implementation of its projects;
- To interact with project beneficiaries in order to hear their concerns.
- To fast track service delivery of core services to the communities within the municipality in which the department has funded projects.
- To assess the progress made by the department in addressing the findings made by the Committee during the Pre- TLP oversight visits.

3. METHOD OF WORK

The Legislature conducted its "Pre-Taking Legislature to the People" (PRE-TLP) programme in the Bushbuckridge Municipality in January 2016. The projects identified for the oversight visits, were prior visited by researchers in December 2015. During the visits, Researchers gathered information on the status of the projects and noted issues which justified a need for the Legislature to conduct oversight visits in the municipality. The oversight visits to the projects therefore enabled the Legislature to assess the progress that has been made by departments in ensuring that service delivery continues in the municipality.

The Committee conducted oversight visits in the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality from 28 to 29 January 2016. The Committee met on the 09 February 2016 to consider its draft report.

4. OVERSIGHT ON GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROJECTS

4.1. Acornhoek Police Station

4.1.1. Background

Acornhoek Police Station is situated in the central lowveld which is forming part of the Mpumalanga Province, and falls under Ehlanzeni District Municipality. It is situated about 38km from Hoedspruit and 76 km from Hazyview. The nearest station is Mhala Police Station, which is 28km from Acornhoek and Bushbuckridge and is 33 km from Acornhoek. The police station services a population of 135 000 with a total number of vehicles in the station is 27, (five (5) sedan, two (2) truck, and 20 LDV).

4.1.2. Sector Policing

During the oversight visit, the Committee was informed that the sector policing is functional and being implemented. The station area is divided into four (4) sectors; one (1) vehicle with two (2) SAPS members is posted to each sector, even though at times, do not cover all the existing shifts because of shortage of resources. The Committee was also informed that sector crime forum meetings are held regularly.

4.1.3. Infrastructure

The station buildings are in good condition and have sufficient working space. The police station has ramps for people with disabilities. One of the major challenges that the station has is shortage of water. The station required renovation in terms of furniture and paintings. The station has holding cells (10 cells which cater a maximum of 10 people each), there were generally clean except for the smell of toilets due to lack of water and the building condition is old in need of repairs and paintings.

The station has section 13 stores in place and all the exhibits were properly marked. The Victim Support Centre for counseling of victims is in place; however; the building is dilapidated and conducive for the users and the function set for.

4.1.4. Challenges

The following challenges were raised by the Station Commander:

4.1.4.1. (a) External

- The 10177 Emergency EMS is going to Polokwane instead of Nelspruit.
- There is a lot of Liquor Abuse within the precinct.
- The level Domestic violence is high.
- Long operating hours allowed by the Liquor Act (up to 00:00) which generates contact crime in the area.
- High unemployment rate.

(b) Internal

- Insufficient supply of water within the station.
- RT46 procedure in fixing and servicing of state vehicles.
- Lenient sentences / bail easily granted to arrested suspects.
- Withdrawal of cases by complainants.
- Cancellation of traffic fines and liquor licences fines issued to repeat offenders.
- Poor co-operation between SAPS and the Hospital when it comes to drunken driving (drawing of blood samples).
- Poor co-operation between SAPS, EMS and Pathologist in order to improve the reaction time when attending accidents and in other murder and culpable homicide scenes.
- Lack of office space for personnel.
- Shortage of Technology Equipment such as computers and printers.

- Damaged perimeter fencing which was reported to the Department of Public Works.
- A back-up generator and security light not functioning and the matter was reported to Department of Public Works.

4.1.4.2. Poor Road Infrastructure

- Inaccessible Roads
- Insufficient light
- Crowded informal trading areas
- Dense, bushy areas environmental design
- Lack of recreational activities
- Street names and house numbers not available / not displayed.

4.1.4.3. Related problematic crimes

The following common crimes were indicated:

- Business Robberies
- Common Assault
- Rapes
- Burglary Business

4.1.5. Union Representation

The station staff is represented by two (2) Unions, which are POPCRU and SAPU. Both union representatives raised the following challenges:

- Network cables not functioning properly.
- Furnisher is not sufficient for the staff.
- Cell doors are very old and can lead to undesired consequences.

- There is overcrowding in offices.
- Vehicles not enough and old to service the area and population.
- Security light in the station is not functioning.
- Transfers not acceptable by the Limpopo Province.

4.1.6. Community Policing Forum (CPF)

The Secretary and the Chairperson of the CPF indicated the following:

- That the CPF is functional and has a code of conduct.
- CPF has a good relationship with the station.
- Conducting crime awareness campaigns.
- Community meetings are conducted.

5. Findings

After the interaction with Management of the station, the following were Committee findings:

- 5.1. There is no proper communication between the Department of Community Safety, Security & Liaison and the station.
- 5.2. The station is without necessary resources such as computers and printers.
- 5.3. Insufficient of water supply.
- 5.4. State vehicles are old and not roadworthy.
- 5.5. Not enough vehicles provided to the station and some vehicles are not road worthy.
- 5.6. There is no enough office space for personnel and the available furniture is insufficient.

6. Recommendations

The Committee recommends that the department must:

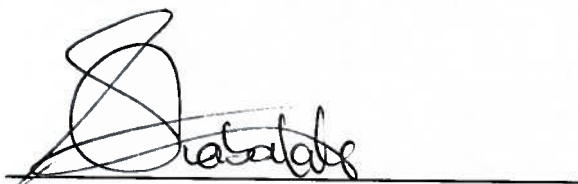
- 6.1. Strengthen its communication with the police station, the department and municipality
- 6.2. Ensure that the station is provided with necessary resources such as computers, printers and that the station is having effective network cables
- 6.3. Urgently come up with a plan that will ensure that the Municipality provide sufficient water to the station
- 6.4. That the station is provided with sufficient new vehicles and have an urgent interim plan that will ensure that the station has road worthy vehicles
- 6.5. Engage with the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport so that the station can be assisted on the following:
 - Proper maintenance of the Police Station is as well as enough office space conducive for working.
 - Sufficient furniture is provided.
 - Proper and accessible roads to the community.
 - Street names should be named and visible.
 - Ensure that the station is properly fenced.
 - A backup generator is properly functioning.
 - That security light is fixed.
- 6.6 Ensure that there is crime awareness campaigns and have programs in place that will reduce the level of the reported problematic crimes

The Department should provide the Committee with a progress report on the implementation of House Resolutions not later than the 23 February 2016.

7. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, Hon GC Shabalala, extends his appreciation to Members of the Committee and departmental officials, all stakeholders and the support staff of the Legislature for their participation during this oversight visit to the communities of the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, in enhancing the oversight role of the Legislature.

The Portfolio Committee tables this report to the House for adoption with its recommendations.



HON. GC SHABALALA (MPL)

16/02/2016

DATE

**CHAIRPERSON: PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT**