

# REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON WOMEN, YOUTH, CHILDREN AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HELD 13 FEBRUARY 2019

(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Mpumalanga Legislature is duly vested with a mandate to maintain oversight of provincial executive authority and any organ of state and all provincial executive authority including provincial organs of state are accountable to it in compliance with section 114 of the constitution. The Legislature is independent and performs its functions impartially without prejudice.

In terms of Standing Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature 2013, the **Select Committee on Women, Youth, Children, and People with Disabilities** (the committee), is established in terms of Rule 135 (h) and has powers to conduct oversight on transversal issues affecting designated groups. The Committee is composed of a multiparty representation and is empowered to develop mechanisms to conduct oversight over provincial departments and public institutions.

The Select Committee is vested with the power to monitor, investigate and enquire into and make recommendations concerning any organ of state or constitutional body regarding transversal and transformation matters to ensure a province free from gender discrimination and inequalities in promotion of the Bill Of Rights.

The Committee in accordance with Rule 119 may summon any person to appear before it to give evidence on oath/ affirmation, or to produce documents and permit oral evidence. The committee may compel an institution or a person to comply with summon subject to the rules and orders or a provincial legislation.

The Legislature seeks to establish whether provincial government delivers services effectively and efficiently within the respective local municipality areas.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE OVERSIGHT VISIT

The objectives were:

- i) To assess the effective and efficient utilization of government funding and resources towards marginalized groups.
- ii) To determine the impact made by the department on the improvement of quality of life to people with disability in the Province.
- iii) To assess the implementation of policies by the departments that seek to improve quality of life for the vulnerable group.
- iv) To consider the budget and expenditure patterns of the department in implementing the legislation and programmes on the aforementioned areas, including financial support to the NPOs in adherence to the Policy of Financial Awards to the NPOs.

### **3. METHOD OF WORK**

The Committee invited and met with the Department of Social Development as per the programme of the Legislature and quarterly target of the Committee to an oversight visit conducted 13 February 2019 at Vera Stimulation Centre and Tholulwazi Youth Centre in Belfast Emakhazeni Local Municipality.

### **4. PRESENTATION BY THOLULWAZI YOUTH CENTRE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

In his opening remarks, the Chairperson, explained that the oversight visit was based on an approach that the Committee adopted to focus on social issues that are predominantly challenges faced by youth. The Committee was particularly interested in engaging with both the department officials and beneficiaries because it was mainly interested in getting feedback on the impact of the department's programmes as well as projects funded by the Department of Social Development.

The District Manager made a presentation on the department's performance on the implementation of policy issues pertaining to the centre, social crime prevention and financial report as follows:

#### **BACKGROUND OF THOLULWAZI YOUTH CENTRE**

Tholulwazi Youth Centre was initiated in 2008 in Siyathuthuka Township in Belfast, with a total number of 5 staff members consisting of the Centre Manager, Youth Development Practitioner, Administrator and 2 Volunteers. The centre receives a funding of **R 231 659.00** which is paid on a quarterly basis and is utilised for the payment of stipends, rental which is **R 1600.00** monthly, stationery ( printing paper, ink etc.), as well as catering for the facilitators and training attendees. The purpose of the centre is to assist young people with the following programmes or services: computer skills, life skills, entrepreneurship skills and career guidance. The centre also offers photocopying services, typing and

printing of documents, internet access, scanning at no charge / for free and acts as an information dissemination gateway to young unemployed people in the community.

The purpose of the centre is in line with the 2018 Youth development policy of the department, as point 8 of the requirements of a youth development centre policy states that a youth centre should be in a position to provide information on self-employment and employment opportunities and provide training and access to information communication and technology. The centre has an impact on the improvement of livelihood of the youth in Belfast as in 2018; a total number of 18 young people were assisted with successful NSFAS bursary applications and are in Universities and 8 in the 2019 academic year. A number of young people employed by the local mines were assisted at the centre with the drafting of Curriculum Vitae, Eskom donated 2 computers to the centre; in terms of credibility and competence of the staff in the centre none of them has qualifications to offer computer training and other programmes. These programmes are then offered by accredited facilitators on a voluntary basis. The centre has a daily attendance register for both the staff and youth accessing services.

The centre has an active and fully functional board in place with 5 members. According to the official of the department there were no challenges reported with the centre, however the department sometimes delay in payment of quarterly funding as a result of an influx of claims from other centres. The centre does submit audited financial statements and bank statements as well as all receipts of purchases which are then further assessed by the department in order for the centre to be eligible for continuous funding, quarterly and mid-term assessment reports are submitted for monitoring purposes.

The biggest challenge brought forward was that of office space, as the building operating from has been sold to a new owner and they were supposed to have moved out by the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2019. The issue was then taken forward to the Municipal Manager of Emakhazeni Local Municipality and they are still awaiting feedback regarding the matter. The centre manager also approached Umsimbithi Mine for a donation of a mobile office space to address the issue. The centre manager also reported that the funding received is not enough as it cannot cover all the operations of the centre, especially the running of training programmes as they have to cater for them and training attendees. The number of computers is limited to meet the demand of users and there is no funding allocated to Internet connectivity which is necessary to access websites for job applications and University applications.

## **COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS**

- The committee noted that the centre is currently facing eviction, as the building has been sold.

- The centre manager has approached Umsimbithi Mine for a donation of a mobile office space to address the issue of office.
- Members have condemned the delay of payments on the quarterly funding to the centre by the Department of Social Development.
- The centre does not have sufficient funds to cater for some of its programmes and not reaching all the youth it ought to meet.
- The committee wanted to know the ideal of the youth centres
- Is the department able to deal with the impact of youth centres

## **5.1 FINDINGS**

After the deliberations, the Committee made the following findings:

- 1) The centre is currently facing eviction, as the building has been sold.
- 2) Payments of quarterly funding from Department of Social Development are not paid in time.
- 3) The centre manager has approached Umsimbithi Mine for a donation of a mobile office space to address the issue office space.
- 4) The centre does not have sufficient funds to cater for some of its programmes and not reaching all the youth it ought to meet.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) The Department in collaboration with the Municipality must assist the Centre in securing an operational space as a matter of urgency and report back to the committee.
- 2) The Department must ensure an effective reporting system strengthen its monitoring in ensuring that transfer of funding are done in time.
- 3) The department must ensure that the centre made follow ups on the Umsibinithi Mine for the mobile office donation request.
- 4) The Department in collaboration with the centre must seek funding of other programmes from relevant organisation and surrounding mines in ensuring that it renders all projects by prioritising the need of youth within the local community.

## **6. PRESENTATION BY VERA STIMULATION CENTRE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

## BACKGROUND OF VERA STIMULATION CENTRE

Vera Stimulation Centre was initiated in 1998; it is situated in the town of Belfast and currently has a total number of 14 beneficiaries. The purpose of the centre is to provide stimulation programmes for children with disabilities below 18 years and is the only centre of its nature in Belfast. The centre is eligible for a funding of **R 120 000.00** per annum, which is **R 30 000.00** paid quarterly. The centre manager however reported that there's inconsistency in funding as in the second quarter the centre received an amount of **R 31 380.00** and **R 27 000.00** in the third quarter.

The funding is utilised to buy groceries, to pay stipends, for maintenance and repairs, stationery, rates and taxes, fuel for transportation of the children to and from home as well as the telephone line. The centre does receive donations in the form of toys from companies as Eskom, Exxaro Mine and the National Union of Mine workers. The centre received a funding of **R 751 000.00** from the national lottery which was partly used to purchase a Toyota Avanza to transport the children from their respective homes to school and back.

The staff composition of the centre is made up of 2 care givers, 1 chef, 1 driver and the centre manager. The centre has a fully functional board with 7 members. It was indicated that the children have a daily attendance register; the staff however does not have a daily attendance register in place. The centre manager indicated that there is a need for more care givers; however that is not achievable as a result of limited funding.

The biggest challenge that was brought forward was that of lack of space as the children are forced to share one classroom for children of all ages, which makes the stimulation process difficult as the children are classified as per their respectable levels as set out on the guidelines on stimulation centres of the department, the levels of functioning of children are classified into three; low level, middle level and high level. Children on the low level are those that will need care all the time, those in middle level show slow development in some areas but can learn to care for themselves. This challenge contradicts the guidelines set by the department of Social Development which makes it clear that a safe and healthy environment which entails a well ventilated space is a necessity for a funded project.

## COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

- Lack of space as the children are forced to share one classroom for children of all ages, which makes the stimulation process difficult.
- The center needs security in the premises as there have been cases of burglary in the center.
- The shortage of care givers and a permanent driver as the currently driver works on part time basis.
- Unwillingness of parents to pay school fees
- The Committee welcomes the funding from Lottery which enable the center to buy an Avanza that transports the children from home to the centre daily.
- The lack of capacity on how to run awareness campaigns to encourage families to bring children with disabilities to the Centre.

The Committee commended the centre for providing such a service. However, it recommended that the Department of Social Development and the centre should work together to address areas that had been identified as needing adjustment and correction.

### 5.1 FINDINGS

After the deliberations, the Committee made the following findings:

- 1) Lack of space which makes it difficult for the stimulation process.
- 2) Currently the driver works on part time basis and can leave at any time.
- 3) No security in the premises as there have been cases of burglary in the centre.
- 4) None compliance as per their respectable classified levels as set out on the guidelines on stimulation centres.
- 5) Lack of capacity on how to run awareness campaigns

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The Department must assist the centre in developing a fundraising strategy for donors in adding extra classes for stimulation processes take place as per the guidelines.
- 2) The Department must assist the Centre in recruiting a driver; with a sign contract clause indicating a month notice before leaving.
- 3) The Department must assist the centre in acquiring a Razor Wire Fence Used with Barbed Wire Together for High Security Fencing to eliminate the bucklering.

- 4) The department must ensure compliance as per their respectable classified levels as set out on the guidelines on stimulation centres.
- 5) The department should ensure that the centre develops a campaign strategy by working with Councillors, Mayor and conduct community Izimbizo for awareness on those parents who still keep their children locked at their homes.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson extended his appreciation to Members of the Committee, officials from the department of Social Development, Siyathuthuka Youth Centre, Vera Stimulation Centre and the support staff of the Legislature for their participation during the deliberations.

The Committee tables this report to the House for adoption with its recommendations and progress to be provided to the Committee by 31 May 2019.



**HON AM GAMEDE (MPL)**

**CHAIRPERSON: SELECT COMMITTEE ON WOMEN,  
YOUTH, CHILDREN, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

13/03/2019  
DATE