
THURSDAY, 23 APRIL 2020

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

[Virtual online sitting held through Microsoft Teams]

The House met at 14:15.

The Speaker took the Chair.

The SPEAKER: Hon members, thank you very much and welcome to the first virtual sitting of the House and thank you for your indulgence and I am sure we are learning and one of the lessons is that it is one of the things that we will do even post the Covid-19 disaster period. Now let us pray.

The Speaker read the prayer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon members. You are already seated. I am going to at this stage read some opening remarks for us to understand what the provisions are, set out by the Speaker, in order to enable us to perform our duties as hon members and I trust that everybody has been connected

to participate in this historic first sitting of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament in terms of Rule 1A of the Standing Rules, with all our members in remote attendance by electronic means.

Since the announcement by the President, Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, of the measures to contain the Covid-19 pandemic, the WCPP has been fully operational with the members doing their constituency work, to assist the general public in whatever way possible, as well as our committees playing their oversight role in an effective, efficient and transparent manner.

Our sitting today would be conducted in terms of the Standing Rules and Directives issued by me on 17 April 2020. Hon members, allow me to highlight some of the important directives in this regard.

The Secretary and his administration will ensure dedicated technical support at all times during this sitting. The quorum requirements for the sitting of the House are as provided for in the Constitution and the Standing Rules. Unless there is an indication of unanimous concurrence, voting will take place by members present and entitled to vote in order to cast their votes by clearly identifying themselves to the Presiding Officer. They would do so verbally expressing their votes.

Members who are present have all the privileges and immunities imparted by the law. This is the House of Parliament. Members who are considered to be out of order by the Presiding Officer – myself in this case – that

would then mean that their microphones will be muted and they will be called to order.

Attendance of members will be recorded by the Serjeant-at-arms.

In instances where these directives do not cover a particular eventuality, the Standing Rules will apply. In instances where the Rules cannot be applied, the ruling by the Presiding Officer is final.

Hon members, all microphones have been muted. You are requested to only unmute your microphone when you intend to raise a point of order in terms of the Standing Rules. You should then first state your name and your surname in order for the Presiding Officer to recognise you. When you speak, please ensure that your microphone is unmuted, and when you are of course done speaking, please mute your microphone in order to allow other members to speak.

Hon members, I have invited the media, and I am hoping that the work of the media will be made easier by them having access to this Microsoft Teams meeting as guests of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. Members of the press may however not use the chat room, speak or activate their cameras while sitting in the gallery because this is a sitting of Parliament in session, as we would do as if we were physically in the House in the WCPP in Wale Street.

For the purpose of this sitting, and as this is our first sitting of the House via Microsoft Teams, I am requesting that hon members be sensitive to language because we at this stage do not have interpretation services as we would otherwise have, and that members at least allow us at this stage to use one language that we can all use to communicate.

The Secretary will explore options for translations for the future so that the sittings of the House continue as per normal in terms of the language that we use, and we do apologise in this regard and I do hope that members have forgiven me.

At this point, hon members, I wish to welcome you and wish you the best of luck with the sitting and say to all of us the new normal has arrived and I hope that we are all able to embrace it and move on with the times.

Thank you very much, hon members. I now recognise the Chief Whip.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you Mr Speaker, I move without notice:

That notwithstanding the provisions of the relevant Standing Rules, Questions to the Premier without Notice and Members' Statements, that being the only scheduled business of the House, will take precedence on Thursday, 23 April 2020. I so move.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon Chief Whip. Are there any members who

wish to object to the motion by the Chief Whip? No objections? Agreed to.

Hon Chief Whip, I recognise you.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you Mr Speaker, I move without notice:

That the House ratifies the decision by the Speaker for the establishment of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, announced on 14 April 2020, as contemplated in Rule 119(2) of the Standing Rules. I so move.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon, the Chief Whip.

Hon members, are there any objections to the Chief Whip having read the motion? No objections? Thank you, hon members, the motion is carried. Thank you, Chief Whip.

Hon members, I would like you to [Interjection.]

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Hon Speaker, may I address you quickly?

The SPEAKER: Of course, is that hon member Mackenzie?

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Yes, hon Speaker. I have just received a Tweet

from a journalist... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: I recognise you.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Thank you. I have just received a Tweet from a journalist saying the link Parliament sent them to join MS Teams is not working and if we can urgently address the matter, please.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Mackenzie. That matter will be attended to by the administration. Our technical team is on standby. They are going to help them now. Apologies to the media for that. I think on that point ... [Interjection.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Speaker, on a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Yes, hon member. Will you please identify yourself?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: It is member Dugmore, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Yes, sir, yes, hon, the Leader of the Opposition.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Speaker, could I ask you to consider, in the light of hon

member Mackenzie's request, that we actually do not formally start until there is a link-up. I think there is a lot of interest in this first session and if we simply proceed and the public and the media are not able to follow – I am not sure what the problem is, if it is the YouTube link which is the problem, or if there are journalists who are trying to get onto the Microsoft, so if you could clarify that. I am just – my main interest is the members of the public so if the YouTube is working then obviously you would use your discretion to make a decision but I think it would be a pity if anyone was excluded and we simply proceeded. I so move, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Okay, thank you honourable, the Leader of the Opposition. I do not know why the link on YouTube is not working, but the members of the media... [Interjection.]

Mr R D MACKENZIE: It is the link on YouTube – sorry, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Please take your seat, hon member Mackenzie, let me proceed.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Okay.

The SPEAKER: I will recognise you shortly. I am just responding on the point raised by hon Dugmore. There are two invites. One is through the open one on YouTube so that all members of the public have access to what we are doing here in the House.

The second one was to extend an invitation to accommodate the media as guests, as we would otherwise do here in the gallery in the House so both of those should be working, so I just want to get the feedback from the IT Team why any of those is not functional, as it should. Can I get an indication that all members are in the House?

I am sure, I am sure. I am here now, I see now that hon member Dugmore is saying that it is working. Now I recognise hon member Mackenzie.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Thank you hon Speaker. It is not the link on YouTube, YouTube is working; the link for members of the media to join MS Teams – that is the one that is not working.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Mackenzie. The IT will attend to that but members of the media for now can follow the YouTube whilst they are trying to connect.

May we please proceed. Are we all ready?

Mr P MARRAN: Hon Speaker, on a point of correction.

The SPEAKER: Yes Sir, who is that?

Mr P MARRAN: Hon Marran.

The SPEAKER: Hon Marran, I recognise you, Sir.

Mr P MARRAN: Hon Speaker, just one correction. It is not the Leader of the Opposition; it is Leader of the Official Opposition. [Laughter.]

Ms L J BOTHA: Frivolous!

The SPEAKER: [Laughter.] Thank you very much, hon member Marran. We can rewrite the Rules of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. Currently they say Leader of the Opposition, but I would like to recognise the hon member Dugmore as the Leader of the Official Opposition. I have no qualms with that. In fact, I ordinarily call him that, but thank you, sir.

Mr P MARRAN: Thank you, Speaker.

The SPEAKER: That point has been carried, no problem. May we please proceed? We have the next order, which in this case we have the questions to the honourable the Premier without notice in terms of Rule 202. I would like to recognise ... [Interjection.]

Hon members, I am just going to read the list of the members who will participate in asking the questions to the Premier, but I want to make this rider. We have 20 minutes to ask questions to the Premier and I have seven members – two, four, six members that would like to ask questions and it is hon Sayed, hon Botha, hon Bosman, hon Herron, hon Dugmore and hon

Marais.

As we all know in these 20 minutes it is also important that the Premier gets the opportunity to respond to each member that is asking the question. So it is up to the first members to help the Premier in ensuring that at least he is able to respond, but also as many members are able to ask their question, so I am asking that we please be circumspect of time and not to ask a question and belabour the point that you want to raise. Just be as prompt and concise as possible.

Thank you very much. I now recognise hon Sayed.

QUESTIONS TO THE PREMIER WITHOUT NOTICE

The SPEAKER: Hon Sayed? [No audible reply.] Why is hon Sayed unable to join?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Oh no, sorry, do you hear me, Speaker?

The SPEAKER: Yes, you are live, sir.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Okay, thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Sayed.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Can the hon Premier perhaps shed more light on the constructive role played by the Opposition parties in the Western Cape and what it entails during this period of Covid-19? [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon Sayed. Hon Premier, I recognise you, sir.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker, and congratulations first of all on this first e-Parliament. I think it is really great news and thank you very much to the hon Sayed for the question.

I think obviously this Covid-19 virus that we are dealing with across the world and in this country, is something that is new to all of us and it allows for the first of many, many things. I must say that I think so far being involved in this pandemic from a Provincial Government point of view I have seen more spheres of Government working together than I had seen before and can I also say that I think between parties as well. I know that right in the very beginning a fair number of calls backwards and forwards from the hon Leader of the Opposition especially saying how do we get access to link up to our Joint Operations Commands across the province.

I think right down to – and unfortunately we could not have it last night, but the Leader of the Opposition asked for a meeting that we have an update or a direct meeting between myself and the leaders of the political

parties, and of course at the end of the day I think part of this virus is something that everyone is calling for everyone in society to play their role. It does not matter, you know, whether you are in government or in opposition or it is government and civil society, NGOs, we are all doing this together. We have all got to pull together to get through this pandemic. We know that specifically from the data put on the table by our medical specialists and our medical team that we are going to have a very tough time going forward and I think the only way we are going to get through this is if we find ways that we can work together.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Premier. Hon Sayed, do you have a follow-up question?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Yes, hon Speaker, I do have a follow-up question. What in the Premier's experience then is the result of this form of co-governance on determining policy and operational matters, hon Speaker? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Sayed. I recognise the hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. I think we must be careful not to call the word co-governance, because then we all take full responsibility for everything. I think obviously the Government has to take responsibility for their decisions made so it is not necessarily co-governance but I think it is about how do we find ways in which we can

tackle issues together, how do we find ways that we perhaps do not follow the normal adversary space, because we are all learning as we are going. This is something that is not a perfect science and you know it is something that as we move through our – I think back to our first positive case that we had in Khayelitsha and I remember there were issues raised, people trying to make sure that we got quarantined for the individual who tested positive and I think at the end of the day everything worked out well, but we also know that we were working together to try and find the best solutions so obviously we still have to take responsibility as the Executive and as Government in this province but we can also definitely find ways in which we can work together to find solutions that is in the best interest of the public of this province.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Premier. Thank you, hon Sayed. I now recognise the hon member Botha.

Ms L J BOTHA: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. My question to the Premier – Premier, there is unprecedented strain on our healthcare systems at this time. In terms of ongoing medical care such as distribution of chronic medication to patients, what are the current challenges and how are these being dealt with moving forward?

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Botha. I now recognise the hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much hon Speaker. Obviously I think chronic meds was an issue that was sort of picked by the Department of Health. I do not have all the exact stats and data on me but we have around 700 000 chronic medical patients in our province and even before we started the lockdown the Health Department started running programmes both with [Inaudible.] – I know that they work with Uber. I know that they were looking at some other delivery mechanisms, even the community health workers were delivering chronic meds rather than having to [Inaudible]. And then – Deputy Speaker, I think somebody’s microphone is not muted – but rather than come to our health facilities... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, please take your seat. Hon members, may I please request that those honourable members, who are not speaking, please switch off your video. Turn your video off, and also switch off your microphone by just clicking on it. It is going to unmute, which means we will not be able to hear you when you are making your tea and coffee at home. May we please do that? I do not want to name the members but please just switch off the video so that we do not see your nice home there, because you are going to want to encourage us to go and come for coffee in your household.

May we please request the Premier to proceed. Premier, please proceed?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Hon Speaker, can I raise a point of

order, Speaker?

The SPEAKER: Of course, member.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Hon Speaker, I just noted that I only asked one follow-up question. I am entitled to two follow-up questions, hon Speaker, as per the Rules, so hon Speaker, I was wondering if – I mean do I wait until the Premier has done responding or can I do my follow-up question now, hon Speaker?

The SPEAKER: I thought you were done, hon member Sayed. May we please request the Premier to proceed responding and then after the hon Botha is concluded then I am going to ask you to ask that question – a follow-up question.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: You are most welcome, hon member Sayed. Hon Premier, please proceed.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, Speaker, so as I said I do not know, I do not think we got to all 700 000. I think that would have been way too big a call in this short period of time, but I do know that many of our chronic patients were receiving their meds and they were given them a two-month supply, so that really helps specifically around the lockdown,

and I also think what is going to happen here is innovation, and we are going to find better ways of getting meds to people and I note that in the first report that I saw that the Health Department were looking specifically at our vulnerable communities to protect them and this is one of those programmes that protects the vulnerable community, whether you are aged or you have lung disorders, TB etcetera, you would have been our first protection, so how do we get your meds to you so that you do not have to leave your home? You know, this is really important so that we are ready to protect society.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Premier. I now recognise hon Botha, your first follow-up question.

Ms L J BOTHA: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Speaker, through you to the Premier. Hon Premier, how have the volunteer health professionals supported with the pressure on the healthcare system during this current status or crisis, rather? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Botha. Hon Premier.

The PREMIER: I did not get that, did you say volunteers or healthcare professionals?

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, please take your seat.

Ms L J BOTHA: Hon Premier, I said, volunteer healthcare professionals.

The SPEAKER: Hon Botha, I recognise you.

The PREMIER: Oh, okay.

Ms L J BOTHA: Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Premier, if I can just put to you the question again – how have volunteer health professionals supported with the pressure on the healthcare system during this current crisis that we are in?

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon member Botha. Hon Premier?

The PREMIER: So obviously with the volunteers, and we have not really started to use our volunteers, but we have got a call-out for them. We have well over a thousand healthcare volunteers that have already put their names forward and I think as people are starting to gather from the information that our Health Department is putting out and our modellers on our scenario-planning, we obviously are asking for volunteers to come and help us, and we will be calling on their services as we build out extra hospital beds, as we build out more capacity to deal with that peak that is going to come in sort of July / August, when we know that we are going to need every single person. Then of course it is also making sure that we have sufficient medical supplies to help protect not only our 14 000 health workers but also the volunteers that are added and we keep on monitoring

our stocks, you hear it all around the world, it is the PPE stocks that are always under pressure, and if you do not have an adequate PPE you cannot protect your frontline and of course when you are fighting a virus like this healthcare professionals, we need to make sure that they are very well protected. I think as Minister Mbombo will tell you or Dr Keith Cloete, the Head of Department, it is something that we really, really are serious about. As of our last report we had R44 million worth of PPE in stock and we have another R185 million on order, so that we are trying to stay ahead of the curve and prepare for what we know is coming at us and I think that is the whole reason for lockdown. It just gives us that opportunity to get prepared.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Premier. Hon member Botha, do you have a follow-up question?

Ms L J BOTHA: Yes, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Okay.

Ms L J BOTHA: Can I proceed?

The SPEAKER: Please proceed, hon member Botha.

Ms L J BOTHA: Hon Premier, any significant strategies and lessons that emerged from dealing with the challenges in response to the Covid-19

pandemic that the Provincial Government will be taking forward?

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, I think one thing about this virus in South Africa, we are lucky in a way because a lot of lessons are being learnt on our behalf in other parts of the world so we definitely take that into the mix when we are doing our work and I think also being aware that obviously we are also a unique environment. We know that in parts of the world it is the elderly that are the most vulnerable. Obviously our elderly are, but we have a younger population so that probably gives us an advantage, although we are not too sure – the implications of the vulnerable in our society, specifically those that are HIV positive or have TB. We know we have a large number of TB patients in our region, or TB sufferers, any other lung disorder, we do know that that does put people definitely on the back foot, but I think also we are learning every single day. We are learning. Our strategies are changing as we are learning because we can apply what we are seeing in other parts of the world but also our own current work that we are doing, and so I think it is still early days for us, but ja, I think it is one of those things that we do have some advantages and I think we are also going to be helping other parts of the world with some of the stuff that we are doing.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Premier. I now recognise hon Sayed.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you so much, hon Speaker. Would the Premier concede that he and his Government are better guided by taking the views and suggestions of the Opposition parties on board, as is the case in the collective response to the Covid-19 crisis, than following a narrow party line that we have seen at some stage ... [Interjection - laughter] one group of the party which the National Parliamentary Caucus Leadership had followed, and certain individuals in the City of Cape Town had followed... [Interjection - laughter]...but would the Premier then also ask mayors in municipalities, for example, to follow the line that he has been following because we must commend the Premier for his particular approach that he has been following in this province regarding the crisis, but I think he needs to encourage, would he be encouraging his MECs and mayors in different municipalities to follow the same line? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon member Sayed. I recognise the hon Premier.

Mr D SMITH: A point of order, Speaker, a point of order, Speaker.

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order? Who? Will you please identify yourself, hon member?

Mr D SMITH: Danville Smith speaking.

The SPEAKER: I recognise you, hon member Smith. What is your point of

order?

Mr D SMITH: Deputy Speaker, while the hon Sayed was speaking, we noticed that the microphones of members were on, while you made the ruling that the microphones must be off and only switched on when a member has a point of order. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon member Smith. That is a valid point of order and thank you very much for your assistance. May I please request again... [Interjection.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: On a point of order, a further point of order.

The SPEAKER: No wait, hon member, I am on the floor.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Okay.

The SPEAKER: May I please request the hon members. The Speaker made the ruling right from the outset that we recognise the Rules as set out by the Speaker, that when there is a member that is on the floor, no matter how exciting the point that the member is making, please keep your microphone off because we are in an online virtual platform so it is not as easy as when you can make all those interjections in the House, so let us just cooperate and I am going to make that suggestion humbly so.

Now I recognise hon Dugmore, you have a point to raise, hon member, the Leader of the Opposition?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. My point of order is that in regard to the point of order raised by the hon member Danville Smith where you have ruled, I think the other concern which I would request you to rule on is not only was a particular hon member's microphone on, but that particular hon member actually laughed in a contemptuous manner when member Sayed was trying to get his third question across, his follow-up question, so I think it is completely against the spirit of what we are trying to achieve here, firstly as you have ruled that that particular member had his microphone on, and then secondly, you know, all of us could hear this contemptuous laughter, almost derisory laughter, which I think goes against the very spirit with which you opened this meeting and in which the Premier also congratulated the Speaker for actually convening this, so I would like you to please make a ruling also on the contemptuous derisory laughter by a particular member who at this point is probably unidentified but maybe they can just own up. Maybe they can actually say that "I apologise for doing that."

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: On a point of order, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you honourable, the Leader of the Official

Opposition. You are assisting there. I would not want to entertain any other point of order. The Premier is on the floor... [Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Can you recognise me, hon Speaker?

The SPEAKER: ...and he is responding to the question by the member and we are doing an injustice to hon member Sayed and to the hon Premier, and most importantly to the people of the province.

Let us please, please cooperate and work together achieving what we sought to achieve here. Hon Premier.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Hon Speaker, can you recognise me? I am raising a point of order, please.

The SPEAKER: Is that on the same matter or a different point of order?

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Yes, yes, on the same matter?

The SPEAKER: Alright, I hope you will forgive me, the hon Leader of the... Honourable, the LOGB, please come through hon LOGB, I recognise you.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Hon Speaker, this is a normal sitting of Parliament, even though it is happening under abnormal conditions. We cannot then change the Rules at a whim. Interjections are allowed in the House and we are in the sitting and therefore I do not agree with any view that the interjections in the normal sitting, even though the conditions under which we are convening this Parliament are different, so I think, hon Speaker, we must be careful of making new rules just because the manner in which the sitting is conducted is not the normal way of conducting the sitting.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon Minister Madikizela and the Leader of Government Business. Unfortunately the Speaker had tabled a special set of Rules in terms of Rule 1 of the Standing Rules, which obviously makes provision for the virtual platform, virtual meetings like this, and that has just been adopted by the House where the Chief Whip read the motion and the House adopted it unanimously, just to reaffirm the tabling of the Rules, which was done on the 8th and then subsequently the terms of reference on 17 April. This is not a normal House of Parliament as you have already indicated, but what is abnormal, what is normal about it, is that we are all here as members of Parliament. Unfortunately interjections that will disrupt this platform will simply lead to collapsing this meeting so your point does not carry and that point, if we allow that point, it will be tantamount to collapsing this meeting and therefore we cannot move on that, on those bases. May I please proceed? Hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker, I notice those points of order and I notice the question and I must say that I did not laugh, but I did smile, because obviously there was the little sting in the tail about the National Assembly and the Opposition there as well as the City of Cape Town. But I also want to say that obviously the line of questioning from the hon member Sayed was about how do we do this together and I think our Cabinet and our Government has been very serious on how do we get this right together, because it is every one of our's responsibility, I think, and what really illustrates it is going to be our modelling that we put on the table, our scenario planning that says that in actual fact in this province we are showing that we have a 1000 beds of our critical care, a 1000 beds too few, and our ICU beds we have 750 beds too few.

Now we can make up the 1000 beds, in actual fact we are going to put 1300 in to play safe, but we are not able to make up the 750 shortfall and there is only one way that we are going to make sure that we do not get to that space where people are going to be lining up waiting for ICU beds, and that is that we all work together. All parties, the whole of society, we have to be the whole of society taking this on and of course there will be oversight and there will be politics here and there but we have to try and do it in the most constructive way possible because that is the only way that we are going to save lives when it gets to July / August, end of July, beginning of August, when we reach the peak of this pandemic. We will only save lives if we do it together because we all have to make sure that we understand that risk and we are going to be opening up some of the

economy and if we see it starting to get away from us we are going to have to close it down again. The one thing Minister Mbombo and myself – the President, you can see the narrative, we will hear tonight as to whether we have or how much competency we have to make sure that we can also slow down to protect as much as possible the system that we have put in place. We have time to prepare for it but we also must understand there are limitations to that and we can only do it if we do it together.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Premier and hon member Sayed and hon member Botha. Now I recognise hon Bosman. Hon, the Leader of the Opposition, will you please switch off your video?

Mr G BOSMAN: Good afternoon, hon Speaker. Good afternoon Premier and colleagues. Speaker, through you, hon Premier, the Covid-19 pandemic is a global threat not just to food security but particularly to food security for vulnerable communities including children. These children have previously relied on food feeding schemes. Can you perhaps tell the House how many children have been fed in the Western Cape through the operating feeding schemes during the Covid-19 crisis?

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Bosman. I recognise the Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker, and to the hon Bosman, thank you for that question. Obviously we can see it now in the system that food security, as we move further and further and deeper into

the lockdown period, is becoming a bigger and bigger issue. It is children, yes, but children are also seen in our mix as part of the solution. When we could see that we were running into trouble two weeks ago we very quickly reactivated our school feeding schemes as well as added to the Department of Social Development's programmes, so at the moment we are feeding through our ECD system 50 000 to 60 000 children every single day and we can feed up to 482 000 learners, nearly half a million learners through our school feeding schemes, so we reactivated that. We are probably averaging only about 100 000 at the moment because many learners are not able to get to their school or even some schools have not managed to get it up and running yet, but we are busy rolling it out.

I think we are sitting at around about 300 schools at the moment and obviously every single time you run a programme you have to also take into consideration that there are risks and I know that there has been fair discussion at a national level around food and specifically for the most vulnerable, and of course we take children into that space so it is learners and Early Childhood Development programmes that we have, as well as our Call Centre. So, you know, that is where we are at, at the moment. We have also put 50 000 food parcels into the system and the Social Development Department is in the lead, but they are taking all of this together and a report should come to Cabinet on how we are mapping the food shortages and the food supply because it is not only just us in the province. There is National Government, there is Provincial Government and Local Government as well as the NGOs and then also even beyond the

NGO there are so many churches and mosques and community organisations that are feeding. But we also know that that runs with a risk so this is a fine balance, and we are trying to map it along with our Call Centre, 14 500 calls on average at our Call Centre, as we build up, in the beginning it was crashing because we could not manage all the calls. We have got about a 100 extra volunteers into the system and about 90 Call Centre operators and so I think we are now getting a better handle on it but we should get a full presentation tomorrow at Cabinet and I think that presentation will be given to the *Ad Hoc* Committee in the afternoon.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you, hon Premier. That concludes the Questions to the Premier without Notice. The time has just ended. I am sorry, hon Premier and hon member Bosman.

Mr P J MARAIS: Hon Speaker, on a point of order. Peter Marais, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Marais, what is your point of order?

Mr P J MARAIS: My point of order that this thing has been so arranged that only the DA will speak and they are so long-winded and they ask sweetheart-questions which I think this is becoming a farce. This technology, by which we have asked questions, becoming the biggest farce I have ever seen... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you, hon member Marais. That is not a point of order, respectfully, it is a frivolous point of order, hon member Marais. We follow the Rules in terms of who must speak and how and when they should speak.

[Question time expired.]

The SPEAKER: I now recognise – in fact we are now moving to Members' Statements and there will be two minutes for each member and I now recognise the Democratic Alliance.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Ms L J BOTHA: Hon Speaker, the outbreak of the coronavirus has disrupted our lives since 11 March 2020 and will continue to tremendously change our lives on a daily basis. Indeed we face unprecedented times in which we must all adjust and adapt to the rapidly altered circumstances we face. This pandemic has forced us to not only look at things differently but to do things differently. Our lives will never again be business as usual. The status quo of the past is no longer an option.

We have seen a significant escalation of Government services including an improvement of public service announcements that reach every corner of this province. We have also turned our focus on the essentials such as clean water and food that has far too long gone under-appreciated.

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary efforts and I applaud the Western Cape Government for doing its utmost to meet the needs of our residents at this time. This Province has and will go above and beyond its core functions to steady the course of our people in the midst of a crisis, the likes of which we have not experienced before.

Thus, with this disruption also came opportunity, opportunity to embrace the uncertainty and learn new coping mechanisms to develop our areas for improvement but also our strengths for even better brighter shared futures. In this spirit I would like to pay tribute to our essential-service workers who have been at the coalface of this pandemic who are forced to see the worst part of the pandemic and who yet overcome fear and uncertainty daily. These individuals emerge as the real heroes and heroines of our current time – the cashier, the nurse, our doctors, refuse workers, banking staff, police and security services and all others working to keep us safe, fed and stable. We salute you. In this spirit we have to remain encouraged because even though all vulnerabilities across the globe have been exposed, we will emerge stronger.

I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Botha. I now recognise the ANC. African National Congress, do you want to take up your opportunity for a member statement?

Ms N D NKONDLO: Thank you. Thank you, hon Speaker. Good afternoon everybody.

“Courage is not the absence of fear. It is inspiring others to move beyond it.”

This is a quote by Nelson Mandela. We must all appreciate the outstanding leadership our country’s President Cyril Ramaphosa has demonstrated with his Cabinet during this time of proportional crisis of coronavirus.

The words of the WHO echo the sentiments as they applaud South Africa’s approach in bringing the disease under control using what they term “preparation, primary prevention, lockdown and surveillance.”

We must further welcome the R500 billion rand economic and social relief package announced by the President on Tuesday. Of that, R130 billion will be coming from the reprioritisation of the current Budget and also through the Select Committee we heard that the 2020 Division of Revenue Bill recognised that large reductions to previously announced estimates of budget transfers to provinces and municipalities had to be made while protecting funding for social services, provinces and municipalities.

Our leadership gets to be tested during this time. In service to our citizens as per the oath we all signed and pledged, we wish to call on more efforts

from our Provincial and Local Government to reconsider the current intervention regarding social relief towards a more responsive and fair distributive manner to distressed households.

We further ask urgency in ensuring ease of access for SMMEs; spaza shops and informal traders to be assisted by municipalities with speed. We further request more attention and humane way of dealing with the homeless and vulnerable sectors of our citizens in the province. We actually call for the Premier and his team to engage the private sector in protecting the workers who placed their lives and those of their families as human shields to enable our country to operate during the lockdown.

The numbers we see in our province are worrisome, hon Speaker, and we call on establishing our own Provincial NEDLAC for a social accord that must bring our communities closer, our workers and private sector to the table in a transparent and equitable manner and harness innovation in our response, especially in dealing with the increasing local transmissions. We shall be monitoring municipalities... [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, thank you hon member Nkondlo.

Ms N D NKONDLO: ...ensure transparency and open themselves up to
[Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Your time is up, thank you very much.

Ms N D NKONDLO: Thank you. [Time expired.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Nkondlo. I now recognise the DA. Is the Democratic Alliance taking the opportunity?

Mr R I ALLEN: Hon Speaker, yes. Reagen Allen, thank you hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Welcome, hon member Allen.

Mr R I ALLEN: Thank you. On 14 April the Democratic Alliance made a call to allow SARS to pay out a Covid-19 temporary employment relief scheme benefit. It is no secret that the UIF has a reputation for being inefficient as it faces insurmountable human infrastructural and IT-related challenges. The DA long ago warned that the UIF would be overwhelmed by the task of administering the Covid-19 benefit. Over last weekend, however, this realisation seems to have dawned on the Minister of Labour.

Now, hon Speaker, I can paint a similar scenario when I consider policing in our country. The DA made the call for accredited Neighbourhood Watches and CPF's to be declared as an essential service as our safety stakeholders are able to play a meaningful role towards curbing crime. However, with the weekend now approaching again it is high time for our National Minister of Police to also have his own realisation as Neighbourhood Watches will be able to assist in keeping our schools safe, our communities safer and even help queues at shopping centres.

If I just go back to labour again, in 2019, last year, we heard that UIF paid out over 800 000 claims over a period of 12 months. Of these claims only 24 000 were made online and with offices currently being closed we knew that they were going to be swamped again.

Back to policing again, if we can reveal, that the number of policing reservists, for example, have dropped by 86% since 2010. This means that the number of police reservists have declined by a shocking to a shocking 8 909 from 63 000 nine years ago. I fail to understand how National Government has overcome, has overseen such a dramatic decline in the number of police reservists.

Hon Speaker, I paint these two scenarios to echo and encourage the message of proactive political discussions.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon member Allen. Your time is up, sir.

Mr R I ALLEN: Thank you so much. [Time expired.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Thank you, hon member Allen. I now recognise the EFF.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Thank you, hon Speaker, and good afternoon to everyone. The Economic Freedom Fighters welcomes the decision of the Western Cape High Court to declare the eviction of people of

Empolweni informal settlement as unlawful and ordered that the dwelling structures be returned and erected.

This follows the action by the City of Cape Town's Law Enforcement Unit acting under the order of the City of Cape Town, which, without warning, forcefully demolished the shacks occupied by the people of Empolweni and in the process destroyed their furniture and trampled on the food and their belongings. All this happened under the auspices of the DA-led Western Cape Government that was armed with a moratorium order from National Government that there should be no evictions whatsoever in the entire country during the period of Covid-19 national lockdown.

The DA-led Western Cape Government has shown time and again that it has no regard for the plight of the poor even in times of global disaster such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

Further, it has shown that it has no regard and is willing to violate the rules and regulations set by the country to administer and control the spread of the Covid-19. It therefore comes as no surprise why the entire Western Cape Province is in such disarray with lootings and unlawful activities dominating the headlines in the province. It is because there is no leadership that is accountable in the first place, which with those who are charged with leadership duties being the ones [Inaudible.] [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF COMMUNITY SAFETY: Because you allow lawlessness and that is the reason... [Interjection.]

Mr R D MACKENZIE: That is not true.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: The Economic Freedom Fighters hope that the Western Cape Provincial Government has learnt something from these recent events and will now engage with the National and Local Government spheres in trying to protect and look after all the people in the province, more especially the poor and the vulnerable as required per Section 41 of the South African Constitution. I thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon member Makamba-Botya. I would like to re-emphasise on the ruling that I made earlier. I have now realised again that once more there are members who are making remarks and I hope that we do not sustain that because it is not going to be helpful as we proceed. May I recognise the Democratic Alliance?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you hon Speaker. Hon Speaker in the past weeks we have experienced a number of lootings and attacks on essential service trucks in the Western Cape. The stoning and violence against these vehicles cannot be tolerated. Our law enforcement agencies must ensure strong action is taken against the perpetrators.

Hon Speaker, anyone responsible for these actions must be brought to book

and prosecuted. It must also be noted that there has been an inconsistency from the National Government, which is seemingly turning a blind eye to CPFs operating in Gauteng, whilst other provinces, including the Western Cape, are prohibited from using Neighbourhood Watch teams. Hon Speaker, if we put aside all differences we will all surely agree that Neighbourhood Watch teams can play a pivotal role in assisting residents to adhere to the Covid-19 regulations.

Neighbourhood Watch teams are the eyes and ears in our communities. They provide a further level of protection for all residents, highlighting greater visibility and likely to result in curbing incidences of violence and looting.

Hon Speaker, whilst we are facing incredibly unprecedented times and it is understandable that residents feel desperate, we cannot tolerate any sort of criminal behaviour.

Hon Speaker, I would like to urge communities to immediately report illegal behaviour to the police and to continue to request for the inclusion of Neighbourhood Watches as we continue to work better together to win the fight against Covid-19. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much hon member Mitchell. I now recognise GOOD, hon member Herron. [No audible response.]

It does appear that GOOD is not taking up the opportunity. I will now proceed... [Interjection.]

Mr B N HERRON: Hon Speaker, I am here.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Herron.

Mr B N HERRON: Can I start again?

The SPEAKER: Hon member Herron, your two minutes starts now.

Mr B N HERRON: Thank you. Hon Speaker, the coronavirus has presented challenges that we never envisaged and posed questions to which we do not have all the answers, but we do know that unprecedented crises require unprecedented responses. Business as usual is consigned to the trash heap and an urgent demand arises for leadership that is pragmatic, informed, agile, fair and compassionate.

The most critical factor for our fundamentally unequal society as we enter this lockdown was the ability to feed the most vulnerable people, but while families were starving at home and a food crisis was emerging we had a Government more concerned with access to cigarettes.

On 2 April I wrote to the Premier and to Ministers Maynier, Meyer and Fritz, alerting them to three food crises – access to fresh food markets,

informal food trading and food relief. My letters were ignored.

On 6 April I again asked the Premier to address the critical scarcity of food in poor communities. This letter was also ignored. Farming was declared an essential service, but small-scale farmers lost access to fresh food markets because these were shut down, although they could have practiced the same social distancing and hygiene controls that supermarkets do.

The penetration of supermarkets in low-income families is insufficient with many families buying fresh food from informal traders, but informal trading was shut down and when the regulations were changed the Western Cape dragged its feet to comply.

Given the role of informal trading in providing livelihoods and food I expected the Premier and Minister Maynier to jump in, but they did not. Food relief is now the subject of scrutiny across the country and this comes as no surprise that we are receiving reports of the manipulation of Government food relief with councillors using access to food for political purposes. Yesterday during the Covid-19 Committee meeting I shared a voice note from an elderly resident in District Six being denied access to food because they are not DA. Elsewhere in the country people are prejudiced because they are not ANC. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: You need to wrap up, hon member Herron.

Mr B N HERRON: I repeat my appeal to the Premier to ensure that politicians are not involved in the access to Government food relief in any way whatsoever. [Time expired.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Herron, your time is up. Thank you very much, hon member Herron. I now recognise the ACDP, hon member Christians.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS: Thank you, hon Speaker, thank you. Hon Speaker, the ACDP in the Western Cape regrets the fact that political parties like the DA and the ANC are using food parcels to write up members for their respective parties. Our people are hungry and vulnerable.

It is brought under our attention that ward councillors are targeting the most vulnerable passing them by because they do not belong to their respective party.

Now, hon Speaker, this is contrary what the Premier, his Cabinet and departments are doing and want to achieve, so from the ACDP's side we want the Premier and the MEC for Social Development to investigate these matters and these allegations.

We get it on a daily basis. Just this morning somebody phoned again to say they were denied food parcels because they do not belong to the DA so we, as the ACDP, request the Premier and the Minister to look at these

allegations and report back to the House. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, thank you, hon member Christians. I now recognise the African National Congress.

Ms N G BAKUBAKU-VOS: Thank you, hon Speaker. The ANC is extremely appalled by the inhuman conditions that people are exposed to in the Bellville and Strandfontein shelters. During visits to the sites we witnessed the gross violation and disregard of Covid-19 regulations by Government. There is no social distancing and there are poor hygienic practices as people do not wash or sanitise their hands before meals.

The law enforcement officers and medical staff deployed do not have adequate PPE and are forced to buy their own sanitisers. The ANC's calls for the Strandfontein shelter to be closed down, where supported by reports commissioned by Doctors Without Borders and the South African Human Rights Commission, which describe the site as more of a prison than a place of safety, as well as a health hazard and potential hotspot for Covid-19 and Tuberculosis infections. Over and above this there are gender issues that need to be addressed which resulted in a reported rape case. The ANC reiterates its calls for the Strandfontein site to be closed down immediately.

The Provincial Government must ensure that poor people are treated with dignity and due respect. Homeless people in Hessequa and Stellenbosch

do not have accommodation. In Drakenstein Municipality there is a serious shortage of mattresses in the Town Hall and Thusong Centre. The ANC also welcomes the additional food relief and increased grants as announced by the President on Tuesday.

I thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Bakubaku-Vos. I now recognise the Democratic Alliance. Will the DA take up their opportunity? [No audible reply.]

Alright, so there is no-one from the DA?

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Hon member Maseko?

The SPEAKER: Is hon member Maseko on the line? [No audible reply.]

Thank you, I now recognise FF Plus, hon Marais.

Mr P J MARAIS: Hon Speaker, the lack of urgency and slow pace by SASSA and the Western Cape Government in reacting to the demands for food by the poor is becoming a powder keg just waiting to be lit. This has placed our society on a very dangerous path from an initial revolt to the possibility of our own Arab Spring, as predicted by Moeletsi Mbeki, brother of the former President Thabo Mbeki. The Freedom Front Plus therefore demands that an urgent bipartisan procedure is to be formulated

by leaders of all the political parties in the Western Cape to address this situation.

Hon Speaker, over many centuries churches and mosques have played a major role in the socio-economic, per Livemint Lounge, of both Coloured – especially Coloured and black communities. They are credible institutions far more than is the case with most NGOs and have kept family records for ages, decades, from birth to death of families. They should be called on to identify families and individuals who are in dire need for food security, caused by the coronavirus and unemployment. We might have a revolution on our hands if we handled this thing poorly. I am sounding a warning, a very serious warning.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, thank you hon member Marais. I now recognise, in the absence of Al Jama-ah, I recognise the DA. Will the DA take up their opportunity? [No audible reply.]

With the absence of the DA member to take up the opportunity, in terms of Rule 146(1) of the Rules, I now recognise one member of the Executive to respond if they so wish to take up the opportunity.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: You are welcome, hon Minister Madikizela.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Hon Speaker, we are facing a very serious global pandemic and a national disaster and I welcome the role that the Opposition is playing in the Western Cape to work with the Western Cape Government and the National Government to deal with this crisis, but I do want to urge all the members of this House to do that within the spirit of ensuring that we assess the people instead of playing politics.

I want to respond, hon Speaker, to some of the issues that have been raised here so that when we talk about the spirit of intergovernmental relations and working together as members of the House we must do that with sincerity and honesty. On the issue of Empolweni I think it must be said that the City of Cape Town honoured the Court ruling that was made which clearly stated that people must not invade land and that was further stated in the regulations that came out that we must make sure that land invasion is something that is not allowed but unfortunately what we saw in Empolweni, with the assistance of one of the members of this House, is quite simple.

Where people who were evicted, and this was said by them, people who were evicted by their landlords ended up invading the land in Empolweni, which is against the regulations, which is of course against the Court ruling and when the City executed that Court ruling, unfortunately instead of working together, as some of the members of the Opposition here have said, with them playing politics, and what is very disturbing about that

Court ruling is that it is not applied the same in other provinces.

We saw the same thing happening in KwaZulu-Natal. We saw the same thing happening in Gauteng but the Court rulings there were completely different than the Court ruling that we saw here and as I am talking to you now, hon Speaker, there is pandemonium in that particular community because instead of respecting the Court ruling to erect 49 shacks, there are many people now who are erecting shacks there and they are assisted by one of the members of this House, and we must be honest when we deal with this thing. And the last two things I want to say, hon Speaker, is that there are serious allegations that have been made here by both hon member Herron and hon member Christians and I think people must not throw these accusations loosely to score cheap political points.

I would be following up on these matters because it is important for us to know exactly who are these public representatives who are using politics in order to give food to people and we must make sure that members do not mislead the House.

I will be engaging these members so that they can give us the names of these people and if those members are not coming forward we will then have to lay charges against people for misleading the House, but lastly, hon Speaker, I do want to say that I thank all the members of the Executive, the members of this Legislature who have been working tirelessly in our communities to make sure that we assist the vulnerable

communities especially during this time. I think the only way for us to be able to deal with this thing is to encourage people to respect the regulations that have been issued by the National Government because we as the Executive in the Western Cape are also doing the same, working with the National Government. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon Minister Madikizela. Hon members, just to correct, that we in terms of the Rules that we assented to as Parliament, we adopted the Rules as we did towards the end of the previous term so in the new term we conceded to the same Rules. It is Rule 145 and Subsection (6) where the Executive gets five minutes so that they are able to respond, if they so wish, to the statements by members or provide clarity, whichever way they so wish to do. That is how the Rules – the new Rules operate.

Now we have reached the end of our meeting and of course that then concludes the House. I just want to say to the members it has been a pleasant meeting and also for all of us, we are learning how the new normal will be and this is how it has affected us and I have seen how progressive this platform has been in terms of allowing members to do oversight over the Executive and hold the Executive to account... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: On a point of order.

The SPEAKER: ...and thank you very much for... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: On a point of order, a point of order.

The SPEAKER: The Speaker is still on the floor, and having done what we have done is to really represent the people that have elected us into office and we dare not fail them. Thank you very much, hon members, I hear there is an hon member who would like to say something? [No audible reply.]

None? Thank you very much, hon members. Now the House is adjourned, and that concludes the business of the day and the Secretary will now switch off the meeting. Thank you very much. Have a blessed evening. Thank you very much, hon members.

An HON MEMBER: On a point of order, a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon members, I hear there is an hon member who would like to say something? Your line is terrible, hon member.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Can I just say on a point of order, Speaker, as you were concluding we were informed that hon member Maseko was connected and she was supposed to do a statement and maybe you did not see or you were not informed but she did then come back online because she had been offline so while you were concluding, my point of order was that hon member Maseko rejoined and I understand

that she was supposed to do a statement and as the ANC we would really support the DA being given this opportunity because it would be a real pity if she is not allowed... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): The House has adjourned.

The SPEAKER: The House has adjourned. Thank you very much, hon, the Leader of the Opposition. I do sympathise with her as well, but in terms of the Rules we have adjourned the sitting and that concludes the debate and the House is adjourned. Thank you very much. Have a blessed evening.

The House adjourned at 15:30.