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PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

THURSDAY, 29 JANUARY 2026

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE PREMIER AND CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS ON THE 2024/25 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER

The Standing Committee on the Premier and Constitutional Matters (the Committee) convened on 14 October 2025 to deliberate on the 2024/25 Annual Report of the Department of the Premier (the Department).

1. Introduction

The Premier and the Director-General (DG) presented the Annual Report for the 2024/25 financial year. The Premier commended the Department for its dedication and achievements, highlighting that this Report covered the first year of the seventh Administration and the implementation of the new 2025-2030 Provincial Strategic Plan (PSP).

Key contextual challenges noted included severe budget pressures, ongoing energy and water crises, and the need for climate resilience. Despite a constrained fiscal environment, the Department operated with a budget of just over R2 billion, achieving a 98.5% expenditure rate and receiving a clean audit outcome from the Auditor-General. The Premier also highlighted the Department's achievement of being certified as a top employer for the third consecutive year, reflecting its commitment to organisational culture and staff well-being.

The DG outlined the Department's transversal role in guiding and supporting other provincial departments with core services including training, ICT, corporate assurance, and legal services. He reported that the Department achieved 63 of its 66 performance targets for the year.

2. Summary of key discussions

2.1. Top Employer Certification and organisational culture

The Committee sought clarification on the metrics and value of the Top Employer certification. The Department explained that it is a thorough, international benchmarking process evaluating business strategy, ethics, culture, and people practices. It was reported that this certification, achieved for the entire Western Cape Government, is a point of pride that drives continuous improvement, provides data-driven insights, and helps attract and retain talent by fostering a positive work environment.

2.2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance

The Department's policy on the safe and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence was discussed. Members were informed that a Governance Policy Framework for AI had been approved by Cabinet. This framework is designed to promote innovation while establishing necessary guardrails, adhering to national and international regulatory standards. It focuses on principles, standards, and leveraging existing governance structures to ensure AI deployment is human-centric, secure, and does not compromise public data.

2.3. Vacancies and staffing

The Committee requested an update on vacancies listed in the Annual Report. The DG confirmed that several key positions had been filled, despite financial constraints. Notable appointments included roles within Legal Services, People Management, and Corporate Services, with a specific emphasis on advancing gender representation in senior positions.

2.4. Declaration of donations and sponsorships

A portion of the discussion centred on a donation recorded on page 15 of the Annual Report, described as "covering the cost of an economy class ticket for Premier Winde" from the Under 2 Coalition.

- **Committee's concern:** Members raised concerns that the description in the Report was ambiguous and sought clarity on whether this constituted a gift to the Premier in his personal capacity, triggering declarations under the Executive Ethics Code, or a reimbursement to the state.
- **Department's response:** The DG clarified that the entire official trip to New York Climate Week was pre-paid by the Western Cape Government. The Under 2 Coalition subsequently reimbursed the Department for the equivalent cost of an economy class ticket, which was then paid into the Provincial Revenue Fund. The DG asserted that this was a donation to the government, not the Premier personally, was properly disclosed in the Annual Report, and was audited without issue. The payment was also received after the Premier had submitted his annual declaration to the Legislature.

The Committee remained concerned about the inconsistency between the written description and the verbal explanation and highlighted the need for precise and unambiguous reporting.

2.5. Alignment of Provincial Strategic Plan (PSP) and Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP)

The Committee inquired about the alignment between the provincial PSP and the national MTDP. The DG confirmed full alignment, explaining that the PSP's four priority areas—Growth for Jobs; Education, Health, and Social Development; Safety; and Innovation, Culture, and Governance—directly correspond to the three pillars of the MTDP: growing the economy, reducing poverty, and building a capable state. The Department monitored this alignment through the PSP implementation plan, quarterly reports to Cabinet, and annual reviews of departmental Annual Performance Plans.

2.6. Economic growth and job creation

Questions were raised regarding progress against the strategic goal of creating 600 000 jobs by 2035. The Department clarified that this was a long-term target under the Growth for Jobs (G4J) strategy, which aimed to grow the provincial economy by 3-5%. Medium-term targets have been adjusted to reflect the challenging national economic climate, but the long-term 2035 goals remained unchanged. The Committee expressed a desire for more frequent and detailed reporting on job creation outcomes linked to the PSP.

2.7. E-Centres and digital inclusion

The Committee acknowledged the critical role of E-Centres, particularly in rural areas, in providing digital access. Members raised concerns about the maintenance of infrastructure and the management of these centres. The Department reported that a significant infrastructure refresh was undertaken and that regional managers conduct site visits. It was also noted that a new Digital Kiosk pilot project is underway to expand access at frontline service delivery points.

Further discussions covered the rollout of Broadband 2.0, which aimed to add 350 new sites, and cybersecurity measures. The Department reported successfully blocking over 330 000 malicious emails and having no serious cyber incidents on its core network during the year.

2.8. Health, safety, and environmental management

The Committee requested a breakdown of the 11 reported occupational health and safety incidents and information on corrective actions taken. The Department reiterated its commitment to staff safety, detailing that training is conducted via newsletters, e-learning platforms, and dedicated sessions. The OHS committee reports directly to departmental EXCO to ensure compliance and swift resolution of issues.

2.9. Contract with Quantum Leap Consulting

The Committee questioned the extension of contracts with Quantum Leap Consulting, given a history of a forensic investigation and subsequent litigation. Legal Services clarified that the Department had previously cancelled contracts based on the investigation, but a court ruled that the historical allegations could not be used to cancel subsequent, legally awarded contracts. The Department, following legal advice, chose not to appeal. A related criminal matter is still ongoing with the South African Police Service (SAPS).

3. Public participation

No members of the public were present to make oral submissions during the public hearing component of the meeting.

4. Committee resolutions

The Committee, after its deliberations, resolved to:

- 4.1 Request that the Department provide a corrected and clarified description of the donation from the Under 2 Coalition in its records to ensure absolute transparency and to avoid any ambiguity.
- 4.2 Request a comprehensive briefing from the Department on the progress and impact of the Provincial Strategic Plan (PSP), with a specific focus on job creation outcomes and economic growth metrics, to be scheduled on a quarterly or bi-annual basis.
- 4.3 Inquire about the monitoring mechanisms for the earmarked funding of R8,676 million for the Office of the Commissioner for Children to ensure its effective utilisation.
- 4.4 Follow up on the public availability of the draft Safety Plan 2.0, as committed to in a previous committee meeting, to enable public submissions.

5. Conclusion

The Chairperson expressed appreciation to the Premier, the Director-General, officials of the Department of the Premier, and the members of the Committee for their constructive engagement.

2. REPORT ON THE BRIEFING AND OVERSIGHT VISIT TO THE CAPE ACCESS CENTRE AND THE CENTRE FOR E-INNOVATION

1. Introduction

The Standing Committee on the Premier and Constitutional Matters (the Committee) conducted a hybrid meeting on 12 November 2025. The purpose was to receive a comprehensive briefing from the Department of the Premier (DotP) on the Provincial Broadband initiatives and the Cape Access Centres (E-Centres), and to conduct an oversight visit to the Cape Access Centre at 9 Wale Street and the Centre for E-Innovation (CE-I) at 4 Dorp Street. A delegation from the Gauteng Provincial Legislature's Portfolio Committee on E-Government and Research Development attended the meeting virtually.

2. Delegation

The delegation of the Standing Committee consisted of the following members:

Allen, R (Deputy Speaker) (DA)
 Booysen, M (DA)
 Johnson, P (DA)
 Sayed, K (ANC)
 Stevens, D (PA)
 Van Minnen, B (DA)
 Walters, T (Chairperson) (DA)

Officials from the Department of the Premier in attendance included: Ms H Robson (Representing the DG), Mr M Cloete, Mr I Samaai, Mr C Wakeford, Mr K Groeneveldt, Mr E Alexander, Mr T De Villiers, Ms N Moholwana and Mr R Shaw.

3. Overview

The agenda for the day comprised a hybrid briefing session followed by a physical walkabout. The virtual component was initiated at the request of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature's Committee on E-Government, whose Chairperson, Ms. Hlophe, explained they sought the engagement because they recognized the Western Cape and Gauteng as the only two provinces with a dedicated E-Government focus.

Their goal was to learn from the Western Cape's experiences, share best practices, and explore collaborative opportunities to jointly advance digital service delivery and ensure South Africa keeps pace with global technological advancements. Following this inter-provincial briefing by the Department of the Premier on the Broadband and E-Centre programmes, the Committee conducted an oversight walkabout to the Cape Access Centre at 9 Wale Street and the Centre for E-Innovation at 4 Dorp Street, accompanied by DotP officials.

4. Briefing by the Department of the Premier

4.1. Broadband Initiative

Mr. Cloete, the Director for Broadband Service Level and Contract Management, briefed the Committee. He explained that the programme is funded through a ring-fenced allocation from Provincial Treasury directly to the Department of the Premier, with client departments not being billed for the base connectivity service. This specific funding model was a key point of interest for the Gauteng delegation.

Regarding the Public Wi-Fi service, the operational cost is approximately R30 million per annum. Usage data indicates high consumption on social media platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook. The Department views this not as a drawback, but as a valuable entry point that fosters digital familiarity, which can then lead to more productive use. They provided examples of users who have secured jobs and started businesses after accessing the internet through this service.

On the topic of measurable economic impact, the Department acknowledged that direct causality is complex to prove. However, they reported that internet usage in the Western Cape grew significantly from 57% in 2014 to 85% in 2022, a trend to which the broadband rollout has contributed. The Programme is formally recognized as a registered flagship project of the province's Growth for Jobs (G4J) strategy.

A major success highlighted was the Programme's role in stimulating private investment and competition. From the baseline of limited-service providers, at least four different Internet Service Providers were now operating in every town and village across the province, all leveraging the core infrastructure originally built for government connectivity.

The new "Broadband 2.0" contract introduces enhanced service management, with a significant improvement being power monitoring at sites. This capability allows for the rapid diagnosis of outages, particularly during periods of load-shedding, enabling a shift from a reactive to a more proactive approach to incident management.

4.2. E-Centre(CapeAccess)Programme

Mr. Wakeford, Director for E-Government for Citizens, and Mr. Groeneveldt, Programme Manager for the E-Centres, presented the Programme.

They highlighted that the initiative was strategically evolving its training offerings beyond foundational digital literacy. This included running two pilot programmes with partners Laerbar and LEAP to provide higher-value skills training for roles such as solution architects and business analysts, thereby directly aligning with provincial economic needs.

A key focus of the briefing was addressing sustainability challenges amid growing demand and budget constraints. In response, the Department is actively pursuing new business models, which include operating the network of 82 E-Centres as a platform for other government departments and private partners, exploring cost recovery for higher-value accredited training, and pursuing external fundraising.

The officials also highlighted the pilot Mobile E-Centre as a crucial tool for extending the Programme's reach to the most remote communities, and Members of the Committee were encouraged to request its deployment for constituency work.

5. Key findings

5.1. Findings on the Broadband Programme

The service-based, anchor-tenant model has been highly effective in de-risking private investment, leading to a competitive ISP market in previously underserved rural areas.

The Programme was a foundational economic enabler, directly linked to the Growth for Jobs strategy, and has contributed to a significant rise in provincial internet penetration.

Broadband 2.0 introduces critical operational enhancements, such as power monitoring, which will significantly improve service reliability and reduce downtime during power outages.

The ring-fenced funding model within the DotP simplifies procurement and accountability for this province-wide critical infrastructure.

5.2. Findings on the E-Centre Programme

The Programme is undergoing a necessary strategic shift from providing basic digital literacy towards offering high-value, economically relevant skills training (e.g., through Lærbar and LEAP pilots) to better align with provincial job creation goals.

The Programme faces significant sustainability challenges due to high demand and budget constraints, prompting an active search for new business models, including a platform approach and cost recovery for advanced courses.

The Mobile E-Centre is an innovative and crucial tool for ensuring the mandate of "leaving no one behind" by reaching the most remote communities.

The Programme provides demonstrable social value, as evidenced by powerful success stories of personal advancement witnessed during the oversight visit.

6. Oversight visit to 9 Wale Street and 4 Dorp Street

Following the briefing, the Committee conducted a walkabout:

6.1 Cape Access Centre (9 Wale Street):

The Committee observed the facility's ten computer stations and interacted with the team, which consists of two core staff members, a Premier's Pay Intern, and is supported by five technical staff and three dedicated officials from DotP.

The Centre serves approximately 70 people on a typical day, with capacity for up to 100 on busy days. A key feature is its dedicated NPO Helpdesk, which provides specialized support to non-profit organizations and early childhood development centres, assisting roughly 30 people from this sector daily.

The Programme's impact was powerfully demonstrated through direct interactions: the Committee heard from the Pay Intern about her learning journey and professional development, and from Ms. Zwane, who shared her story of rising from a cleaner at the building to the E-Centre's Development Manager.

6.2 Centre for E-Innovation (4 Dorp Street):

The visit to the NIOC provided a solid view of the 24/7 monitoring and management capabilities that underpin the reliability of the government's digital services, as discussed in the presentation.

7 Engagement with Gauteng Provincial Legislature

The virtual engagement with Gauteng fostered an insightful dialogue. Their questions focused on practical implementation: funding models, cost-benefit analysis, and rural rollout strategies. Both committees affirmed the value of the interaction and committed to maintaining the relationship for shared learning, with Gauteng expressing a desire for a future physical visit.

8. Acknowledgement

The Committee thanked the officials from the Department of the Premier for their transparent and detailed responses. The Committee also thanked the staff at the visited centres and the Gauteng delegation for their constructive engagement.

9. Conclusion

The briefing and oversight visit delved into the strategic operational and financial models that ensure the sustainability and impact of these key digital programmes. The Committee resolved to maintain oversight, particularly concerning the implementation of Broadband 2.0 and the new sustainability models for the E-Centres.

3. REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. Introduction

The Annual Report (AR) of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament (WCPP) for the 2024/25 financial year was tabled in accordance with Section 60(1) of the Financial Management of Parliament and Provincial Legislatures Act [Act No. 10 of 2009] (FMPPLA). This report serves as a comprehensive account of the WCPP's activities and performance, promoting accountability for decisions made during the financial year which marked the transition from the 6th to the 7th Parliamentary term.

The WCPP's performance was evaluated against the targets and budget outlined in its Strategic Plan and the Annual Performance Plan for 2024/25. In line with Section 4 of the FMPPLA, the Committee reviewed the AR to oversee performance indicators, financial management, governance, and human resource functions.

2. Overview

The Committee convened on 29 October 2025 to deliberate on the AR. The meeting commenced with a briefing from the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA), which confirmed the WCPP's 12th consecutive unqualified audit outcome. The AGSA praised the institution's high standards and advised the Committee to improve oversight by regularly checking on the implementation of its decisions.

The Audit Committee Chairperson, Mr Davids, concurred with the AGSA's findings, reinforcing the positive audit outcome.

Subsequently, the Committee engaged with the WCPP's executive authority and management, led by the Speaker and the Secretary to Parliament. The leadership highlighted the successful management of the parliamentary transition and the achievement of an 86% performance target rate (19 out of 22 targets), the highest over the five-year strategic cycle, up from 74% in the first year.

3. Financial management

The WCPP operated with a budget of R203 million for the 2024/25 financial year. The institution recorded an underspend, primarily due to the transitional period between parliamentary terms. Key factors contributing to the underspend included:

- R1,344 million on Compensation of Employees due to vacancies.
- R8,217 million on Goods and Services, largely due to reduced committee activity, lower demand for enabling allowances, and delayed projects.
- R476,000 on Transfers and Subsidies.
- R6,660 million on Capital Assets, mainly due to the Audio-Visual upgrade being planned for the 2025/26 financial year.
- Rollovers totalling R17,809 million were approved.

4. Key issues discussed

4.1. Strategic performance and institutional impact

The WCPP achieved 86% of its performance targets, the highest over the five-year strategic period. However, the Committee noted significant variations in performance across different programmes:

- Programme 1: Governance, Leadership and Administration achieved only 67% of its targets (6 out of 9), with specific concerns about internal audit follow-ups and security compliance.
- Programme 2: Parliamentary Support Services showed a particular concern - while it met 100% of its operational targets, it achieved only 33% of its strategic objectives (1 out of 3), indicating a disconnect between daily operations and long-term improvement goals.

The Committee questioned this disparity in Programme 2, seeking assurance that the high volume of daily work is leading to tangible, lasting improvements in parliamentary support services

4.2. Member support and capacity building

Member satisfaction was reported at a five-year high of 87%. However, the Committee provided feedback, suggesting that survey results may not always capture specific operational challenges faced by members, such as difficulties with digital systems for claims. The Administration committed to more direct, one-on-one engagements to diagnose and resolve individual Member support issues. The Speaker reinforced the strategic priority of "Strengthening Support to Legislators," ensuring that the push for digitisation and modernisation does not leave any Member behind.

4.3. Organizational culture and staff retention

The Committee expressed concern over the staff turnover rate of 15.2% and its impact on institutional knowledge and support to members. In response to questioning, management clarified that the figure was significantly influenced by the end of fixed-term contracts in the Speaker's office and for backlog work following the 6th, Parliament. However, the Committee highlighted that exit interviews with staff who resigned, particularly newer employees, revealed underlying issues including a silo mentality, lack of integration, inconsistent policy implementation, and communication gaps.

The Committee requested a comparative analysis of the staff complement from the 5th to the 7th Parliament to understand the impact of these changes over time.

The Secretary confirmed that the recent culture audit identified a need to build trust, foster collaboration, and adapt leadership styles. In response, the WCPP is prioritising enhanced internal communication, a comprehensive review of HR policies in consultation with organised labour, and the development of a formal succession plan to address the lack of a promotion policy and an ageing workforce. The strategic focus is on empowering and recognising employees, breaking down silos, and creating a more enabling environment to retain staff.

4.4 Financial sustainability

The financial sustainability of the WCPP was discussed and it was noted that its budget constituted 0.24% of the provincial budget. The Secretary reported that the institution was addressing this challenge by engaging with the Financial and Fiscal Commission at the legislative sector level to develop a new, sustainable funding model for all provincial legislatures. Additionally, a concurrent spending review was being conducted to determine the cost of delivering on its core constitutional mandates, including lawmaking, oversight, and public participation. In response, the Committee concluded that evidence-based requests are needed. Members were urged to substantiate any

requests for additional funding by developing detailed, outcome-based committee work plans that show exactly how the current budget is limiting their ability to deliver impactful work.

4.5 Security, infrastructure, and public perception

The WCPP maintained a 98% compliance rate with the Critical Infrastructure Protection Act. Persistent challenges were noted, stemming from the WCPP's status as a tenant in a shared building. The Committee also raised the issue of public perception, questioning the combat-ready appearance of SAPS officers at the precinct and suggesting a more ceremonial dress code to align with the institution's public-facing role. Management confirmed this is a standing agenda item with SAPS through the Joint Planning Committee.

5. Input received from the public

A delegation from the Central Karoo district attended the meeting, and the Chairperson formally welcomed their presence. Mr Adams, a former Secretary of the WCPP, made an oral submission. He raised a concern regarding the non-payment of his pension benefits.

In response, the current Secretary to Parliament informed the Committee that this matter is the subject of an ongoing investigation by the Public Protector. The Secretary stated that the WCPP Administration is legally obliged to allow this independent constitutional process to run its course without interference and is therefore constrained in its ability to comment on or act upon the matter at this stage.

6. Information requested

The Committee requested that the WCPP provides a written response detailing a comparative analysis of the staff complement from the 5th to the 7th Parliament, and the impact of these changes.

7. Conclusion

The Committee commended the WCPP for achieving a 12th consecutive unqualified audit and for managing a complex parliamentary transition with notable efficiency, culminating in an 86% performance achievement. The Chairperson expressed gratitude to the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Secretary, and the entire WCPP administration, as well as the AGSA, the Audit Committee, and all Members for their robust and constructive engagement.

4. **REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE ON THE 2024/25 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PROVINCIAL TREASURY AND ITS ENTITY; THE WESTERN CAPE GAMBLING AND RACING BOARD**

The Standing Committee on Finance (the Committee) convened on 31 October 2025 to deliberate on the 2024/25 Annual Report of the Provincial Treasury, and its Entity; the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board (WCGRB).

1. Provincial Treasury: 2024/25 Annual Report Deliberations

1.1. Introduction

The Minister of Finance and the Head of the Provincial Treasury presented the Annual Report for the 2024/25 financial year. The Minister noted that the Provincial Treasury achieved a lot during the 2024/25 financial year, focusing on long term financial sustainability, fairness, value for money, innovation and trust.

For the period under review, the Provincial Treasury published three major research papers, including the Provincial Economic Review and Outlook, the Municipal Economic Review and Outlook, and the Local Government Budget Performance Review assessing all 30 municipalities. The Provincial Treasury was also able to use data-driven tools to assist with fiscal futures, which in turn allowed the Provincial Treasury to lobby the National Treasury to update the Provincial Equitable Share, thereby also allowing for fairer allocations for provinces. During the 2024/25 financial year, the Provincial Treasury also assisted departments to apply and secure funding for infrastructure from national government in respect of the Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI).

The Minister noted that this was the Provincial Treasury's 12th clean audit. Although it was a challenging year, especially given the changes to the national budget process, the Minister was proud of the team and expressed her gratitude for all the officials that contributed to the work of the Provincial Treasury. The Minister also informed the Committee that the Provincial Treasury breached the 30% National Treasury benchmark for total procurement spend to women-owned business for the first time in the Western Cape Government's history. This was a historic moment as it seemed that there was no other government in the world that had achieved this feat.

1.2. Summary of key discussions/concerns

1.2.1. Interventions in municipalities

The Provincial Treasury continued its intervention at the Beaufort West Municipality, which progressed from stage one to stage two of its Financial Recovery Plan (FRP). For the period under review, the Provincial Treasury also started intervention work in Theewaterskloof Municipality, which was then placed under an FRP. The Provincial Treasury then also started the support plan and FRP for Kannaland Municipality.

The Provincial Treasury noted that intervention periods at municipalities differed because municipalities only graduated from intervention once all the criteria of each FRP was met. The municipality would have to show that it has moved from rescue to stability and sustainability. A municipality would remain under an FRP if they did not show any improvements in respect of sustainability.

The Minister further noted that even if Kannaland Municipality concluded every metric contained in the FRP, on time, it would still likely take the municipality five years before they reached financial sustainability. The Provincial Treasury was working with Kannaland Municipality's council to ensure there was proper oversight and that the municipality met all its targets in respect of the FRP.

1.2.2. Engagements with, and support of municipalities

The Committee expressed concern about the support to struggling municipalities. It was noted that one of the Provincial Treasury's strategic priorities was to support municipalities to achieve financial stability and sustainability.

The Minister indicated that the Provincial Treasury assisted municipalities through various support programmes and grants. Municipalities could submit applications for funding; however, the approval of this funding was subject to long term financial sustainability. The Provincial Treasury also offered support in terms of the Financial Management Capability Grant and the Municipal Financial Recovery Services Grant. Many of the grants offered related to revenue enhancement and long-term financial planning. The Provincial Treasury also assisted the Department of Local Government in terms of councillor training and induction.

The Provincial Treasury further provided ad hoc support to municipalities. For example, the Provincial Treasury offered a revenue masterclass to assist municipalities with revenue challenges and long-term planning. The Provincial Treasury also formed part of a budget and governance forum with Members of the Mayoral Committees where all finance concerns were discussed. The Provincial Treasury will also be offering a masterclass or webinar on development charges for municipalities.

The Provincial Treasury also held annual financial statement consistency workshops with municipalities, which did so well that it was being rolled out to all the other provinces, in partnership with National Treasury.

The Provincial Treasury continued to support municipalities in terms of reducing red tape and guiding them on preferential procurement regulations on an ongoing basis. The Provincial Treasury customised the frequency of its engagements with municipalities depending on each one's needs, assisting them with developing credible budget funding plans, and improving collection rates and revenue.

1.2.3. Geopolitical challenges and political instability

During the 2024/25 financial year, the Provincial Treasury noted that there were challenges due to global and local factors such as fiscal constraints, increasing demands for services, geopolitical risks, and political instability.

The Provincial Treasury expanded on the geopolitical risks indicating that the Ukraine war also had an impact on South Africa.

In terms of the reference to political instability, there were 18 hung councils during the year under review, which had implications for how the municipalities were run and the additional support they needed from the Provincial Treasury.

1.2.4. Funded and unfunded budgets of municipalities

During the 2024/25 financial year, 24 municipalities adopted funded budgets because of improved governance arrangements. The Provincial Treasury noted the importance of approved funded budgets, which denoted credible budgets where revenue matched expenditure lines.

For example, in the 2023/24 financial year, Cederberg Municipality had an unfunded budget; however, they have since moved to a funded position. In the 2024/25 financial year, Swellendam Municipality had an unfunded budget, but it has moved to a funded position. Bitou Municipality also moved from an unfunded budget in 2023/24 to a funded budget in 2024/25.

The Provincial Treasury supported municipalities in terms of improving their budget revenue and expenditure and assisted them in adopting funded budgets. The Provincial Treasury also provided advice to municipalities in terms of the accuracy of their financial reporting systems and long-term financial planning.

Eskom's Municipal Debt Relief Programme played a significant role in the relief that enabled some municipalities to move from an unfunded position to a funded position. This was especially the case for the Cederberg and Matzikama Municipalities.

1.2.5. Data accuracy and verification

The Minister noted that all the data was linked to information received from credible sources such as Statistics South Africa and Quantec. For example, the data included in the PERO was linked to the data source, which the Committee could reference if it needed to.

1.2.6. Provincial Equitable Share Formula

The Provincial Treasury continued to lobby National Treasury for updates to the Provincial Equitable Share (PES) formula, indicating that the current PES formula disadvantaged high-growth provinces like the Western Cape. The Provincial Treasury continued to advocate for a full formula review to ensure a fairer allocation of national resources, in line with provinces' population and economic growth.

The Provincial Treasury has argued that the national funding should follow the "feet", because there were many people migrating between provinces. The Provincial Treasury; therefore, wanted a higher weighting of the population data, but also a higher weighting of the economic data, specifically.

1.2.7. Public Private Partnerships

The Provincial Treasury performed an oversight role throughout the Public Private Partnership (PPP) project cycle, assessing factors such as affordability, value for money, and risk transfer during project development. Provincial Treasury also monitored closed PPP deals that were in the implementation stage.

The Minister indicated that PPP was an instrument within the Alternative and Blended Finance (ABF) model. It was the departments' prerogative to formulate a proposal and submit the applications for a PPP. The Provincial Treasury was able to assist a department with the ABF mechanism and assessing applications for financial viability and risks, but it was that department's responsibility to do the groundwork in terms of that PPP project.

1.2.8. Vacancies

The Committee noted that there was one African male within the organisation's structure. The Provincial Treasury indicated that it would continue to address the challenges posed by elevated vacancies, which had increased demands in its workload. Since the submission of the Provincial Treasury's 2024/25 Annual Report, some vacancies had already been filled. The Provincial Treasury was in the process of seeking approval from Cabinet for some appointments.

The Department of Public Service and Administration's circular 20 of 2024 had an impact on the pace in which the Provincial Treasury could fill its vacancies. There were some governance structures that the Provincial Treasury had to implement before job applications could be considered and vacancies could be advertised and funded.

The approved vacancy rate within the Provincial Treasury in the year under review was 28%, which was quite large for such a small organisation. This was a concern as the vacancy rate was primarily a symptom of structured financing. Going forward, the Provincial Treasury would address this challenge through the strategic prioritisation of critical posts. The Provincial Treasury's Cost of Employment committee would adjudicate the posts for criticality, as well as planning in respect of the retention of capable staff, particularly for employees between the ages of 25 and 36 that were found to be the most mobile and who were often poached.

The Provincial Treasury also offered bursaries to facilitate career progression in critical fields. The Provincial Treasury was also in the process of developing an alternative non-remunerative award policy to boost the morale of staff in the absence of being able to provide performance rewards.

1.2.9. Eskom's Municipal Debt Relief Programme

The Provincial Treasury indicated that there were four municipalities enrolled in Eskom's Municipal Debt Relief Programme. The municipalities were Cederberg, Matzikama, Beaufort West and Kannaland. All four municipalities performed well in the first year of the programme and qualified for the write-off of the first third of their debts. The debts written off totalled R93,1 million.

The municipalities recently concluded the second year of the three-year programme. Municipalities were required to report monthly on their compliance, and the Provincial Treasury was required to assess those monthly reports and report to National Treasury.

During the second year of the programme, the Beaufort West, Matzikama and Cederberg Municipalities strengthened their compliance requirements, while Kannaland Municipality saw a marked deterioration in one of the 41 compliance conditions, which was to make consistent payments to Eskom. The Provincial Treasury has since implemented an FRP at Kannaland Municipality.

1.2.10. Integrated Financial Management System

The Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) posed a challenge for the Provincial Treasury since there was a moratorium on the IFMS, nationally. The Western Cape Government (WCG) used e-procurement; however, this only allowed for a certain level of transactions. For the WCG to roll out e-procurement for all transactions across all WCG departments, the moratorium had to be lifted, but this decision was with the National Treasury. The Provincial Treasury has lobbied the National Treasury to lift the moratorium.

1.2.11. National Energy Regulator of South Africa – Gauteng High Court ruling

The Provincial Treasury's Chief Directorate: Local Government Public Finance played a critical supporting role when the Gauteng High Court ruled that the National Energy Regulator of South Africa's (NERSA) methodology for determining municipal electricity tariffs was unlawful. The Court required all municipalities to submit updated

Cost of Supply Studies (COSS) alongside their 2024/25 financial year electricity tariff applications. The Court judgment came at the end of July 2024, and the first of the new month was on a Sunday. This meant that the ruling was being communicated to municipalities on non-working days (weekend).

Some municipalities had challenges in terms of revenue loss because they could not implement the new tariff due to the absence of valid COSS. The Provincial Treasury, along with the Department of Local Government, then mobilised all its resources to assist all Western Cape municipalities that lacked valid COSS or funding for COSS, ensuring they developed compliant models and met the submission deadline.

NERSA then indicated that there was a miscalculation of approximately R50 billion, which was not included in the current NERSA proposals in respect of the increase for electricity tariffs for municipalities. The Minister indicated that there was a concern that the R50 billion was going to be placed on municipalities. This concern was raised with National Treasury, as the last issue that was needed for citizens was for the cost of living to increase beyond the ability to pay these expenses, resulting in a further push towards poverty.

1.2.12. The use of consultants

The Committee noted the use of consultants within the Provincial Treasury. The Minister noted that the PERO was now written in-house, while consultants were still used for the drafting of the MERO. The Minister hoped to build the capacity within the Provincial Treasury so that the MERO could be drafted in-house as well; however, this would take some time given the volume of work required to draft the MERO.

The Minister indicated that, where possible, the Provincial Treasury preferred to use its in-house capacity to complete tasks; however, there were areas of work that required capacity that Provincial Treasury did not have, particularly when a task was not part of its day-to-day work. Consultants were mainly used when specific services were needed from time to time.

2. The Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board: 2024/25 Annual Report Deliberations

2.1. Introduction

The Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board (WCGRB) received an unqualified audit for the 2024/25 financial year. The Minister noted that the WCGRB's role was to control and regulate gambling within the Western Cape, and to provide a consistent and effective regulatory environment free from corruption and unlawful gambling and betting activities.

2.2. Summary of key discussions/concerns

2.2.1. Revenue collected from gambling tax

The gambling sector saw a significant growth in gambling taxes. For the year under review, the WCGRB collected approximately R1,7 billion in gambling taxes. Money from Corporate Social Investment (CSI) initiatives totalled approximately R15,9 million.

In 2015, revenue collected from gambling tax amounted to R51 million. Ten years later, gambling tax amounted to R1,7 billion, due to the increase in licence holders. The WCGRB indicated that the growth in revenue could also largely be attributed to online gambling and betting taxes. Unfortunately, an increase in gambling transactions also resulted in an influx of punter disputes, which the WCGRB had to resolve.

2.2.2. Responsible gambling measures and excessive gambling advertising

The Committee noted that there were increased levels of gambling advertising across the province, often targeting vulnerable communities and the youth.

The WCGRB indicated that both the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Act, 1996 (Act 4 of 1996) (the WCGR Act) and its Regulations contained strict prohibitions against false, misleading advertisements, and advertisements targeting youth. All advertisers were also required to include a statement in their advertisements about the dangers of addictive gambling. The WCGRB was also in discussions with the National Gambling Policy Council on how to address this challenge. There were also deliberations on the possible restriction on sponsorships at events where minors might frequent, such as sporting events.

The Western Cape was one of the few provinces where approval was required by the WCGRB before a licence holder in the Western Cape was able to advertise in the province. Unfortunately, the WCGR Act did not make provision for licence holders located in other provinces to seek permission for advertising in the Western Cape. Since approval was not required for other provinces, it was permissible for a gambling establishment located in those provinces to advertise in the Western Cape. For example, a licence holder located in Mpumalanga was allowed to advertise in the Western Cape without the WCGRB's approval.

There were also restrictions about advertising to vulnerable persons; however, the WCGRB noted that the amount of gambling advertising, nationally, appeared to be excessive. The WCGRB also informed the Committee that licence holders were getting quite creative about the way they promoted their products; however, the WCGRB was in the process of addressing this and there were discussions about implementing a minimum criterion for advertising that would be applicable for all provinces. The WCGRB agreed that advertising had to be addressed on a national level.

In terms of responsible gambling programmes, the WCGRB was part of the provincial government Thusong Programme that meets with communities to teach them about problem gambling and responsible gambling. The WCGRB, alongside the South African Responsible Gambling Trust also visited licenced establishments to engage with punters and inform them about responsible gambling.

One of the licence conditions was that each licence holder had to contribute 0.1% of their gross gaming revenue to the South African Responsible Gaming Trust, where the money was used for education, awareness and the treatment of individuals.

2.2.3. Board remuneration and skills retention

The Committee noted the WCGRB's remuneration level, which was among the lowest for provincial entities, making it difficult to attract and retain skilled professionals.

The WCGRB noted that it was evident that the entity had grown tremendously. The staff structure was originally 75 posts; however, an organisational review indicated that the optimal structure for the WCGRB would be 115 posts. The WCGRB was engaging with the Minister and Provincial Treasury regarding additional funding for these posts.

The WCGRB agreed that the retention of staff was a significant problem, as they had lost key staff members to other entities, and even to international organisations. Online betting was also a major growth area, and the lack of resources within the WCGRB placed a great strain on existing staff.

The WCGRB still retained the same number of staff that it did in 2015, despite the significant growth in the gambling industry. A responsible gambling mini division was needed within the organisation to address the issue of problem gambling, especially given the massive growth in the industry.

The WCGRB and Provincial Treasury were working together to address the entity's capacity issues. The Provincial Treasury was meeting with the Department of the Premier to discuss the WCGRB's capacity needs to operate optimally.

2.2.4. Casino relocation application

The WCGRB reported on five casinos that were awarded casino licenses in the Western Cape. During the year under review, the WCGRB also dealt with a case of one of the casino's that applied to relocate to the Metro.

The WCGRB explained that the initial Western Cape Gambling and Racing Policy Determinations, 1999 the section that spoke to regional exclusivity for the five casinos in the Western Cape, was found to be invalid by the High Court, and could not be affected or enforced. The Court further confirmed that the WCGRB was authorised to consider applications for the relocation of a casino in accordance with the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Act, 1996 (Act 4 of 1996). Tsogo Sun then applied for relocation to the WCGRB. The application was for the relocation of the casino from Caledon to Somerset West. Tsogo Sun motivated for the relocation citing the underperformance of the casino in Caledon and the declining revenue of the establishment.

Since the application for relocation, the WCGRB has embarked on a public participation process requesting comments from members of the public. After much deliberation, the WCGRB granted Tsogo Sun the approval for the relocation, noting the economic benefits for the community, job creation opportunities, tourism, infrastructure development in Somerset West, and CSI contributions.

Tsogo Sun has also committed to upgrading and reorganising the current Caledon Hotel and Spa, including conference facilities, restaurants and bars. There was also a discussion about continuing with CSI initiatives in Caledon, preserving jobs at Caledon Hotel and Spa, and offering current Caledon Casino staff employment opportunities at the new casino in Somerset West.

2.2.5. Rental income and new WCGRB building

The Committee noted that the WCGRB generated an income from renting its building and questioned whether it was within the entity's mandate to do this.

The WGRB explained that when it bought its building, as part of the sale agreement, it included the transfer of an existing lease agreement to the WCGRB; however, this lease agreement expired in April 2025. This was not something that the WCGRB would do in the normal course of its business.

2.2.6. Corporate Social Investment initiatives

The Committee noted that the Western Cape only held five casino licences, and that the Central Karoo was the only area that did not have a casino licence and therefore was not benefiting from CSI initiatives. It was further noted that current licence holders only established CSI initiatives within their surrounding communities.

The Minister indicated that if a casino was in a particular area, then the community surrounding that area would likely want the CSI to be established in their surrounding areas where the casino could be causing gambling harm, not in a different area that was far from the casino.

The WCGRB clarified that although CSI initiatives were locally focused, organisations could still apply to any casino operator for funding.

3. Committee resolutions

3.1. The Committee, after its deliberations, REQUESTED the following from the Provincial Treasury:

- 3.1.1. A report on the review of the Provincial Equitable Share formula, once a decision has been made on the possible review;
- 3.1.2. A report providing feedback on the moratorium on the Integrated Financial Management System;
- 3.1.3. A report updating the Committee on the Beaufort West Municipality's progress in respect of its Financial Recovery Plan, and a timeline indicating when the Municipality's financial recovery will be completed; and
- 3.1.4. The links/information to the Financial Recovery Plans for the Beaufort West, Kannaland and Theewaterskloof Municipalities.

3.2. The Committee, after its deliberations, REQUESTED the following from the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board:

- 3.2.1. A report updating the Committee on the filing of the 41 vacancies;
- 3.2.2. A report providing the Committee with a timeline for the completion of the refurbishment of the entity's office; and
- 3.2.3. A report on the relocation of the casino from Caledon to Somerset West, the implications for jobs at Caledon Casino, and the expectations for job creation in Somerset West.

3.3. The Committee RESOLVED the following:

- 3.3.1 That the Provincial Treasury be invited to brief the Committee on the review of the Provincial Equitable Share Formula once a decision has been made on the review;
- 3.3.2 To request progress reports from the Provincial Treasury in respect of the Financial Recovery Plans for the Kannaland and Theewaterskloof Municipalities in the new year; and

3.3.3 To visit each of the municipalities under intervention, and to check the progress made in respect of their respective Financial Recovery Plans.

3.4 The Committee FURTHER RESOLVED to invite the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board to brief the Committee on its spending trends, as well as the spending trends of licence holders in respect of Corporate Social Investment for the past 24 months.

5. Conclusion

The Chairperson expressed appreciation to the Minister, the Head of Department, officials from the Provincial Treasury and the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board, and the members of the Committee for their constructive engagement.

5 Report of the Standing Committee on Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport on the 2024/25 Annual Reports of the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety, the Western Cape Liquor Authority, and the Western Cape Police Ombudsman

The Standing Committee on Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport, having discussed the 2024/25 Annual Reports of the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety (Department), the Western Cape Liquor Authority (WCLA), and the Western Cape Police Ombudsman (WCPO), dated 15 October 2025, reports as follows:

The 2025/26 strategic objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speaker's priorities, which have an impact on committees, are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and
Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

The Standing Committee on Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport, conducts oversight over multiple portfolios. The annual report process affords the Committee the opportunity to engage the respective departments and entities on its annual reports.

The Standing Committee on Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety, the Western Cape Liquor Authority, and the Western Cape Police Ombudsman, for the year ended 31 March 2025, reports as follows:

Introduction

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament's (WCPP) Annual Report programme for the 2024/25 financial year was advertised in newspapers, as well as the WCPP's social media platforms, inviting stakeholders and members of the public to attend and participate in the discussions. The Committee deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety (the Department) and the Western Cape Liquor Authority (WCLA), and the Western Cape Police Ombudsman (WCPO) on 15 October 2025 as part of its oversight function. The Minister and the Acting Head of Department were given an opportunity to make opening remarks. Likewise, the WCPO and the Chief Executive Officer of the WCLA were afforded the same opportunity.

The Department and its Entities were examined on:

Part A: General Information,

Part B: Departmental Performance Information; and

Part D: Human Resources Management of the Department's Annual Report

Members of the public were also given an opportunity to pose questions and to make input during the discussions. There were no submissions or input from the public.

1. Welcome

The Chairperson opened the meeting and allowed for brief introductions. The Chairperson noted an apology on behalf of Member A Cassiem.

2. Context

The Chairperson stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the 2024/25 Annual Reports of the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety (Department), the Western Cape Liquor Authority (WCLA), and the Western Cape Police Ombudsman (WCPO).

Minister A Marais and the Acting Head of Department, Mr. H Arendse, were given the opportunity for brief introductory comments.

3. Western Cape Liquor Authority

Mr. S George, the Chief Executive Officer, led the WCLA delegation. The following are pertinent points pertaining to the year under review.

- 3.1. (Re)zoning for licensed liquor outlets remains a challenge, especially where the proximity is close to residential and schooling areas.
- 3.2. The filling of two key senior management vacancies proved to be difficult to resolve.
- 3.3. The WCLA implemented stricter measures to adhere to Section 4 of the Western Cape Liquor Act (4 of 2008), in respect of applications for the renewal of licenses.
- 3.4. The recruitment process was less automated and required manual sorting. The process has since been streamlined.

4. Western Cape Police Ombudsman

General O Reddy led the WCPO delegation. The following are pertinent points pertaining to the year under review.

- 4.1. The WCPO explained in detail the criteria used to categorize complaints received against policing services.
- 4.2. The majority of the 366 complaints received were categorized under General Complaint (90), Enquiry (70), Poor investigation (67) and Unacceptable Behaviour (62).
- 4.3. The statistics indicate that most complaints are spread across many police stations. This suggests that cases are largely isolated rather than attributed to a specific police station or policing precinct.
- 4.4. The WCPO does not have jurisdiction to investigate complaints against law enforcement, neither does it have proactive investigative powers within its mandate. Investigations into complaints about the South African Police Service and/or municipal policing can only be initiated following a lodged complaint. The

WCPO also does not have post monitoring powers to implement measures to resolve complaints beyond it reporting matters to the policing hierarchy. These limitations were highlighted as areas to consider amending current legislation regarding investigations into policing behaviour.

- 4.5. The WCPO uses interns, including graduate interns, to ameliorate the pressures created by vacancies within its staffing structure.

5. Department of Oversight and Community Safety

The following are pertinent points pertaining to the year under review.

- 5.1. The Department reported a total of 48 joint operations via the Safer City Cooperation Agreement.
- 5.2. As part of the Safer City Cooperation Agreement, the Department sought to create an inventory of all CCTV cameras in Cape Town, and, where possible, the province. These include the location and functionality of these CCTV cameras.
- 5.3. The Department is working towards the integration and sharing of technology, be it Artificial Intelligence or sharing CCTV camera footage, to combat crime and enhance emergency and policing responses to crimes. Solutions to these matters, as part of the Safer City Cooperation Agreement, are ongoing.
- 5.4. Recently, the Department funded a cross-functional delegation of officials from various Western Cape Government departments and the City of Cape Town to China, to learn best practices and integrated dashboards. The invitation was also sent to the SAPS; however, the SAPS did not designate officials for the visit to China. The Department offered co-funding for the SAPS officials.
- 5.5. The Department visited 40 police stations to monitor the respective domestic violence act registers (and other areas of the stations). The Department reported that not all stations were able to issue protection orders. The Department has a five-year plan to visit all 151 police stations to inspect the domestic violence act registers, using a standardized monitoring tool. The reports from these visits are sent to the Provincial Police Commissioner.
- 5.6. The Committee interrogated the Department's Employment Equity policy and the demographics of the current and future departmental staffing structure. The Department duly responded as well as outlined its plans to ensure fair recruitment practices, as well as the overall status of its organizational culture.
- 5.7. The Committee raised the possibility that the Department will consider the expansion of the Chrysalis Academy to other areas in the province, specifically in the Garden Route District Municipality. Such an initiative would ease the travel challenges to transport cadets to the Chrysalis Academy Tokai campus.

6. Request for information

- 6.1. The committee requested the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety to submit the number of CCTV Cameras linked to law enforcement and policing structures in the province, to be used as part of the Safer City Cooperation Agreement.

7. Recommendations

The Committee recommended that the Western Cape Liquor Authority:-

- 7.1. Consider the revision and increase of the stipend/sitting fees allocated to Western Cape Liquor Authority Governing Board members for scheduled meetings.
- 7.2. Schedule more full board meetings per annum.

The Committee recommended that the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety:-

- 7.3. Consult the Garden Route District Municipality to use the now-defunct holiday resorts in Calitzdorp and/or Oudtshoorn, or other suitable facilities, to use the facilities as a Chrysalis Academy campus for cadets from that region. In short, seek full rollout of the Chrysalis Academy in the Garden Route.

6. Report of the Standing Committee Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport, on an oversight visit to the Western Cape Police Ombudsman on 11 November 2025

The Standing Committee on Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport, having conducted an oversight visit to the Western Cape Police Ombudsman on 11 November 2025, reports as follows:

The delegation

The delegation of the Standing Committee on Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport included the following Members:

Democratic Alliance

Van Minnen, B (Chairperson)

Booyesen, M

Johnson, P

African National Congress

Ngqentsu, B

National Coloured Congress

Michels, J

Apologies

Cassiem, A (EFF)

Kaizer-Philander, WF(DA)

Western Cape Police Ombudsman

Gen Reddy, O (Western Cape Police Ombudsman)

Seale, K (Deputy Director: Head of Office)

Lewis, A (Assistant Director)

Matwa, Z (Senior Investigator)

Isaacs, G (Assistant Director)

Public/political staff

Shuma, S (NCC)

The link between the oversight visits and the priority strategies

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament strives to uphold its mandated duty of conducting oversight over the provincial departments, the national departments and related agencies. It also aims to effect socio-economic upliftment for the citizens of the Western Cape.

The oversight visit to the Western Cape Police Ombudsman (WCPO) was a key engagement as it ensured that the Committee fulfils its mandate to monitor the performance of an important structure that seeks to mend community and policing relationships.

Although the Committee largely discussed the WCPO's first and second quarterly reports for 2025/26, the WCPO's report on allegations of gang infiltration into the top structures of the South African Police Service in the Western Cape was also addressed.

1. Background

The WCPO was established to be an independent body that investigates public complaints about police inefficiencies, behaviour and breakdown with the community. The WCPO's mandate only concerns complaints linked to South African Police Service (SAPS) and Metro Police officials. The WCPO celebrates its 10th anniversary, having been formally operational since 2015.

2. Salient points that emanated from the discussion on the Quarterly Performance Reports

- 2.1. The presentation did not solely focus on the statistics of targets across the first two quarters. Instead, the WCPO presented the types of complaints, the process to conclude complaints, the Complaints Management System (CMS), the strategic objectives, and the Rural Expansion Initiative.
- 2.2. The Offices of the WCPO are earmarked for relocation by 31 March 2026, to a more central base closer to the public transport hub, in the City of Cape Town.
- 2.3. The Rural Expansion Programme is gaining momentum. The use of Thusong Centres and municipal offices is identified as potential sites. WCPO staff maximise opportunities when conducting investigations in rural areas to also expand awareness and marketing campaigns, to showcase the services offered. This strategy allows for satellite office-style initiatives, combining investigations in far-reaching areas, and using that time to also have community engagements. Establishing district satellite offices is in the pipeline.
- 2.4. In terms of staffing structure, five posts were recently advertised. There are eight additional granted posts, although only three have been filled. To mitigate the under-resourcing, graduate interns and interns are employed, with one graduate intern deployed as an investigator. Commence recruitment on level 8
- 2.5. The WCPO informed the Committee that its workload will increase with more comprehensive outreach to implant a footprint across the province. This will then also require more staff recruitment, which would commence on the level 8 salary scale.
- 2.6. WCPO advises complainants to lay civil or criminal charges against SAPS members accused of damage to infrastructure, including broken doors or other property. The complaints do not warrant further investigation from the WCPO, as the nature of the complaints falls outside of the mandate.
- 2.7. The WCPO reported that generally, the relationship between the police and residents in rural areas tends to be more cordial than in the urbanised areas.
- 2.8. Statistics show that policing complaints tended to match the criminal activity in high crime areas.
- 2.9. The WCPO informed that it engages both locally and internationally to share best practices, and in many ways, the WCPO itself is consulted as part of benchmarking exercises. Engagements included hosting the KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng

governments, establishing a partnership with the Namibian government for an exchange programme for respective officials.

3. Investigation into SAPS, particularly from within the structures of the office of the Provincial Police Commissioner, and alleged affiliation to gangs.

The Chairperson, at the request of the WCPO, requested Mr S Shuma to exit the meeting as the content of the discussion was too sensitive for public dissemination. Although not explicitly invoked, the action was in line with the provisions of the WCPP's Standing Rule 72.

Gen Reddy provided feedback on the nature of the request to investigate, as well as the scope of the investigation, into the remarks about the alleged infiltration of the SAPS Western Cape's Police Commissioner's office, made by Judge D Thulare in 2022.

WCPO assessed that the complaint was serious enough to launch an investigation; however, it could not investigate any criminality, but only those matters related to the scope of the WCPO's mandate.

The sub judice nature of some of the details of the allegations means that a Commission of Inquiry might be compromised.

4. Resolutions

The Committee resolved to:-

- 4.1. Seek legal advice on what the Committee's next step should be to deal with the matter of Judge D Thulare's comments on alleged infiltration by gang structures into the office of the South African Police Service's Provincial Police Commissioner in the Western Cape, specifically, regarding the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry (COI). The COI would be on gang infiltration into the criminal justice cluster in the Western Cape.
- 4.2. To further consider questioning the insufficient staffing capacity and resourcing of the South African Police Service in the Western Cape.
- 4.3. Invite the office of the Western Cape Police Ombudsman to all Committee hearings and/or public engagements, to aid in the WCPO's marketing and awareness reach.

7. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The 2024/25 strategic objectives of the WCPP, linked to the Speaker's priorities, which have an impact on committees, are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and
Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

The Standing Committee on Education, having deliberated on the Annual Report of the Western Cape Education Department for the year ended 31 March 2025, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

Annual reports are key instruments for departments to report on performance measured against performance targets and budgets as outlined in the strategic plans and annual

performance plans of departments. The Standing Committee on Education deliberated on the Annual Report of the Western Cape Education Department (hereinafter the WCED or the Department) on 21 October 2025 as part of its oversight function.

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament's Annual Report Programme for the 2024/25 financial year was publicised in newspapers. Stakeholders and members of the public were invited to attend and participate in the discussions. Before proceeding to the deliberations on the Annual Report, the Minister and the Head of Department were given the opportunity to make opening remarks.

The Department was examined on:

Part A: General Information;
Part B: Performance Information; and
Part D: Human Resources Management.

Members of the public were also allowed to pose questions and to give input during the discussions.

2. Overview

The Minister of Education, Hon D Maynier, together with the Head of the Department, Mr B Walters, provided an overview of the successes and challenges faced by the WCED during the 2024/25 financial year. The Minister and HOD highlighted both challenges and innovative changes in the 2024/25 Annual Report of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED).

Minister D Maynier's foreword to the 2024/2025 Annual Report reflects a year of significant achievement and resilience for the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). The WCED celebrated its highest matric pass rate to date, with notable improvements in Quintile 1–3 schools. He highlighted the WCED's commitment to learning recovery through the Back-on-Track programme and the rapid school infrastructure build initiative, all while navigating severe fiscal constraints. The Minister emphasised the department's continued support for vulnerable learners through sustained investment in school nutrition, learner transport, and no-fee school subsidies, underscoring a values-driven approach to inclusive education.

The Head of Department, Mr B Walters, in his Accounting Officer's report, reinforced the department's operational and strategic successes during the year under review. He noted that the WCED achieved a 99.8% budget expenditure rate, demonstrating sound financial management despite economic pressures. Mr Walters outlined key interventions, including the 1+9 teacher development model and systemic improvements in literacy and numeracy, particularly in Grades 3 and 6. He also highlighted the department's expanded infrastructure footprint, with 457 new classrooms added, and the successful integration of Grade R and Early Childhood Development into the public education system.

Together, Minister Maynier and Mr Walters presented a cohesive vision of a growing, adaptive, and performance-driven education system. Their leadership emphasised innovation, accountability, and learner-centered outcomes, even in the face of budgetary and systemic challenges.

3. Key points of discussion of the Annual Report

- 3.1. The Committee noted the implementation of key interventions by the WCED, including the Back-on-Track programme, which provided targeted tutoring and holiday classes to support learning recovery across school phases.
- 3.2. The 1+9 intervention model was welcomed, which allows Intermediate and Senior Phase teachers to receive structured professional development every tenth day, and acknowledged its positive reception among educators.
- 3.3. The Committee commended the WCED's progress in early grade literacy and numeracy, as reflected in the 2024 systemic test results. It was noted that Grade 3 Language and Grade 9 Mathematics pass rates now exceed pre-COVID-19 levels.
- 3.4. The Committee acknowledged the WCED's continued efforts to strengthen learner support across all phases to sustain and build on these academic gains.
- 3.5. The Safe Schools Programme was recognised as a critical initiative in promoting safe and conducive learning environments. The Committee noted the three-pronged approach comprising environmental upgrades, developmental interventions, and systems-focused strategies.
- 3.6. Specific safety enhancements were highlighted, including fencing repairs, electronic access gates, alarm systems, and intercom installations. The Committee also noted the deployment of 64 School Resource Officers (SROs) to 32 schools, supported through Area-Based Teams and LEAP.
- 3.7. The Committee took note of the 7,894 calls responded to and 5,765 cases logged under the Safe Schools Programme between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.
- 3.8. The expansion of Early Childhood Development (ECD) was highlighted, including the addition of 457 classrooms and the integration of Grade R and Pre-Grade R into the public system.
- 3.9. The Committee acknowledged the WCED's strategic focus on access, enabling systems, workforce capability, and programme quality in the delivery of ECD services.
- 3.10. The universalisation of Grade R from January 2023 was noted, with 2,424 practitioners formally incorporated under the Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act 76 of 1998) and PAM regulations.
- 3.11. Regarding the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act, 2024 (Act 32 of 2024), the Committee noted the WCED's strategy to increase learner access by requesting registered ECD independent sites to accommodate more learners and adjusting learner-to-teacher ratios in public schools to 1:33 where feasible.
- 3.12. The Committee reviewed the current quintile ranking system and noted the presence of no-fee schools across all quintiles, including 30 in Quintile 4 and 16 in Quintile 5 in the Western Cape. Members expressed concern that over 40 no-fee schools are now located within Quintiles 4 and 5, indicating a potential misalignment in the current classification.
- 3.13. The Committee welcomed the WCED's use of the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) to support both youth employment and education system functionality.
- 3.14. While acknowledging the WCED's achievements, the Committee indicated its intention to pose further questions on budget efficiency, educational outcomes, and comparative benchmarking across provinces.
- 3.15. Concerns were raised regarding learner transport provision, affordability of examination fees, revenue from reprographic services, and infrastructure challenges in rural schools. The department responded with details on transport route criteria, budget allocations, and rollover justifications.
- 3.16. There had been a call for more human-centred data on learner throughput and performance to better understand the impact of departmental interventions.

4. Public comments

The Committee allowed members of the public to give input on the Annual Report of the WCED. Ms Z Jacobs: a member of the Fadak Foundation, Ms L Fondun: a member of the L&C Community Programmes, Mr L Phiko: a member of the public, Mr M Gierdien: a member of the public, Ms M Ziyambi: a member of Equal Education, Ms T Makupula: a member of the public, Ms D Erosi: a member of Equal Education, Ms F Fatyele: a members of the public, Mr S Mtsa: a member of the public, Ms P Mqodeli: a member of the public, Ms A Joya: a member of Equal Education and Mr P Mabotshwa: a member of the public gave their inputs. The Minister and the Head of the Department duly responded to the issues raised by all members of the public.

5. Request for Information

The Committee REQUESTED the WCED to provide:

- 5.1. A report on the Mass Participation; Opportunity and Access; Development and growth (MOD) Programme feeding programme's rollover and budget shifts exceeding R100 million, as well as further explanation on public-private partnerships and asset register entries.
- 5.2. A breakdown of admission appeals received, resolved, and still pending.

6. Conclusion

The Committee expressed its appreciation for the information provided by the Minister, the Head of Department, and the officials of the Western Cape Education Department. The Committee appreciated the oral submission made by members of the public. The Committee thanked everyone who participated in the deliberations.

8. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON ITS OVERSIGHT VISIT TO THE BOLAND LANBOUSKOOL IN PAARL.

The 2024/25 Strategic Objectives of the WCPP, linked to the Speakers' Priorities, which impact committees, are as follows:

- Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and
Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

The Standing Committee on Education (hereafter the Committee), having conducted an oversight visit to the Boland Lanbouskool on 04 September 2025, reports as follows:

The delegation

The delegation of the Standing Committee on Education included the following Members:

P Johnson (DA) (Chairperson of the Committee)
Kaizer-Philander, WF (DA)
Walters, TCR (DA)
Christians, FC (ACDP)

The following parliamentary official accompanied the committee:

Ms. W Hassen-Moosa, Procedural Officer

1. Overview

The Standing Committee on Education conducted an oversight visit to the Boland Landbouskool to assess the institution's infrastructure, curriculum delivery, and alignment with provincial education priorities. The visit provided valuable insights into best practices in agricultural education, rural learner support, and technical skills development. Observations from the visit have informed the Committee's review of strategic plans presented by Landbou High School for 2025. This report summarises the key elements of the Landbou High School presentation, with reference to lessons drawn from Boland Landbouskool's operational model and institutional ethos.

2. Visit to the Boland Landbouskool

Mr JJ Moolman, the Principal, and Mr N Petersen, the Director of the Cape Winelands Education District, were present during the visit.

2.1. Key aspects discussed at the school

- 2.1.1 The school's presentation outlined a phased development plan to position Landbou High School as a leading institution in agricultural and technical education
- 2.1.2 Landbou High School was founded to serve rural communities through specialised agricultural education, guided by values of discipline, self-reliance, and practical learning rooted in the agricultural economy. Early leadership prioritised resilience and responsiveness to the needs of farming families and rural youth.
- 2.1.3. The school's legacy includes strong community ties, notable alumni contributions to the agricultural sector, and a reputation for producing skilled graduates. Its founding ethos continues to shape strategic direction, reflecting a commitment to evolving industry demands and rural youth empowerment.
- 2.1.4 Infrastructure upgrades include:
 - Renovation of academic blocks to support modern pedagogy.
 - Expansion of agricultural facilities such as livestock pens, irrigation systems, and mechanisation workshops.
 - Hostel improvements to enhance learner safety, dignity, and capacity.
- 2.1.5. Curriculum enhancements would introduce modules in agribusiness, sustainable farming, and technical agriculture aligned with industry standards.
- 2.1.6 A digital learning strategy is proposed, integrating smart classrooms and blended learning platforms.
- 2.1.7 Strategic partnerships are being pursued with Agritech firms, tertiary institutions, and local farms to enrich learner exposure and career readiness.
- 2.1.8 Safety and compliance upgrades are prioritised, including fencing, sanitation, and fire safety systems.
- 2.1.9. The school's leadership reaffirmed its commitment to inclusive education and academic excellence.
- 2.1.10 Boland Landbouskool is referenced as a benchmark institution, with further details available at <https://bolandlandbou.co.za/>.
- 2.1.11 Funding requirements are outlined, with proposed contributions from provincial budgets, private sector sponsorships, and donor support.
- 2.1.12 Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms include quarterly progress reviews and learner performance indicators.

2.1.13 The school requested the Committee to:

2.1.13.1 Continue with its parliamentary oversight of rural education infrastructure.

2.1.13.2 Support the interdepartmental collaboration between Education, Agriculture, and Public Works.

2.1.13.3 Consider Landbou High School as a pilot site for rural technical education reform.

3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the Standing Committee acknowledged the strategic intent and forward motion by Landbou High School in its 2025 presentation. It was clear from the observation made during the oversight visit at Boland Landbouskool, it was also evident that targeted investment in agricultural education could yield substantial benefits for rural youth, community development, and sectoral growth. The suggested improvements, curriculum additions, and institutional collaborations demonstrate a praiseworthy dedication to quality, diversity, and provincial priorities. To guarantee successful implementation and long-lasting effects, interdepartmental cooperation and ongoing parliamentary oversight would be crucial.

4 Acknowledgments

The Committee thanked the WCED, the Principal, and the teachers who were present during the visit to the Boland Landbouskool.

9. Report of the Standing Committee on Health and Wellness on the Annual Report of the Department of Health and Wellness for the 2024/25 financial year.

The 2024/25 strategic objectives of the WCPP, linked to the Speaker's priorities, which have an impact on committees, are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and

Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

The Standing Committee on Health and Wellness, having deliberated on the Annual Report of the Department of Health and Wellness for the year ended 31 March 2025, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament's (WCPP) Annual Report programme for the 2024/25 financial year was advertised in newspapers, as well as the WCPP's social media platforms, inviting stakeholders and members of the public to attend and participate in the discussions.

The Standing Committee on Health and Wellness (the Committee) deliberated on the Annual Report of the Department of Health and Wellness on 23 October 2025, as part of its oversight function. The Minister and the Head of Department were allowed to make opening remarks.

The Department was examined on:

Part A: General Information,

Part B: Departmental Performance Information; and

Part D: Human Resources Management of the Department's Annual Report.

Members of the public were also allowed to pose questions and give input during the discussions.

2. Overview

The Minister of Health and Wellness, Minister M.W. Wenger, provided a brief introduction to the Annual Report of the Department of Health and Wellness for the 2024/25 financial year, outlining the Department's performance and financial information.

The Minister reported that the Department had achieved its seventh consecutive clean audit and congratulated departmental officials on this outstanding accomplishment. She described the achievement as particularly commendable given the size and complexity of the Department, noting that it reflected rigorous effort, accountability, and sound governance. The Minister also commended officials for their dedication, commitment, and hard work under challenging circumstances.

Dr K. Cloete, the Head of Department (HOD), was also afforded an opportunity to make a brief introduction to the 2024/25 Annual Report of the Department of Health and Wellness. He described the 2024/25 Annual Report as a watershed reflection, marking the conclusion of a five-year strategic cycle that began in 2020. The HOD highlighted two major disruptions during this period: the COVID-19 pandemic and the global financial austerity, which significantly affected healthcare systems worldwide, including in the Western Cape. Despite heightened demand and constrained resources, the Department maintained its record of clean audits and continued to deliver essential services to communities.

He reaffirmed the Department's commitment to transparency, stakeholder collaboration, and continuous improvement in pursuit of its mandate to promote health and wellness across the province.

The Chairperson then tabled the Annual Report of the Department of Health and Wellness for the 2024/25 financial year, paving the way for a comprehensive public hearing, which included detailed deliberations and interrogation by Committee Members.

3. Key points from the discussion on the Annual Report of the Department

- 3.1. During the 2024/25 financial year, the Department received its seventh consecutive clean audit from the Auditor-General, indicating robust internal controls, credible performance reporting, and adherence to regulatory standards.
- 3.2. The Auditor-General commended the Department for its proactive responsiveness to audit recommendations and its commitment to transparency in addressing identified risks.
- 3.3. The consistent attainment of clean audits over multiple years underscores the Department's reputation as a leader in public sector governance within the Western Cape and nationally.
- 3.4. The Department reported a significant increase in service demand, particularly in primary healthcare, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and Forensic Pathology Services.
- 3.5. The EMS responded to over 596,000 incidents during the reporting year, with notable surges during festive seasons and public holidays. However, service delays persisted, especially in rural and high-density urban areas, due to resource and staffing constraints.

- 3.6. The Forensic Pathology Service managed over 11,000 cases, reflecting broader social determinants of health, including high rates of violence, injury-related deaths, and substance abuse.
- 3.7. While the Department continued to prioritise operational efficiency, the growing service demand highlighted the need for expanded capacity and improved intersectoral coordination.
- 3.8. Staffing shortages remained a critical challenge, particularly in the recruitment and retention of medical officers, nurses, and specialists in rural and underserved areas.
- 3.9. Progress was noted in filling key leadership positions, including the appointment of the Director for the West Coast District and the Chief Director for Metro Health Services.
- 3.10. The People Management Strategy emphasised employee wellness, leadership development, and employment equity, with ongoing initiatives to enhance African representation in senior management.
- 3.11. Despite these advances, concerns persist regarding burnout, morale, and succession planning across clinical and administrative cadres.
- 3.12. Several strategic infrastructure projects were completed, including the new Emergency Centre at Robertson Hospital, which has improved emergency response capacity in the region.
- 3.13. The Department reported over-expenditure in capital assets, attributed to the accelerated completion of high-priority projects and the need to address urgent facility upgrades.
- 3.14. While the Department's infrastructure delivery model remains largely effective, it requires continued oversight to ensure sustainability, value for money, and alignment with long-term service delivery plans.
- 3.15. The withdrawal of USAID and PEPFAR funding had a significant impact, resulting in the loss of approximately 698 posts, predominantly within the NGO sector supporting HIV and TB programmes.
- 3.16. To mitigate service disruption, the Department implemented several innovative strategies, including multi-month dispensing for chronic medication, E-scripting systems to streamline prescriptions, and the deployment of digital health technologies such as e-lockers for medicine collection.
- 3.17. While these measures cushioned the immediate impact, the long-term sustainability of donor-dependent programmes remains a concern.
- 3.18. Maternal and under-five mortality rates continued to pose challenges, particularly in high-burden districts where social and economic vulnerabilities intersect with health inequities.
- 3.19. The Department launched the first Paediatric Palliative Care Framework in South Africa; a landmark initiative aimed at improving the quality of life for children with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions.
- 3.20. Immunisation coverage showed a decline, prompting the Department to intensify efforts to rebuild public confidence and enhance outreach through community-based programmes.
- 3.21. Continued focus on health promotion, disease prevention, and data-driven interventions would be essential for improving population health outcomes in the next strategic cycle.

4. Public input

The Committee provided an opportunity for members of the public to give input during the meeting. The participants included members of the Community Health Forum: Ms D. Kiewiets, Ms N. Xuzo, Mr C. Swarbreck, Ms L. Peter, Mr N. Sifumba, Ms N. Ndayi, and Ms N. Betana.

During the engagement, members of the public raised several concerns regarding the functionality and visibility of clinic committees and hospital boards, which serve as key mechanisms for community participation and accountability. Additional issues highlighted included challenges within the Emergency Medical Services (EMS), particularly the inadequate response time, inadequate communication between the Department and the health stakeholders, and limited interaction between the Minister and Community Health Forum members.

The Department responded to all questions and provided clarity where required. The Department confirmed that measures are currently underway to stabilise and reconstitute governance structures, and to strengthen stakeholder engagement frameworks. The Department also acknowledged that improving communication between health facilities and local communities is essential to fostering trust, enhancing accountability, and ensuring more responsive health services.

5. Resolution

The Committee resolved to;

- 5.1. Conduct an oversight visit to the Robertson Hospital to assess the hospital's infrastructure, including the newly established Robertson Emergency Centre.
- 5.2. Conduct an oversight visit to the Kraaifontein Day Hospital.
- 5.3. Conduct an oversight visit to the Gugulethu Health Community Clinic.
- 5.4. Schedule a briefing by the Department on its Strategic Plan for the next five years and the budget projections for the upcoming financial year.
- 5.5. Schedule a stakeholder engagement on providing health services in the Western Cape Province, to strengthen health service delivery and identify potential legislative gaps.
- 5.6. Implore the WCPP Committees to rethink the public participation process, to find ways to allow members of the public to have a voice and to be partners with parliament in improving service delivery.

6. Recommendations

The Committee recommended that:

- 6.1. The Department of Health and Wellness should consider formalising and regulating the process of lending medical equipment from the Red Cross to other healthcare facilities, to ensure effective management, accountability, and traceability of such equipment.
- 6.2. The Department should explore ways to communicate the Annual Report to the public in an accessible manner. One option is to publish the executive summary along with a suitable infographic to help the public to better understand the Annual Report of the Department of Health and Wellness.

7. Requests for Information

The Committee requested the Department to submit the following information by Friday, 21 November 2025:

- 7.1. A detailed report on all child death cases reviewed by the Child Deaths Review Board during the current financial year.

- 7.2. Comprehensive report on the number and nature of employee labour-related cases currently before the Bargaining Council and the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). And how many cases the Department lost.
- 7.3. Report on the employment equity of the Department of Health and Wellness and whether the department's equity has increased or decreased from 2020 to 2025.

8. Conclusion

The Department of Health and Wellness has demonstrated resilience, innovation, and integrity in navigating an exceptionally challenging five-year period. Its consistent record of clean audits, commitment to evidence-based decision-making, and proactive engagement with stakeholders reflect a solid foundation for continued excellence.

However, the Standing Committee noted that significant challenges remain, particularly in closing the gap between strong audit performance and the lived service experiences at the community level. Critical priorities include addressing persistent staffing shortages in rural and high-demand areas and ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare services across the province.

The Committee commended the Department for its transparency, fiscal discipline, and dedication to public service. It also expressed its intention to maintain close oversight and collaboration in the forthcoming strategic cycle to strengthen governance, enhance community participation, and improve health outcomes for all residents of the Western Cape.

The Chairperson thanked Members of the Committee, the Minister, the Head of the Department, the departmental officials, and health stakeholders for their attendance, preparation, and responses to the questions posed by the Committee.

10 Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development on the Annual Report of the Department of Social Development for the 2024/25 financial year.

The 2024/25 strategic objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speaker's priorities, which have an impact on committees, are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and
Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

The Standing Committee on Social Development, having deliberate on the Annual Report of the Department of Social Development for the year ended 31 March 2025, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament's (WCPP) Annual Report programme for the 2024/25 financial year was advertised in newspapers, as well as the WCPP's social media platforms, inviting stakeholders and members of the public to attend and participate in the discussions.

The Standing Committee on Social Development (the Committee) deliberated on the Annual Report of the Department of Social Development (the Department) on 20 October 2025, as part of its oversight function. The Minister and the Head of Department were allowed to make opening remarks.

The Department was examined on:

Part A: General Information,

Part B: Departmental Performance Information; and

Part D: Human Resources Management of the Department's Annual Report.

Members of the public were also allowed to pose questions and provide input during the discussions.

2. Overview

The Department of Social Development's Annual Report for the 2024/25 financial year reflects the Department of Social Development's performance across various programmes and service areas. The report outlines the Department's strategic objectives, budget utilization, service delivery achievements, and challenges encountered. It also provides insights into the department's governance, human resource management, and financial performance. The Committee interrogated the report section by section, focusing on general information, performance data, governance, human resources, and financials.

The Minister of Social Development, Mr. J Londt, provided an overview of the performance of the Department during the 2024/25 financial year. The Minister reported that the Department of Social Development's 2024/25 Annual Report not only reflects the work of the Department, but also the unwavering dedication and resilience of the department's staff to creating a more inclusive, resilient and caring Western Cape.

The Minister emphasized the Department's commitment to serving the most vulnerable communities in the province. He noted the steep learning curve in his role but praised the department's culture of innovation and collaboration as the Department continued to navigate complex socio-economic challenges such as poverty, high unemployment levels, the prevalence of child abuse, and Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

The HOD echoed the Minister's sentiments, highlighting the Department's achievements despite significant challenges, including staff safety concerns, hijackings, and health-related strains. Despite these challenges, the Department has remained steadfast in its commitment to serving the most vulnerable group of people in the Western Cape by prioritizing resources toward statutory obligations, addressing GBV, providing nutritional support to food-insecure households, and supporting victims of crime and violence. Both the Minister and the HOD affirmed that the Department had met most of its targets and effectively utilized its budget, while remaining open to feedback and continuous improvement.

3. Key points from the discussion on the Annual Report of the Department

- 3.1. During the financial year under review, the Department successfully implemented the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Ambassador Programme across all 46 service delivery areas. Noteworthy progress has been observed in areas such as Delft and Hanover Park, where victims have been effectively supported in securing protection orders.
- 3.2. The GBV Ambassador Programme operates at a minimal cost and has been integrated into the Social Work Integrated Management System (SWIMS) app, enhancing its visibility and trackability.

- 3.3. The Department reported strides made during the 2024/25 financial year in improving the quality and reach of its social welfare services through the adoption of data-driven planning and improved accountability mechanisms.
- 3.4. The introduction of the Social Work Integrated Management System Application (SWIMMS App) has been a game-changer for over 1000 social worker professionals as they have been able to digitise their casework.
- 3.5. The Committee was informed that the SWIMS App has been developed to function offline, particularly benefiting rural areas with limited connectivity.
- 3.6. To further support the SWIMS App initiative, public Wi-Fi access has been expanded, facilitating improved connectivity for both non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and departmental staff. The system is designed to enhance data accuracy and improve the overall efficiency of service delivery.
- 3.7. A significant challenge remains in the shortage of social workers, primarily due to the National Treasury's stance that does not classify social workers as frontline personnel. This has resulted in budgetary constraints that hinder the Department's capacity to expand its workforce. Advocacy efforts are ongoing to address this critical gap in service provision.
- 3.8. The Committee raised concerns regarding issues surrounding teenage pregnancy, statutory rape, underreporting and the lack of legal prosecution. In response, the Department mentioned that a dedicated task team comprising representatives from the South African Police Service (SAPS), the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), the Department of Health, and the Department of Social Development has been established to improve enforcement and interdepartmental coordination.
- 3.9. In terms of disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, NGOs have been funded to deliver support across all districts, ensuring coverage in both metropolitan and rural areas.
- 3.10. The Department reported that assisted living and elder care services face limitations during the financial year under review, due to budget constraints, prompting a strategic shift towards home-based care as a more cost-effective alternative.
- 3.11. Regarding performance targets and achievements, the Department has adopted a conservative approach to target setting, influenced by unpredictable service demand and financial limitations. Despite this, notable overachievement has been recorded in areas such as diversion programmes and GBV-related services.
- 3.12. The Committee was informed that the Sanitary Dignity Programme, initially delayed in the financial year under review, due to procurement issues, however, the challenge has been resolved and has now been successfully expanded from 400 to a total of 700 schools.
- 3.13. The Department reported that the tender for sanitary towel distribution was valued at R11 million, and legal requirements necessitate adherence to formal procurement processes. Despite these challenges, the Department has demonstrated efficient budget utilisation.
- 3.14. In the domain of governance and risk management, the department achieved a commendable 99.8% budget expenditure. Key risks identified include staff safety, statutory compliance, and data management. The SWIMS system is being utilised to mitigate these risks effectively.
- 3.15. The Department reported that Human Resource Management challenges persist, with a high resignation rate among younger staff members, often attributed to career advancements or permanent appointments elsewhere.
- 3.16. The vacancy rate is further impacted by unfunded posts and restrictions imposed by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). To address these issues, retention strategies such as career pathing and targeted support initiatives are being implemented.

4. Public input

The Committee opened the meeting for the members of the public to submit their input on the Annual Report of the Department of Social Development. However, no members of the public were present.

5 Conclusion

The Chairperson thanked Members of the Committee, the Minister, the Head of the Department, and the departmental officials for their preparation and responses to the questions posed by the Committee.

11 Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development on its oversight visit to the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home in Kraaifontein on Tuesday, 04 November 2025.

The Standing Committee on Social Development, having conducted an oversight visit to the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home in Kraaifontein on Tuesday, 04 November 2025, reports as follows:

Delegation

The delegation consisted of the following Members:

Democratic Alliance

Kaizer-Philander, WF (Chairperson)
Booyesen, M
Johnson, P
Walters, TCR

African National Congress

Kamfer, F

Patriotic Alliance

Stephens, D R

Additional Member

Windvogel, R

Apologies

Cassiem, A (EFF)

1. Introduction

The 2024/25 Strategic Objectives of the WCPP, linked to the Speakers' Priorities, which impact Committees, are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and
Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

In line with its oversight mandate, the Standing Committee on Social Development conducted an oversight visit to the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home in Kraaifontein on 4 November 2025. The purpose of the visit was to assess the quality of care provided to

residents, evaluate governance and operational challenges, and engage with management regarding progress made and support required.

Committee oversight visits are a crucial mechanism for accountability, providing members with firsthand insight into the conditions within the Department of Social Development (DSD) facilities and funded NGOs. These visits enable the Committee to interact directly with staff, observe the quality of care and services rendered, inspect infrastructure, and verify that service standards align with the expectations of both the community and government.

2. Overview and background

On Tuesday, 4 November 2025, the Standing Committee on Social Development conducted an oversight visit to the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home located in Kraaifontein, Cape Town. The visit formed part of the Committee's ongoing oversight programme over the Department of Social Development (DSD) and its funded non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The Committee's constitutional and parliamentary mandate requires it to monitor and oversee the implementation of policies, programmes, and expenditure of the DSD to ensure accountability, efficiency, and the delivery of quality social welfare services to vulnerable groups. As part of this mandate, the Committee routinely visits service delivery sites to assess the standard of care provided, the utilisation of departmental funding, and the overall impact of DSD-supported programmes on communities.

KSE Tehuis Old Age Home is one of the NGOs funded by the Department of Social Development to provide residential care and support services to older persons in accordance with the Older Persons Act, 2006 (Act 13 of 2006). The facility offers accommodation, meals, healthcare support, and social and recreational services to elderly residents, many of whom are frail or have no family support.

The purpose of the oversight visit was to assess the quality of care and living conditions of residents at the facility; evaluate the effectiveness and adequacy of departmental funding and support; engage with management, staff, and residents to gain insight into operational challenges and successes; ensure compliance with relevant legislation, norms, and standards governing residential facilities for older persons; and identify areas requiring intervention or policy review to enhance the sustainability and quality of services provided to the elderly.

The visit provided the Committee with first-hand information on the realities facing residential care facilities for older persons, including financial constraints, staffing levels, maintenance needs, and the well-being of residents.

Upon arrival at KSE Tehuis Old Age Home, the Committee was welcomed by Dr P. Louw, the Director of the Institute for Contemporary Research Africa (ICRA). ICRA is a Non-Profit Company (NPC) that has partnered with the Department of Social Development (DSD) since 2015 in response to the need to build capacity within DSD-funded care facilities.

Dr Louw was accompanied by officials from the Department of Social Development and members of the Home's management team. As a consultant appointed by the Department to assist the Home with its turnaround strategy, focused on improving care quality, strengthening governance, and addressing operational challenges, Dr Louw briefed the

Committee on the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home's core services and current challenges. He also accompanied the Committee on a guided walkabout of the facility. Additionally, Ms P. Momoza, the Director for Vulnerable Groups from the Department of Social Development, provided an overview of the Department's funding allocations and the ongoing support provided to the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home.

This report presents an overview of the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home in Kraaifontein, outlining the key findings, challenges observed, and recommendations arising from the Committee's oversight visit.

3. Key observations and challenges

- 3.1. KSE Tehuis Old Age Home, situated in Kraaifontein, is a registered residential care facility under the Older Persons Act 13 of 2006.
- 3.2. The facility is licensed to accommodate 156 residents and currently houses 122 older persons, most of whom are beneficiaries of SASSA grants.
- 3.3. The Committee was informed that the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home received an annual funding allocation of R6.29 million for the 2025/26 financial year from the Western Cape Department of Social Development (DSD).
- 3.4. The Old Age Home plays a critical role in providing care and support to vulnerable elderly individuals in the region.
- 3.5. During the facility walkabout, the Committee observed that the building is a double-storey structure. Residents who are wheelchair-bound are accommodated on the ground floor, while mobile residents, most of whom are living with Alzheimer's disease, are accommodated on the upper floor.
- 3.6. The Committee noted that each standard room accommodates six residents. However, there are also couples' rooms furnished with two beds to cater for married residents.
- 3.7. The facility is experiencing a progressive increase in maintenance requirements, with escalating costs and limited financial resources to address them adequately.
- 3.8. Rising incidents of violence in the surrounding community have begun to impact the safety and well-being of both residents and staff, highlighting the need for enhanced security measures.
- 3.9. While expressing appreciation for the support received from the Department of Social Development (DSD), Dr Louw and the management of the Old Age Home reported that funding remains inadequate. They noted that corporate social investment initiatives tend to prioritise children's services over elderly care.
- 3.10. Funding constraints were reported as the major ongoing challenge. The Committee was informed that the Old Age Home provides care for older persons from previously disadvantaged communities, with approximately 95% of residents relying solely on the SASSA grant and receiving no financial support from relatives or loved ones.
- 3.11. It was reported that the total cost to care for one resident in the facility is approximately R10,500 per month. However, DSD provides funding of only R4,000 per resident, while each resident contributes R1,795 from their SASSA grant. This leaves the Old Age Home facing a significant funding shortfall, as most residents have no family support to help cover the remaining costs.
- 3.12. The resident population is ageing and presenting increasingly complex care needs. Challenges such as aggression, inappropriate behaviour, and unrealistic expectations regarding permanent residency were noted. Some residents were described as having been "abandoned" by their families, leading to emotional distress and behavioural difficulties.

- 3.13. Staff morale has been negatively affected by instances of verbal abuse from residents, families, and activists. In addition, false accusations and negative media portrayals have further strained the working environment.
- 3.14. The persistent shortage of adult nappies for residents remains a major concern across Old Age Homes in the province. The issue has been raised by the Older Persons Forum, which was ultimately discussed in a multi-stakeholder platform that includes the Department of Health and Wellness, the Department of Social Development, the City of Cape Town, and other government entities; however, the challenge remains unresolved.
- 3.15. It was reported that there was a Circular in 2013, where it was stated that the Department of Health and Wellness would provide residents in Old Age Homes with three (3) adult nappies per day in the province. However, other regions have been complaining about not getting the nappies from the Department of Health and Wellness, and at some point, only the Cape Winelands region was reported to be receiving only two (2) nappies per resident instead of the three (3) nappies per day.
- 3.16. Some of the challenges surrounding the distribution of adult nappies in Old Age Homes included challenges around the quality of the nappies and the size of the nappies, with some nappies distributed to the elderly person being the nappies of the children.
- 3.17. The food menu for the residents at KSE Tehuis Old Age Home was reported to be inadequate for residents, and a new menu that will cater for the needs of the residents is urgently needed.
- 3.18. The Committee was informed that the Old Age Home requested the assistance of a dietician from Kraaifontein Day Hospital; unfortunately, the Old Age Home has not received the requested assistance.
- 3.19. Hospital visits have been identified as a significant challenge for residents. The Committee noted that older individuals often spend the entire day at health facilities. This situation becomes difficult because elderly patients are left waiting in long queues without food, and staff members at the Old Age Home must also spend the whole day away from their work responsibilities.
- 3.20. Shortage of medical staff and carers was reported as a challenge, and there is no medical doctor who visits the Old Age Home.
- 3.21. The Old Age Home has two security guards at the gate, one security guard during the day shift and one security guard during the night shift. In addition, the facility has cameras. However, it was reported that the monitor was not working due to its remote control not having batteries.
- 3.22. Regarding the public complaint at KSE Tehuis Old Age Home, the facility advised that individuals seeking clarification about its operations or any related matters should contact the Old Age Home directly if they have complaints or require information involving the Old Age Home.
- 3.23. The current board of the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home has been in existence since 2017. In 2019, the Old Age Home was supposed to elect a new board, but due to COVID-19, that was postponed and in 2020, there was a lot of struggles to schedule an AGM due to conflicting views from external stakeholders.
- 3.24. The facility's board struggles with capacity and availability, impacting effective oversight. However, a governance assessment has been initiated by Dr Louw to address systemic issues through an integrated approach.

4. Progress and Interventions by Dr Louw at KSE Tehuis Old Age Home

Dr Louw reported that, despite persistent challenges, the Old Age Home has made notable progress since the intervention of the Institute for Contemporary Research Africa (ICRA). The following key developments were highlighted:

- 4.1. A comprehensive governance assessment covering 496 items was conducted. Of these, 68% were assessed, resulting in a 33% score, indicating clear areas requiring improvement.
- 4.2. An implementation plan is being developed in collaboration with staff, focusing on strengthening financial management, updating policies, and improving reporting systems.
- 4.3. An extraordinary board meeting was scheduled for 8 November 2025 to address governance and constitutional matters.
- 4.4. The Constitution of the KSE Tehuis Old Age Home is being reviewed to ensure that it is clear, practical, and aligned with governance prescripts to promote accountability.
- 4.5. Measures have been introduced to enhance security by restricting unauthorised access to the facility and protecting staff from abuse.
- 4.6. Accountability processes are being expanded to include all stakeholders, activists, the media, families, residents, visitors, and law enforcement agencies.

5. Input by the Department of Social Development

Ms P. Momoza, Director for Vulnerable Groups at the Department of Social Development (DSD), delivered a presentation outlining the Department's support to KSE Tehuis and its broader role in promoting compliance and service quality across residential facilities for older persons.

She emphasised that the facility is regularly monitored through both announced and unannounced visits, with a focus on governance, financial management, service delivery, and compliance with national norms and standards.

The Department has conducted health audits in collaboration with Rendaq Healthcare, in alignment with the National Health Act, 2003 (Act 61 of 2003). These audits assess the quality of care provided and identify areas for improvement. Ms Momoza also highlighted the Department's rapid response mechanisms for investigating complaints and conducting follow-up visits to ensure continuous service improvements.

To strengthen institutional capacity, the facility has been linked to the Institutional Capacity Building (ICB) Programme, which provides guidance and intervention support. The Department has also facilitated capacity-building workshops on norms and standards and has donated adult nappies to assist with resident care. A mentorship programme has been recommended to further support staff development.

KSE Tehuis is also participating in a pilot caregiver training programme, with two training sessions conducted in September and October 2025. The training aims to equip caregivers with the skills to manage complex care needs, improve care quality, reduce neglect, and promote career development. The programme further encourages peer accountability and knowledge sharing among staff members.

The Department's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team is planning additional performance monitoring activities to ensure sustained improvements and accountability. Ms Momoza reaffirmed the Department's commitment to supporting KSE Tehuis and collaborating with all stakeholders to enhance the well-being and dignity of older persons.

6. Resolutions

During the visit, several Members of the Committee made the following undertakings:

- 6.1. Member Booysen, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Health and Wellness, undertook to discuss the health-related challenges experienced in old age homes with the Minister of Health, including:
 - 6.1.1. Arrangements to assist residents when accessing health facilities;
 - 6.1.2. The distribution of adult nappies in old age homes; and
 - 6.1.3. The frequency of doctor visits to residential care facilities.
- 6.2. Member Windvogel undertook to assist KSE Tehuis Old Age Home financially by contributing funds for the purchase of batteries required for the facility's camera monitoring system.

7. Recommendations

The Committee recommended that:

- 7.1. The Department should encourage and assist KSE Tehuis Old Age Home to establish a public relations and complaints management platform to improve communication with the public and stakeholders.
- 7.2. The Department should support the Old Age Home by referring it to private donors and partners, such as the Cape Care Fund and other potential sponsors, to secure additional funding.
- 7.3. The Department of Social Development should set a firm timeframe for the hosting of the facility's Annual General Meeting (AGM). No further extensions should be permitted to ensure the appointment of a new Board and the restoration of institutional stability.
- 7.4. The Old Age Home must ensure that all security cameras and monitoring systems are always functional.

8. Request for Information

The Committee requested the Department of Social Development to submit the following information by Friday, 16 January 2026:

- 8.1. A detailed report outlining the Department's authority and mechanisms to monitor and ensure that AGMs in old age homes across the province are convened and that Board members are duly appointed.
- 8.2. Documentation confirming the ownership of KSE Tehuis Old Age Home.
- 8.3. A copy of the Constitution and founding documents of KSE Tehuis Old Age Home.
- 8.4. The mandate and Terms of Reference authorising Dr Louw's intervention at KSE Tehuis Old Age Home.
- 8.5. A progress report detailing the interventions and outcomes achieved by Dr Louw since the commencement of his work with the facility.
- 8.6. A report from the Department of Health and Wellness providing details on:
 - a) The assistance provided to old age homes across the province; and
 - b) A regional breakdown of adult nappy distribution to these facilities.

9. Conclusion

The Committee's visit to KSE Tehuis Old Age Home provided valuable insights into the facility's operational realities. The Standing Committee acknowledged the commitment and resilience of the management and staff, who continue to provide care under

challenging circumstances, and expressed appreciation for the ongoing support from the Department of Social Development.

The challenges faced by the facility underscore the need for sustained investment, stronger governance, and a holistic approach to elderly care in the province. The Committee remains committed to continued engagement with stakeholders to strengthen oversight, improve funding mechanisms, and enhance support for residential care facilities across the Western Cape.

10. Acknowledgements

The Committee concluded its visit by expressing sincere appreciation to Dr Louw, the management team of KSE Tehuis Old Age Home, and the staff for their leadership, cooperation, and continued dedication to the care of residents. Gratitude was also extended to the officials of the Department of Social Development for their comprehensive briefings and responsiveness to Members' questions during the oversight visit.

12 Report of the Standing Committee on Social Development on its follow-up oversight visit to the Vermont Old Age Home in Knysna on Tuesday, 25 November 2025.

The Standing Committee on Social Development, having conducted a follow-up oversight visit to the Vermont Old Age Home in Knysna on Tuesday, 25 November 2025, reports as follows:

Delegation

The delegation consisted of the following Members:

Democratic Alliance

Booyesen, M
Johnson, P (Acting Chairperson)
Walters,

African National Congress

Kamfer, F

Patriotic Alliance

Stephens, D R

Apologies

Cassiem, A (EFF)
Kaizer-Philander, WF (DA)

1. Introduction

The 2024/25 Strategic Objectives of the WCPP, linked to the Speakers' Priorities, which impact committees, are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and
Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

Pursuant to the joint visit of the Standing Committee on Social Development and the Standing Committee on Health and Wellness to the Vermont Old Age Home in Knysna

on Monday, 30 September 2024, Members observed a range of serious challenges. These included significant governance and leadership crises; the presence of two competing Boards resulting in the operation of two separate bank accounts; chronic delays in staff salary payments, with some staff not receiving salaries at all; issues relating to payslips and unexplained deductions, including uncertainty regarding UIF contributions; the absence of hot water for residents; severe budgetary constraints; an insufficient supply of adult nappies; maintenance challenges compromising the safety and functionality of the building; and the accumulation of medical waste due to non-payment of service providers. These issues were among the many concerns noted and reported during the visit.

Considering these challenges, the Standing Committee on Social Development resolved to conduct a follow-up visit to the Vermont Old Age Home on Tuesday, 25 November 2025. The purpose of this visit was to assess the implementation of the turnaround strategy, including the appointment of a new Board since the Committee's 2024 visit, to engage with the new Board members, and to receive a briefing from the Department of Social Development on the progress made in restoring stability and ensuring compliance at the Vermont Old Age Home in Knysna.

2. Overview of the follow-up visit to the Vermont Old Age Home

The Standing Committee on Social Development undertook an oversight visit to the Vermont Old Age Home, a residential care facility funded by the Department of Social Development (DSD). As a registered old age home providing care to frail and vulnerable older people, Vermont relies on departmental subsidies to deliver essential services. In line with its oversight mandate, the Standing Committee monitors the Department's performance, ensures accountability, and assesses whether funded facilities such as Vermont comply with legislative requirements, uphold prescribed norms and standards, and provide safe, dignified care to their residents. This visit formed part of the Committee's ongoing responsibility to safeguard the well-being of older people and evaluate the effectiveness of departmental interventions.

The follow-up visit to the Vermont Old Age Home in Knysna was undertaken as a continuation of the Committee's earlier oversight engagement conducted on 30 September 2024, during which Members identified severe operational, governance, and compliance challenges that had compromised both resident well-being and the overall functioning of the facility. The purpose of the follow-up visit was to determine the extent to which Vermont had addressed the concerns previously raised and to assess progress toward restoring stability, strengthening governance, and ensuring compliance. Central to this assessment was the review of the newly appointed Board, its legitimacy, effectiveness, and its role in resolving leadership conflicts that had included competing Boards and the misuse of administrative and financial systems, such as the operation of multiple bank accounts.

During the visit, the Committee engaged extensively with the members of the new Board to understand the corrective actions taken to stabilize governance, improve financial management, and strengthen operational systems. The Committee also received a comprehensive progress briefing from DSD officials on the interventions implemented to support the facility, improve compliance with regulatory standards, and address urgent service delivery failures.

The oversight visits further provided an opportunity to assess the current conditions at the Vermont Old Age Home, including progress with infrastructure repairs, the

continuity of essential services such as hot water, the availability of medical supplies and adult nappies, the payment of staff salaries, and the management of medical waste. The Committee also reviewed the facility's financial recovery plan, its long-term budgetary sustainability, and the measures in place to protect the rights, dignity, and well-being of residents.

Overall, the follow-up visit to the Vermont Old Age Home was an important step in determining whether sufficient progress had been made and in identifying any remaining gaps requiring further intervention. The Committee affirmed its commitment to continued monitoring to ensure that Vermont Old Age Home meets its obligations to provide safe, dignified, and high-quality care to its residents.

Upon arrival, the Committee was welcomed by the management and Board Members of the Vermont Old Age Home, together with officials from the Department of Social Development. This report provides an introduction and overview of the Vermont Old Age Home, presentations by the Vermont management and DSD officials, followed by the Committee's recommendations and conclusion.

3. Presentation by Vermont Old Age Home Management

Mr M.W. Spies and Mr M. Laminie, both board members, together with Ms E.L. Bosman, the Facility Manager of the Vermont Old Age Home, accompanied the Members on a walkabout of the facility. The Members visited the laundry room, waste-management area, kitchen, resident rooms, and dining room. The Members noted and commended the significant improvements in the overall upkeep of the facility.

Following the walkabout, Mr Spies provided a detailed briefing on the Vermont Old Age Home's turnaround strategy, including the appointment of a new board since the Committee's 2024 visit.

Mr Spies reported that the Vermont Old Age Home is a registered residential care facility in terms of Section 18(3) of the Older Persons Act 13 of 2006. The Old Age Home provides comprehensive residential care services to frail older persons as well as assisted living support to semi-independent residents. The facility currently operates at full capacity, accommodating 50 frail older persons and six assisted living residents. The majority of residents rely solely on SASSA grants for income, and most families are unable to make financial contributions, placing increased pressure on the facility's limited resources. The Department of Social Development (DSD) remains the primary funder of the home, supplemented by residents' grants. The Committee was informed that Vermont received R2,493,228 for the 2024/25 financial year, including additional allocations for operational improvements, while the allocation for 2025/26 is R2,371,844. The facility's previous challenges, as noted during the last oversight visit, included severe governance instability, financial mismanagement, and administrative shortcomings. Key resolutions adopted at that time called for strengthened monitoring and evaluation, improved labour practices, and adherence to norms and standards.

The Vermont board members and management outlined the facility's vision, which is caring for those who cannot care for themselves, and its mission is to provide holistic care within a supportive and sustainable environment through partnerships. It was reported that the frail care unit continues to operate at full capacity, supported by dedicated nursing staff and volunteers. The assisted living flats currently house five residents, and a waiting list signifies continued demand for these services. The service centre, although designed to accommodate 50 members, has struggled to reach its target

due to limited external funding. As a result, Vermont has had to subsidise aspects of the programme from its general operational budget.

The Committee was informed that governance at the Vermont Old Age Home has improved significantly following the election of a new Board in November 2024. The newly appointed board has brought greater stability and oversight to the management of the home. The Committee was informed that twelve (12) members of the previous board have been co-opted as members of the board to enhance sustainability and utilise their experience. Furthermore, a Facility Manager was formally appointed on 1 November 2025 after an extended period during which interim arrangements were in place. In addition, Vermont continues to roll out staff development and capacity-building initiatives, including the introduction of a biometric system aimed at reducing absenteeism and improving accountability. Financially, the home relies primarily on DSD funding and SASSA grant contributions, and management reported notable improvement in the settlement of inherited debts and in paying suppliers timeously. The management of the Vermont Old Age Home reported that Dr Brink from Knysna Hospital has been assisting the facility with nappies and cleaning materials, which has provided significant relief. However, challenges remain, particularly in relation to outstanding municipal accounts, compliance with COIDA and UIF, and the need for additional funding to fill critical staff vacancies. The Committee was also informed of conflicting guidance from nurses at Knysna Hospital on how medication should be prepared for elderly residents.

Management highlighted several positive developments since the last oversight engagement. These include successful fundraising events, improved staff morale, strengthened compliance with norms and standards, and enhanced service delivery. Despite these improvements, Vermont continues to face several persistent challenges. These include recurring staff absenteeism, administrative backlogs, and ongoing infrastructure concerns such as broken geysers, malfunctioning kitchen equipment, and general maintenance needs. Security concerns were also raised as an area requiring urgent attention. To address these ongoing challenges, Vermont board members and management identified several critical needs, including additional staff, particularly Enrolled Nursing Assistants (ENAs), relief nurses, and administrative personnel, as well as upgrades to the frail care wing, laundry and kitchen facilities, and security systems. The facility also identified the need for additional staff training and improved access control systems to enhance safety.

4. Presentation by the Department of Social Development

Ms V Damon, Social Work Policy Developer from the Directorate, Vulnerable Groups within the Department of Social Development, proceeded to brief the Committee on the interventions implemented by the Department since the previous oversight visit and the progress achieved to date. The Department confirmed that governance stability had been restored, noting that a functional and legitimate board was elected in November 2024, and a Facility Manager was formally appointed in November 2025. Monitoring and evaluation processes have been significantly strengthened. Quarterly monitoring visits are now conducted consistently, complemented by two in-depth, six-month on-site assessments. These efforts are supported by a comprehensive Service Delivery Improvement Plan, which outlines the required corrective measures and guides the Department's oversight responsibilities.

DSD also reported substantial improvements in health and safety compliance. Deep cleaning and pest control interventions were undertaken to ensure a safe living

environment for residents, and the facility continues to receive support to maintain compliance with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards. Financial oversight has improved through the implementation of strengthened internal controls, the appointment of a local auditor, and the consistent payment of suppliers. These measures have contributed to stabilising the overall financial management of the Vermont Old Age Home.

The Committee was informed that capacity-building initiatives have formed a central part of the Department's support to Vermont. Registered nurses received training on relevant norms and standards, and a mentorship programme has been established to support ongoing staff development. DSD further provided additional support to the facility through funding for laundry services and general operational costs. Strategic planning sessions held in October 2025 assisted the facility and its partners in refining priorities and strengthening long-term planning. The Department emphasised its continued commitment to oversight and collaboration, ensuring that Vermont meets statutory requirements, improves service delivery, and upholds the rights and dignity of older persons.

The Committee deliberated on the presentations.

5. Recommendations

The Committee therefore recommended that;

- 5.1. The Department of Social Development must initiate a forensic investigation, as recommended by the Committee in 2024, into the funds (subsidy) allocated to the Vermont Old Age Home from 2019 to 2025, with specific reference to the concurrent bank accounts held in the name of Vermont.
- 5.2. The Department of Social Development must maintain continuous oversight of the Vermont Old Age Home, provide targeted funding for critical staffing and infrastructure needs, and accelerate the implementation of outstanding compliance measures. Ensuring the long-term sustainability, safety, and quality of care at the Vermont Old Age Home remains a priority, and the Committee will continue to monitor progress closely.
- 5.3. The Department of Social Development should use the Vermont Old Age Home as a pilot site for the turnaround strategy, demonstrating what can be achieved to support struggling old age homes across the province.
- 5.4. The Committee should table a Motion during a House Sitting on the turnaround strategy and the significant improvements achieved at the Vermont Old Age Home in Knysna.

7. Request for Information

The Committee requested the following information from the Vermont Old Age Home and the Department of Social Development by **Friday, 16 January 2026**:

- 7.1. A copy of the Vermont Old Age Home Constitution.
- 7.2. A copy of the Vermont Old Age Home turnaround strategy, including the updated restructuring plan and the Vermont organogram.
- 7.3. The Department of Social Development must submit a report on the advisory support it provides to NGOs, including both legal and strategic assistance. The report should also outline formal measures the department implements to prevent the misuse or abuse of funds.

- 7.4. Clarity from the Department of Health regarding the preparation of medications in old age homes, specifically, whether medications may be prepared the night before or must be prepared each morning.

8. Conclusion

The Standing Committee noted that significant progress has been made at Vermont Old Age Home since the previous oversight visit, particularly in areas of governance, financial administration, and service delivery. The stabilisation of the board, the appointment of a Facility Manager, improvements in compliance, and the strengthened monitoring framework demonstrate a meaningful turnaround from the crisis conditions observed during the previous visit. The Committee commended the new Board, facility management, and the Department of Social Development for the interventions and efforts that have contributed to the progress achieved.

However, despite these positive developments, several challenges continue to affect the facility's operations. These include staff shortages, infrastructure deficiencies, administrative backlogs, and continued pressure to meet compliance requirements across several service areas.

9. Acknowledgements

The Committee expressed its sincere appreciation to the management and new board members of the Vermont Old Age Home for the successful implementation of the turnaround strategy. The Committee applauded the notable improvements and recognised the efforts of the new board and management in enhancing service quality and strengthening governance stability at the facility.

13 REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON MOBILITY ON THE 2024/25 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WESTERN CAPE MOBILITY DEPARTMENT AND ITS ENTITY; GOVERNMENT MOTOR TRANSPORT

The Standing Committee on Mobility (the Committee) convened on 24 October 2025 to deliberate on the 2024/25 Annual Report of the Western Cape Mobility Department (the Department), and its Entity; Government Motor Transport (GMT).

1. Western Cape Mobility Department: 2024/25 Annual Report Deliberations

1.1. Introduction

The Minister of Mobility in the Western Cape and the Head of Department presented the Annual Report for the 2024/25 financial year. The Minister noted that the 2024/25 financial year was a challenging yet exciting year, where the Department continued to provide subsidised transport services to approximately 230 000 commuters daily within the City of Cape Town, and a further 21 000 commuters through the Go George public bus service. Non-motorised transport was also a priority for the Department, with progress being made in respect of infrastructure improvements and the distribution of bicycles outside of the Metro.

The Minister noted that the Department was recently established during the 2023/24 financial year, but it had already received a clean audit during the 2024/25 financial year. The Minister expressed his gratitude to the Department's employees for the hard work

that they had done to achieve a clean audit during the second year of the Department's existence.

1.2. Summary of key discussions/concerns

1.2.1. Vacancies within the Department and the Organizational Redesign

Although there were challenges in respect of vacancies and the appointment of senior staff within the Department, improvements had been made since the conclusion and submission of the 2024/25 Annual Report. The Minister noted that these appointments were subject to the availability of panel members; however, the Department was trying to expedite these appointment processes, while ensuring that the appointments were based on skill, competence and the Western Cape's demographics.

1.2.2. Minibus Taxi Challenges

The Department's 2024/25 Annual Report noted that Minibus Taxi (MBT) violence remained problematic; however, the Minister assured the Committee that there was no hostility between the MBT industry and the Department, and that peace and stability within the transport sector was of the utmost importance. Although there were challenges that had been prevalent for decades, the Department understood the importance of MBTs to the commuters and the economy of the Western Cape. The Department would continue to offer training opportunities to MBT owners and would continue to engage with MBTs through peace summits, thereby working towards a long-term solution to the transport challenges.

The Department recently launched an MBT Executive Leadership course with the University of Cape Town's School of Business, which it deemed a critical investment for the transport industry. The Department's training programmes also addressed leadership, operations, conflict prevention and conflict resolution. The Department and Minister's previous Peace Summit also encouraged dialogue around core issues within the MBT industry, which led to the identification of training and skills needed in the industry.

1.2.3. Improving Rail, Port and Freight Services

Improving freight services was a key factor for developing the Western Cape's economy. The Department wanted to inform the citizens that mobility was not just about MBTs, as there was a critical need to focus on freight, port and rail as well. According to the World Bank's latest Container Port Performance Index, the Port of Cape Town has shown a significant improvement, which was a result of a joint effort between various national and provincial departments, the City of Cape Town (the city) and Transnet. The Minister also noted that there was a good, constructive relationship with the National Minister of Transport.

In terms of freight, the Department had set up a Project Management Unit that would work closely with Transnet Freight to improve current services and the overall performance of the Port of Cape Town.

The Committee noted that the relationship between the Department, the city and the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) was important to promote the use of rail services to commuters in the province. During the Mobility Month (October 2025), the Minister met with senior officials from PRASA to observe and acknowledge the work they were doing to improve and recover the rail services in the province. The Department

had endeavoured to support PRASA in their efforts to recover damaged and vandalised rail lines. There were scheduled meetings between the Minister and PRASA to discuss the future of the rail plans for the Western Cape. There was a possibility that a Memorandum of Understanding would be signed between the Department and PRASA by the end of the year, which would identify the roles and responsibilities of both partners. The Department also hoped to assist PRASA with the current ticketing issues, security along the railway lines, accessibility issues and other challenges.

The Department was in the process of drafting a Provincial Public Transport Strategy. Once drafted, the strategy would be presented to the Committee for its consideration and input before being finalised. There were various modes of transport that had to be integrated to ensure safe, reliable and affordable transport for the citizens of the Western Cape. The Minister indicated that it was important to ensure that all modes of public transport complemented one another, instead of competing against one another.

1.2.4. Non-Motorized Transport Services for Rural Areas

The Committee noted that Non-Motorised Transport (NMT) such as bicycles were important for citizens; however, this was a challenge for citizens residing in rural areas where bicycle routes and infrastructure were lacking. The Minister acknowledged that there were challenges in respect of infrastructure, and that bicycle lanes and infrastructure seemed to be lacking because municipalities' Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and Integrated Transport Plans (ITPs) did not speak to NMTs. The Minister believed that mobility should be a shared service between the province and municipalities, and that officials should be stationed at districts, which would enable the province to reach its mobility-related goals and objectives.

NMT plans were critical for implementation, and therefore the Department's objective was to assist all district municipalities and some local municipalities to draft NMTs. The Department also wanted to assist more municipalities with Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI) applications.

1.2.5. Irregular Expenditure

According to the Department's 2024/25 Annual Report, there was R842 000 in irregular expenditure that related to the 2023/24 financial year, which was identified in the 2024/25 financial year. This was for work that was done outside of the contractual period. The Department's Internal Control Unit conducted its own investigation, compiled a report and submitted it to the Accounting Officer, who confirmed the irregular expenditure. An application of condonement was then submitted to the Provincial Treasury. The outcome of this assessment was still forthcoming.

1.2.6. Departmental Assistance to E-Hailing Services and Municipalities

The Committee noted that there was a challenge of illegal transport services/businesses operating in the Western Cape, which related to the issuing of vehicle licenses. While the Committee understood the challenge of oversupplying licenses, there was also a need for the Department to assist municipalities with comprehensive transport frameworks, which seemed to be lacking in some municipalities' IDPs.

1.2.7. Possible Introduction of Impoundment Legislation

The Department's 2024/25 Annual Report indicated that there was a possible intention to introduce impoundment legislation to representatives of public transport operators, and that it would complete a Regulatory Impact Assessment on this matter going forward. The objective of the possible impoundment legislation would be to improve road safety through the availability and application of an enforcement mechanism that was proven internationally to be effective in dealing with current and future road traffic transgressions.

The Minister noted that there were many unroadworthy vehicles in the province, which could result in the loss of lives on the roads. The Department's intention was to ensure that all modes of transport in the province were roadworthy and safe. If there was a need to impound unroadworthy vehicles so that the safety of the citizens was not compromised, then the Department would do so. The focus was on safety, and impoundment was one of the mechanisms to try to achieve that objective; however, the Department noted that it was difficult to impound public transport vehicles. The current laws provided limited grounds to impound these vehicles.

The Minister commended the city for meeting with the MBTs and listening to their concerns, while explaining the need for an impoundment by-law. There was a common goal by all spheres of government to ensure less fatalities on the roads in the province.

1.2.8. Universal Accessibility Services and Dial-a-Ride Expansion

The Minister noted that the Dial a Ride service for persons with disabilities was a critical service for the province. There was a challenge in terms of financing for this service; however, the City and the Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities had engaged on this matter. The Department would also further support the service if they received more funding for it.

The Minister noted that Universal Accessibility Services should not only be limited to citizens in the Metro, and that there should be more focus on non-metro areas in the province, especially rural areas.

1.2.9. The Use of Consultants

The Committee questioned the use of consultants and whether there was a skills transfer from consultants to officials within the Department. The Department noted that its organisational redesign would address this matter. At this point, the Department had a 30% vacancy rate, and the Department did not yet have a fit-for-purpose organisational design. The Department also did not have occupational specific dispensation posts. From a compensation perspective, the city and other competitors paid better salaries, and the government's salaries no longer seemed competitive. There were also skills that were only needed on an ad hoc basis, so it did not make sense for the Department to employ these skills on a permanent basis.

Some officials were taking on more work to compensate for the vacancies, so the "capacity consultants" assisted in easing the load of some employees.

2. Government Motor Transport: 2024/25 Annual Report Deliberations

2.1. Introduction

The Government Motor Transport (GMT) received an unqualified audit for the 2024/25 financial year. GMT indicated that their focus was on providing quality cost-effective mobility services. The Minister noted that GMT received its 13th unqualified audit result, which showed that the entity had effective governance and financial controls in place.

GMT recently received the innovation award from GovTech 2025 for its mobility application. The entity was also shortlisted for a National Service Excellence Award for the app.

2.2. Summary of key discussions/concerns

2.2.1. Provision of Services for Other Institutions

Approximately 11% of GMT's revenue was generated from national departments and entities. The demand for GMT's services had expanded quite substantially, with municipalities also requesting GMT services. The Committee questioned whether Members of Provincial Parliament, besides the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, were able to become GMT's clients and hire government vehicles when travelling long distances for parliamentary work. The Minister indicated that the Department and GMT officials would consider and discuss this possibility.

2.2.2. Global and Geopolitical Challenges

GMT's 2024/2025 Annual Report alluded to global and geopolitical issues that would continue to have an impact on the automotive sector, with inevitable implications for GMT's service delivery and cost models. These pressures were compounded by persistent challenges, including rising vehicle acquisition costs, escalating operational expenses, and financial constraints faced by client departments.

The Minister noted that there had been talks abroad about increases in tariffs on certain goods. Some of the vehicles that GMT leased to its clients/service providers had to be imported, which had implications due to tariff increases. It was inevitable that global matters would have an impact on the work that GMT did.

2.2.3. Services Offered to Municipalities

The Committee questioned the extent of the services GMT offered to municipalities in terms of their fleet. There were challenges around fleet management within municipalities, and the reluctance to share equipment, which led to the hiring of equipment at exorbitant costs. It seemed that GMT would be the logical alternative to assist municipalities given the systems that the entity already had in place, in terms of offering those services to municipalities.

GMT noted that it had a strong relationship with the city, whose fleet size was similar to GMT's. GMT was able to observe the City's fleet management as a benchmarking exercise to evaluate its best practices and to project how it should move forward.

GMT has had various engagements with municipalities, in particular, Stellenbosch Municipality which has been an active client for GMT, leasing non-specialised vehicles from the entity. The challenge was that certain approval processes had to be followed, and councils' approvals were needed to lease vehicles. There were municipalities that wanted to hire specialised vehicles, which were extensive requests requiring specialised equipment. From an investment perspective, this was considered a "high" investment that

would require commitment from the municipality for at least five years. This type of commitment would then also become a finance lease in terms of the requirements for accrual accounting, which municipalities would need to adhere to.

2.2.4. Technological Capacity

The Minister indicated that GMT had been confronted with instances of hijacking in respect of its government vehicles. If GMT did not have the technology to track these vehicles, then the entity would be in a very compromised position. The Minister commended GMT for tackling issues of security efficiently and effectively to ensure the safety of its clients.

The Minister also acknowledged the use of technology in improving GMT's turnaround time for fixing and servicing their vehicles.

GMT also used its Intelligent Transport System (ITS) to gather data from the government vehicles to process accidents and losses, and to make "SMART" decisions.

2.2.5. Shift to Greener Fleet Operations

In support of its phased shift to greener fleet operations, GMT has adopted a soft-strategy approach through the introduction of hybrid vehicles. The procurement of hybrid vehicles has generated strong interest among GMT's client institutions. By 31 March 2025, 172 hybrid models were secured, comprising a mix of Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEV) and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV). GMT was in the process of ensuring that there were charging points for these vehicles.

Although GMT was developing a new energy vehicle strategy, there was a concern about whether municipalities were developing green strategies to align with GMT and the Department's green strategies. This would need to be addressed going forward.

GMT was also committed to reducing its carbon emissions and greening its fleet.

2.2.6. Vacancies within the GMT Unit

The Committee noted that there were several vacancies within GMT. The Minister indicated that he shared the Committee's concern and assured the Committee that the Department was committed to appointing capable officials to fill all the vacancies. The Department would be holding interviews in the following weeks; however, there was also a challenge of arranging interview panels.

The Committee also questioned whether interns were absorbed into the Department and GMT once their work exposure period expired. GMT indicated that interns played a significant role within the Department and that they were allowed to apply for positions when they were advertised internally. GMT noted that quite a few interns had been successful in obtaining permanent positions within the GMT unit.

GMT also noted that several employees were poached by the city as well, and that some officials left because they wanted to earn more.

3. Public Participation

Mr Jamie Wyngaard, the Co-founder of LOOP, requested to address the Minister and the Department. He explained that LOOP was a mobility tech company that developed a digital cash collection solution for MBTs to address the safety risk around carrying cash on hand all day. LOOP then developed a system where WhatsApp could be used to pay for taxi rides. WhatsApp payments were instant and there was no bank charges attached to the payments.

LOOP has also expanded their focus to look at the hiring of MBTs to private companies, which has helped move MBTs towards formalisation and access to finance. The WhatsApp payment system also allowed businesses to hire MBTs, since corporate entities did not pay cash. With more businesses hiring MBTs, it has assisted in changing driver behaviour. The drivers were vetted, checked for Professional Driving Permits and their vehicles were inspected. LOOP has already received an award from President Cyril Ramaphosa for their work in this space.

Mr Wyngaard noted the concerns raised during the deliberations, particularly around public transport, taxi behaviour and traffic. These were issues that affected the public. He quoted President Cyril Ramaphosa, saying that to improve the economy, more had to be done to improve the public transport situation. He believed that collective action had to take place to resolve transport issues, and that it was not just an issue for the Department to tackle.

My Wyngaard indicated that there were ways to solve some of the challenges in the public transport sector. He stated that the first approach was with technology, and the second approach was with empathy. He noted that countries such as South Korea, the United Kingdom and Singapore held programmes and workshops in research and development, co-creating and seeking solutions with the public and private sectors to address challenges. In the Western Cape, it seemed that the relevant role players were operating in isolation. He wanted to know how the public and private sectors could work more closely with the Department, and how citizens could become more involved in finding solutions to the public transport challenges.

The Minister indicated that he was familiar with LOOP's work and that the Department was open to engaging with LOOP. He also noted that there had been a commitment from Stellenbosch Municipality to meet with LOOP on 31 October 2025. The Minister also indicated that LOOP had been invited to engage with them as the Mobility Month came to a close at the end of October 2025.

4. Committee resolutions

4.1. The Committee, after its deliberations, REQUESTED the following:

- 4.1.1 A report on the number of interns absorbed into the Western Cape Mobility Department for the past two financial years;
- 4.1.2 A report on the average time officials spent in their respective positions before resigning or leaving the Western Cape Mobility Department (for resignations that occurred over the last two financial years);
- 4.1.3 A report on the possibility of a partnership between the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and Government Motor Transport for the hiring of vehicles for Members of Provincial Parliament;
- 4.1.4 A list of consultants used by the Western Cape Mobility Department and their Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment rating;

- 4.1.5 An updated schedule on the Western Cape Mobility Department's organisational redesign and recruitment plans;
 - 4.1.6 A report on the Western Cape Mobility Department's review of transfer payments to municipalities;
 - 4.1.7 A report from the Western Cape Mobility Department on its state of readiness to implement new laws and regulations on carbon tax;
 - 4.1.8 A report on the nature of the gifts received by officials, who the gifts came from, and the recipients of the gifts within the Western Cape Mobility Department; and
 - 4.1.9 A report from the Western Cape Mobility Department on the work done in respect of its intertown transport services, the expectations for this service and when the process is likely to begin.
- 4.2. The Committee RECOMMENDED that Government Motor Transport explores the possibility of working more closely with municipalities, particularly around fleet management and the hiring of vehicles and equipment to deter wasteful expenditure.
- 4.3. The Committee RESOLVED that the Western Cape Mobility Department should brief the Committee on its organizational redesign, at a date to be determined by the Committee.

5. Conclusion

The Chairperson expressed appreciation to the Minister, the Head of Department, officials from the Western Cape Mobility Department, the members of the Committee, and the member of the public for their constructive engagement.

14 Report of the Standing Committee on Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning on the Annual Reports of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning and CapeNature for the 2024/25 financial year.

The Standing Committee on Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning having deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning and CapeNature for the 2024/25 financial year, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

The Annual Reports of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (the Department) and CapeNature for the financial year ended 31 March 2025 was tabled on 9 September 2025 in accordance with section 65(1)(a) of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), as amended.

As part of its oversight function, the Standing Committee on Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (the Committee) deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department and CapeNature on 17 October 2024. Annual reports are the key instruments for departments to report on performance measured against their performance targets and budgets as outlined in their strategic plans and annual performance plans. In addition, hereto, it accounts for the success of each programme that was implemented.

Standing Rule 111(1)(a) of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament provides standing committees with the mandate to consider departmental annual reports submitted in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999).

The Annual Report Programme for the 2024/25 financial year was advertised in newspapers to invite stakeholders and members of the public to attend and participate in the discussions.

The Committee deliberated on Part A: General Information, Part B: Performance Information and Part D: Human Resource Management, after which the Chairperson afforded an opportunity to the public to ask questions to the Department.

The Committee proceeded to engage with the Department by asking questions on Parts A, B and D of the Annual Report. All questions were satisfactorily answered, and the Committee was satisfied that the Department achieved its predetermined objectives for the 2024/25 financial year and that it was accurately reported on.

2. Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning

Overview

In a year marked by environmental urgency and economic pressure, the Department positioned itself as a key player in shaping a resilient and sustainable Western Cape. The Department's leadership, under Minister Anton Bredell, emphasized the growing need to integrate environmental stewardship into every facet of development planning. Climate change, biodiversity loss, and urban expansion were not just challenges—they were catalysts for innovation.

The Department contributed significantly to the province's long-term vision, aligning its work with the Western Cape Infrastructure Framework 2050 and the Provincial Strategic Plan 2025–2030. Despite budget constraints and staffing limitations, the Department achieved over 90% of its performance targets, demonstrating a commitment to service delivery and strategic foresight.

The Department's programmes tackled everything from environmental law enforcement to biodiversity management. Notable achievements included:

- Mainstreaming climate governance across provincial planning and economic development;
- Advancing spatial planning tools like the Mossel Bay Environmental Management Framework, with new frameworks initiated in Bergrivier; and
- Strengthening compliance and enforcement, particularly in communities most affected by environmental degradation.

The Department's work was deeply aligned with the Growth for Jobs Strategy, ensuring that environmental sustainability supported economic growth. Performance reporting was transparent and detailed, with oversight from the Auditor-General confirming compliance and accountability.

Despite financial pressures, the Department maintained a stable staffing structure and invested in skills development, employment equity, and wellness programmes. Senior managers signed performance agreements, and efforts were made to ensure a representative and capable workforce.

Labour relations were managed proactively, and consultants were used strategically to fill gaps in expertise. The Department's commitment to its people was clear: they were not just employees, but partners in building a sustainable future.

3. CapeNature

Overview

In the face of mounting environmental challenges, CapeNature's 2024/25 journey has been one of resilience, innovation, and deepened commitment to conservation.

CapeNature continued to confront the realities of climate change head-on. The Entity responded to 97 wildfire incidents, a notable increase from the previous season, and managed severe flooding and storm events. The Global Risk Report highlights that extreme weather and biodiversity losses remain among the most pressing environmental risks globally.

In response, CapeNature has strengthened its agility and capacity, learning from past fire seasons and refining its approach. There were also notable conservation successes, including the successful translocation of the Cape Mountain Zebra, the highest recorded numbers of Cape Gannets at Lambert's Bay Island, and progress in protecting African Penguin colonies through agreements on fishing restrictions.

CapeNature continues to align its work with the Western Cape Government's Growth for Jobs Strategy, notably through the implementation of a three-year Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) contract. The Entity recognized that nature-based solutions are not only essential for climate adaptation but also central to unlocking sustainable economic opportunities for the province.

These work opportunities are complemented by a range of outsourced services that support the management of protected areas across the province—including maintenance, laundry, alien vegetation clearing, and security services.

As the steward of the Western Cape's rich biodiversity, the organization has not only protected nature but also empowered communities and strengthened its role in climate adaptation.

CapeNature expanded its conservation footprint significantly, adding over 13,000 hectares to its protected areas—more than double its target. This expansion was complemented by seven new stewardship agreements, reflecting a growing collaboration with private landowners and communities. The rediscovery of the elusive Boosmansbos Long-tailed Forest Shrew and ongoing efforts to protect the endangered African Penguin underscore the organization's scientific rigor and ecological dedication.

Despite weather-related disruptions, CapeNature's eco-tourism sector thrived, generating R77 million in revenue. The reserves welcomed record numbers of day visitors, drawn by the beauty of the Western Cape and the success of 11 targeted marketing campaigns. These efforts not only boosted tourism but also reinforced the value of nature-based experiences in promoting mental well-being and environmental awareness.

CapeNature's impact extended beyond conservation into social upliftment. Through partnerships and government programs, the organization created over 1,800 work

opportunities, with a strong focus on youth and women. Internships and learnerships provided vital skills and experience, helping bridge the gap between education and employment for many young South Africans.

The year was marked by an increase in wildfire incidents, with CapeNature responding to nearly 100 fires across vast landscapes. These events highlighted the growing threat of climate change and the importance of proactive fire management. The organization's response was swift and coordinated, protecting both biodiversity and human communities.

CapeNature continued to build strong alliances—with NGOs like WWF-SA and SANCCOB, and with local municipalities—to amplify its impact. Internally, the organization maintained high standards of governance, compliance, and financial management, ensuring transparency and accountability in all operations.

As CapeNature moved forward, its focus remained clear: to conserve the Western Cape's natural heritage, support sustainable development, and build resilience against environmental threats. The 2024/25 Annual Report is not just a record of achievements—it's a testament to the power of nature, community, and purpose.

However, the year was not without its challenges. The increasing frequency and severity of wildfires, floods, and storms underscored the urgent need for climate adaptation. CapeNature responded to nearly 100 wildfire incidents, covering vast areas and stretching its resources.

Financial constraints also loomed large. With reduced government allocations and slow economic growth, the organization had to rely heavily on self-generated income to maintain service delivery. This financial pressure was compounded by staffing limitations, as cost containment measures restricted the filling of critical vacancies.

Infrastructure vulnerability emerged as another concern. Severe weather events led to unplanned closures of key tourism facilities, disrupting operations and revenue streams.

4. Resolutions

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the Department be invited to brief the Committee:

- 4.1 On its strategies for fostering collaboration and mutual understanding with municipalities. The briefing should include an explanation of efforts to build capacity and clarify roles and expectations in relation to development planning and environmental management;
- 4.2 On its communication strategy, with specific reference to how it intends to enhance public awareness of its enforcement activities and other key initiatives;
- 4.3 On the findings of the Housing Market Studies and the implementation plans for Inclusionary Housing Policies across municipalities; and
- 4.4 On the extent and consequences of environmental crime, and its implications for biodiversity and conservation in the province.

5. Recommendations

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Department improve its public communication regarding its work particularly in areas such as environmental law enforcement to ensure that the public is adequately informed and engaged.

6. Conclusion

The Chairperson thanked the Members of the Committee, the Minister, the Head of Department and all the officials of the Department for their preparation and responses to the questions raised by the Committee.

15 Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism on the 2024/25 Annual Reports of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism; Western Cape Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency; Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone Licensing Company SOC Ltd; and Atlantis Special Economic Zone, for the year ended 31 March 2025

The Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, having deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism and its Entities, for the year ended 31 March 2025, referred to it, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

Section 113(3)(b) of the Constitution requires that “Members of the Executive Council of a province must provide the legislature with full and regular reports concerning matters under their control.” Section 65 of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) requires the Minister of each department and public entity to table an annual report in the legislature within six months of the end of each financial year.

As part of its oversight function, the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism (the Committee) deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (the Department) and its Entities, Western Cape Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency (Wesgro); Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone Licencing Company SOC Ltd trading as Freeport Saldanha Industrial Development Zone (FSIDZ); and Atlantis Special Economic Zone (ASEZ), on 27 October 2025.

Annual reports are the key instruments for departments to report on performance measured against their performance targets and budgets as outlined in their Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans.

The Annual Report Programme for the 2024/25 financial year was advertised in various newspapers, inviting stakeholders and members of the public to participate in the discussions.

The Committee deliberated on Part A: General Information, Part B: Performance Information and Part D: Human Resource Management of the respective Annual Reports.

2. Department of Economic Development and Tourism

2.1 Overview

The Department reported that the 2024/25 financial year was one of transition and renewal, marked by the appointment of a new administration, a new Minister, a new Head of Department, and the continued rollout of the Growth for Jobs (G4J) Strategy.

Despite fiscal constraints and capacity challenges, the Department achieved a clean audit for the fourth consecutive year and attained 94% of its annual performance targets, with minor variances attributed to technical adjustments rather than non-performance. The Department's strategic priorities included promoting economic growth, job creation, energy resilience, trade facilitation, and tourism recovery.

2.2 Key issues discussed

- 2.2.1 The Department reported a vacancy rate of approximately 38% at the start of the 2024/25 financial year, primarily due to fiscal constraints. The Department indicated that targeted recruitment efforts and ministerial approvals had resulted in a reduction of the vacancy rate to approximately 20%, with five senior management positions successfully filled during the reporting period.

Members expressed concern about the continued impact of staff turnover, limited promotional opportunities, and succession planning gaps on institutional stability and service delivery. The Department confirmed that exit interviews were routinely conducted to identify underlying causes of staff resignations and that a staff development initiative had been introduced to strengthen succession planning and career progression pathways.

The philosophy of impact-driven hiring was reiterated, with an explanation that new appointments would only be made where positions directly contributed to improving the lives of the poor and unemployed. It was further noted that staff retention challenges were a global phenomenon but that the Department remained committed to building a capable, efficient, and purpose-driven public administration.

The Committee acknowledged the Department's progress in reducing vacancy levels but emphasised the importance of maintaining organisational capacity to deliver on key priorities such as visa reform, skills development, renewable energy expansion, and the extension of economic programmes to rural areas.

- 2.2.2 The Department continued in its efforts to improve visa facilitation processes to enhance tourism, investment, and business travel. A comprehensive benchmarking study was commissioned to identify systemic challenges within South Africa's visa regime and its impact on inward travel and economic growth. The findings were presented to the Provincial Cabinet and subsequently shared with the national Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Leon Schreiber. The Department indicated that several of the study's recommendations were being considered at national level to address structural barriers and modernise the visa system.

A key milestone during the year under review was the implementation of the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme, introduced in January 2025, in collaboration with the Department of Home Affairs. This initiative allowed approved tour operators to issue digital group visas for visitors from key markets such as India and China, simplifying travel procedures and supporting the recovery of the tourism sector. To date, 65 tour operators have been accredited under the scheme, facilitating the entry of more than 11 000 tourists from these markets, particularly during the off-peak tourism season. The Department reported that this initiative has significantly enhanced conference tourism and regional visitor inflows.

In addition, the Department deployed interns to assist with passenger facilitation at airports and continued collaboration with national authorities on the introduction of electronic gates to improve traveller processing and border efficiency. These interventions formed part of the Department's broader commitment to reducing red tape and enhancing the province's global competitiveness.

The Committee expressed concern about the impact of visa delays on tourism and investment growth but commended the Department for its proactive, evidence-based advocacy and for leading practical reforms through the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme. Members encouraged the Department to expand similar facilitation mechanisms to additional high-potential markets and to monitor the long-term impact of these initiatives on tourism recovery, foreign investment, and the Western Cape's international competitiveness.

- 2.2.3 During the year under review, more than 11 700 jobs were created through strategic collaborations in the green, digital, and manufacturing sectors. The Department reported an 80% transition rate from internships to full-time employment, supported by significant private-sector investment in accredited training programmes.

Companies partnering with the Department contributed up to R60 000 per learner for specialised skills training and as much as R250 000 per learner for artisanal programmes. These investments reflected a strong private-sector commitment to sustainable employment outcomes, as companies had a vested interest in retaining the skilled employees they trained.

The Department highlighted that this demand-driven approach ensured that training programmes were aligned with the labour market's evolving needs.

In the Business Process Outsourcing sector, approximately 202 500 jobs were reported, contributing an estimated R350 000 per job in foreign revenue and about R2,5 billion to the provincial Gross Domestic Product. The Committee noted ongoing collaboration with companies in the technology, data science, and software development sectors to strengthen the skills pipeline and reduce reduction rates in these high-demand fields.

However, the Department acknowledged persistent challenges, including a shortage of qualified artisans, an aging artisanal workforce (with an average age above 50), and the high cost of training. These factors were identified as potential risks to industrial growth and infrastructure development. The Department has prioritised artisanal and technical training programmes as part of its long-term strategy to enhance youth employability and industrial resilience.

The Committee commended the Department for its strong partnerships with the private sector and its focus on demand-led, sustainable job creation. Members welcomed the high internship-to-employment transition rate and encouraged the continued expansion of artisanal, digital, and technology-related training programmes.

The Committee also expressed concern about the aging artisanal workforce and urged the Department to strengthen its skills pipeline, expand youth-focused

training, and further leverage private-sector investment to enhance skills retention and productivity across the provincial economy.

- 2.2.4 The Energy Resilience and the Just Energy Transition (JET) was a collaborative initiative supported by international partners including the European Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom, representing an investment package of approximately USD 8,5 billion.

The Western Cape Government established an Energy Council and developed a Provincial Energy Plan aligned with the JET framework. The Plan seek to strengthen the province's energy security, reduce reliance on Eskom, and expand renewable generation capacity.

As part of its energy resilience programme, Riversdale in the Garden Route was identified as the first town to be free from load shedding, with a second town under consideration. The Department clarified that energy independence does not imply complete separation from Eskom but rather a stable, self-sufficient power supply during national outages.

The Committee also noted the use of solar-powered desalination plants, co-funded by French partners, as examples of renewable energy being applied to local infrastructure projects. The Department reaffirmed that energy resilience remained a key pillar of the G4J Strategy, recognising that sustainable economic growth is dependent on reliable energy provision.

The Committee commended the Department for its proactive efforts in developing the Provincial Energy Plan and establishing international partnerships. Members emphasised the importance of ensuring that renewable energy investments benefit rural communities and areas with limited grid access.

Concerns were raised regarding transmission infrastructure constraints, which could hinder the pace of renewable integration. The Committee encouraged greater collaboration with the private sector to accelerate grid expansion, improve energy storage capacity, and enhance local manufacturing within the green economy. The Committee further stressed the need for regular reporting on project implementation, funding utilisation, and measurable outcomes linked to the G4J Strategy to ensure accountability and long-term energy security across the province.

- 2.2.5 In terms of export promotion related to Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) Development, the Department highlighted its initiatives to strengthen export capacity, promote inclusive entrepreneurship, and enhance market access, particularly for those operating in rural and township economies. These initiatives formed part of the Department's broader objective to stimulate economic participation and support enterprise growth through targeted funding and capacity-building programmes.

The Department reported that 97 businesses were supported during the year under review. Of these, 61 enterprises successfully pitched to funders, resulting in R25 million in approved funding. A further seven businesses advanced to the accelerator phase, collectively creating jobs and raising an additional R40 million in investment. The Programme placed a strong emphasis on women-owned, youth-

led, and rural-based enterprises, linking high-potential companies with investors and development partners.

The Department also highlighted the success of the SMME Booster Fund, which provided financial and technical support to township-based enterprises through partnerships with intermediary organisations. Approximately 80% of supported businesses were black-owned, and 44% were women-owned, reflecting the Department's commitment to equitable and broad-based economic empowerment.

In response to queries from Members, the Department confirmed that selection criteria and monitoring processes were clearly defined and that regular site visits and monthly engagements were conducted with intermediary organisations to ensure compliance and evaluate impact. The Committee welcomed these measures but emphasised the need for continuous tracking of long-term outcomes, particularly in relation to job creation, business sustainability, and market expansion.

The Committee commended the Department for its efforts to promote entrepreneurship, investment readiness, and export growth, noting that such initiatives played a vital role in supporting inclusive economic development and enhancing the province's competitiveness in domestic and international markets.

3. Western Cape Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency (WESGRO)

3.1 Overview

Wesgro, the official tourism, trade, and investment promotion agency for the Western Cape, presented its 2024/25 Annual Report outlining strong performance and sound governance. The agency achieved a clean audit for the second consecutive year, reflecting robust internal controls and effective financial management.

Wesgro operated in a dynamic global trade environment characterised by shifting economic alliances, ongoing geopolitical tensions in Europe and the Middle East, and evolving international policy frameworks. Despite these uncertainties, the agency reported growing investor and visitor confidence in the Western Cape, supported by a stable governance environment, clear economic leadership, and strong public-private collaboration.

The agency's achievements during the year under review included the facilitation of R14,6 billion in new investments, R5,38 billion in trade declarations, and the execution of 45 international trade missions. Over 1 500 active exporters were registered on the Cape Trade Portal, while 36 business event bids were secured, with a projected economic impact of R745,1 million.

In addition, the agency reported R390 million in private-sector funding and R46,5 million in Corporate Social Investment (CSI) commitments through the EduInvest initiative, which supported the construction of four new schools.

Wesgro also facilitated 86 cruise ship calls, generating an estimated R1,32 billion in economic impact, and successfully supported the expansion of international air connectivity through Cape Town Air Access, adding one new airline, four new international routes, and ten route expansions.

The Committee commended Wesgro for its continued role in promoting the Western Cape as a leading destination for investment, trade, and tourism.

3.2 Key issues discussed

- 3.2.1 EduInvest was described as a private-sector investment vehicle in education, enabling the replication of catalytic delivery models that support inclusive economic growth and align with Wesgro's broader mandate to enhance provincial competitiveness. By leveraging business partnerships, the initiative has helped to reduce infrastructure backlogs, stimulate local construction and employment, and improve educational outcomes in under-served communities.

During the year under review, four new schools were built through the EduInvest partnership model, attracting approximately R390 million in private investment and securing an additional R46,5 million in CSI commitments from participating companies. The schools developed under this initiative included Spark Primary (Blue Downs), Crystal House (Paarl), and Epics School (Kayamandi, Stellenbosch), each designed to serve areas of high learner demand and promote access to quality, affordable education.

The Committee commended Wesgro for the tangible impact achieved through the EduInvest initiative and noted its value as a model for future private-sector collaboration in public service delivery.

- 3.2.2 The Committee raised questions regarding Wesgro's support for rural exporters, particularly those located in regions such as the Central Karoo, where limited infrastructure, connectivity, and market access continue to hinder participation in international trade. The Committee emphasised the importance of ensuring that the province's trade promotion efforts and export development programmes are inclusive and accessible to businesses across all districts.

Wesgro outlined its continued efforts to broaden export participation through the Cape Trade Portal, a digital platform that connected Western Cape exporters to global buyers, facilitated product showcasing, and simplified trade promotion processes. The agency reported that more than 1 500 exporters were currently registered on the platform, including an increasing number of small and emerging enterprises from rural districts.

To strengthen inclusion beyond digital engagement, Wesgro implemented district outreach campaigns in collaboration with the Department and local municipalities. These initiatives focused on training and mentorship in export readiness, compliance, logistics, and digital marketing, thereby equipping rural entrepreneurs with the skills and tools necessary to compete internationally.

Wesgro further confirmed its plans to enhance digital accessibility by improving user experience on the Cape Trade Portal and by expanding its regional outreach programmes to under-served areas. The agency reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that export growth was inclusive, contributing to both provincial competitiveness and the economic empowerment of rural communities.

The Committee commended Wesgro for its proactive approach and encouraged the agency to continue strengthening partnerships with district chambers of commerce,

business support organisations, and development agencies to deepen the impact of export facilitation across all regions of the Western Cape.

4. Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone Licencing Company SOC Ltd Trading as Freeport Saldanha Industrial Development Zone (FSIDZ)

4.1 Overview

The FSIDZ continued to position itself as a strategic industrial and logistics hub for the region, with a focus on maritime services, energy production, oil and gas, and offshore manufacturing. During the year under review, FSIDZ reported an improvement in financial and operational governance, including the stabilisation of management structures and stronger performance oversight.

Investment promotion activities were intensified, with a growing pipeline of investors in energy, logistics, and marine-related industries. FSIDZ's rebranding and targeted marketing campaigns contributed to renewed investor confidence. Freeport Saldanha also continued to collaborate closely with the Department, Transnet, and Eskom to support the development of enabling infrastructure and grid capacity in the Saldanha Bay region, aligning with the province's Just Energy Transition objectives.

The entity highlighted ongoing efforts to attract both local and international investors to projects focusing on green hydrogen, renewable energy, and industrial diversification, positioning the zone as a catalyst for sustainable regional development and job creation.

FSIDZ achieved a clean audit for the year under review. Four of five previously vacant factories had been successfully leased. Several high-impact projects, particularly in the green hydrogen and steel manufacturing sectors, were in advanced feasibility or early implementation stages, with construction expected to commence within the next six to 12 months. FSIDZ also confirmed the establishment of new governance structures, including the reconstitution of its Board and Audit Committee, aimed at improving oversight and investor confidence.

4.2 Key issue discussed

The Committee noted the significant progress made in stabilising governance and improving operational performance through the implementation of a structured Recovery Plan. The Committee acknowledged FSIDZ's growing contribution to the Western Cape's industrial and energy development agenda, noting its strategic role in advancing the province's Just Energy Transition objectives.

However, Members expressed concern regarding delays in securing port access and the slow pace of engagement with the Transnet National Ports Authority, which continued to constrain project implementation and investor commitments. The Minister confirmed that the matter had been escalated to Transnet's national leadership and that ongoing advocacy efforts were underway to unlock the required infrastructure access and operational approvals.

The Committee also raised questions about investment traction, governance reforms, and infrastructure readiness, urging FSIDZ to accelerate collaboration with the Department, Transnet, and Eskom to ensure the SEZ's long-term sustainability. The entity assured

Members that corrective measures, enhanced oversight mechanisms, and a strengthened investment facilitation framework had been implemented to address these challenges.

The Committee encouraged FSIDZ to ensure that the economic benefits of its projects extend to surrounding communities through skills development programmes, local procurement, and employment opportunities, particularly in alignment with the province's Growth for Jobs (G4J) Strategy. Members requested regular updates on the SEZ's investment pipeline, public-private partnerships, and progress in advancing the province's renewable energy goals.

5. Atlantis Special Economic Zone (ASEZ)

5.1 Overview

The purpose of the ASEZ was to establish a sustainable Greentech Special Economic Zone that fostered a supportive business environment for the green economy, promoted integrated economic growth, and generated employment opportunities. The entity was partially owned by the City of Cape Town and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. It leveraged relationships with external academic institutions and international communities to fulfil its mandate effectively.

The ASEZ showed continued success in attracting renewable energy and component manufacturing investors, with notable growth in private-sector participation. The entity achieved a clean audit, underscoring sound governance and effective financial management practices.

Key achievements included increased investor commitments within the renewable energy, waste management, and green technology sectors. The ASEZ secured additional funding from the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition amounting to R400 million for infrastructure development and was pursuing further support through the Budget Facility for Infrastructure and partnerships with Infrastructure South Africa.

5.2 Key issues discussed

5.2.1 The Committee raised concerns regarding funding limitations, delays in top-structure development, infrastructure readiness, and high rates and taxes imposed by the City of Cape Town. These factors were identified as potential barriers to scaling investment activity and improving the Zone's financial sustainability. The Committee emphasised the importance of diversifying funding sources through the Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI) and private-sector partnerships, as well as exploring incentives to attract and retain investors.

Approximately 90% of the ASEZ's developed land parcels had been allocated to investors, with 94 hectares still available for future development. However, limited funding for top-structure development and delayed environmental approvals had affected timelines for investor occupation. Engagements with potential tenants and public infrastructure partners were ongoing to mitigate these challenges.

5.2.2 The Committee noted that the ASEZ was actively engaging with the BFI as part of its strategy to unlock alternative infrastructure funding. The ASEZ applied to Infrastructure South Africa to be included in the Infrastructure Fund pipeline, aiming to receive project preparation support and assistance in packaging bankable projects.

The BFI engagement was intended to diversify funding sources beyond the government budget for top structures and civil infrastructure in zones 2 and 3; attract private-sector investment by making projects investment-ready; and accelerate infrastructure delivery, supporting the transition from planning to operational phases.

- 5.2.3 The Committee acknowledged challenges affecting ASEZ's financial sustainability, including delays in tenant lease agreements, slow infrastructure rollout, and reliance on government funding. The Committee also noted ongoing efforts to engage Infrastructure South Africa and private developers, with optimism that BFI support will unlock additional capital for development.

6. Resolutions/Actions

- 6.1. The Committee RESOLVED that it would undertake a follow-up oversight visit to:
- 6.1.1 Atlantis Special Economic Zone to track progress on infrastructure development and tenant uptake; and
 - 6.1.2 Freeport Saldanha Industrial Development Zone to assess investment traction and governance improvements.
- 6.2 The Committee REQUESTED that WESGRO provides it with a detailed report on the four schools built under the EduInvest initiative, with specific reference to the scope and objectives of each project; the impact of the projects on the respective communities; and the materials and infrastructure used in the construction of the schools.

7. Conclusion

The Committee recognized the challenges experienced during the year and congratulated the Department and its entities on sterling work under difficult circumstances. The Committee was satisfied that the predetermined objectives for the 2024/25 financial year were adequately achieved and that they were accurately reported.

Furthermore, The Committee extended its congratulations to the Department of Economic and its Entities on the preparation and presentation of their respective Annual Reports. The Committee commended the high standard of reporting, the clarity of performance information, and the evident commitment to transparency and good governance reflected in the documents. Members acknowledged the consistent efforts in driving economic growth, investment promotion, and tourism development within the Western Cape.

While acknowledging progress, the Committee emphasised the need for continued focus on delivery, accountability, and inclusive growth.

16 Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism on the 2024/25 Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture, and its Entity Casidra, for the year ended 31 March 2025

The Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, having deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture and its Entity, Casidra, for the year ended 31 March 2025, referred to it, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

Section 113(3)(b) of the Constitution requires that “Members of the Executive Council of a province must provide the legislature with full and regular reports concerning matters under their control.” Section 65 of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) requires the Minister of each department and public entity to table an annual report in the legislature within six months of the end of each financial year.

As part of its oversight function, the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism (the Committee) deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture (the Department) and its Entity, Casidra, on 30 October 2025.

Annual reports are the key instruments for departments to report on performance measured against their performance targets and budgets as outlined in their Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans.

The Annual Report Programme for the 2024/2025 financial year was advertised in various newspapers, inviting stakeholders and members of the public to participate in the discussions.

The Committee deliberated on Part A: General Information, Part B: Performance Information and Part D: Human Resource Management of the respective Annual Reports.

2. Department of Agriculture

2.1 Overview

The Department reported strong performance for the 2024/25 financial year, demonstrating fiscal discipline, strategic alignment with provincial priorities, and impactful service delivery across its programmes. The Department received a clean audit for the year under review. This outcome reflected a continued commitment to sound financial management, compliance with legislative requirements, and effective internal controls.

The Department achieved a 98% expenditure rate of its allocated budget. It also met 98% of its annual performance targets, reflecting effective planning and execution. A late allocation of R300 million just days before the financial year-end was responsibly managed, with funds rolled over and deployed in the current year.

The Department’s work was closely guided by the Western Cape’s Vision-Inspired Priorities, with particular emphasis on growth and jobs, climate resilience, and food security. In support of economic growth, the Department implemented commodity-based programmes that successfully leveraged over R100 million in private sector investment, fostering agricultural development across the province.

To strengthen climate resilience, the Department launched a Water Resilience Strategy that was approved by the Provincial Cabinet and continued to advance climate-smart agricultural initiatives to ensure sustainable production in the face of environmental challenges. In the area of food security, the Department partnered with Casidra to support over 7 400 food gardens, providing direct benefits to household nutrition and reinforcing community resilience.

The Western Cape accounted for 58% of South Africa's total agricultural exports, up from 55% the previous year. The Department supported producers through compliance assistance, market access facilitation, and participation in international trade platforms such as Fruit Attraction in Madrid.

2.2 Key issues discussed

- 2.2.1 The Committee noted the record growth in South Africa's agricultural exports during the reporting period. It was reported that, for the first time in the country's history, agricultural exports reached a total value of USD 13,7 billion, representing the largest single-year growth on record. This achievement was attributed to the collective efforts of farmers, workers, producers, and exporters across the country.

The Committee further noted that this growth occurred despite ongoing global trade challenges and potential tariff barriers. The Department informed the Committee that a comprehensive Export Strategy for the Western Cape was in the process of being finalised to strengthen and expand market access. The Strategy would be tabled before the Western Cape Cabinet and subsequently submitted to the Committee to inform oversight and future planning. The Committee welcomed the report and expressed optimism that these initiatives would continue to drive export growth within the agricultural sector.

The preliminary findings from a study conducted by the Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP), indicated that anticipated job losses linked to United States tariff measures may have been overstated. The analysis suggested that the actual impact on the sector was likely to be less severe than initially projected. The finalised study will be approved by the Western Cape Provincial Cabinet.

The Department reiterated its commitment to evidence-based policy making, emphasising that both the collaboration with Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) and the BFAP study formed part of a broader strategy to ensure that policy decisions, particularly those related to trade and employment, were informed by credible data and robust economic modelling.

- 2.2.2 The Fruitlook Project was a key climate-smart agriculture initiative. Fruitlook was a satellite-based decision support tool that monitored soil moisture and crop water use, providing farmers with daily guidance on irrigation needs. By enabling precise water management, the tool improved water efficiency, conserved resources in water-scarce areas, and supported crop productivity and quality. Initially subsidized by the Department, the project was in the process of being gradually commercialized, with continued support planned for small-scale farmers during the transition period. The Department confirmed that an external evaluation of the project had been conducted.
- 2.2.3 South Africa was the world's second-largest exporter of citrus, after Spain, with the Western Cape ranking as the country's third-largest producing region. Recognizing the sector's strategic importance to the provincial economy, the Department allocated targeted funding of approximately R1 million to support producers, particularly in managing phytosanitary challenges such as citrus black spot and the false codling moth.

The Department actively engaged with industry stakeholders, including the Citrus Growers Association, and participated in the Citrus Summit in Gqeberha in March

2025 to discuss global trends, market movements, and export forecasts. Producers were pursuing alternative markets, with negotiations underway in several Asian countries, including the Philippines. The national Department of Agriculture has also made progress in opening markets for other fruit categories, potentially benefiting the citrus sector indirectly.

The Department continued to provide strategic support, market intelligence, and international engagement to strengthen the resilience of the citrus industry. Despite the challenges posed by US tariffs, producers were demonstrating adaptability and were actively exploring alternative market opportunities.

- 2.2.4 The Water Resilience Strategy was formally approved by the Western Cape Provincial Cabinet on 29 October 2025 and launched on 31 October 2025. The Strategy was designed to enhance the province's resilience to water scarcity and climate variability, particularly in the agricultural sector. It formed part of the Department's broader climate-smart agriculture agenda and aligned with the Western Cape's Growth for Jobs Strategy.

The complexity of water governance and the need for improved coordination between provincial and national departments was acknowledged. While devolution of water infrastructure responsibilities was not explicitly confirmed, the Department was actively engaging with relevant authorities to ensure effective implementation.

The Water Resilience Strategy represented a key milestone in the Western Cape's efforts to safeguard agricultural productivity and sustainability in the face of climate change.

- 2.2.5 In terms of veterinary and plant health services, the Department maintained its status as a leader in biosecurity, with no outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease reported in the province.

The Department is in the process of drafting a provincial veterinary services bill, following Cabinet approval, to strengthen local legislative capacity. Investments were made in laboratory infrastructure and plant health capacity to support food safety and export readiness.

- 2.2.6 Despite recruitment challenges in specialised scientific roles, the Department filled key vacancies and continued to build internal capacity. Supply Chain Management remained compliant, with no irregularities reported. The Department was investing in internal maintenance capacity to reduce reliance on the Department of Infrastructure and to address backlogs.

- 2.2.7 The Department played a leading role in the Nourish to Flourish initiative and the Interministerial Committee on Food Security, working alongside the Departments of Health, Education, and Social Development to address child nutrition and household food access.

3. Casidra

3.1 Overview

Casidra, the implementing agency for agricultural and rural development projects, reported a year of resilient performance and strategic realignment in the face of economic and operational challenges.

Casidra maintained its reputation for sound governance, receiving an unqualified audit opinion for the year under review. While audit findings were noted, corrective actions were being implemented to restore the organisation's record of clean audits, which previously stood at 36 consecutive years. The Entity successfully managed the rollover of R153 million from a late-year allocation, demonstrating its capacity to operate across multi-year funding cycles.

Casidra implemented over 7 400 food security projects, including household and community gardens, contributing significantly to nutrition and livelihoods in both rural and urban areas.

The entity continued to deliver infrastructure and input support to smallholder farmers under programmes such as the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme and Ilima/Letsema. Despite funding constraints, Casidra maintained progress on multi-year agricultural infrastructure projects, supported by its flexible financial systems.

The Casidra Board highlighted complex challenges, including delayed national budget allocations and the intricacies of farm ownership and handover. A Business Development Manager was appointed to diversify funding sources and reduce reliance on government grants. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to risk mitigation, ethical governance, and ensuring that Casidra remained financially sustainable and impact driven.

3.2 Key issues discussed

3.2.1 The Amalienstein and Waaikraal farms were state-owned, with the Department of Infrastructure holding legal title, the Department acting as custodian, and Casidra responsible for day-to-day operational management. The long-term objective was the transfer of these farms to community management by 2030, contingent upon operational viability, governance readiness, and community capacity. Funding from private sector partners, such as Lactalis (R3,3 million), supported infrastructure upgrades and improved sustainability

The Amalienstein Farm operated a dairy enterprise and cultivated pasture crops, including irrigated pastures and lucerne, alongside diversification into onion seed and other vegetable crops. Despite commercial support from partners such as Lactalis, the farm remained challenged by old infrastructure, limited resources, and drought impacts. A turnaround plan (2021) was in place to guide operational improvements and prepare the farm for eventual community handover. Priorities included infrastructure upgrades, water security, and securing commercial partnerships to ensure profitability and sustainability.

The Waaikraal Farm was undergoing a similar transition, with current operations constrained by past droughts, infrastructure limitations, and resource scarcity. Funding was being sought through commercial partnerships alongside support from the Department. A turnaround plan was in place, with ongoing community engagement and monitoring to build governance capacity, operational competence, and handover readiness.

The Committee noted ongoing challenges typical of rural farming, which included theft, vandalism, and stray animals. To address these issues, Casidra and the

Department established several mitigation measures such as engagement with community forums and local farmer associations, collaboration with local police, imposition of penalties for repeat incursions, and the deployment of night security, with plans to explore additional surveillance measures subject to budget constraints.

Financial sustainability of the farms relied on commercial partnerships, notably with Lactalis, which has supported dairy infrastructure upgrades, increased livestock numbers, and enhanced milk production. These partnerships were considered essential for ensuring long-term viability and reducing dependence on government funding.

The handover process included regular stakeholder engagements involving the Department of Land Reform and Rural Development, the Department of Infrastructure, agriculture officials, and farm leadership. Legal and municipal processes, including land adjustments and the allocation of portions for schools, churches, and worker housing, may extend timelines but were actively managed to meet the 2030 target. Ongoing community engagement was maintained to address operational, social, and legal challenges associated with the handover.

The Committee noted the complexities associated with state farm management, including the layered responsibilities between the government institutions. The Committee emphasised that successful transfer to community management required robust governance frameworks and empowerment of local communities. Evidence from previous transfers indicated that Community Property Associations often faced challenges, including internal conflict, mismanagement, and poor operational oversight.

Alternative models, such as the aggregator approach used along the Orange River, were highlighted. In this model, community members owned individual parcels but collectively manage production of high-value export commodities, promoting shared responsibility, commercial viability, and sustainable operations. The Committee stressed that without a well-designed management model and adequate support, farm handovers risked operational chaos, increased theft, and vandalism.

The Committee noted that the Spatial Development Framework played (SDF) a critical role in long-term planning and sustainable use of these state-owned farms. The SDF provided guidance on land use, infrastructure development, and environmental management, ensuring that farm operations were integrated with local communities, land-use conflicts were minimised, and sustainable agricultural and economic development was promoted. It also informed water security, irrigation planning, access infrastructure, and risk mitigation strategies, underpinning strategic decision-making and enhancing the long-term sustainability of both the Amalienstein and Waa kraal farms.

- 3.2.2 Casidra faced constraints in offering market-related salaries and pay progression, impacting staff retention. In response, the entity launched a workplace culture initiative, including flexible work arrangements, wellness programmes, and bursary support for staff. Employment equity targets showed improvement, with progress in recruiting designated groups and persons with disabilities.

4. Resolutions/Actions

- 4.1. The Committee RESOLVED that it would invite the Department of Agriculture to brief it on the:
 - 4.1.1 Evaluation Report of the Fruitlook Project with specific reference to its contribution to resource resilience, food security, and sustainable agricultural practices; details of the external evaluation conducted on the project and its findings; and an outline of the Department's planned support measures for small-scale farmers during the transition and phasing-out of the service; and
 - 4.1.2 Study commissioned through the Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) to assess the impact of US tariffs on agricultural exports.
- 4.2 The Committee REQUESTED that the Department of Agriculture provides it with the latest BFAP Report and any associated analyses on agricultural production, trade, export performance, and employment trends, to support evidence-based oversight and policy planning.
- 4.3 The Committee RESOLVED that Casidra be invited to brief the Committee on the implementation of the Spatial Development Framework (SDF) as it relates to the promotion of integrated rural development, environmental sustainability, and optimal land use at the Amalienstein and Waaikraal farms, with specific reference to how spatial and environmental considerations are being incorporated into the operational and infrastructure plans of both farms.

5 Conclusion

The Committee recognized the challenges experienced during the year and congratulated the Department and Casidra on sterling work under difficult circumstances. The Committee was satisfied that the predetermined objectives for the 2024/25 financial year were adequately achieved and that they were accurately reported.

17 Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism on the 2024/25 Annual Reports of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism; Western Cape Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency; Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone Licensing Company SOC Ltd; and Atlantis Special Economic Zone, for the year ended 31 March 2025

The Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, having deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism and its Entities, for the year ended 31 March 2025, referred to it, reports as follows:

1. Introduction

Section 113(3)(b) of the Constitution requires that "Members of the Executive Council of a province must provide the legislature with full and regular reports concerning matters under their control." Section 65 of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) requires the Minister of each department and public entity to table an annual report in the legislature within six months of the end of each financial year.

As part of its oversight function, the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism (the Committee) deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (the Department) and its Entities, Western Cape Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency

(Wesgro); Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone Licencing Company SOC Ltd trading as Freeport Saldanha Industrial Development Zone (FSIDZ); and Atlantis Special Economic Zone (ASEZ), on 27 October 2025.

Annual reports are the key instruments for departments to report on performance measured against their performance targets and budgets as outlined in their Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans.

The Annual Report Programme for the 2024/25 financial year was advertised in various newspapers, inviting stakeholders and members of the public to participate in the discussions.

The Committee deliberated on Part A: General Information, Part B: Performance Information and Part D: Human Resource Management of the respective Annual Reports.

2. Department of Economic Development and Tourism

2.1 Overview

The Department reported that the 2024/25 financial year was one of transition and renewal, marked by the appointment of a new administration, a new Minister, a new Head of Department, and the continued rollout of the Growth for Jobs (G4J) Strategy.

Despite fiscal constraints and capacity challenges, the Department achieved a clean audit for the fourth consecutive year and attained 94% of its annual performance targets, with minor variances attributed to technical adjustments rather than non-performance. The Department's strategic priorities included promoting economic growth, job creation, energy resilience, trade facilitation, and tourism recovery.

2.2 Key issues discussed

2.2.1 The Department reported a vacancy rate of approximately 38% at the start of the 2024/25 financial year, primarily due to fiscal constraints. The Department indicated that targeted recruitment efforts and ministerial approvals had resulted in a reduction of the vacancy rate to approximately 20%, with five senior management positions successfully filled during the reporting period.

Members expressed concern about the continued impact of staff turnover, limited promotional opportunities, and succession planning gaps on institutional stability and service delivery. The Department confirmed that exit interviews were routinely conducted to identify underlying causes of staff resignations and that a staff development initiative had been introduced to strengthen succession planning and career progression pathways.

The philosophy of impact-driven hiring was reiterated, with an explanation that new appointments would only be made where positions directly contributed to improving the lives of the poor and unemployed. It was further noted that staff retention challenges were a global phenomenon but that the Department remained committed to building a capable, efficient, and purpose-driven public administration.

The Committee acknowledged the Department's progress in reducing vacancy levels but emphasised the importance of maintaining organisational capacity to

deliver on key priorities such as visa reform, skills development, renewable energy expansion, and the extension of economic programmes to rural areas.

- 2.2.2 The Department continued in its efforts to improve visa facilitation processes to enhance tourism, investment, and business travel. A comprehensive benchmarking study was commissioned to identify systemic challenges within South Africa's visa regime and its impact on inward travel and economic growth. The findings were presented to the Provincial Cabinet and subsequently shared with the national Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Leon Schreiber. The Department indicated that several of the study's recommendations were being considered at national level to address structural barriers and modernise the visa system.

A key milestone during the year under review was the implementation of the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme, introduced in January 2025, in collaboration with the Department of Home Affairs. This initiative allowed approved tour operators to issue digital group visas for visitors from key markets such as India and China, simplifying travel procedures and supporting the recovery of the tourism sector. To date, 65 tour operators have been accredited under the scheme, facilitating the entry of more than 11 000 tourists from these markets, particularly during the off-peak tourism season. The Department reported that this initiative has significantly enhanced conference tourism and regional visitor inflows.

In addition, the Department deployed interns to assist with passenger facilitation at airports and continued collaboration with national authorities on the introduction of electronic gates to improve traveller processing and border efficiency. These interventions formed part of the Department's broader commitment to reducing red tape and enhancing the province's global competitiveness.

The Committee expressed concern about the impact of visa delays on tourism and investment growth but commended the Department for its proactive, evidence-based advocacy and for leading practical reforms through the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme. Members encouraged the Department to expand similar facilitation mechanisms to additional high-potential markets and to monitor the long-term impact of these initiatives on tourism recovery, foreign investment, and the Western Cape's international competitiveness.

- 2.2.3 During the year under review, more than 11 700 jobs were created through strategic collaborations in the green, digital, and manufacturing sectors. The Department reported an 80% transition rate from internships to full-time employment, supported by significant private-sector investment in accredited training programmes.

Companies partnering with the Department contributed up to R60 000 per learner for specialised skills training and as much as R250 000 per learner for artisanal programmes. These investments reflected a strong private-sector commitment to sustainable employment outcomes, as companies had a vested interest in retaining the skilled employees they trained.

The Department highlighted that this demand-driven approach ensured that training programmes were aligned with the labour market's evolving needs.

In the Business Process Outsourcing sector, approximately 202 500 jobs were reported, contributing an estimated R350 000 per job in foreign revenue and about

R2,5 billion to the provincial Gross Domestic Product. The Committee noted ongoing collaboration with companies in the technology, data science, and software development sectors to strengthen the skills pipeline and reduce reduction rates in these high-demand fields.

However, the Department acknowledged persistent challenges, including a shortage of qualified artisans, an aging artisanal workforce (with an average age above 50), and the high cost of training. These factors were identified as potential risks to industrial growth and infrastructure development. The Department has prioritised artisanal and technical training programmes as part of its long-term strategy to enhance youth employability and industrial resilience.

The Committee commended the Department for its strong partnerships with the private sector and its focus on demand-led, sustainable job creation. Members welcomed the high internship-to-employment transition rate and encouraged the continued expansion of artisanal, digital, and technology-related training programmes.

The Committee also expressed concern about the aging artisanal workforce and urged the Department to strengthen its skills pipeline, expand youth-focused training, and further leverage private-sector investment to enhance skills retention and productivity across the provincial economy.

- 2.2.4 The Energy Resilience and the Just Energy Transition (JET) was a collaborative initiative supported by international partners including the European Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom, representing an investment package of approximately USD 8,5 billion.

The Western Cape Government established an Energy Council and developed a Provincial Energy Plan aligned with the JET framework. The Plan seek to strengthen the province's energy security, reduce reliance on Eskom, and expand renewable generation capacity.

As part of its energy resilience programme, Riversdale in the Garden Route was identified as the first town to be free from load shedding, with a second town under consideration. The Department clarified that energy independence does not imply complete separation from Eskom but rather a stable, self-sufficient power supply during national outages.

The Committee also noted the use of solar-powered desalination plants, co-funded by French partners, as examples of renewable energy being applied to local infrastructure projects. The Department reaffirmed that energy resilience remained a key pillar of the G4J Strategy, recognising that sustainable economic growth is dependent on reliable energy provision.

The Committee commended the Department for its proactive efforts in developing the Provincial Energy Plan and establishing international partnerships. Members emphasised the importance of ensuring that renewable energy investments benefit rural communities and areas with limited grid access.

Concerns were raised regarding transmission infrastructure constraints, which could hinder the pace of renewable integration. The Committee encouraged greater collaboration with the private sector to accelerate grid expansion, improve energy

storage capacity, and enhance local manufacturing within the green economy. The Committee further stressed the need for regular reporting on project implementation, funding utilisation, and measurable outcomes linked to the G4J Strategy to ensure accountability and long-term energy security across the province.

- 2.2.5 In terms of export promotion related to Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) Development, the Department highlighted its initiatives to strengthen export capacity, promote inclusive entrepreneurship, and enhance market access, particularly for those operating in rural and township economies. These initiatives formed part of the Department's broader objective to stimulate economic participation and support enterprise growth through targeted funding and capacity-building programmes.

The Department reported that 97 businesses were supported during the year under review. Of these, 61 enterprises successfully pitched to funders, resulting in R25 million in approved funding. A further seven businesses advanced to the accelerator phase, collectively creating jobs and raising an additional R40 million in investment. The Programme placed a strong emphasis on women-owned, youth-led, and rural-based enterprises, linking high-potential companies with investors and development partners.

The Department also highlighted the success of the SMME Booster Fund, which provided financial and technical support to township-based enterprises through partnerships with intermediary organisations. Approximately 80% of supported businesses were black-owned, and 44% were women-owned, reflecting the Department's commitment to equitable and broad-based economic empowerment.

In response to queries from Members, the Department confirmed that selection criteria and monitoring processes were clearly defined and that regular site visits and monthly engagements were conducted with intermediary organisations to ensure compliance and evaluate impact. The Committee welcomed these measures but emphasised the need for continuous tracking of long-term outcomes, particularly in relation to job creation, business sustainability, and market expansion.

The Committee commended the Department for its efforts to promote entrepreneurship, investment readiness, and export growth, noting that such initiatives played a vital role in supporting inclusive economic development and enhancing the province's competitiveness in domestic and international markets.

3. Western Cape Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency (WESGRO)

3.1 Overview

Wesgro, the official tourism, trade, and investment promotion agency for the Western Cape, presented its 2024/25 Annual Report outlining strong performance and sound governance. The agency achieved a clean audit for the second consecutive year, reflecting robust internal controls and effective financial management.

Wesgro operated in a dynamic global trade environment characterised by shifting economic alliances, ongoing geopolitical tensions in Europe and the Middle East, and

evolving international policy frameworks. Despite these uncertainties, the agency reported growing investor and visitor confidence in the Western Cape, supported by a stable governance environment, clear economic leadership, and strong public-private collaboration.

The agency's achievements during the year under review included the facilitation of R14,6 billion in new investments, R5,38 billion in trade declarations, and the execution of 45 international trade missions. Over 1 500 active exporters were registered on the Cape Trade Portal, while 36 business event bids were secured, with a projected economic impact of R745,1 million.

In addition, the agency reported R390 million in private-sector funding and R46,5 million in Corporate Social Investment (CSI) commitments through the EduInvest initiative, which supported the construction of four new schools.

Wesgro also facilitated 86 cruise ship calls, generating an estimated R1,32 billion in economic impact, and successfully supported the expansion of international air connectivity through Cape Town Air Access, adding one new airline, four new international routes, and ten route expansions.

The Committee commended Wesgro for its continued role in promoting the Western Cape as a leading destination for investment, trade, and tourism.

3.2 Key issues discussed

3.2.1 EduInvest was described as a private-sector investment vehicle in education, enabling the replication of catalytic delivery models that support inclusive economic growth and align with Wesgro's broader mandate to enhance provincial competitiveness. By leveraging business partnerships, the initiative has helped to reduce infrastructure backlogs, stimulate local construction and employment, and improve educational outcomes in under-served communities.

During the year under review, four new schools were built through the EduInvest partnership model, attracting approximately R390 million in private investment and securing an additional R46,5 million in CSI commitments from participating companies. The schools developed under this initiative included Spark Primary (Blue Downs), Crystal House (Paarl), and Epics School (Kayamandi, Stellenbosch), each designed to serve areas of high learner demand and promote access to quality, affordable education.

The Committee commended Wesgro for the tangible impact achieved through the EduInvest initiative and noted its value as a model for future private-sector collaboration in public service delivery.

3.2.2 The Committee raised questions regarding Wesgro's support for rural exporters, particularly those located in regions such as the Central Karoo, where limited infrastructure, connectivity, and market access continue to hinder participation in international trade. The Committee emphasised the importance of ensuring that the province's trade promotion efforts and export development programmes are inclusive and accessible to businesses across all districts.

Wesgro outlined its continued efforts to broaden export participation through the Cape Trade Portal, a digital platform that connected Western Cape exporters to

global buyers, facilitated product showcasing, and simplified trade promotion processes. The agency reported that more than 1 500 exporters were currently registered on the platform, including an increasing number of small and emerging enterprises from rural districts.

To strengthen inclusion beyond digital engagement, Wesgro implemented district outreach campaigns in collaboration with the Department and local municipalities. These initiatives focused on training and mentorship in export readiness, compliance, logistics, and digital marketing, thereby equipping rural entrepreneurs with the skills and tools necessary to compete internationally.

Wesgro further confirmed its plans to enhance digital accessibility by improving user experience on the Cape Trade Portal and by expanding its regional outreach programmes to under-served areas. The agency reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that export growth was inclusive, contributing to both provincial competitiveness and the economic empowerment of rural communities.

The Committee commended Wesgro for its proactive approach and encouraged the agency to continue strengthening partnerships with district chambers of commerce, business support organisations, and development agencies to deepen the impact of export facilitation across all regions of the Western Cape.

4. Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone Licencing Company SOC Ltd Trading as Freeport Saldanha Industrial Development Zone (FSIDZ)

4.1 Overview

The FSIDZ continued to position itself as a strategic industrial and logistics hub for the region, with a focus on maritime services, energy production, oil and gas, and offshore manufacturing. During the year under review, FSIDZ reported an improvement in financial and operational governance, including the stabilisation of management structures and stronger performance oversight.

Investment promotion activities were intensified, with a growing pipeline of investors in energy, logistics, and marine-related industries. FSIDZ's rebranding and targeted marketing campaigns contributed to renewed investor confidence. Freeport Saldanha also continued to collaborate closely with the Department, Transnet, and Eskom to support the development of enabling infrastructure and grid capacity in the Saldanha Bay region, aligning with the province's Just Energy Transition objectives.

The entity highlighted ongoing efforts to attract both local and international investors to projects focusing on green hydrogen, renewable energy, and industrial diversification, positioning the zone as a catalyst for sustainable regional development and job creation.

FSIDZ achieved a clean audit for the year under review. Four of five previously vacant factories had been successfully leased. Several high-impact projects, particularly in the green hydrogen and steel manufacturing sectors, were in advanced feasibility or early implementation stages, with construction expected to commence within the next six to 12 months. FSIDZ also confirmed the establishment of new governance structures, including the reconstitution of its Board and Audit Committee, aimed at improving oversight and investor confidence.

4.2 Key issue discussed

The Committee noted the significant progress made in stabilising governance and improving operational performance through the implementation of a structured Recovery Plan. The Committee acknowledged FSIDZ's growing contribution to the Western Cape's industrial and energy development agenda, noting its strategic role in advancing the province's Just Energy Transition objectives.

However, Members expressed concern regarding delays in securing port access and the slow pace of engagement with the Transnet National Ports Authority, which continued to constrain project implementation and investor commitments. The Minister confirmed that the matter had been escalated to Transnet's national leadership and that ongoing advocacy efforts were underway to unlock the required infrastructure access and operational approvals.

The Committee also raised questions about investment traction, governance reforms, and infrastructure readiness, urging FSIDZ to accelerate collaboration with the Department, Transnet, and Eskom to ensure the SEZ's long-term sustainability. The entity assured Members that corrective measures, enhanced oversight mechanisms, and a strengthened investment facilitation framework had been implemented to address these challenges.

The Committee encouraged FSIDZ to ensure that the economic benefits of its projects extend to surrounding communities through skills development programmes, local procurement, and employment opportunities, particularly in alignment with the province's Growth for Jobs (G4J) Strategy. Members requested regular updates on the SEZ's investment pipeline, public-private partnerships, and progress in advancing the province's renewable energy goals.

5. Atlantis Special Economic Zone (ASEZ)

5.1 Overview

The purpose of the ASEZ was to establish a sustainable Greentech Special Economic Zone that fostered a supportive business environment for the green economy, promoted integrated economic growth, and generated employment opportunities. The entity was partially owned by the City of Cape Town and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. It leveraged relationships with external academic institutions and international communities to fulfill its mandate effectively.

The ASEZ showed continued success in attracting renewable energy and component manufacturing investors, with notable growth in private-sector participation. The entity achieved a clean audit, underscoring sound governance and effective financial management practices.

Key achievements included increased investor commitments within the renewable energy, waste management, and green technology sectors. The ASEZ secured additional funding from the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition amounting to R400 million for infrastructure development and was pursuing further support through the Budget Facility for Infrastructure and partnerships with Infrastructure South Africa.

5.2 Key issues discussed

- 5.2.1 The Committee raised concerns regarding funding limitations, delays in top-structure development, infrastructure readiness, and high rates and taxes imposed by the City of Cape Town. These factors were identified as potential barriers to scaling investment activity and improving the Zone's financial sustainability. The Committee emphasised the importance of diversifying funding sources through the Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI) and private-sector partnerships, as well as exploring incentives to attract and retain investors.

Approximately 90% of the ASEZ's developed land parcels had been allocated to investors, with 94 hectares still available for future development. However, limited funding for top-structure development and delayed environmental approvals had affected timelines for investor occupation. Engagements with potential tenants and public infrastructure partners were ongoing to mitigate these challenges.

- 5.2.2 The Committee noted that the ASEZ was actively engaging with the BFI as part of its strategy to unlock alternative infrastructure funding. The ASEZ applied to Infrastructure South Africa to be included in the Infrastructure Fund pipeline, aiming to receive project preparation support and assistance in packaging bankable projects.

The BFI engagement was intended to diversify funding sources beyond the government budget for top structures and civil infrastructure in zones 2 and 3; attract private-sector investment by making projects investment-ready; and accelerate infrastructure delivery, supporting the transition from planning to operational phases.

- 5.2.3 The Committee acknowledged challenges affecting ASEZ's financial sustainability, including delays in tenant lease agreements, slow infrastructure rollout, and reliance on government funding. The Committee also noted ongoing efforts to engage Infrastructure South Africa and private developers, with optimism that BFI support will unlock additional capital for development.

6 Resolutions/Actions

- 6.1. The Committee RESOLVED that it would undertake a follow-up oversight visit to:
- 6.1.1 Atlantis Special Economic Zone to track progress on infrastructure development and tenant uptake; and
 - 6.1.3 Freeport Saldanha Industrial Development Zone to assess investment traction and governance improvements.
- 6.2 The Committee REQUESTED that WESGRO provides it with a detailed report on the four schools built under the EduInvest initiative, with specific reference to the scope and objectives of each project; the impact of the projects on the respective communities; and the materials and infrastructure used in the construction of the schools.

7 Conclusion

The Committee recognised the challenges experienced during the year and congratulated the Department and its entities on sterling work under difficult circumstances. The

Committee was satisfied that the predetermined objectives for the 2024/25 financial year were adequately achieved and that they were accurately reported.

Furthermore, The Committee extended its congratulations to the Department of Economic and its Entities on the preparation and presentation of their respective Annual Reports. The Committee commended the high standard of reporting, the clarity of performance information, and the evident commitment to transparency and good governance reflected in the documents. Members acknowledged the consistent efforts in driving economic growth, investment promotion, and tourism development within the Western Cape.

While acknowledging progress, the Committee emphasised the need for continued focus on delivery, accountability, and inclusive growth.

18 Report of the Standing Committee on Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport on the 2024/25 Annual Reports of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, The Western Cape Language Committee, the Western Cape Cultural Commission, and Heritage Western Cape.

The 2025/26 strategic objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speaker's priorities, which have an impact on committees, are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and
Priority 3: Strengthening the core business.

The Standing Committee on Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport, having deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (Department), the Western Cape Language Committee (WCLA), and the Western Cape Cultural Commission (WCCC) and Heritage Western Cape (HWC), for the year ended 31 March 2025, reports as follows:

The Standing Committee on Police Oversight, Community Safety, Cultural Affairs and Sport, conducts oversight over multiple portfolios. The annual report process affords the Committee the opportunity to engage the respective departments and entities on its annual reports.

Introduction

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament's (WCPP) Annual Report programme for the 2024/25 financial year was advertised in newspapers, as well as the WCPP's social media platforms, inviting stakeholders and members of the public to attend and participate in the discussions. The Committee deliberated on the Annual Reports of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (Department), the Western Cape Language Committee (WCLA), and the Western Cape Cultural Commission (WCCC) and Heritage Western Cape (HWC), on 28 October 2025 as part of its oversight function. The Minister and the Head of Department were given an opportunity to make opening remarks. Likewise, the chairpersons and representatives for the three entities.

The Department and its Entities were examined on:

Part A: General Information,

Part B: Departmental Performance Information; and

Part D: Human Resources Management of the Department's Annual Report

Members of the public were also given an opportunity to pose questions and to make input during the discussions. There were no submissions or input from the public.

1 Welcome

The Chairperson opened the meeting and allowed for brief introductions.

2. Context

The Chairperson stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the 2024/25 Annual Reports of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (Department), the Western Cape Language Committee (WCLA), and the Western Cape Cultural Commission (WCCC) and Heritage Western Cape (HWC),).

Minister RD Mackenzie and the Head of Department, Mr. G Redman, were given the opportunity for brief introductory comments.

3 Western Cape Language Committee

Ms. G Lentz, WCLC Chairperson, along with the departmental officials, responded to the Committee's questions on the WCLC. The following are pertinent points pertaining to the year under review.

- 3.1 In order to further promote the use of marginalized language, the Department attaches the promotion of languages to cultural awareness programmes. This improves the reach as promoting language without the cultural significance would not be as effective.
- 3.2 The WCLC also expanded its stakeholder partnerships, collaborating with the Department of Correctional Services and the National Library of South Africa, to reinforce the use of reading as a tool to rehabilitate prisoners.
- 3.3 The WCLC and the Department enhanced their partnerships with the Cochoqua Khoisan Tribal House to further promote the *Teach Yourself Nama* booklet. The partnership with the University of Cape Town and the Namibian government is also an ongoing relationship that seeks to sustainably promote the use of, and teaching of Nama.
- 3.4 The WCLC also hosted an isiXhosa Spelling Bee competition for Grade 4 learners.
- 3.5 Other key achievements include initiatives to promote South African Sign Language as well as engagement with the University of the Western Cape's Centre for Multilingualism and Diversities Research, to host a Kaaps Symposium.

4 Western Cape Cultural Commission

Mr. G. Moolman represented the WCCC due to the unavailability of the chairperson. The following are pertinent points pertaining to the year under review.

- 4.1 The Department reported that it encourages municipalities to include sites for initiation in their spatial development planning. There are challenges in locating suitable land for initiation sites, which ensure that the sanctity and dignity of the practice are upheld, during rapid urbanization.
- 4.2 The Department has engaged with the South African Police Service to address the extortion of parents of initiates, who have suffered extortion threats whilst their sons are away for initiation.
- 4.3 The Department has an annual programme to train initiative carers and practitioners in health and hygiene-related matters, to ensure that initiatives remain medically

safe. Likewise, the relevant initiation forums are given organizational development training to build well-structured forums.

- 4.4 The Department also seeks to strengthen the relationship between the initiation forums and landowners of sites earmarked for initiation practices.
- 4.5 The Department is developing a new model for facilities, such as the Okkie Jooste facility, currently undergoing upgrades. This includes discussions with the Department of Tourism to use cultural facilities as potential backpacking services.

5 Heritage Western Cape

Ms. R Gani, Chairperson of the HWC, along with the Chief Executive Officer, Dr M Janse Van Rensburg, responded to the Committee's questions. The following are pertinent points pertaining to the year under review.

- 5.1 HWC has an active link on its website to report heritage crime. The HWC has collaborated with a network of conservation bodies to combat heritage crime.
- 5.2 The HWC also provides training to heritage officers and SAPS officials on the importance of heritage sites and what constitutes heritage crime. The Hawks, essentially the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), has a specialized unit dealing with heritage crime.
- 5.3 HWC processed 2256 heritage applications for the year under review. The Lean Methodology was implemented and significantly improved efforts to process applications.
- 5.4 Awareness programmes to promote HWC
- 5.5 The HWC continues its rollout of Quick Response (QR) Code plaques at various heritage sites. Scanning these QR codes gives access to valuable information on the respective heritage sites.

6 Public Input on the Entities

There was no public input on the entities.

7 Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport's Annual Report

- 7.1 The Department stated that it has a budget of R2.5 million to assist municipalities with the maintenance and upgrade of municipal sports facilities.
- 7.2 The Department invites municipalities to apply for funding to upgrade municipal sports facilities. This is an annual opportunity to apply for the funding.
- 7.3 The Department has 346 service delivery points for the after-school programme that include MOD centres, shared facilities programme, and recreation centres. Approximately 52% of these points are based in the rural areas, whereas 48% are based in the metro region.
- 7.4 The Department hosted several collaborations with the Tribal Houses, focusing on youth and cultural identity.
- 7.5 The Department facilitated 3600 literacy interventions reaching and affecting 604,000 residents of the province.
- 7.6 There are 2507 registered clubs across all federations. The Club Development framework focuses on the 16 priority codes per year. The R13 million funding is used for the procurement of sports equipment and attire, support for coaches and players, and transport to and from fixtures. Federations nominate registered clubs for funding.
- 7.7 The Department provided responses to questions on resignations. There were varied reasons for these resignations.

8 Public participation

Members of the public addressed the Committee and the Department on matters listed below. The Department duly responded.

- 8.1 Mr. N Sandlana, chairperson of the Gugulethu Sports Council, raised concerns about the upgrading of sports facilities in Gugulethu and referenced his engagements with the City of Cape Town and the Department. He emphasized the importance of an indoor swimming pool complex for Gugulethu.
- 8.2 Mr. M Khoabani, Secretary of the Western Cape Initiation Council Forum, highlighted concerns regarding the rezoning of initiation sites, particularly the spatial planning for developments earmarked close to the initiation sites. The sanctity, values, and respect for the initiation sites and the rite are threatened by potential urbanized developments within proximity of the initiation sites. He added that there should be a more sizeable funding mechanism to ensure that initiation processes are given sufficient support. He added that there are no AmaHlubi and Basotho initiation sites in the province, specifically the Metro region.
- 8.3 Mr. K Nantolwana, from the Gugulethu Sports Council, questioned the Department on the underspend and the status of development of coaches in township areas.
- 8.4 Mr. M Inno, a member of the public, submitted comments related to initiation. Mr. stated that there was no support for Tswana men undergoing initiation. He questioned the challenging costs associated with initiation processes and questioned the support offered by the Department.

Paramount Chief S Morris, Cochoqua Tribe, requested a prayer to bless the meeting. The Chairperson allowed the blessing to be offered.

19 Report of the Standing Committee on Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning on the Annual Report of the Department of Local Government for the 2024/25 financial year.

The Standing Committee on Local Government, having deliberated on the Annual Report of the Department of Local Government for the 2024/25 financial year, reports as follows:

1 Introduction

The Annual Report of the Department of Local Government (the Department) for the financial year ended 31 March 2025 was tabled on 9 September 2025 in accordance with section 65(1)(a) of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), as amended.

As part of its oversight function, the Standing Committee on Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (the Committee) deliberated on the Annual Report of the Department on 13 October 2025. Annual reports are the key instruments for departments to report on performance measured against their performance targets and budgets as outlined in their strategic plans and annual performance plans. In addition, hereto, it accounts for the success of each programme that was implemented.

Standing Rule 111(1)(a) of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament provides standing committees with the mandate to consider departmental annual reports submitted in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999).

The Annual Report Programme for the 2024/25 financial year was advertised in newspapers to invite stakeholders and members of the public to attend and participate in the discussions.

The Committee deliberated on Part A: General Information, Part B: Performance Information and Part D: Human Resource Management, after which the Chairperson afforded an opportunity to the public to ask questions to the Department.

The Committee proceeded to engage with the Department by asking questions on Parts A, B and D of the Annual Report. All questions were satisfactorily answered, and the Committee was satisfied that the Department achieved its predetermined objectives for the 2024/25 financial year and that it was accurately reported on.

2 Overview

The Western Cape Department of Local Government's 2024/25 Annual Report presents a compelling narrative of resilience, innovation, and service excellence in the face of significant challenges.

The year was defined by a series of disasters, including the tragic building collapse in George and widespread flooding across the province. These events tested the capacity of local government structures, but the coordinated response—led by the Western Cape Disaster Management Centre—demonstrated the strength of intergovernmental collaboration and emergency preparedness.

Despite these challenges, the Department maintained a strong performance record. It achieved 97% of its annual targets and received its 12th consecutive clean audit, reflecting a deep commitment to good governance, financial accountability, and ethical leadership. Municipalities across the province continued to show financial resilience, with high levels of grant spending efficiency and improved audit outcomes.

A major focus was placed on capacity building, with extensive training provided to councillors and officials to strengthen governance, ethics, and financial management. The Department also played a key role in supporting municipalities navigating coalition dynamics, helping to stabilize local governance structures.

Infrastructure development was another highlight. The Department facilitated 17 water and wastewater projects valued at over R3 billion, and secured R106 million in international funding to support sustainable development. These efforts were aligned with the Western Cape Water Resilience Strategy, which aims to enhance long-term water security through innovative solutions like groundwater resilience projects.

The Department emphasised their efforts in Integrated Governmental Relations, particularly through the Joint District and Metropolitan Approach. By working closely with municipalities, they have identified catalytic projects and collaborated to minimize overlap and duplication.

The Thusong Programme continued to be a cornerstone of service delivery, reaching over 1.2 million people with essential services and driving youth development initiatives. The

Department also hosted the Local Government Innovation Summit, showcasing advancements in technology, cybersecurity, and data-driven governance.

Internally, the Department strengthened its governance frameworks, focusing on risk management, fraud prevention, and compliance with employment equity and B-BBEE standards. Human resource strategies emphasized wellness, performance management, and skills development, ensuring a capable and motivated workforce.

3 Challenges and concerns

While largely positive the Department's report also reflects some key concerns and challenges that shaped its performance and strategic focus.

3.1 Governance in coalition municipalities

The rise of coalition governments in several municipalities presented governance challenges such as instability in council decision-making, leadership disputes and difficulty in maintaining service delivery continuity. The Department had to intervene to support these municipalities, indicating a broader concern about the sustainability and functionality of coalition arrangements in local governance.

3.2 Infrastructure delivery bottlenecks

Although significant progress was made in water and wastewater infrastructure, some projects faced delays due to procurement issues, technical capacity gaps, and intergovernmental coordination hurdles. These bottlenecks risk slowing down service delivery improvements, especially in underserved communities.

3.3 Financial oversight and audit outcomes

While many municipalities improved their audit outcomes, a few still struggled with irregular expenditure, weak internal controls and poor asset management. This uneven performance underscores the need for continued financial oversight, capacity building, and stricter compliance enforcement.

3.4 Human resource constraints

The Committee is particularly concerned regarding the human resources constraint not only in the Department but also at municipalities such as skills shortages in critical areas, especially engineering and financial management, high staff turnover in municipalities and challenges in attracting and retaining talent, particularly in rural areas. These HR issues impact the ability of municipalities to deliver services effectively and maintain institutional stability.

3.5 Community engagement and trust

Despite the success of the Thusong Programme, the Department acknowledged that public trust in local government remains fragile in some areas. Strengthening participatory governance and improving communication with residents remains a priority.

4. Information requested

The Committee REQUESTED that the Department:

- 4.1 Provides a detailed cost analysis of payments made to consultants during the year under review, including a comparative estimate of the cost had individuals with equivalent skills been appointed internally;
- 4.2 Submits a summary of work completed by consultants appointed, outlining the objectives, deliverables, and outcomes of their respective projects;
- 4.3 Indicates which municipalities have health programmes in place, and provides details on the scope and focus areas of these programmes;
- 4.4 Provides a report on the status and effectiveness of municipalities' Fraud and Corruption Prevention Plans, including:
 - 4.4.1 A summary of any reported incidents of fraud and corruption; and
 - 4.4.2 The corrective actions taken in response to these incidents;
- 4.5 Submits a progress report detailing its short-, medium-, and long-term strategies to address vacancies in critical posts, including information on the bursary initiative;
- 4.6 Provides the Committee with a risk mitigation plan to ensure continuity of operations during the relocation of the Western Cape Disaster Management Centre;
- 4.7 In collaboration with the Department of Traditional Affairs, brief the Committee on the criteria used for the recognition of traditional leaders, with the aim of ensuring consistency in the application of these criteria.

5. Recommendations

The Committee RECOMMENDED that the Department:

- 5.1 Explore strategies to enhance councillor training, with a focus on improving governance and overall municipal performance;
- 5.2 Identify municipalities that demonstrate sound and consistent financial practices, and promote these models as best practices to underperforming municipalities to enhance financial sustainability;
- 5.3 Replicate the success of the fire response coordination model, including the regional mobilisation of helicopters, to proactively address the ageing infrastructure challenges faced by municipalities;
- 5.4 Accelerate the implementation of energy and water resilience plans, ensuring that the significant funds allocated to these areas are utilised effectively and that consultant spending yields measurable and tangible outcomes; and
- 5.5 Explore innovative and collaborative solutions to support municipalities in modernising their systems without bearing the full financial burden. This includes initiating a strategic discussion or feasibility study on alternative approaches such as shared services, phased upgrades, and public-private partnerships. These approaches should be considered for inclusion in the Department's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) going forward.

6. Conclusion

In summary, the 2024/25 Annual Report reflects a department that is not only responsive to crises but also proactive in building resilient, well-governed, and innovative municipalities. It stands as a testament to the power of collaboration, strategic investment, and a relentless focus on service delivery.

The Chairperson thanked the Members of the Committee, the Minister, the Head of Department and all the officials of the Department for their preparation and responses to the questions raised by the Committee.