

OVERSIGHT REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENT; CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS (COGTA) ON THE PUBLIC HEARING CONDUCTED ON 07 MARCH 2013, VUKUZAKHE COMMUNITY HALL, AT DR PIXLEY KA ISAKA SEME LOCAL MUNICIPALITY –DEPARTMENT OF COGTA

1. INTRODUCTION

The Portfolio Committee on Human Settlement; Co-operative Governance and Traditional affairs (the Committee) has a constitutional mandate to oversee the Department of Human Settlement and Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (the Departments) respectively in exercising their powers and the performance of their functions - read s 133 (2) and s 115 (a) & (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 (the Constitution). As a matter of fact and law, both departments have a responsibility to foster intergovernmental relations within the three spheres of government without encroaching on the geographical, functional or institutional integrity of government in another sphere, in accordance with s 41 (1) (g) of the Constitution.

The TLP project is in line with sections 59 and 118 of the Constitution, which state that both the National and Provincial Legislature must facilitate public involvement in the processes of the Legislature and its Committees to ensure “effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government”. The purpose of TLP is to reach out to the communities and to enable the people to have access to the Legislature especially people who are living in deep rural areas. The Legislature seeks to hear the voice of the people and to ascertain whether provincial government delivers services effectively and efficiently within the respective municipalities.

2. PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

The purpose of the public hearing, which was actually a joint hearing of the Economic and Social Transformation Clusters, was to allow the MEC's a platform

to report back to the community and the Committee on the range of service delivery concerns which had been raised in the pre-TLP public hearing on 14 November 2012. The public hearing also provided Members of the Legislature an opportunity to engage with members of the public on service delivery issues.

3. METHOD OF WORK

In preparation for the TLP, the research section conducted pre-site visits to the Municipality late October 2012 to early November 2012. Comprehensive research reports were compiled that informed the Committee's programme for the TLP. In February 2013, researchers re-visited Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Municipality to assess the progress made by the department. The Social Cluster was briefed on the findings by the researchers.

In ensuring that public participation and involvement takes place, the Committee invited the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, SALGA, Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Municipality, Traditional Leaders, Gert Sibande District Municipality, relevant stake holders and the general public to attend the public hearing on 07 March 2013, at Vukuzakhe community hall, to enable the community to receive progress made by the department on the concerns raised on 14 November 2012, during a public hearing.

4. OBSERVATIONS

- The department has responded adequately from the concerns raised by the community.
- The leadership of the municipality was present during the public hearing at Vukuzakhe community hall held on 07 March 2013

5. CONCERNS RAISED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON 14 NOVEMBER 2012, DURING THE PRE TAKING LEGISLATURE

The community raised the following concern:

- There is lack of basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity
- Some ward councillors do not convene community or ward meetings.
- The Municipality did not respond to the requests of the communities.
- There were no street lights
- Some meter boxes are dysfunctional
- The streets are not user friendly for the blind people and for people who are using wheel chairs
- People were complaining about lack of job opportunities
- People were also complaining about the fact that the municipality does not consult them when appointing CDW's.

6. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ISSUES RAISED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON 14 NOVEMBER 2012, DURING THE PRE - TAKING LEGISLATURE TO THE PEOPLE

6.1 The progress report was presented as follows:

The MEC, Hon SPD Skhosana, firstly thanked the Legislature for giving the Department of COGTA an opportunity to report back to the community of Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality on the concerns raised during the public hearing which was on 14 November 2012. The MEC presented his progress report as follows:

The department visited places like, Amersfoort, Daggakraal and Wakkerstroom to assess the extent of such concerns. The MEC mentioned the names of Sizwe, Nontokozo Magwagwa, Zodwa Ngwenya , Mr Zwane and many others who were complaining about sites to build houses.

In responding, the department indicated that, some of the people still live in shacks like Enkanini; Vukuzakhe location and there were also areas outside Vukuzakhe wherein people need sites. The Government and the municipality will do something on these issues during the forthcoming financial year. In other places, people do not have stands. There is a company that will be working on the allocation of sites. 4000 stands will be allocated to people.

The department also stated that, there is an issue of street lights, of which people were complaining about. They even made an example of an old grandmother who is staying in a RDP house, which does not have toilet and she is vulnerable when she wants to relief herself during the night, because the place is too dark at night. To address this problem, the department will work with Eskom so as to install electricity.

With regard to the issue of water, the department will prioritise the provision of water in the Municipality. It further mentioned that people raised serious concerns with regard to the streets that are not user-friendly or inaccessible to people with disabilities such as the blind and wheel chair bound people.

The department acknowledged that some people needed sites for a crèche, churches and Baptism places. The department advised the public to communicate with the Municipality, which is better placed to assist them in this regard.

The department acknowledged the concern, that people are compelled to walk long distances in order to purchase electricity. To address this inconvenience, the department will work together with the municipality and Eskom to make more outlets available and accessible. The department reported that the Executive Mayor is attending to the issue of people who have challenges in conducting proper metre readings. During the forthcoming financial year 2013/14, Gert Sibande District will provide clean water to farm dwellers to avoid sharing the water with livestock.

With regard to the complaint as raised by people from Ward 5, about the appointment of Community Development Workers, the department clarified the

procedures that are being followed when CDWs are appointed. It was emphasized that CDWs are public/civil servants and they are described or regarded as cadres of a special-type. In other words, the CDW's post was advertised, shortlisted and interviews were conducted like any other post in the department, but what is important, is that one must stay in the relevant Ward.

Regarding Ward Committees, they were elected by the community in the presence of the Speaker of the Municipality and it was indicated that they should work hand in hand with the ward councillor.

7. FINDING

- 7.1 The MEC responded to all the concerns that were raised during the public hearing on 12 November 2012.
- 7.2 There are no time frames on the undertakings made by the MEC;

8. RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE PROGRESS REPORT MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT

The Committee recommends that the department should:

- 8.1 Ensure that all the commitments and undertakings made by the MEC are implemented

A progress report on the above should be submitted to the Portfolio Committee by 30 September 2013.

9. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson thanked Hon. Members of the Committee for their sterling work; the Executive Mayor; Speaker, Chief Whip of the Municipality, Councillors and the

officials from the Department of CoGTA for their participation during the site inspections.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairperson wishes to thank all the members of the Community who also participated actively during the site inspections and public hearing respectively.



HON. RM MTSHWENI
CHAIRPERSON: PORFOLIO COMMITTEE
ON HUMAN SETTLEMENT & CoGTA

21/06/2013

DATE