

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND
TRANSPORT; ON COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON
TAKING LEGISLATURE TO THE PEOPLE OVERSIGHT VISITS TO
BUSHBUCKRIDGE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY 27 JUNE 2018 (CSSL)**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Legislature conducted the programme of Taking the Legislature to the People (TLP) as from 25 to 29 June at the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality. The Portfolio Committee on Public Works Roads and Transport; Community Safety, Security and Liaison (the Committee) visited Mhala Police Station in Thulamahashe on 27 June 2018 and further conducted a public hearing in Agincourt where a number of issues relating to safety and security of the surrounding were raised.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE VISITS

a) The following objectives shaped the oversight visits to the projects of the department:

- To determine challenges impacting on the Police Stations in meeting the national standards.
- To assess the challenges affecting the functionality of the Police Stations (e.g. office space and operational budget for CPF).
- To assess how the surrounding police stations were proving services to the communities of Bushbuckridge Municipality.

3. METHOD OF WORK

The TLP Programme was conducted on 25-29 June 2018 and oversight visits and Public Hearings were conducted as follows:

- 27 June 2018 : **Mhala Police Station in Thulamahashe (Bushbuckridge Cluster)**
- 28 June 2017 : Public Hearing at the main venue

The following people interacted with the Committee during the oversight visit:

The Officials from Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Mhala Police Station Management, SAPU, and CPF.

4. OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

The Committee noted that the station buildings are in good condition but old. The Committee also noted that the municipality had functional Community Policing Forum (CPF) structures in place. It was further noted that there is shortage of vehicles in all the Police Stations within the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality.

5. OVERSIGHT ON GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROJECTS

5.1. Mhala Police Station

5.1.1. Background

Mhala is rural area and has a population of an estimated 423 247 according to 2015 census report by statistics South Africa and serving the community of Mhala in a radius of 1060.73 km². Mhala has a staff compliment of 115 Police Act members and 24 Public Service Act Personnel. The police population ratio are currently 1:3680 (1 police officer for every 3680 community members). The personnel to vehicle ratio are currently 1:6.19 (1 vehicle for every 6.19 members. The station serves eighty (84) formal settlements, there are four (4) sectors and one (1) satellite within policing area. 80% of the roads are gravel and 20% tarred. The precinct is surrounded by tourist attractions as well as Central Business District (CBD). Mhala has implemented an enterprise Risk Register to ensure that the goals and objective of the SAPS are not hampered by posing threats. To ensure that the identified risks are mitigated the Risk Register is monitored on a quarterly basis.

5.1.2. The Committee deliberations with the Mhala Police Station Management

The following issues were raised

- The station buildings are in good condition but old. There is no enough office space, store room has been turned to offices.
- The Community Service Centre (CSC) is also small but it has space for public to seat.
- The CPF is functional and they hold meeting on monthly basis
- The station have 13 SAPS stores which holds exhibits and confiscated items
- The main contributory factors to crime within Mhala policing area were amongst others unemployment rate, drugs and alcohol abuse.
- Service delivery protest resulting in the blocking of the Road, which is the Manyeleti to Acornhoek road, shortage of water.
- Human trafficking and Drug abuse it's a problem more especial to children around the area.

5.1.3. Challenges

1. Office space is not enough hence the Detectives are currently operating from the Police Barracks which is 500 metres away from the Station and the barracks do not have the intranet connection which makes it difficult for the Detectives to function properly.
2. No adequate furniture , most chairs are old and no longer user friendly
3. No proper boardroom to hold weekly meetings
4. No surveillance cameras in the station which make the police and the SAPS' 13 stores for cars more vulnerable
5. Hluvukane Satellite Police station uses a mobile prefabs office which is old and a proper structure is needed
6. Shortage of Police officials leads to the station only posting two officials at Hluvukane instead of four.
7. Shortage of vehicle
8. No holding cell in the Community Service Centre

9. There are four holding cells in the station which were opened in 1982 and they are in a bad state and they need to be fully revamped, currently the showers are not working; some doors are not functioning properly.

10. Public Hearings

Issues that were raised during the public hearings:

1. Due to the fact that the community was using services of Thulamahashe Police Station which is far away from them, they requested the satellite police station at Agincourt as a matter of urgency to combat the level of high crime rate in the area.

Cross- Cutting Recommendations

The Committee noted the concerns that were raised by the community and there for recommended to the department to investigate the above mentioned concerns and provide progress report as a matter of urgency..

11. Findings

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

1. There is a need for additional police vehicles at Mhala Police Station.
2. Shortage of Offices and there is a need for adequate furniture at Mhala SAPS
3. There are vacancies and shortage of staff in Mhala Police Station
4. Hluvukane Satellite Police station uses a mobile prefabs office which is old and a proper structure is needed
5. No surveillance cameras in the station which make the police and the SAPS' 13 stores for cars more vulnerable
6. Human trafficking and drug abuse around Bushbuckridge
7. There are four holding cells in the station which were opened in 1982 and they are in a bad state and they need to be fully revamped.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommended that the department must implement the following measures:

1. Ensure that Mhala Police station has new vehicles for service delivery.
2. Engage with the National Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport so that the station can be assisted in terms of offices and also engage SAPS to purchase new furniture for the station and further provide progress to the Committee.
3. Ensure that critical posts are filled.
4. Escalate the matter of Hluvukane Satellite Police station to National Public Works, Roads and Transport to build a proper structure. Provide the progress thereof.
5. SAPS must ensure that the issue of surveillance cameras is prioritized in the 2019/2020 financial year.
6. Provide plans in dealing with the human trafficking and drug abuse to prevent and protect children.
7. The Department of CSSL must raise the issue of construction of a new police station with the National SAPS Department as a matter of urgency.

13. CONCLUSION

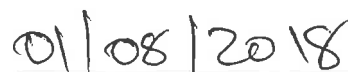
The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, Hon GC Shabalala extends her appreciation to Members of the Committee, the department, SAPS and the support staff of the Legislature for their participation during this oversight visit to the communities of the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, in enhancing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

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

Unless otherwise stated, the department should provide progress report on all issues raised to the Portfolio Committee by 31 August 2018 and thereafter on a quarterly basis.



HON. GC SHABALALA (MPL)



DATE

**CHAIRPERSON: PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT;
COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON**