

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT; COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON ON THE SITE VISITS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS CONDUCTED ON 18 TO 21 JUNE 2013, DURING THE “PRE- TAKING LEGISLATURE TO THE PEOPLE PROGRAMME”, ON THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT AT THEMBISILE HANI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY; NKANGALA DISTRICT.**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

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 124 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. Thus, the Portfolio Committee on Public Works, Roads and Transport; Community Safety, Security and Liaison (the Committee) regularly conducts public hearings and oversight visits to projects of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport; in the various municipalities of the Province.

The Legislature conducted pre-site visits and held public hearings at Thembisile Hani Local Municipality in preparation for the Taking Legislature to the People event (TLP), which will take place in September 2013. The purpose of the visits was to obtain service delivery information from the community within the municipality in order to prepare the Executive on issues that will need its execution and report back at the main event.

During the pre-site visits held in Thembisile Hani Local Municipality, the Committee conducted its oversight visit to projects of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

The following objectives shaped the oversight visit to the projects of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport:

- To assess the progress made on the construction of Kwa-Mhlanga Hospital in line with the department's plans;
- To determine the extent to which public funds are efficiently, economically and effectively used by the department in the implementation of projects.

The Legislature also aimed to hear the voice of the people and to ascertain whether provincial government delivers services effectively and efficiently within the municipal area. There were no issues raised in the public hearings that affected the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport.

## 3. METHOD OF WORK

In preparation for the Pre-TLP, the research section conducted pre-site visits to the Municipality during April and May 2013. Comprehensive research reports were compiled that informed the Committee's programme for the Pre-TLP. Subsequent to the pre-site research visits, the Committee embarked on a special pre-TLP visit to the Municipality and conducted oversight visits to the projects on 18 – 20 June 2013.

The Legislature then conducted three public hearing on the 21 June 2013. The public hearings were conducted at Moloto Old Age Centre, Boukenhout Old Age Centre and Verena Multipurpose Centre.

## 4. OVERSIGHT ON GOVERNMENT PROJECTS

On 19 June 2013, the Committee conducted an oversight visit to **Kwa-Mhlanga Hospital** and the acting CEO of the hospital met with the Committee.



#### **4.1. Observation by the Committee**

The committee noted that the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport had delegated a junior official at District level to attend the briefing session. The committee also noted that both the consultant and the contractor that were appointed on the project did not attend the briefing session. It also came to the attention of the committee that the person who was representing the provincial Department of Health was not present at the briefing session.

After a short discussion, the committee resolved not to continue with the meeting as the relevant people that were invited did not attend the briefing session. Upon the arrival of the consultant, the committee decided to conduct an in loco inspection. The following issues were noted:

#### **4.2. Construction of the Intensive Care Unit (ICU)**

The Committee noted that the ICU facility was not being utilized at the time of the visit. The progress on the completion of the ICU was reported to be at 98%. It was reported that the OPD plan had toilets which were next to the ICU. For hygienic reasons, the contractor's scope of work was further extended where the contractor was requested to build extra toilets outside the hospital building. The Committee enquired from the Consultant on whether he had recommended the escalation of the prices and what could be the reason for him failing to finish the project on time. The Consultant responded to the questions and agreed that he had recommended on the escalation of prices, he further reported that the reason the project had not been completed on time was because the project plan had been adjusted completely. The Committee also noted that there was poor planning on the project as the contractor had been given additional work, which was the construction of the OPD that could be utilised by the hospital in the meantime the contractor was busy with the original scope of work as well as the construction of the permanent gas storage which had escalated the original price by R17 676 084, 50.



### **4.3. Construction of the Casualty Ward**

The Committee noted that the casualty ward was not 100% completed. The Consultant reported that progress on the completion of the Casualty was at 98%.

### **4.4. Upgrading of the Theatres**

The consultant reported that the upgrading of the theatres was at 50% complete. However, the Committee noted that there were no construction workers on site. The Committee enquired on whether the project would be completed on the 31 August 2013 as previously confirmed by the consultant. The consultant assured the Committee that the project will be completed on 31 August 2013.

### **4.5. Additional Work**

In order for the hospital's operations not to be disrupted whilst the theatres were being upgraded; it was resolved that the OPD had to be built. The committee noted that the OPD was complete and functional. The additional toilets were also complete and functional. The Consultant reported that the budget for the construction of the toilets was R1 000 000, 00.

The Committee noted that the mini theatre did not meet some of the standard requirements of a theatre. The mini theatre did not have a change room and a scrub room. The Committee noted that even though the theatre was used as an interim theatre, it will not carry out the functions of a theatre. The Committee also noted that a part of the roof of the mini theatre was in poor condition.

The Committee also noted that the contractor was busy with the construction of a pathway that connects the theatre with the ICU. The committee was of the opinion that the ICU cannot be linked to the mini theatre as the ICU was not a sterile unit. The sterility of the ICU was being compromised by the toilets that were constructed next to it.



## 5. Findings

The Committee made the following findings:

- a) The department delegated a junior official at district level to attend the briefing session. Furthermore, the contractor that was appointed on the project did not attend the meeting.
- b) The mini theatre that was constructed did not meet some of the standard requirements of a theatre.
- c) There was no proper coordination between the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport and the Department of Health as the OPD plan had toilets which were next to the ICU.
- d) There was an escalation of prices in the project, without the necessary procedures being followed.
- e) Construction workers were not on site and payments delays were cited as the reason.
- f) The project is to be completed on the 31 August 2013.

### 5.1. Recommendations

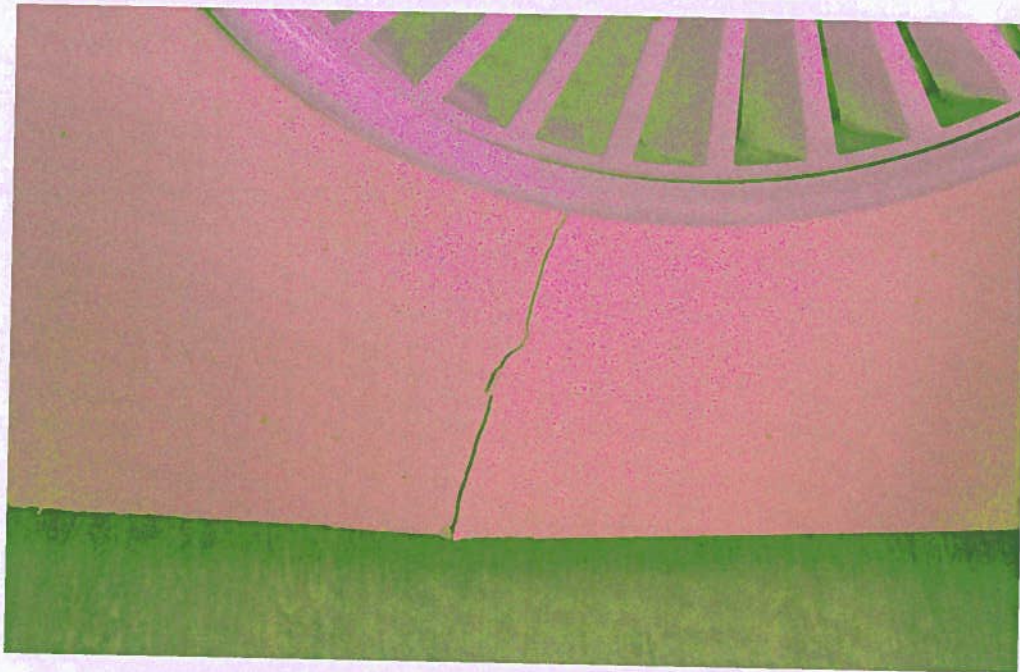
According to the findings listed above, the committee recommended that:

- a) The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport must ensure that the Accounting Officer and most senior officials at the provincial office attend meetings that are called by the Provincial Legislature. Furthermore, the department must ensure that consultants and contractors that are entrusted with the construction of government infrastructure contracts attend meetings that are called by the Provincial Legislature.
- b) The Accounting Officer of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport and the Department of Health must ensure that the mini theatre is properly constructed and meet all the standard requirements of a theatre.



- c) The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport must ensure that there is proper coordination between the department and the client departments.
- d) The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport must provide the Committee with a detailed budget report on the project. Furthermore, the department must ensure that planning of projects is done properly to avoid escalation of budgets;
- e) The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport must ensure that the delay in payments is resolved and construction workers resume duties on site;
- f) The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport and the Department of Health must ensure that the construction of the building is completed on the revised date, which is 31 August 2013.

**P1-1: The collapsing roof in the newly constructed mini-theatre**



## **6. PUBLIC HEARING**

The Public Hearings were conducted at Moloto Old Age Centre, Boukenhout Old Age Centre and Verena Multipurpose Centre. The following issues, relating to the department were raised in the three public hearings:



## 6.1. Boukenhout Old Age Centre

**Ward 24** – The Community experienced an increase in road accidents involving learners' whilst trying to cross the road to the other side to attend school. There is a need of transport for disabled learners.

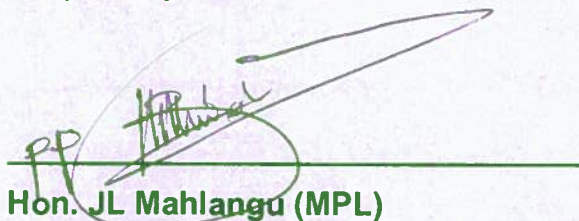
## 6.2. Verena Multi-Purpose Centre

**Ward 11** – The R25 road was not in a good condition.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, Hon JL Mahlangu would like to thank all members of the Committee, the Chairpersons and Members of the various Portfolio Committees of the Legislature, departmental officials, all stakeholders and the support staff of the Mpumalanga Legislature for their participation and rigorous work done during this important outreach to the community of Thembisile Hani 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 departments should provide progress reports on all issues raised to the relevant Portfolio Committee by **31 August 2013** and thereafter on quarterly basis.

  
Hon. JL Mahlangu (MPL)

06 / 08 / 13  
Date

Chairperson: Portfolio Committee on Public Works,  
Roads and Transport; Community Safety,  
Security and Liaison