

**PRE-TAKING LEGISLATURE TO THE PEOPLE OVERSIGHT REPORT OF
THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION; CULTURE, SPORT AND
RECREATION CONDUCTED AT STANWEST LIBRARY IN LEKWA LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY, 25 AUGUST 2016**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Taking Legislature to the People (TLP) event will take place in Lekwa Local Municipality from 12 – 16 September 2016. As part of the preparations for the event, the Portfolio Committee on Education; Culture, Sport and Recreation (the Committee) undertook preliminary TLP oversight visits from 24-25 August 2016 in Lekwa.

The Committee visited Stanwest Library on 25 August 2016 as a follow-up visit to the 2011 TLP visit. The House resolutions emanating from this Committee report will be referred to the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation (the Department) for necessary interventions and report back to the Legislature before the main TLP event.

2. PURPOSE OF THE OVERSIGHT VISITS

The focus of the oversight visit was to assess the progress made at the library since the 2011 TLP oversight visit of the Committee and to assess the delivery of library services by the Department.

3. METHOD OF WORK

The Committee researcher conducted preliminary visits to the libraries in Lekwa Local Municipality and presented the research findings of that visit to the Committee on 16 August 2016. The research report included an analysis of the implementation of the 2011 TLP House Resolutions. Subsequently the Social Cluster pre-TLP oversight visits programme was approved and circulated to the Committee.

The Department was informed about the pre-TLP programme and the Gert Sibande District Management was invited to accompany the Committee on the oversight visit. An invitation was also extended to the Gert Sibande District Municipality and Lekwa Local Municipality. The Committee considered its draft pre-TLP report on 30 August 2016.

4. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- The Gert Sibande District manager (Mr Owen Pretorius) accompanied the Committee on the day of the visit. He was supported by the Chief Librarian (Mr Amos Mathonsi) who is responsible for the libraries in four (4) local municipalities.
- The Committee was briefed by the Department and the Municipality on the current functionality of the library and overall delivery of library services in the Municipality.
- The Committee interacted with the Department and the Municipality on the presentations and then did an inspection *in loco* at the library.
- The Department is relatively successful in its endeavours to provide access to library services, promote public libraries in the province and promote a sustainable reading culture.
- The Department has not been able to standardize the delivery of library infrastructure at Lekwa Municipality.
- Delivery of infrastructure and furniture remains a challenge.
- The library is easily accessible to the community and is functional. It is also adequately staffed.
- The library was clean and orderly; both the municipal and the departmental staff were on site at the library to do their work.

5. INTERACTION WITH THE LIBRARY MANAGEMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, SPORT AND RECREATION

5.1. STANWEST PUBLIC LIBRARY

Background

Stanwest Public Library is situated in Stanwest and was officially opened on 01 May 1982 under the former Transvaal Administration. Due to service delivery protests at the nearby Sakhile Township, this library currently provides services to both Stanwest and Sakhile.

The Committee observed that the Stanwest Library, like many other libraries built during the previous regime in South Africa, is very small and was built to cater for a small racially segregated community. Such libraries do not cater for the growing needs of communities and it was noted that the Department has constructed “ideal” libraries for example at Morgenzon. These libraries are spacious and contain all aspects such as reference works, computer centre, media centre and have modern ICT infrastructure.

5.1.1. 2011 TLP visit of the Portfolio Committee

The Portfolio Committee on Education; Culture, Sport and Recreation visited the library in 2011 during the Taking Legislature to the People in Lekwa Local Municipality.

Based on the research report of the Legislature and the presentation made by the Department and the Municipality during the pre-TLP on 25 August 2016, the following progress on implementation of the 2011 TLP House Resolutions was noted:

❖ Ensure that enough personnel is employed at the Library

The House resolution was implemented, but only in the 2016/17 financial year, when the Lekwa Local Municipality appointed an Assistant Librarian with effect from 18 July 2016. Since the 2011 visit, the library had been operating with one (1) librarian. The DCSR has also appointed one EPWP contract employee and the Municipality has appointed two more employees (one permanent and one contract) which brings the personnel at the library to three (3). Currently the library is adequately staffed.

❖ Sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Lekwa Municipality on the maintenance of the library;

The House resolution was not fully implemented. The MOU or affiliation agreement with the Municipality was signed but it was reported that the Municipality does not have a maintenance budget. In terms of the MOU, maintenance and provision of cleaning material is the responsibility of the Municipality; however, according to the Chief Librarian employed by the Department, the Municipality has no maintenance budget.

❖ Ensure that all necessary resources are provided to the library and that the computers are efficiently working and installed with internet and a printing machine.

The House Resolution was implemented. According to the department five (5) computers with internet service and the photocopier were provided in terms of the affiliation agreement. These computers replaced the ones that were reported stolen during the 2011 visit. The computers were connected in the library during the inspection *in loco*. The internet service is working and a service provider is on site for routine maintenance.

❖ **Ensure that the air conditioner is working**

The House Resolution was not implemented. It was verified in the inspection *in loco* that the air-conditioning system has not been working since 2009.

❖ **Ensure that relevant and enough books are provided**

The House Resolution was implemented. According to the Department, sufficient library books are delivered on a yearly basis and the librarian is invited during annual book selection hosted by the DCSR. Library users are given a chance to enlist books relevant to their needs.

❖ **Ensure that enough space is made available to the public**

The House Resolution was not implemented as the library itself has not been expanded. There is however, a large room adjacent to the library, which is meant to be used by library users as a study area. However, the study area was seen to be used by General Workers from the Municipality as their dining and storage area.

❖ **Ensure that there are toilets at the library**

The House resolution was not implemented. There is one (1) staff toilet within the library which is clean and operational. However, there are no toilet facilities for the library users.

❖ **Install a security system in the library**

The House resolution was not implemented. There is still no security system at the library and the 3M system is not working since it was installed. There was a break in at the library on 10 June 2014. The Department indicated that the Municipality appointed two 24 hour security guard after the June 2014 break in.

5.1.2. Functionality of the library

The Committee noted that the current functionality of the library and the following services provided to date by the Department (DCSR):

- a) **Provision of books:** 8 094 books have been provided to the library to date, as per the recent inventory. The Committee engaged the DCSR on this matter and noted

that the books at the library should be of sufficient scope to also cater for university students doing research.

- b) In the 1st quarter of 2016/17 the official from the library attended a book selection event from 18-20 May 2016 at Mbombela Archive Building, where an amount of R65 000.00 was allocated to Stanwest Public Library to procure new books.
- c) **Provision of ICT services:** the DCSR has provided a functional ICT network system and free internet services are available in 30 minute segments for library users. The SITA Library Information Management System (SLIMS) has been implemented and is functional at Stanwest Library. There is also a 3-in-1 photocopying machine that has provided relief to the library staff as pages used to be torn from library books in the absence of a facility to make copies. The department has also installed anti-theft system on the books.
- d) **Provision of training to library staff:** the DCSR provides training to all public libraries on different courses. Stanwest staff attended SLIMS training provided by SITA on capturing of membership and capturing their own books on the system. They are also invited to attend a peer group learning forum at Ermelo regional library on 26 April 2016 which assists library workers to learn from each other. The DCSR encourages library workers to study towards a library qualification by providing funding in the form of a departmental bursary.
- e) **Marketing of libraries:** the DCSR supports libraries to market their services to the community, by providing promotional materials when requested on time. In the 1st quarter of 2016/17 all public libraries were provided with promotional materials.

5.1.3. Main Challenges at the Library

The following challenges were noted by the Committee:

- **Breaking in and theft of computers:** The DCSR reported in its presentation on 25 August 2016 that even though the library had an alarm system, there was a break in on 10 June 2014 and three (3) computers were stolen. The Municipality claimed from its insurance company and is yet to replace the computers. After that break in the Municipality provided two security guards (24 hour security). During the inspection of the library on 25 August 2016 the Committee saw that there were five (5) computers in the library as provided by the DCSR.
- **Lack of transport:** The DCSR reported that library staff is sometimes not able to attend meetings or workshops due to transport challenges, which the DCSR does assist with when informed in advance.
- There is no air-conditioning service installed at the library and in summer the weather conditions are reportedly unbearable for the staff and users.
- There is no telephone at the library, which was reported a long time ago to no effect, according to the librarian. The librarian further indicated that there are no newspapers and magazines.
- There are no reference materials at the library but it was resolved during the recent book selection event that a separate selection would be done for reference materials.

5.2. FINDINGS

The Committee made the following findings for Stanwest Public Library:

- (a) The 2011 TLP House Resolutions were not fully implemented by the Department as at 25 August 2016. Three (3) of the eight (8) resolutions were implemented and five (5) were not implemented.
- (b) The Department has signed an MOU or affiliation agreement with the Municipality, which stipulates that maintenance and provision of cleaning material is the responsibility of the Municipality. However, it was indicated that the Municipality did

not have a maintenance budget. Therefore maintenance and provision of cleaning materials was still a challenge at the library.

- (c) The 2011 House Resolution to install a security system was not implemented. There is still no security alarm system and 3M system installed at the library. This is a concern as the Department has replaced five (5) stolen computers at the library. The provision of security services is the responsibility of the Municipality.
- (d) The 2011 House Resolution to ensure that the air-conditioner is installed and functional was not implemented. There is no air-conditioner at the library.
- (e) There is no land line telephone at the library, which has been long been requested, according to the librarian.
- (f) The Librarian has no office and there is no children's section at the library. Although the library is small, considering the user rate, there is currently no need to enlarge the library or provide more staff than what is provided.
- (g) The librarian also reported that there were no magazines, newspapers and reference books at the library.
- (h) It was a concern that the room intended to be used as a study area for library users was reportedly used as a dining area and storage place by municipal employees.
- (i) There is a need for more qualified librarians and trained library assistants in the Lekwa Local Municipality.
- (j) There is a need for libraries that are built according to the ideal structure, providing all the multi-media services under one roof and which serves a number of areas rather than building small libraries in suburbs.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

After the deliberations and inspection *in loco* at Stanwest Library, the Committee recommended that the Department must:

- (a) Submit an updated progress report on the 2011 TLP House Resolutions by 09 September 2016.

- (b) Engage the Municipality in terms of section 4.3 of the signed affiliation agreement (Undertaking by the Municipality) to ensure that the maintenance budget is activated. Provide a progress report by 09 September 2016 indicating the budget available for maintenance in 2016/17 financial year.
- (c) Engage the Municipality in terms of section 4.3 of the signed affiliation agreement to ensure that a service provider is appointed to install a security alarm system at the library. Provide a progress report by 09 September 2016.
- (d) Ensure that the air-conditioner is installed and functional at the library by 31 October 2016. Provide a progress report by 09 September 2016.
- (e) Ensure that the telephone landline facility is installed at the library by 31 October 2016. Provide a progress report by 09 September 2016.
- (f) Investigate the feasibility of providing an office for the librarian and a children's section at the library. Provide a progress report by 09 September 2016.
- (g) Provide current magazines, newspapers and reference books to the library by 09 September 2016.
- (h) The Department and the Municipality must ensure that the study area at the library is not used for other purposes not conducive to studying.
- (i) The Department and the Municipality must submit their plan to ensure that each library in Lekwa Local Municipality has a qualified librarian, as well as trained library assistants by the end of the 2016/17 financial year. Provide a progress report by 09 September 2016.
- (j) Investigate the feasibility of building another ideal library structure in Lekwa Local Municipality, similar to the one at Morgenzon library. Provide a progress report by 09 September 2016.

6. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson would like to thank the Honourable Members of the Committee for their constructive input during the pre-TLP oversight visits in Lekwa Local Municipality. The support staff of the Legislature is also appreciated for their assistance to the Committee.

The attendance of the Gert Sibande District Management and the Lekwa Local Municipality during the Committee's visits is acknowledged, as well as the support of the Gert Sibande District Management of the Department is acknowledged.

The Lekwa Local Municipality must also be thanked for their collaboration with the DCSR in providing this important service to the community. The Committee encourages the full implementation of the Affiliation Agreement with the Department.

The Chairperson requests the House to adopt this report with its findings and recommendations. The Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation is expected to implement the House Resolutions herein and submit a progress report to the Legislature by 09 September 2016.



HON. VV WINDVOEL (MPL)

**CHAIRPERSON: PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION; CULTURE, SPORT AND RECREATION**

01/09/2016.
DATE

