
TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2026

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT

The sign † indicates the original language and [] directly thereafter indicates a translation.

[Hybrid Sitting held with some hon members present in the House and some in virtual attendance through Microsoft Teams]

The House met at 10:00.

The hon Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.

The SPEAKER: Please be seated. [Interjection] Order. Hon members, before we proceed, I would like to make some comments about the logistical arrangements. Today's Sitting shall be governed by the Standing Rules, and in instances where the Rules cannot be applied, the ruling by the Presiding Officer is final. The quorum requirements for the Sitting of the House are provided for in the Constitution and in the Standing Rules. The Sergeant-at-Arms will record members' attendance.

Hon members who are present in the Chamber and via Microsoft Teams have all the privileges and immunities imparted by law. Unless there is an indication

of unanimous concurrence, voting will be confined to members present in the House and who are entitled to cast their votes in accordance with our Standing Rules. Members who are considered to be out of order by the Presiding Officer will have their microphones muted and will be called to order. Hon members, when you wish to raise a point of order, such a hon member may address the Presiding Officer as normal, but must mute his or her microphone when he or she has completed speaking.

Hon members, you are kindly requested to ensure that your microphones are unmuted when you are recognised by the Presiding Officer, and to mute your microphones when you have finished speaking. Hon members, I kindly request that those who are not members of this House to please observe the decorum of the House. For the purposes of this Sitting, language translation services are available by using the devices at your disposal. Hon members, I wish to remind you that no interjections are permitted during these hybrid Sittings, and to this end, I wish to draw your attention to Rule 40 of our Standing Rules.

The Secretary and her administration will ensure that there is a dedicated technical support at all times during the Sitting, and hon members, before we proceed, I would like to welcome the guests in the gallery, welcome to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. We will now proceed with the business of the House, and the Secretary will read the first Order of the Day.

1. Debate on Vote 10: Infrastructure – Western Cape Appropriation Bill.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise the hon minister, Minister of Infrastructure, Minister Simmers.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you, hon Speaker, Premier, the hon Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, hon Dean McPherson, fellow members of the Executive in this House, fellow members of this House, members of the Consular and Diplomatic Corps, I know some of them are still on their way, our key sector partners, including our CSI partners into the future, esteemed guests, but most importantly, people of the Western Cape who are following the session online.

It is my honour to table today a R9.86 billion infrastructure budget that will create and accelerate delivery towards our future Western Cape together. But infrastructure is not built in a year, it is not built in one term of government, and it is never built by accident. It is built through discipline, through planning, and yes, through partnership and through the commitment to invest today for a future we may only see tomorrow.

That is why this Government developed the Western Cape Infrastructure Framework 2050, supported by the Infrastructure Strategy and Implementation Plan, to ensure that every project we build today fits into the province we are preparing for our children and our grandchildren. But this framework is not a document that gathers dust on a shelf. It is the blueprint that guides every decision we make, every project we plan and every we spend.

It also recognises that infrastructure delivery must keep pace with growth. The Western Cape continues to attract people from across South Africa because of opportunity, stability and better services. That growth is positive indeed, but it also means that demand for housing, schools, roads and the healthcare facilities are increasing every year as well. If we fail to plan, we plan to fail. If we plan properly, we create the capacity for future generations to succeed.

†So hierdie begroting gaan nie net oor vandag nie, dit gaan oor die Wes-Kaap van more, dit gaan oor verantwoordelike beplanning en dit gaan oor die plig om reeds vandag te begin bou aan die toekoms wat ons vir gemeenskappe wil sien. [So this Budget is not only about today, it is about the Western Cape of tomorrow, it is about responsible planning and it is about the obligation to already start building the future today that we want to see for communities.] Because every cent we spend must build opportunity, every project must support growth and every investment must move this province forward.

Hon Speaker, the fiscal environment remains under pressure. Budget reductions from National Government continue and over-reliance on national transfers remains a risk for every province in South Africa. Demand for infrastructure is growing faster than the funding available. Our population is growing. Urbanisation continues. Housing needs are increasing. Educational needs are increasing. More communities need roads, clinics and services.

Yet the resources we receive do not grow at the same pace. But in the Western Cape, we do not retreat when pressure increases. We plan better. We partner

smarter. We deliver faster. And we accelerate where others hesitate. That is why my Department is taking the next step in reform through this Budget I am tabling. Later this year, we will establish a Western Cape infrastructure facility to support and accelerate delivery of our Western Cape infrastructure project pipeline, unlocking new funding models, new partnerships and new delivery mechanisms.

The purpose of the facility is very simple. Projects that are ready must move. Funding that is available must be unlocked. Partnerships that can work must be solicited. And delivery must happen at the speed that our residents expect. Because delays in projects do not only delay infrastructure. They delay jobs. They delay growth. And they delay opportunity. Hon Speaker, we must also ensure that existing national funding instruments are aligned with the realities faced by fast-growing provinces.

The current structure of the Urban Settlement Development Grant is largely limited to metropolitan municipalities, while significant growth and development pressure is increasingly experienced in secondary cities and key non-Metro municipalities across the Western Cape. If we want to support sustainable urbanisation, economic growth and integrated Human Settlements, funding mechanisms must recognise that development is no longer confined to Metros alone.

We will therefore continue to engage the National Government and relevant national departments, organise Local Government and our partners in the sector

to support my call for reforms that will allow infrastructure funding to reach high-growth non-metro municipalities so that they too can ensure delivery that can meet their growing demand. Sustainable growth requires sustainable funding and this remains a priority for the Western Cape Government.

We are strengthening partnerships with development finance institutions and the private sector to unlock new funding opportunities for infrastructure delivery. Just last week, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Development Bank, becoming the first provincial department and government to do so, marking an important step in expanding our ability to finance our large-scale infrastructure projects in the Western Cape.

We also continue to engage with the Development Bank of South Africa and private sector investors to ensure that infrastructure delivery in this province does not stall because funding is constrained. If funding slows us down, we find new funding. If systems slow us down, we improve the systems. If bureaucracy slows us down, we remove those barriers. Hon Speaker, our Singular Infrastructure Pipeline now contains 52 projects with an estimated value of more than R132 billion.

It represents potential for roads, potential for housing, potential for water and energy, potential for economic growth, and potential for thousands of jobs across the Western Cape. The pipeline allows us to move projects from idea to planning to funding to implementation in a structured and predictable way. Earlier this year in the Overberg district, the Karwyderskraal landfills' next

expansion became the first project to move fully through the pipeline from planning to implementation.

From a concept, to feasibility, to approvals, to funding alignment, to construction on site, all of this, hon Speaker, in less than a year. Members of the House, in less than a year. That is what acceleration looks like. We do not talk, we deliver. The Western Cape Infrastructure Project Pipeline also gives certainty to investors, hope to municipalities, and yes, certainties to all of those communities still waiting for the opportunity. When projects are properly planned and properly sequenced, delivery becomes predictable.

And when delivery becomes predictable, confidence grows. Confidence leads to investment. And investment leads to change and ultimately growth for all of our people. Hon Speaker, but acceleration also requires innovation from Government. Earlier this month, we launched the Roads for You mobile application, if you have not done so, in your gift bag, there is a QR code to scan, placing road maintenance reporting directly in the hands of the public.

To date, more than 6,600 downloads have already been recorded and more than 400 cases have already been reported and processed. Residents are reporting. Our officials are responding. Service delivery is improving. But our infrastructure pipelines digital platform is now active. Our ChatBot Eve is in the final stages of testing and our digital turning initiative is underway. While others talk about innovation, in the Western Cape, we implement it.

Hon Speaker, Programme 1 receives R379 million. Under this programme falls the Masaki Sizwe Bursary Programme, which this year is celebrating 20 years. So for 20 years, this programme has supported students in engineering, construction, and the built environment and I would love our Acting DG of Roads to stand, Michael Hendrikse, who is the top official of Roads and is a proud product of this Masaki Sizwe Bursary Programme. Thank you very much, Michael.

Over the last 20 years, we have created more than 1,200 bursaries that have already benefited, Michael being one of them. Because infrastructure is not only built with concrete and steel. It is built with skills. It is built with knowledge and yes, it is built with people. Public Works receives R2.785 billion to maintain and improve public facilities across our province. This includes schools, clinics, hospitals, care facilities, and community buildings. Because strong communities require strong infrastructure.

- At Sir Lowry's Pass High School, we are busy building a R94 million school, which will be completed by June 2027.
- In Sunningdale, a new primary school, valued at R74 million, will be complete also by June 2027.
- At Panorama Primary in Vredenburg, a replacement school, valued at R87 million, will be completed by December 2027.
- In Clanwilliam, the CIYCC upgrade of R65 million, Minister Lund, will be completed in October 2026.

- In Stellenbosch, the Lindelani/Siyakhathala upgrade of over R210 million will be completed in November 2027.
- In Diazville, we are constructing a new clinic of R56 million, which will be completed by May 2026.
- At Eersterivier Hospital, which I visited on Friday, hon Premier, the R86 million mental health unit is complete, it will strengthen the specialised care, as my colleague touched in her speech yesterday.

So infrastructure is also about safety. It is about building and maintaining a solid foundation. But ultimately, infrastructure is also about care. Hon Speaker, for the 2026/2027 financial year, our transport infrastructure branch receives over R4.56 billion. The provincial roads pipeline includes more than 100 projects, with 41 committed for implementation over this MTF cycle. They include projects such as:

- The George Western Bypass
- The MR108 upgrade
- The Carinus Bridge, which will be a first of its kind in Africa once it is completed.
- Worcester Eastern Bypass, and the
- R300 Northern Extension.

Because we understand that roads connect our economy. They connect farmers to markets. They connect workers to jobs. They connect communities to opportunity.

Hon Speaker, to accelerate our roads delivery even further, from the 1st of April, as I mentioned last year, the Department is now fully implementing the new provincial roads delivery model, based on four pillars: partnership, finance, delivery, and innovation. Through stronger partnerships with municipalities, and some of my partners are sitting here, through alternative funding mechanisms, through improved project management, and through the use of modern technology, we are ensuring that road infrastructure delivery becomes faster, more efficient, and more sustainable.

In a province with large rural areas, strong agricultural activity, and yes, growing urban centres, road infrastructure is essential for economic inclusion. Farmers depend on reliable roads to get products to market on behalf of my colleague to reach his target. Workers depend on safe roads to reach their jobs. Businesses depend on efficient transport networks to remain competitive. So every kilometre of road we maintain or upgrade strengthens the economy of the Western Cape.

Hon Speaker, now for Human Settlements. And here we are allocating more than R2 billion to expand access to housing opportunities across the Western Cape. Housing demand in this province continues to grow as more people move to the Western Cape in search of opportunity, safety, and better services. This demand is driven not only by population growth, but also by migration into our province, which we welcome.

So people come here because they believe they have a better chance to find work, to live safely, and to build a future for their families in this province. But that places responsibility on this Government to plan ahead, to release land, and to build communities that can grow in a sustainable way. Our response, therefore, must be at scale, but also well-planned and well-located. †In die Wes-Kaap spoeg en plak ons nie, ons beplan. [In the Western Cape we do not spit and paste, we plan.]

At Welmoed Phase 1, more than 3,200 opportunities will be delivered. The Premier and I will be doing the soil turning by October of this year for this catalytic project. While the full Welmoed development will ultimately yield over 10,000 opportunities in that sub-council area, making it one of the largest integrated settlements in the province in implementation phase, the Ithemba development, in the same sub-council of the City, will yield approximately 2,400 opportunities, not only providing homes, but services and community facilities for thousands of residents who will call this development their home into the future.

But these are not small projects. These should be seen as new communities. Communities that will provide access to schools, transport, jobs, and services. Communities that will give families stability. Communities that will allow residents to live closer to opportunity. Hon Speaker, in the inner city, we continue to unlock well-located land for development through our partnership with the City of Cape Town and recently the National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure. So thank you for your land as well, Minister

McPherson.

Major developments include Presswich, Leeuloop, Founders Garden, Helen Bowden, Welmoed, Ithemba, and Amandel Place. Each forming part of our strategy to unlock well-located land and create integrated communities. Last week, we launched the Presswich Development, which will provide mixed-use opportunities in the heart of Cape Town. Together with Leeuloop, Founders Garden, and the Helen Bowden site, these projects demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that public land works for the public good.

Because location matters. Housing must be close to opportunity, close to transport, close to work, close to education, and close to the future we are building for all the residents that reside in the Western Cape. Hon Speaker, and to unlock even more opportunities, the Department is implementing our Rapid Land Release Programme, identifying underutilised provincial properties and, where possible, nationally owned properties and preparing them for development.

Through proper planning, feasibility studies, and development packaging, land is being released for housing, economic activity, and community facilities. Projects such as Presswich, Leeuloop, and Founders Garden form part of our Rapid Land Release Programme. Public land must serve the people. Hon Speaker, the unlocking of well-located State land remains one of the most important reforms required to accelerate housing delivery, not just in our province, but across South Africa.

So I therefore welcome the recent national initiatives announced by Minister McPherson to release underutilised State and, yes, Defence land for Human Settlements development, including land in the City of Cape Town metropolitan area that has long been identified as suitable for affordable housing. Thank you, Minister McPherson, for that commitment. But this is a reform that many of us have advocated for a number of years, because land availability remains one of the biggest constraints to delivering affordable housing at scale.

When National, Provincial, and Local Government work together to release our well-located land, we unlock opportunity for thousands of families and bring communities closer to jobs, transport, and services. Hon Speaker, improving housing delivery is not only about building more units. It is also about ensuring that the legislative and policy framework enables faster, more responsive, and more effective delivery by our Provincial Government in partnership with our sector partners and Local and National Government.

For this reason, I initiated a review of the legislative and policy environment governing housing development in the Western Cape with the aim of identifying amendments that will allow us to respond better to the unique challenges of our province. So this work is ongoing, but it has already identified important reforms that will strengthen delivery and will be put in place before the end of this term.

Firstly, we are working towards the establishment of a Provincial Housing

Advisory Panel, which will bring together expertise from the public sector, private sector, and built environment professions to support better planning, faster decision making, and improved project implementation and secondly, we are advancing the proclamation of the Western Cape Housing Development Act of 2018, which contains important provisions to improve the acquisition, release, and use of land for housing development.

The regulations required for the implementation of this Act are already in draft form as I stand here, and this work continues at pace because these reforms are essential. Because if we want fast delivery, we must modernise the Rules that govern delivery, and the Western Cape will not wait for that change. We will lead the charge to that change. Hon Speaker, but fair allocation of these opportunities also requires accurate information. Through our housing demand database verification drives, thousands of beneficiaries have been assisted to update their details, ensuring that opportunities are allocated fairly and transparently.

For the Welmoed project alone, more than 6,000 residents were assisted during our two verification drives last year, because a housing opportunity should never be lost because a possible qualifying beneficiary's information is outdated. Hon Speaker, let me now share one example. I would love the three beneficiaries to stand up if they have arrived. They are in Melkhoutfontein in the Hessequa municipal area. We piloted what we call our Incremental Housing Programme.

In the audience, as my special guests, I have Mr and Mrs Kleinhans, not related to another Kleinhans, I can tell you that. Mr and Mrs Tsipahlanga and Mrs Susan Lawrence. Now, they are among 26 beneficiaries who applied for housing but did not qualify, hon members, for the fully state subsidised unit or the BNG unit. But instead of giving up, they continued to attend these meetings and I am going to specifically talk about Mrs Lawrence. Mrs Lawrence is a single mother of two. One of her children is actually physically disabled.

She attended these community meetings. She learned about our programme. She applied for first home finance because she has been working as a general worker for many, many years and today, Premier, members of the House, hon Speaker, through you, she is the proud owner of her own home as a single mother of two. And she continues to renovate her house to ensure that her disabled son can live a quality life. That is when policy works for the people. That is what true delivery must mean.

Not only structures, †almal huil oor geboue, [everyone cries about buildings,] but ownership, dignity, and yes, in the case of Mrs Lawrence, opportunity for her and the two kids of which one is disabled. Hon Speaker, but we are also restoring dignity through partnerships with financial institutions and two of my three partners are here, hon Speaker. Through innovative agreements with our banks, outstanding bonds are being settled so that beneficiaries can receive their title deeds and become the legal owners of their homes.

Many of them have paid more than 80 percent of their bond period and were on

the trench or the brink of almost losing their homes. Hundreds of families, this innovative innovation to this Government led by this Premier, they have already benefited and more applications are being processed as I stand here. One of these partners is First National Bank. They are here, if they can just stand there, Premier. They especially flew in the team.

And I am pleased to share this afternoon that this afternoon at one o'clock, any member that is available, together with our partner FNB, we will hand over another batch of title deeds to beneficiaries from across this province in this very building. So please do join us. Come and see how our partnership with a financial institution empowers our people to ownership. Because, hon Speaker, a house only becomes a home when it is built on a solid foundation of trust, faith and love.

Imagine what we will see at one o'clock today when you finally own that house that you have nearly paid off and you were about to lose. This Government cares and our sector partners care. So thank you, FNB. You have helped us for now. We can say thank you for helping us. Hon Speaker, across Government, infrastructure delivery continues at scale. There are more than 300 health projects. There are more than 210 education projects and more than 250 general infrastructure projects and they are currently being implemented across the Western Cape.

This level of delivery is necessary because the Western Cape continues to grow. More people arrive every year. More families need homes. More learners need

schools. More patients need clinics. More communities need roads and services. Infrastructure drives growth. Growth creates jobs. Jobs creates hope, †en daardie hoop moet sigbaar wees, sigbaar in ons dorpe, sigbaar in ons landelike gebiede, sigbaar in ons stede en sigbaar in elke gemeenskap waar mense wag vir geleenthede. [and that hope must be visible, visible in our towns, visible in our rural areas, visible in our cities and visible in every community where people wait for opportunities.]

Hon Speaker, before I conclude, allow me to express my appreciation to the leadership and staff of the Department of Infrastructure. To our Head of Department, our Head of Ministry, our Deputy Directors-General, our Senior Managers, and every official across the Department. Many of them walked here this morning with me because this is our budget. It is not my budget. Some of them are following these sessions online at our head office and in our regional office across this province.

Yes, even our roads teams will be part of our family from the 1st of April because, hon Speaker and Premier, we call ourselves Team DOI. Thank you for your dedication, team, your professionalism, and your commitment to serving the people of the Western Cape. I also, and they suddenly get recognition from me, I would love our finance team to stand. †Hulle is bietjie menssku. [They are a bit shy.] I do want to also thank our finance team, who has ensured that we received our consecutive clean audit, Premier, as a new department.

But let us not forget, this would in actual fact be our 13th consecutive clean

audit, the only provincial department that can say so dealing with infrastructure. So well done to our finance team. And I also thank the team in my Ministry for their support and hard work. Infrastructure delivery on this scale is never the work of one person, †al kry een persoon pak slae. Dit is spanwerk, dit is beplanning, dit is deurstettingsvermoë, dit is samewerking en dit is geloof in die toekoms. [even if one person gets a hiding. It is teamwork, it is planning, it is resilience, it is cooperation and it is belief in the future.]

Hon Speaker, infrastructure does not follow election cycles, although some wish it did. It follows a vision. It follows discipline and it follows the courage to build for the next generation. So this R9.86 billion Budget turns plans into projects, projects into jobs and jobs into opportunity. As I stand here, across this province cranes are rising, the vision of our National Minister, which I share. Roads are being built. Homes are taking shape. Schools are expanding. Clinics are opening and communities are growing.

†Dit is hoe vooruitgang lyk, dit is hoe verantwoordelike regering werk, ons bestuur nie in die Wes-Kaap agteruitgang nie, ons bou die toekoms. [That is what progress looks like, that is how responsible government works, we do not manage deterioration in the Western Cape, we build the future.] Because in this province, hon Speaker and members, we are not waiting for the future. We are already building that future. †Ons wag nie hier vir die toekoms nie, ons bou daai toekoms, want saam bou ons, as 'n span, die Wes-Kaap van môre en daarmee lê ek ons Departement se R9.86 biljoen 2026 Infrastruktuurbeegroting ter tafel vir al ons mense wat deel gaan vorm van daai toekoms in die Wes-

Kaap, wat ons nou alreeds bou. Baie, baie dankie. [We do not wait here for the future, we build that future, because together we build, as a team, the Western Cape of tomorrow and with that I table our Department's R9.86 billion 2026 Infrastructure Budget for all our people who are going to form part of that future in the Western Cape, that we are already building now. Thank you very, very much.]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie aan die agbare Minister, [The SPEAKER Thank you to the hon Minister,] thank you to the hon Minister. [Interjection] Order members. Order. [Interjection] Order. [Interjection] Order, members. The Minister has concluded. [Interjection] Order. [Interjection] Order, members. Hon members, before I recognise the next hon member, I wish to remind the members in the gallery that while you are very welcome to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, you may not participate in the proceedings on the floor and that is including clapping if you are in agreement or showing your disapproval with something that is being said if you do not agree.

So please, just a reminder that you may not participate. Can I also remind the members to not elicit a response from the members in the gallery? Hon members, I recognise the hon Lekker.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Thank you. Thank you, hon Speaker. My sincere condolences to you and your family. Hon members, I rise on behalf of the African National Congress to participate in this debate on Vote 10, the Budget of the Department of Infrastructure. Let me state this without any hesitation.

The ANC rejects this Budget. We reject this Budget not as a matter of routine opposition, but because it fundamentally fails to respond to the scale of the infrastructure crisis confronting the people of the Western Cape.

It fails to meet the housing demand. It fails to correct spatial injustice. It fails to use public infrastructure as a lever for economic transformation. Hon Speaker, this Department is entrusted with one of the most powerful tools of the State. Infrastructure is not neutral. It shapes who has access to opportunity, who lives with dignity, and who remains trapped in poverty and yet, when we interrogate this Budget, we see a department that is not using this power to transform the society, but rather to maintain existing inequalities.

The Department itself has acknowledged that in the previous financial year, over 300 million in conditional grant was returned to National Treasury due to underspending. At a time when there is a massive housing backlog, at a time when informal settlements are expanding, at a time when communities are crying for basic services, this Government failed to spend money that was already allocated. That is not a technical glitch. That is a collapse in planning, collapse in execution, and a failure of political leadership, my hon fellow MEC.

Now, hon Speaker, we are presented with a new Budget and we are told that things will be different, but where is the evidence? Where is the detailed implementation plan that gives us confidence that this Department will not repeat the same failures because history tells us otherwise? Hon Speaker, let us turn on housing delivery. The housing backlog under the DA-led

Government has increased to over 643,000 households. This has grown exponentially from 591 units in 2021.

The Department in its APP has acknowledged that housing output has decreased significantly from nearly 20,000 opportunities in 2017/2018 during MEC Madikizela to just 7,486 in 2024/2025. While housing demand stands at over 643,000, this Government led by the DA plans to deliver 2,417 sites, 5,249 houses in the current financial year. This is not just inadequate, it is unacceptable.

We must remind this House that at the height of the ANC governance in this province, more than 25,000 housing opportunities were delivered annually without fail. So what are we witnessing here is not progress, it is regression. Hon Speaker, we must also interrogate how this Budget is structured. There is a clear policy direction emerging from this Department. A shift away from direct delivery towards partnerships, facilitation and reliance on the private sector.

This is evident in the increasing emphasis on what they call leveraging public assets and unlocking value. But what does that mean in practice? It means public land is increasingly being treated as a commodity. It means that instead of building houses for the poor, the State is entering into deals that prioritises profit over the people. We saw this with the sale of the Good Hope Centre for 135 million to a foreign national, while fellow South Africans are told they must go back to the Eastern Cape or their budget must follow the...

[Interjection] Keep quiet. Keep quiet, Wayne.

The SPEAKER: Order. [Interjection] Order.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): A strategic public asset disposed of not to advance social justice, but to serve market interests and enrich foreign pastures. Hon Speaker, let us be clear. You cannot resolve a housing crisis by selling public land. You resolve it by building on that land. Hon Speaker, we must also speak about stalled projects because they expose the dysfunction within this Department. The Mahama Project in Khayelitsha has been delayed for more than four years due to unresolved land ownership issues and I am happy that your fellow DA Minister is here.

Infrastructure has already been installed. Money has already been spent. But houses cannot be built on that piece of land because somebody was sleeping on the job. This is a classic example of poor coordination, weak governance, and lack of urgency. In fact, it is as a result of the City of Cape Town that did not check who is the owner of that piece of land before putting in infrastructure. We must tell you, you do not read, you come here and look for people to blame and the consequences are borne by the people.

Families continue to live in informal settlements. Children continue to grow up without the basic services. In this Department's APP, the Department claims low-cost housing projects in Gugulethu, Crossroads, Philippi, and Sir Lowry's Pass Village originally planned for completion in 2023/2024 are now only

projected to be completed around 2027/2028, provided there are no further extortion disruptions that are occurring. It is a blatant lie that these projects are stalled only by extortionists.

Take ownership, my hon fellow colleague, and stop blame-shifting. Hon Speaker, let me turn to the issue of the roads. The Department itself acknowledges a road maintenance backlog of 32 billion. That figure alone should trigger a crisis response. But when we look at the Budget allocations, we do not see a plan that matches this scale. Instead, we see incremental budgeting without a clear roadmap on how this backlog will be reduced over time.

We need specifics. How much of this 32 billion backlog will be addressed this year? Which municipalities will be prioritised? What are the timelines? Because without that, this is just another number in a report. Hon Speaker, we note with concern the reductions in key funding streams. The Asset Finance Reserve has been reduced. The Equitable Share Allocation has declined. These are not abstract figures, but real cuts that will impact on service delivery.

This is austerity and austerity, hon Speaker, is a political choice. It is a choice to reduce the role of State. It is a choice to shift the burden onto the poor. It is a choice that we fundamentally reject. Hon Speaker, now let me address the leadership question. And hon Mr Simmers is not just responsible for the Department. He is the Provincial Leader of the DA. So he carries both administrative and political responsibility and it is precisely on this basis that

we must interrogate his leadership.

Because what we see is a department that is underperforming, a budget that is misaligned with the reality, and a government that is increasingly disconnected from the people. Hon Speaker, MEC Simmers has now become weak and ineffective. He presides over a department that returns money while people suffer. He provides over a housing programme that is shrinking instead of expanding. He presides over a system that delays projects while communities suffer and yet he wants to present himself as a capable leader of this province.

We know how the DA operates. We have seen the patterns. Black leaders are elevated when convenient, but quickly discarded when they challenge the status quo. So I say to hon MEC, I hope you are supporting the right faction within the DA. I hope you are still enjoying the privilege of being Donald Trump's †laaitie [boy]. Because if not, like many before, you will be isolated. Hon Speaker, while the DA is busy with its internal politics, the people are dealing with real issues.

They are dealing with overcrowded informal settlement. They are dealing with a government that is slow, unresponsive, and disconnected. We must interrogate why the so-called Provincial Roads Delivery Model. We are told that it will improve efficiency, but where is evidence? Has it reduced cost? Has it accelerated delivery? At a broader level, this Budget reflects a failure to confront spatial inequality. We are serious about transformation. Then infrastructure should be used to reverse up-to-date spatial patterns, which are

evident everywhere you go. In the Cape Flats, even in the townships. This Budget does not demonstrate any willingness to address or reverse up-to-date spatial patterns.

As I draw to a close, the ANC notes with concern, with serious concerns, the bribery allegations involving CCC Maintenance and Services and calls for a full transparent investigation that goes beyond the surface of what has been presented to the public. We cannot ignore claims that the alleged bribery incident may have been orchestrated under circumstances where the company owner was invited to engage the City Manager regarding companies' frozen accounts while raising questions that require careful examination.

The City's swift decision to terminate all the company's contracts has already resulted in significant job losses with workers now left without income, further compounding the socio-economic crisis. As the ANC, we will closely monitor how and whom these contracts are reallocated to, to ensure that this situation is used to simply reshuffle patronage networks. In conclusion, this Budget is not a tool for transformation. It is a mechanism for maintaining the status quo.

It does not address the housing crisis at scale. It does not respond to infrastructure backlog with urgency. It does not place the needs of the poor at the centre. It reflects a government that is comfortable with inequality, a government that is comfortable with slow delivery and comfortable with a decline. We deserve better. The people of the Western Cape deserve better. They deserve a government that builds. They deserve a government that

delivers. They deserve a government that transforms our economy, a government that ensures that it addresses the imbalances ...[intervenes]

The SPEAKER: Hon Lekker, your time has expired, please conclude.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): ...and therefore, this budget, we are not supporting it. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Lekker. [Interjection] Order. Hon Adams, can I please remind you that you cannot, if you want to address the House, you can speak by switching on your microphone and I will address you. But it is completely against the Rules and un-parliamentary to just stand up and make sounds. You can say †*kom op*, [come on] once I acknowledge you or recognise you and you put on your microphone. [Interjection] Order. Order. [Interjection] Order. [Interjection] Order. I have addressed, hon Adams. I do not need any assistance to do so.

Hon Adams, according to the hon Speakers list in front of me, I have got hon Petrus. [Interjection] Hon Adams, please take your seat. Thank you very much. I have just received from the Table Staff the updated hon Speakers list and I recognise the hon Adams.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I was going to speak from my speech, but ... †*maar die Vader weet, agbare hon Speaker, ek het nog nooit so slegte boring speech gehoor nie. Agbare hon Speaker, daar is*

mense wat doodgaan en wag vir huise. Die *hon member* het gesê dit is amper 700,000 op die waglys, is waar wat sy sê, dis die goddelike waarheid wat sy sê.

Van 2019 af, was die huise *delivery* 8,000 gewees, huidiglik is dit ...[Tussenwerpsel.]

[but the Lord knows, hon Speaker, I have never heard such a poor boring speech. Hon Speaker, there are people dying and waiting for houses. The hon member said it was almost 700,000 on the waiting list, it's true what she says, it's God's truth what she says.

From 2019 the houses delivery was 8,000, currently it is ...[Interjections.]]

The SPEAKER: Hon Adams, please take your seat. Hon Masipa, is that a point of order?

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): Yes, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order.

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): Is the member on the floor prepared to take a question?

The SPEAKER: I will ask the member, please take your seat. Hon Adams, are you prepared to take a question?

†Mnr B ADAMS (PA): Agbare hon Speaker, die DA moet weet, ek is nie bang

vir hulle nie, nè?

[Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, the DA must know I'm not scared of them, hey?]

The SPEAKER: I am asking you ...[intervenes]

Mr B ADAMS (PA): I will not entertain the hon member.

The SPEAKER: Okay, thank you very much. Hon... Just before I recognise you again, please take your seat, hon Adams. [Interjection] Order, members, I am on the floor. Hon Nkondlo? Hon Masipa, just for the record, hon Adams is not prepared to take a question. Hon Adams, you may proceed.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): He can send me a mix-it, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, housing delivery has fallen to 3,000 †onder die mees slegste Minister wat die Infrastructure Department in die Wes-Kaap nog gehad het. 3,000, die ANC het 25,000 'n jaar ge-deliver vir die mense van die Wes-Kaap, hoe kan jy voor die Vader nog so sleg is dat jy 3,000 bou en jy wil staan en *boast* en sing en jy wil vir mense... ek wil vir die mense van Melkies, vir Melkhoutfontein wil ek sê dankie vir die Minister, dat hy darem vir hulle uit-*gesort* het. Ek is dankbaar dat julle julle huise gekry het in Melkhoutfontein, dis 'n baie lieflike plek, daai Melkies. Maar in elke geval, Minister ...[Tussenwerpsel.]

[Under the worst Minister that the Infrastructure Department in the Western Cape has ever had. 3,000, the ANC has delivered 25,000 per year for the people of the Western Cape, how Can you before the Father still be so bad

3000 and sing and for the people you want to... I want to say to the people of Melkies, to Melkhoutfontein I want to say thank you to the Minister, that he at least sorted them out. I am grateful that you have received your houses in Melkhoutfontein, it is a very lovely place, that Melkies. But in any case, Minister ...[Interjection.]

†Die SPEAKER: *Agbare* Adams, [The SPEAKER: Hon Adams,] I need to caution you and remind you that you may not address the gallery. You must speak to the Chair. So can you please address me? [Interjection] Order. [Interjection] Order, members.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, while the Minister is boasting about a budget of R9.8 billion for infrastructure, yet thousands of families in the Western Cape are still waiting for the basic infrastructure for a house to live in. †Mense gaan dood en wag vir hulle huise. [People are dying and are waiting for their houses.] While the Minister blames budget pressure from the ANC, communities are suffering the consequences while the Minister is playing blame. People spend decades on housing waiting lists, and the tragic reality is that many people, like I said, are dying while waiting for houses.

Hon Speaker, †daar is mense in George wat met hulle laaste *pension funds* geld in Wendy *houses* bly omdat hulle nie huise kry nie en hulle kinders in dit sit en dan is daar nog die *audacity* om vir daai mense nog *notices* te gee dat daai mense daai huise moet afbreek. *Agbare hon* Speaker, die DA onder Minister Tertius Simmers is die slegste sedert die ANC. Die ANC het beter as die DA

gedoen, maar dit is wat gebeur wanneer jy 'n *coconut in charge* sit wat nie onse mense se pleit verstaan nie. [there are people in George who with their last pension funds money live in Wendy houses because they don't get houses and put their children in there and then there is still the audacity to give those people notices that those people must break down those houses. Hon Speaker, the DA under Minister Tertius Simmers is the worst since the ANC. The ANC did better than the DA, but that is what happens when you put a coconut in charge who does not understand our people's plea.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Adams, please take your seat. Hon Chief Whip.

The CHIEF WHIP: Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: Is that a point of order?

The CHIEF WHIP: Yes, hon Speaker. I would ask that you ask the hon member to withdraw the attack on the integrity of the Minister that he just made.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): What words...

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. [Interjection] Order again. Hon Adams, please rise. Hon Adams, I need to remind you in terms of the Rules. You are casting aspersions on an hon member of the House and I therefore request that you withdraw.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): I did not cast aspersions. The hon Minister is building 3,000 houses ...[intervenes]

The SPEAKER: I am not engaging you, I am not debating you. That is a ruling. Can I please ask that you withdraw that statement?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Which statement must I withdraw, hon Speaker?

The SPEAKER: That the Department is led by a coconut. Can you please ...[intervenes]

Mr B ADAMS (PA): But is he not a coconut Minister?

The SPEAKER: I am not debating you on my ruling. There is other ...[intervenes]

Mr B ADAMS (PA): I did not, but hon Speaker, I did not say the Minister was a coconut.

The SPEAKER: No, no, you did ...[intervenes]

Mr B ADAMS (PA): I was saying they were led by a coconut. I did not say he was a coconut. [Interjection]

The SPEAKER: Order. There is only one, there is only one Minister leading

that Department. So the... [Interjection] Order, members! [Interjection] Order. The context and the pretext of your contribution, I am asking you to unconditionally withdraw.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, I unconditionally withdraw if you are thinking that he is not a coconut. I withdraw.

The SPEAKER: That is not... [Interjection] Hon members! Hon Adams, I have asked you to withdraw unconditionally ...[intervenes]

Mr B ADAMS (PA): I withdraw. I withdraw, hon Speaker. I withdraw.

The SPEAKER: You may continue.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Can I continue, hon Speaker?

The SPEAKER: You may continue.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, 3,000 houses a year. Our infrastructures, our roads, if you drive in Kuilsrivier, if you drive in Bongoletu in Oudtshoorn, if you drive in Bridgton in Oudtshoorn, if you drive in Asla Park in Mossel Bay, if you drive in Newton Park in Pacaltsdorp, if you drive in Khayelitsha, if you drive in Macassar, and the Minister is speaking about flourish infrastructure in the Western Cape.

He is not flourishing. He is a Minister of †mislukking [failure.] I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Adams. [Interjection] Order, members. Let me just, I just want to be guided by the Table Staff. Is the hon member on the virtual platform? I therefore recognise the hon Lithakong?

Ms T LITHAKONG (EFF): [No audible response]

The SPEAKER: I recognise the hon Marais.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, to you, welcome back and our condolences to you and the family. Hon Speaker, the Freedom Front Plus notes the very important role this Department plays in every sector of our society. Programme 4 on Human Settlements sits at the heart of human dignity, personal pride, opportunity, and social justice. It speaks directly to the constitutional promise that everyone should have a right to access adequate housing.

However, this promise must be viewed alongside the reality we face. The Budget for Human Settlements Development Grant has been reduced. This comes at a time when housing backlog has already escalated to 600,000 and more. But this is not just a number. It includes many families that have been waiting for more than 20 to 25 years. So access to adequate housing, hon Speaker, does not necessarily mean ownership.

But it does require that the State takes reasonable measures within its available resources to progressively realise this right. Hon Speaker, I want the Department and the Minister to ensure that quality houses are built. There are title deeds being handed over to many shortly after the construction has been completed, without assessing for any building defects that will later pass on to the new beneficiary. I want to also alert the Department to Fisantekraal, where 3,000 houses have been built, but there is no functioning, fully functioning police station.

I believe that planning must be revisited and in closing, hon Speaker, with my limited time, Bainskloof Pass must also be attended to by the Department. It is a very important provincial heritage.

The SPEAKER: Hon Marais, your time has expired, thank you very much.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: I recognise the hon Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, we need to reflect on what the Infrastructure Budget is actually delivering. Because while infrastructure as a category is broad and important, we must be honest that this Infrastructure Budget will not deliver any more houses. And right now, that is exactly our province's problem. Housing delivery in this province is not keeping pace with need. Instead, we are caught in a cycle that undermines

meaningful progress.

Land is suddenly being released for housing faster than we are able to build on it and then rather than accelerating construction, we end up diverting resources to protect the land from what they call unlawful occupation and this is not a sustainable model. The model is performative. Especially when the Department conceded in the Committee last week that not a single project in the social housing pipeline is currently funded. If we are serious about delivery of affordable housing, we would change our approach, adapting to the reality that we have an affordable housing crisis and that relying on conditional grants will not fix this.

Not a single portion of the Provincial Equitable Share nor the new alternative and blended finance fund has been allocated to housing delivery. This in the context where the Government frequently raises concerns about not receiving its fair share. Yet when funds are available, housing, one of the most urgent needs in this province, is not prioritised. As I said, there is no social housing regulatory authority funding moving through the housing pipeline. This constrains the Province's ability to deliver at scale, particularly for working families.

So what are we left with despite all the MEC's numbers? We have 5,317 housing units that are actually funded for this financial year and funded through the Human Settlements Development Grant only and where are these houses being built? Far away from the city centre. Hon Speaker, this Infrastructure Budget

appears to favour flash over fundamentals.

The SPEAKER: Hon Herron, your time has expired.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Now, let me just... Okay, hon Wessels, you do not need the podium? Okay, then I recognise you, hon Wessels.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Hon Speaker, Premier Allen Winde, Minister Tertius Simmers, colleagues in the Legislature, distinguished guests, and people of the Western Cape. Maybe before I start, let me talk of the irony that just happened. The irony in the comment of member Adams's comment regarding Wendies, when the very same person on the 5th of February this year laid a complaint, through you, hon Speaker [Interjection]

The SPEAKER: Order. Hon Wessels, please take your seat. Hon Adams? Hon Adams, I will recognise you. You do not need to shout. I will give everyone an opportunity. You can just get up and I will recognise you. What did ...[intervenes]

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker...

The SPEAKER: Hon Adams? Hon Adams, in terms of the Rules, is that a point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Yes, Hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): The hon member is trying to cast aspersions, hon Speaker. That is very un-parliamentary. [Interjection]

The SPEAKER: Order. [Interjection] Order, order! Hon Adams, you rose on a point of order. Addressing me, you do not need to engage across the floor. And hon members, there was a member on the floor. Hon Wessels, I wish to remind you that all members are honourable. You please do not cast any aspersions. There is a parliamentary mechanism available in the Parliamentary Rules if you want to bring any information to the attention of the House, can I please ask that you be cautious in your approach? And I will, hon Adams, revert to Hansard to look at the context of that submission by hon Wessels, and I will return back to the House with the ruling. Hon Wessels.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you, thank you very much, hon Speaker. Let me state it then differently. The irony of an hon member's comment regarding Wendies in George and the people staying in those, when it was a hon member of this House that actually on the 5th of February 2026 laid the complaint at the very municipality to evict the people living in that Wendy, hon Speaker. So let me be clear. The Budget Vote sets out the blueprint to improve the lives of the people in the Western Cape, because this year we are building more

homes, we are handing over more title deeds, we are fixing more roads. This is what this Government does.

Hon Speaker, we should remember that the Government does not create wealth. People do. But people need a government that builds infrastructure that allows them to do that. So while the ANC talks, we deliver and while the PA makes promises, we will hand over title deeds. [Interjection]

The SPEAKER: Order.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Hon Speaker ...[Interjection]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): ...infrastructure remains a major driver of growth. The Western Cape will spend 31.1 billion ...[Interjection]

The SPEAKER: Hon Wessels, please take your seat. [Interjection] Order members. Hon members... [Interjection] Order. Hon members... hon members, there is a member on the floor. I allow a lot of latitude because that is the beast of this House and contestation of ideas and policies are absolutely the role of the space for a Parliament. But I cannot allow that when hon members on the floor that they are being drowned out by running commentary. That is not allowed.

Hon members, there is a speakers list for a particular reason. Please allow the members on the speakers list to make the contribution. If you disagree and you want to rebut that, you have an opportunity on the speakers list or outside of this Chamber over a cup of coffee. Hon Wessels, you may continue.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. In the words of Minister Jaco Londt, †die oorverdowende gekekkel. [the deafening cackling.] So, hon Speaker, the Western Cape will spend over R31.1 billion over three years on infrastructure. For this year alone, we will spend 9.8 billion on delivering for the people of this province. Hon Speaker, the word delivery is not something that should be mentioned by the ANC, as it does not happen in ANC-run provinces. But delivery and the ANC go together.

In fact, the DA can proudly walk this country, in this province, in these municipalities, with our heads held high because we deliver, we provide, we make the difference. We care about the people of South Africa. In Human Settlements, with a budget of more than 2 billion, we deliver over 2,400 service sites. We will deliver more than 5,200 houses. This R2 billion investment will not go missing. It will not be spent on fake housing projects where no houses are delivered, unlike in the ANC-led provinces, unlike Ventersdorp, unlike Kagisano Molopo in the North West.

Hon Speaker, the ANC's slogan should actually read, no houses, just corruption, with a bread on the side. This is a shame. These are the vulnerable communities of this country ...[intervenes]

The SPEAKER: Hon Wessels, please take your seat. Hon members, I ask for your indulgence. I have previously cautioned and I have asked for your cooperation. There has been an entire political debate which gave a lot of leeway for you to make your comments, and that occurred prior to these individual Budget Votes. Hon members, you will have another opportunity at the end of this Budget Votes to again express your approval or disapproval.

But for now, there is a member on the floor, in terms of the Rules, have been allocated time to make his or her contribution, and it is our duty as members to allow that to happen, and my duty to ensure that the member is provided with the space to do so. Running commentary is not allowed, and especially when you drown out the speaker on the floor. Hon Wessels, you may continue.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. That is why ANC MECs can shower in hotels while Gauteng goes down the drain. While the ANC feeds their own pockets, the DA will continue to build houses. Hon Speaker, we do not just build houses. We create homeowners, not dependents. Under the DA-led Western Cape Government, we have registered over 78,000 title deeds over the last decade. This year alone, we delivered 6,515 title deeds. We smashed our target.

Now compare this to the ANC and the PA and the EFF in Knysna. They have nothing to show for it, only chaos. Projects stall because of ineffective governance that impacts service delivery. So while they grandstand, their

people are waiting for houses. The people of the Western Cape deserve better. We are giving them better – title deeds, security, the dignity of ownership. Hon Speaker, between 2022 and 2025, the Garden Route and the West Coast achieved notable successes in reducing the housing demand.

A decrease of more than 17 and nearly 46 percent respectively. This is not excuses. This is progress. The Department has yielded an extensive social housing pipeline that delivers approximately 7,000 new rental units over the next five years. This is for the people of the Western Cape. This is for the most vulnerable in our communities. Not only for the people in the Metro. In fact, the first housing project in a non-Metro municipality is currently under construction in the Drakenstein Municipality.

Hon Speaker, on our roads, we have been tested. Weather conditions have been severe. We did not sit back and blame the weather. We got to work. We repaired strategic routes. We started the upgrade of the Louis Fourie Road in Mossel Bay. We pushed forward with the Ceres to the Op-die-Berg Road. This year, we will complete the Louis Fourie Road and the reseal and rehabilitation of the MR310 between Ceres and Op-die-Berg.

This year, we are investing 1.79 billion through the Provincial Road Maintenance Grant. We are protecting our surface roads and we are maintaining our gravel network. We are launching new projects in Gordon's Bay, the Marina's Way, and safety improvements on the R44, the Winery Interchange. Every project creates work opportunities. We are mandated to those people of

the Western Cape to create jobs to women and persons with disabilities. We believe in giving everyone a fair chance.

Hon Speaker, through Public Works, we ensure that frontline services have what they need. We are modernising schools. We are modernising health facilities and we have two mega health infrastructure projects that are being planned to modernise our healthcare system. In previous words of Minister Baartman, readers are leaders. That is why we are rebuilding the Beaufort West Library. We are constructing the office accommodation for the Children's Commissioner in Cape Town. We are modernising office accommodation at York Park in George and the Seafare House in Cape Town.

We have earmarked just over 134 million for the construction at Child and Youth Care centres. We have earmarked almost R70 million for urgent assistance, for urgent maintenance at Child Youth Care centres across the province. That is what a competent government does. We invest in infrastructure, in the infrastructure needs of our people across all sectors. Hon Speaker, we are also investing into the people of this province. Through the Masakh'iSizwe, we funded 50 new students, engineering, architecture, and built environment.

Through the Professional Development Programme, we support 40 candidates to become registered professionals. Through the Contractor Development Programme, we empower emerging contractors, not with hand-outs, but with skills, with experience, and with the ability to compete. This is how we build

a capable State, by growing the capabilities of our people. Hon Speaker, through you to member Lekker, let me speak plainly. The so-called construction mafia is organised criminality. Plain and simple.

It is being allowed to flourish because the ANC failed to act. In Gugulethu, Crossroads, Philippi, Sir Lowry's Pass Village, projects delayed, cost balloons, people intimidate ...[intervenes]

The SPEAKER: Hon Wessels, please take your seat. [Interjection] Order. Please take your seat. Hon... [Interjection] Order. [Interjection] Order. Hon Lekker... [Interjection] Order. [Interjection] Hon... [Interjection] Order. Hon Adams, is that a point of order? [Interjection] Order. Hon Lekker, there is a speaker on the floor ...[intervenes]

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker...

The SPEAKER: ...is that a point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): I was going to ask, if hon member is not scared enough to answer questions.

The SPEAKER: So you want to pose a question to the member?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Through you, hon Speaker. If he is not too scared.

The SPEAKER: Okay, I will ask. Hon Wessels, are you prepared to take a question?

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Fine, thank you very much ...[intervenes]

The SPEAKER: Order! Hon Wessels, before you continue, I want to conclude that point of order. Hon Adams. Hon Wessels, please take your seat. Hon Adams, please take your seat.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): I take note that the honourable is scared to take a question.

The SPEAKER: [Interjection] Hon members? Hon members, there are Rules in this House. [Interjection] Order. Hon Adams, I am still addressing you. You rose on a point of order, the member is not prepared to take your question. And then I saw hon Bryant. Is that a new point of order?

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Yes, hon Chair. I am rising in terms of Rule 40 and Rule 66.4. Hon Chair, there are consistent interruptions taking place, even while I am speaking now, which has forced hon member Wessels to have to sit down on at least three occasions and interrupted the flow of his speech, which is completely disrespectful and in contravention of Rule 40. We also have Rule 66.4 being contravened in terms of irrelevant points of order being raised to intentionally disrupt his speech. Please, can you rule on those?

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I [Interjection] Order. [Interjection]

Order. [Interjection] Order. Hon Nkondlo. Hon members, there was a point of order by the hon Bryant. In terms of the first point of order, hon Bryant, I will listen carefully. On the second point of order, that was a point of order, a general point of order, and the member was asking if the other member is prepared to take a question, so I am not going to agree that that is an interruption of the flow. But we may continue. Hon Wessels, you may continue.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, through you, the main reason why I did not take the question is through you while mister or member ...[intervenes]

The SPEAKER: Hon Wessels, I have already ruled you were not prepared to take a question. Please do not now use your time to explain the question. That is against the Rules. Hon Wessels, please continue with your speech.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. So while the hon, through you, member Adams, makes lives on Facebook, this Department changes the lives of communities. But let me get back to the construction mafia. Projects delayed, costs ballooned, and people intimidated. The ANC holds the national portfolio ...[intervenes]

The SPEAKER: Hon Wessels, please take your seat. Hon Adams, is that a point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Speaker, the hon ...[intervenes]

The SPEAKER: Hon member, please speak to me.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, the hon member is again casting aspersion about my Facebook lives. He must stop following me, please. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: [Interjection] Order. Hon members [Interjection] Hon members! Hon members, I wish to, hon Adams, firstly, that is not a point of order. And secondly, you have had allocated time in terms of the speakers list. You cannot get up if you do not agree with an input being made by a member, there are other mechanisms to remedy that input. But you cannot address comments made and expect the Chair ...[Interjection] Hon members, I provide you an opportunity when you are on the floor and I expect the same courtesy as the Chair.

Hon Adams, that is not a point of order and I wish to caution you that you may not get up and just correct the content of any speech. If you do not agree or disagree with the content being made, there are other mechanisms available to you to correct that. But that is completely unparliamentary. Hon Wessels, please continue.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. I said that a lot today. So the so-called construction mafia is organised criminality, plain and simple. This is being allowed to flourish because the ANC failed to act. The

ANC holds the national police portfolio. They hold the justice portfolio. They have never been able to crack down on this and what do they do? Dilolo.

They talk about radical economic transformation. Meanwhile, radical criminals transform the construction sites to extortion rackets. Hon Speaker, simply put, the ANC is too weak to act, too compromised to care, and too busy fighting their internal battles. We will not wait for them. We call on the national police to do their job. We will not allow criminals to dictate when and where we build.

Hon Speaker, this Budget is about a critical few things. Building more homes. Handing over more title deeds. Fixing more roads. Developing young people. Creating jobs. That is what we promised. That is what we are delivering. The DA governs the Western Cape because we are competent. We get the basics right and when you get the basics right, you unleash the greatest force for good in any society – the people. The ANC cannot say this. The EFF cannot say this. The PA cannot say this.

They had their chances in National Government, in local municipalities like Knysna, in portfolios like Human Settlements, and they have failed every single time. Only the DA delivers. Only the DA builds. And only the DA puts the people first. Hon Speaker, we will continue to build. We will continue to deliver. And we will never stop believing that the people of this province deserve a government that works for them as hard as they do. [Interjection]

The SPEAKER: Order.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): The DA supports this Vote. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: [Interjection] Order. Hon Lekker, order. [Interjection] Order! Hon members, we are on Vote One for the day. I think it is important that I lay these ground Rules in order for us to get through the remainder of the Votes. So, Hon Minister, before you continue. Hon members, there is a speakers list. You can make your input through your members on the speakers list. Running commentary is not allowed. You are drowning out the speaker and the same way that I protect whoever from both sides of the house when you are on the floor, I expect that you do and respect that same right to another member that is democratically elected to represent the constituents.

Whether you agree or disagree with that input, you cannot drown out the speaker and suppress an input. Hon members and through the Chief Whips, if you can please work with us from the Chair in order for us to get through this day. I now recognise the hon Minister. Hon Minister Simmers.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you, Hon Speaker, and thank you for all hon members who participated in this very colourful debate today, I must say. Budget debates are important because they allow us to test ideas. So the rational ones that may be quite blunt. They challenge priorities, which is important, I welcome that. And they ensure that every rand which we spend serves the people of the Western Cape. †Maar as 'n mens, met alle respek,

agbare Speaker, as 'n mens na sommige van die bydraes vandag luister, sou jy wragtig dink hier gebeur niks in hierdie provinsie nie.

Jy sal dink daar word geen huise gebou nie, dat daar geen paaie onderhou word nie, ek moet benadruk, provinsiale paaie, want sekere lede ken nie die verskil tussen 'n provinsiale pad, 'n nasionale pad en 'n munisipale pad nie, want hulle stel net nie belang om hulle te vergewis van die verskille nie. Jy sal dink geen skole word opgradeer nie. Jy dink geen projekte word vorentoe geneem nie. [But with all respect honourable Speaker, if one listens to some of the contributions here today one would really think that nothing is happening here in this province.

One would think that no houses are being built, no roads are being maintained, and I have to emphasize provincial roads, because certain members do not know the difference between a provincial road, a national road and a municipal road, because they just are not interested to acquaint themselves of the differences. One would think that no schools are being upgraded. One would think no projects are taken forward.]

Hon Speaker, the facts actually tell a different story if you just pick up the book and read. Because leaders are readers, those who actually want to lead.

†Die bewys van wat ons hier vandag debatteer, lê nie in wat ons sê as die regering en ek en my Departement nie, die bewys lê in die werk wat gedoen word. [The proof of what we are debating here today, does not lie in what we

say as the Government and myself and my Department, the proof lies in the work that is being done.] This year alone, the Department of Infrastructure is managing a pipeline of projects worth more than R132 billion. †Kyk in die boek. [Look in the book.] We are delivering inner city, mixed use and affordable housing at scale through projects like Welmoed, Ithemba, Leeuloop, Founders Garden, Helen Bowden and Presswich.

And through you, hon Speaker, to the hon member Herron, less than three weeks ago, the Premier and I launched Presswich. I would encourage you and all members in April, you will actually see our advert going out. It was not just some fancy announcement. We are upgrading roads across the province with more than 100 transport infrastructure projects in the pipeline and 41 committed over this MTF. The detail is in the book. We are building and maintaining ...[intervenes]

†Die SPEAKER: Agbare Minister, daar is 'n punt van orde. Neem asseblief u sitplek in. [The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, there is a point of order. Please take your seat.] Hon Adams, is that a point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Yes, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: When you address me, can you please rise?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, sorry, I am still new. Is the hon Minister allowed to lie and to †skel op die vloer? [swear on

the floor?]

The SPEAKER: Hon Adams, referring to an hon member as lying is unparliamentary. So, before I continue, I will ask you to please withdraw that.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): I withdraw that. But is the hon member allowed to †*skel?*
[swear?]

The SPEAKER: The hon member is... [Interjection] Hon members, the fact or the delivery of a member and how a member delivers their contribution, I am not going to dictate to the member. So, just conclude that, that is not a point of order. The hon Minister, you may continue.

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: Dankie
agbare...[Tussenwerpsel.]

[The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you, hon ...[Interjection.]]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon member, is that a new point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): No, no, no, hon Speaker. I was just going to say †*ek wil wragtigwaar sit nou.* [I really want to sit now.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not a point of order. And just for the record, hon Adams, you cannot rise on a point of order already been adjudicated

in terms of the Rules. Hon Minister, you may continue.

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: Agbare Speaker, hierdie provinsie het drie tale, Afrikaans in sy suiwer vorm mag ek praat, want ek vloek en ek skel nie. Maar as 'n mens ABET Afrikaans het, dan moet ek verstaan, ek leer vir die dag 'n nuwe woord, in die HAT woordeboek. [The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Hon Speaker, this province has three languages, Afrikaans in its pure form I may speak, because I do not swear or *skel*. but if one has ABET Afrikaans then I must understand, I learn for the day a new word, in the HAT dictionary.] We are building and maintaining hospitals [Interjection]

The SPEAKER: Order.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: ...clinics, care facilities and public buildings across every district of the Western Cape and we are doing this in one of the most difficult fiscal environments in recent years. Hon Speaker, ...[Interjection]

The SPEAKER: Order.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: ...several members spoke about the housing backlog, †ja, die agterstand is 'n werklikheid, maar die vraag is nie of die uitdaging nie bestaan nie, die vraag is of [indistinct] [yes, the backlog is a reality, but the question is not if the challenge does not exist, the question is

[Indistinct.]]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon Chief Whip, is that a point of order?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Earlier, hon member Adams had to withdraw. He had to withdraw, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Hon Chief Whip, just for procedure, can you please use the microphone on your left-hand side?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Apologies about that, hon Speaker. Earlier, the hon Adams had to withdraw because of casting aspersions. The MEC just now said that the hon Adams is having an ABET. So that is also casting aspersions. Same as what happened earlier. Can the same ruling be applied? Thank you very much. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: Hon members, I will revert to Hansard and I will come back to that because ...[Interjection] Order! [Interjection] Hon members! I do not need any assistance from either the left or the right-hand side of this House in order to preside over the Sitting. Hon Chief Whip, on your point of order, I will refer to Hansard and I will come back to make sure that we get the pretext and the context of that submission. But I will come back to the House with a ruling. Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you, hon Speaker. †Maar die vraag is nie of die uitdaging bestaan of nie, die vraag is of 'n regering besig is om dit aan te spreek. [But the question is not whether the challenge exists or not, the question is if a government is busy to address it.] In the Western Cape, we are responding with scale, with planning, which is much needed in the infrastructure family, and with required reforms to actually address the reality of all of our people. Something some of the Opposition do not fully comprehend or understand.

†Ons stel grond beskikbaar, maar nou, deur u agbare Speaker, het ek 'n vraag aan die Opposisie in hierdie Huis. Die vraag is nou aan die ANC en GOOD, ondersteun u ons Nasionale Minister McPherson se roepe dat nasionale eiendom, soos Youngsfield en Wingsfield, beskikbaar gestel word vir behuising, nadat, in u geval, beide u partye se Ministers, sy portefeulje voorheen behartig het, maar diep misluk het om deursetting en deurvoer te gee aan die roepe van die Stad Kaapstad, met die ondersteuning van die Provinsiale Regering?

Gaan u ons Nasionale Minister ondersteun in daai roepe? Ons bou geïntegreerde nedersettings, ons finaliseer die klagtes, ons hersien wetgewing om vinniger te kan lewer, ons werk saam met banke, hier sit ons vennote, met munisipaliteite, daar sit ons vennote en ook die privaatsektor wat ook hier sit vanoggend. Ons sit nie met gevoude hande nie, agbare Speaker. Maar ons sal ook nie toelaat dat onwettige besettings, politieke opportuniste en onstabiliteit weer ontwikkeling ontspoor, soos ons in die verlede tussen 2021 en 2024, net

voor verkiesings, in hierdie provinsie gesien het nie.

[We make land available, but now, through you, hon Speaker, I have a question for the Opposition in this House. The question is now to the ANC and GOOD, do you support our National Minister McPherson's calls that national land, like Youngsfield and Wingsfield, be made available for housing, after in your case, both your parties' Ministers previously handled his portfolio, but deeply failed to react and execute to the calls of the City of Cape Town, with the support of the Provincial Government?

Are you going to support our National Minister in those calls? We build integrated settlements, we finalise the complaints, we revise legislation to deliver faster, we work with banks, here our partners are sitting, with municipalities, there sit our partners and also the private sector who are also here this morning. We don't sit with hands folded, hon Speaker. But we will also not allow that illegal invasions, political opportunism and instability again derail development, as we have seen in the past between 2021 and 2024, just before the elections.]

Hon Speaker, some hon members criticise our reliance on national funding. Yes, I heard that. But let us be honest. More than 90 percent of provincial budgets come from national transfers. And if hon member Lekker looks in the budget book, hon Speaker, through you, she will note that in actual fact, we have been afforded an additional R300 million for the ISUPG. So actually, you need to au fait yourself with the Blue Book. That is the reality that every province faces, that we are grant dependent.

†Maar die verskil is, dat ons in die Wes-Kaap nie verskonings soek of maak nie, ons soek oplossings, agbare Speaker. [But the difference is, that we in the Western Cape do not look for or make excuses, we look for solutions, hon Speaker.] That is why we are establishing a Western Cape infrastructure facility. That is why we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Development Bank ...[Interjection.]

†Die SPEAKER: Agbare Minister?

[The SPEAKER: Hon Minister?]

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: ...we are engaging ...[intervenes]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat, please take your seat. Hon Leader of the Opposition, is that a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Speaker, I would like to know whether the hon MEC is willing to take a question on a specific area in my constituency.

The SPEAKER: Absolutely. Hon Minister, are you prepared to take a question?

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Hon Speaker if the hon member can put it in writing, I think I will gladly respond formally. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Hon Leader of the Opposition, the Minister is not prepared to take a question. Is that a new point of order? Because you cannot rise on a point of order on a point of order.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: No, no, it is just to say no, thank you very much. I will put it as a question for oral reply. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: We are engaging development finance institutions. We are calling for reforms to national funding instruments like the USDG, which I encourage all parties of the Legislature to support. So that fast-growing non-Metro municipalities can also receive the support they need into the future. †Maar praat is maklik, om te bou is baie moeilik. [But talk is easy, to build is very difficult.] Ask the people of Knysna and Grabouw what instability under the ANC, PA and EFF coalitions has meant for service delivery.

†Maklik om te praat, maar bitter stadig om te bou. [Easy to talk but very slow to build.] Ask communities what happens when infrastructure portfolios are used for politics instead of delivery. And through you, hon Speaker, †so in plaas van kom op, kom op en sanik soos die klinkende metaal en luidende simbaal, wat u is, agbare mnr Adams, en in u party se kru taal, hou op biza, hou op biza en tel die foon op. Pappa probeer vir u bel uit George uit, jy biza al die pad.

Wanneer munisipale koalisies veg oor wie die meeste gaan skep by die trog ...[Tussenwerpsel.] [so instead of coming up, coming up and complain like the resounding metal and clanging cymbal, that you are, hon Mr Adams, and in your party's crude language, stop to biza, stop to biza and pick up the phone. Pappa is trying to phone you from George, you biza all the way.

When municipal coalitions fight about who is going to scoop the most at the trough...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat.

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: ...stop projekte.

[The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: ...stop projects.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Leader of the Opposition, is that a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Yes, hon Chair, this time it is a point of order. I see at least we are getting calmer towards the end of the debate. I think the hon MEC maybe should speak through you because otherwise members, some of them are going to feel offended and rightfully so. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. That is absolutely correct. Hon Minister, can I remind you to speak to the Chair? Hon Adams, is that a new

point of order?

†Mnr B ADAMS (PA): Ja, agbare Speaker

[Mr B ADAMS: (PA): Yes, hon Speaker.]

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

†Mnr B ADAMS (PA): My Griekwa-neef moet nie met my as ‘n Koranna moeilikheid soek nie, *hon Chair*. Agbare Speaker, ek praat baie direk, as hy met my wil praat, hy kan buite gaan en dan praat ons, ons *sort* die ding uit, hy hoef nie ...[Tussenwewpsel.] [B ADAMS (PA): My Griqua cousin must not look for trouble with me as a Koranna, hon Chair. Hon Speaker, I speak very directly, if he wants to talk with me, he can go outside and then we talk, we sort this out, he does not have to...[Interjection.]]

†Die SPEAKER: Agbare... agbare... agbare Adams ...[Tussenwewpsel.]

[The SPEAKER: Hon...hon...hon Adams...[Interjection.]]

†Mnr B ADAMS (PA): ...hy moenie praat van mense ...[Tussenwewpsel.]

[Mr B ADAMS (PA): ...he must not speak of people...[Interjection.]]

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

†Mnr B ADAMS (PA): *Hon Chair*, hy moenie ...[Tussenwewpsel.]

[Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Chair, he must not...[Interjection.]]

The SPEAKER: Order! Hon Adams, hon Adams, please take your seat. Hon Bryant, before I recognise you. [Interjection] Hon members, hon Adams, I am very mindful that you are ...[Interjection] Hon Adams, I am addressing you because you addressed me. Hon Adams, I allowed you a lot of latitude and leeway because I am mindful that you are new and that the Rules of the House have maybe not been explained to you.

What you have just done is completely un-parliamentary. You do not, if there is a submission or contribution by a member, you do not have to engage on the content of that submission. There are Rules available at your disposal as a member to use that mechanism to come back to the House to come and correct those contributions or the input that you do not agree with. But hon Adams, this is the last warning. I have been very lenient and I wish to remind all members that when at the start of this term, this House has adopted a set of Rules that we all agreed we will work with.

There is also for the members' info and for the citizens in the gallery that are watching what is transpiring in this House, there is a Rules Committee meeting where Rules are being amended currently. If you have any input or if you do not agree with any of the Rules and you do not want to comply with any of the Rules, please use that opportunity to make your input for the amendment of those Rules.

Hon members, this House and the decorum of this House are very important.

The citizens represented here are who elected us to represent them. You do not sit here to represent your own jackets. Can I please remind you of the enormous responsibility that each one of you took when you took your Oath of Office? Please do not dare to fail the citizens of this province. Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you, hon Speaker. As I conclude, I do want to thank the Standing Committee under the leadership of the hon Dirk Wessels for their oversight and their role in ensuring that the task which we have set ourselves for the next three years, that we remain focused on that and that you hold us accountable. I do want to thank all of our partners who are present here today for the role that you will be playing as we all ultimately seek to accelerate our ability to deliver in the Western Cape, but ultimately that you will be playing your part to ensure that we shape our future Western Cape together. I thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister and hon members. Hon members, that concludes the debate on this Vote. The House will now suspend for two minutes to allow for the guests of Minister Simmers to leave the official bay and for the guests in the gallery, and then I will also use that opportunity to allow the guests of Minister Mackenzie for the debate on Cultural Affairs and Sport to take their seats. The House is now suspended.

The House was suspended at 11:37.

The House resumes at 11:40

[The Deputy Speaker takes the Chair]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, we will commence in 25 seconds. We will promptly proceed and I will recognise the Secretary to read the Second Order of the Day.

2. *Debate on Vote 13: Cultural Affairs and Sport, Western Cape Appropriation Bill.*

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I recognise the hon Minister, Minister Mackenzie.

The MINISTER OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker and hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier, hon members of the Executive Council, hon members of the House, the Head of Department and my top management team joining us this morning, friends of the arts, culture, sport, recreation, colleagues of this beautiful province and people of the Western Cape and people of South Africa, a beautiful country which I call my home. We table this Budget Vote at a time when Government is required to make sharper choices with fewer resources while responding to deeper and more complex social challenges.

Across our province, we see the pressures clearly. Young people navigating environments of risk, communities seeking connection and families looking for

spaces that are safe, structured and supported. In this context, the work of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport is not peripheral, it is foundational. Because long before Government intervenes in crisis, it must invest in prevention. Long before we speak about recovery, we must create belonging. And long before opportunity can be seized, it must first be visible and accessible.

The Budget is therefore not a statement of expenditure, it is a statement of intent to build the Western Cape where every resident has access to participation, where talent has a platform and where pathways to opportunity are real and within reach. Hon Speaker, this year the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport reaches a significant milestone. For the first time, our Budget exceeds R1 billion. We are now officially billionaires. It is a clear signal of confidence by the Western Cape Government in the upstream work of this Department, work that invests in prevention, strengthens social cohesion and creates pathway to opportunity long before risk takes hold.

It is also a budget that translates in real targeted investments from support to artists and cultural platforms, to community-based programmes, to strategic events that unlock local economic activity. Hon Speaker, arts and culture are not luxuries. They are the foundation of how communities see themselves, how they express identity and how they find belonging. But they also are economic. A World Bank report that consistently highlighted the growing creative economy as a driver of future growth, employment and innovation. That is why our investment in arts and culture is deliberate, not only to preserve identity,

but to unlock jobs, enterprise and opportunity.

Therefore, in the 2026/2027 financial year, we are allocating R21 million to our annual Arts and Culture Funding Programme. This investment will support artists, organisations and community initiatives across the province, unlocking production, performance and participation, while stimulating local economies and sustainable livelihoods. Hon Deputy Speaker, we are deliberate in how we invest, ensuring that the creative economy is not only supported, but actively enabled to grow and create jobs in the Western Cape.

Because when an artist is supported, an ecosystem is activated, from production teams to venues, from technical crews to local vendors. Recognising the film contribution to the creative industry, we have decided to ring-fence R3 million in our arts funding, specifically to support film development, positioning the Western Cape as a globally competitive destination for production, while opening pathways for local creatives in a high-growth industry and connecting them to international markets. So, thank you to the team for having the foresight to earmark that R3 million just for the film industry.

Hon Speaker, at community level, we are strengthening the foundations for our ecosystem. Therefore, we have allocated R500,000 to community art centres, ensuring that access to creativity is rooted where talent first emerges. Because when we invest at that level, we are building pipelines from communities to stages, from stages to income, and from income to dignity. Hon Deputy Speaker, this past weekend, I attended the Zabalaza Theatre Festival at the

Baxter Theatre, which was inspiring to see emerging artists take the stage with confidence, creativity, and purpose.

Among the performers and the producers are young people who not long ago were practicing their craft in community spaces, and today they are stepping up onto professional stages with confidence where they belong. I did invite some of them myself. Our colleagues are welcome. Thank you. Welcome to stand up, sir. This wonderful man who has been incredible in producing a wonderful show at the Baxter Theatre, thank you for putting our artists on the stage. †Dit sit 'n riem onder die hart, [It is a strap under the heart,] as they say in Afrikaans. Thank you for joining us this afternoon, sir.

Because our investment in the art is to assist young people and to continue to further the development of our creative economy. Hon members, given the importance of this cultural hallmark activity, we have therefore allocated an additional R10 million to our Hallmark and Incubator Events Programme, which are expanding platforms that attract visitors, create markets for creators, and position the Western Cape as a leading cultural and sporting destination in South Africa. Hon members, in December we had the George Arts Sports Festival, where 150 artists, vendors, and support services were directly activated, creating income, visibility, and opportunities across the value chain.

And hon Premier, as I said earlier on, I got a missed call from the Mayor of George, HOD Redmond, and I hope it is his commitment to take that festival forward, because I was waiting for him to confirm that investment, but I cannot

confirm to call him back. Hon Speaker, on Saturday evening, hon Deputy Speaker, on Saturday evening, I attended the Cape Town Carnival, where nearly 50,000 people gathered in a shared space of celebration, expression, and pride. As I walked through the crowds, I heard different languages, different accents from across South Africa and beyond, all drawn to experience the richness of our culture here in our province.

As part of the Cape Town Carnival was the Kaapse Klopse, a beloved culture in this province, where they performed with energy, discipline, and pride. And it is wonderful to see Munib, as I saw him earlier on, Gambino, who organises the great festival every year to acknowledge our culture in this province. And thank you, Melvin, for joining us today, †dit sit 'n riem onder die hart [it is a strap under the heart,] there are people who go out of their way to support this culture in this province. Therefore, in the 2026/2027 financial year, the allocation to the Kaapse Klopse, Cape Malay Choirs, and our Christmas Choir bands increases to R2 million, recognising their role, not only in heritage preservation, but in building our community and enabling livelihoods.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this year is an incredible year for many of our communities. And I want to welcome the Club 60 from Mitchell's Plain, who is also joining us today. This year, Mitchell's Plain is celebrating an incredible milestone. Mitchell's Plain turned 50. So thank you to our seniors from Mitchell's Plain for joining us today. And another community is turning 50 Mfuleni, and Atlantis is also celebrating 60 this year. And we will be honouring these communities by special events this year to celebrate, and more detailed

announcements will be made as we go towards their celebration. But these are not simply just commemorative events. They are structured platforms of identity, dignity, and economic participation.

Hon members, this year, we started a beautiful competition called the Got Talent competition. And thank you also, Alistair Isabel is also here, who is the organiser of that competition. But it was not only in Mitchell's Plain, it was in George and in Matzikama, because we want to give young people in that community an opportunity to succeed. And I hope members of this House will start getting their voices ready so they can also maybe enter those competitions. I certainly will not, hon Deputy Speaker, because I cannot sing.

Hon Deputy Speaker, choral music, it is an important part of our community and because of the importance of our community, we continue to invest and support them. And for this year, an allocation of R1 million to our Choral Music Programme will be invested to enable choirs to perform in curated cultural festivals where their talent is showcased and valued. Hon Speaker, we support our culture and heritage in this province. An additional investment in our culture and heritage will be R3 million investment in our Real Dance and Incenso Programme, to expand participation, particularly amongst young people, affirming our cultural identity and pride across community.

Hon Deputy Speaker, culture must be practiced with dignity, structure and safety. For this reason, our customary initiation programme received an additional R2 million, strengthening governance, improving coordination and

ensuring that the rites of passage are conducted responsibly in partnerships with our communities. I will just have a sip of water quickly. Thank you. Hon Speaker, Deputy Speaker, language is beyond a tool of imagination. It is a gateway to dignity, access and participation.

Just a few days ago, I had the opportunity to attend a National Language Summit where leaders, academics and practitioners from around the country participated and shared their thinking around language and where we are going. As part of my contribution, I shared with them the wonderful booklet that we are producing and have produced in the Western Cape for the Nama language. We preserve and protect our culture in the Western Cape, and I will certainly distribute more of this to all our members so that they can see what we are doing to preserve our languages in this province.

We are committed to advancing multilingualism in the Western Cape, particularly on previously disadvantaged communities. Therefore, to give additional effect to this, we are investing R1 million in additional and sign language promotion. I also want to welcome Jabaa Mohammed here, who is joining us from Deaf SA, because we will continue to invest in programmes to promote sign language. Because in this province, we value all languages because when you value a language, you value its people.

Hon Deputy Speaker, something that is very close to my heart are libraries. They are the democratic spaces in our society where the children discover reading, where there are job seekers accessing opportunities, where students

study, and where communities find a safe place to get together. That is why in partnership with our Year Beyond Programme, we are formally driving a simple but powerful campaign across the Western Cape. It is called On Wednesdays, We Read. Through this initiative, thank you, I know my colleague in Finance will like this, she always gives money for reading, thank you hon Baartman.

On Wednesdays, We Read. We encourage every learner, every parent, every educator, every resident, and every member of this House to just commit 30 minutes once a week to reading. Just 30 minutes once a week to reading, so we can help those who cannot read and those who were not reading at the moment and encouraging them to read. So through our Year Beyond, Deputy Speaker, we are investing R3 million in the 2026 financial year into the Thousand Stories initiative, placing young people directly into libraries in the Western Cape as reading champions.

This programme, yes, honourable, you can say that again, yes, this programme does two things at once. It creates pathways for young people while building pathways into literacy for children who visit those libraries. It exposes young people to new experience within library spaces, strengthening both their skills and their sense of purpose. This year ahead, we will expand the programme further, growing participation from 364 to 537 youth placed in library while expanding its focus beyond reading into coding and digital literacy.

We will also strengthen our integration across our system, embedding playmakers within our MOT programme, piloting delivery with the City of Cape

Town and expanding into clinics through partnerships linked to Healthy Futures and Khulisa Care. Hon Speaker, thank you, colleague, these are not isolated interventions. They form part of a deliberate strategy to close the learning gap and build a culture of reading at scale. In order to ensure sustainability of our public library service and clarity of responsibility and to improve delivery across the system, we will continue to assign the function to the remaining municipalities in this province.

To facilitate this and to strengthen our investment in libraries, we will allocate an additional R6 million to the Municipal Replacement Fund, ensuring that our libraries remain open, functional and accessible, particularly in communities where fiscal pressure places these services at risk. But we are not stopping there, Deputy Speaker, because we love libraries. We give an additional R2 million to refresh multilingual library collection, ensuring residents can access material in languages that reflect their identity and their lived experience.

Through that, we allocate an additional R3 million to replace our outdated SLIM system with a modern integrated platform, ensuring that libraries are not only repositories of books, but gateways to information, technologies and opportunity into digital society. Hon Deputy Speaker, we continue to invest in books and continue to invest in libraries. And we have also, for members of this House, who are quite interested and who will be doing the 30 minutes as I have asked, there are some new local authors who is from this beautiful province, their books have been uploaded onto our system. Please go and take them out.

We did invite some of them here. I am not sure if they have managed to make them, but hon members, let us go visit our libraries and support our local authors by taking out books and support reading in this province. It is more than just books. It is changing the economic opportunity of these individuals. Hon members, archives play a big role in our society. They are not just simply records of the past, they are instruments of accountability in the present and the past, and they are there to safeguard our future, because without proper records, there can be no transparency. Without transparency, there can be no accountability. And without accountability, there can be no trust in government.

Hon Deputy Speaker, during our most recent annual Archives Week, we engaged with close to a thousand participants through exhibitions, workshops and educational programmes with our digital platforms, reaching over 3.4 million impressions, connecting citizens to their history, their rights and their place within our democratic society. This is what modern archives must be. Not silent repositories, but instruments of access, justice and public engagement. Therefore, for the year 26/27, the National Archives Week will be celebrated under the theme Archives for Justice, highlighting the role of records in protecting our memory, enabling transparency and supporting the lived realities of our people.

Building on this momentum, we will host a records management symposium, bringing together accounting officers and records managers to strengthen

compliance, improve governance practices and reinforce institutional accountability across government. Through our recent engagement, the role of artificial intelligence in archives and records management, we are positioning the Western Cape not only to preserve records, but to modernise how we manage, access and protect it in a rapidly evolving digital environment. Because, hon Deputy Speaker, when memory is not preserved, memory will be lost.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we all know sport is one of the most powerful tools we can use to shape behaviour, build discipline and create opportunity, particularly for young people. Hon Deputy Speaker, I am proud to share that in this upcoming financial year, we will sustain participation of more than 72,000 learners on our MOT programme. We are expanding our MOT programme this year from 315 to approximately 335 centres across the Western Cape. We estimate with an additional 20 centres of opportunity, we will reach more than 5,000 young people.

But this is not just about reach. It is about system building. It is about broadening our school sport ecosystem where we already have seen impact. And it is worth reflecting on some of those impacts. Over 12,600 learners participated in provincial school sport competitions. Nearly 160,000 participated at district level. And almost 3,000 learners have progressed into a national level participation pathway. These are not isolated numbers. They represent a functioning system of identification, development and progression.

And that is why we are investing R78 million in the MOT programme for this financial year, targeting expansion, strengthening delivery and support for the workforce that support these programmes. Because out of those numbers are people. They are human beings. They are individuals who go to these MOT centres, who coach and teach and make that happen. And I am not sure if Liesel is here. Liesel Hendricks is here and the team from Lavender Hill. †Ah, daar sit sy. [Ah, there she sits.] Liesel Hendricks is one of the examples and a long-time coach of the MOT centres. Choreographer, mentor and dancer.

If you ever have time to go on TikTok, she has got an extremely popular following, but she shares the positive news of what is coming out of Lavender Hill. It is wonderful to see young people doing such great things. And I want to share one of her quotes. I also follow her on TikTok. She says:

“People do not need to see what they look like. They need to feel what they are becoming.”

She always tells our learners. But she has also created additional success, Deputy Speaker. Under her wing, Micaela Naiman, I am not sure if Micaela is here, has also progressed from a six-year-old. Today, Micaela is a seasoned performer who danced at the Netball World Cup Opening Ceremony. That is what our MOT centre produced. Daphne Basson, who is also progressed to a seasoned dancer and performed at the prestigious Rainbow Academy just down the road.

And I can mention many. Jordan George, Halika Isaacs, and Brandon Samuels, who you probably have seen in TV shows, music videos, and then Showmax productions. These are the individuals that have come from our Western Cape Government MOT centre and will continue to invest in that. So that R78 million, hon members, produced wonderful individuals such as Liesel and it is always wonderful to go to a TikTok account to see all the wonderful work she does there.

Hon members, our system functions, but the reason our system functions is because of officials who work so hard. And because of the great foundation that was laid, we were able to package, put together, and take to Cabinet, which I believe is one of the greatest documents, and yes, I am biased, that this country has ever produced. It is called the Western Cape School Sport Strategy. And I want to thank my colleague, Minister David Maynier, who partnered with me in going to deliver this fantastic school sport strategy implemented from the first week in April.

I actually do not want to say the 1st of April, it sounds like an April fool's joke. But as you know, the Government Budget starts on the 1st of April. Just to break it down for you in some form, but I know the members have read the annual, the new budget and it is in there in more detail. But the work of the Western Cape School Sport Strategy will be supported by a direct investment for now in R55 million from the 1st of April, and R36 million will be allocated to infrastructure, which will be implemented with a fierce sense of urgency with multi-purpose course built around the province, obviously the school leagues,

the equipment, the uniform, all of those wonderful things that will display excellence.

And thank you for the HOD and his management team who has been working tirelessly around the last two years in putting that together. And the Western Cape Cabinet, who had the vision to support the strategy, it is R130 million hon members. It is an incredible investment in school sport by the Western Cape Government. Hon members, one of the first international games I have seen was the 1995 Rugby World Cup. I took a train from Kleinvlei Station, we exchanged in Salt River Station and we ended up at Nuweland, as you all will know it affectionately.

That gave me a different perspective on life and the future I wanted for myself. It was wonderful to see the Springboks annihilate Romania on that day. So when we received a request for support from our colleagues from Cricket Western Cape, and thank you Corrie for being here from Cricket Western Cape, I fully understand why they needed support. It was not just about Newlands and about Boland Cricket, it is about giving young people, those future Ricardo's who is going to go to that World Cup next year, a bigger vision in life.

And again, I want to thank my colleagues in Cabinet for supporting and of course our colleagues in Finance and our colleagues, our Head of Department, because we can formally announce and table budgets today that Cricket Western Cape will be receiving R15 million to upgrade those two stadiums so they can

be Cricket ready next year for the World Cup and of course the legacy programmes that goes part to that. So thank you Corrie for approaching us. It is our honour to support Cricket Western Cape and to support the World Cup that will be coming to the country next year so the young Ricardo's that go to the Cricket World Cup next year can have a new vision of the future.

And I see hon Sayed is laughing and smiling because I know he loves cricket very well, just like me he was not good enough to make the Proteas team, but I know he will be there to support the cricket next year. Hon Speaker, over the last year we have done incredible work in school sport. If members have not seen it, please do some research. The Western Cape is now the national champions for school sport in South Africa. The first time since 2012. And I want to thank all of the wonderful young people from various aspects of our communities who have done incredibly well in flying our flag high.

It is worthwhile mentioning some of them, Zubair Smith from Steenberg High flying high in gymnastics, Ignatie Glaza from Athlone School for the Blind, Amaru Joseph from Vanrhynsdorp, Jordan Jacobs again from Lavender Hill High School, and I also must highlight Roshay Munro from Mossel Bay who has personally wrote to me to share what it meant to wear Western Cape colours. And by the way Jermaine has also now received recognition as the school's Junior Male Athlete of the Year and I also want to thank him for representing the Western Cape with pride.

Hon members, we cannot do this on our own. Government cannot solve all the

challenges on our own, and we are proud to partner with partners to see how we can work together in dealing with some of the challenges in our communities and I want to welcome all our partners who are present here today. Asaw Baldi, the Managing Director of Vodacom is also joining us here in the Western Cape. Thank you for joining us and thank you for wanting to work with us in dealing with sport and some of the challenges our young people are dealing with in our communities.

Hon members, we will continue to invest in sport and we will continue to invest in mass participation sport. But yesterday I got my Cape Town Marathon starting time. I was not very happy like everybody because none of us ever thought that a marathon will start at eight o'clock. By that time we would have done half the time. But we understand it is an international marathon and they need to start at 8.00 to accommodate the darkness. But no one teleports to a marathon. But no one wakes up in the morning and starts to run a marathon.

They start with a walking, they start with a five kilometre, they do a 10 kilometre, they do a 21 kilometre, a 30 kilometre, 36 long run and ultimately end a marathon. That is the international standard. If you run a marathon from birth, you are certainly Superman. So as the Western Cape Government, we invest in sport and invest in partners that can develop running so that everybody can run a marathon. So we have partnered with First National Bank.

I heard First National Bank was here, but they have also partnered with us to develop the Nelson Mandela race, which is a beautiful 27 kilometre race. Hon

members, if you have not done so, please take the time to do that race and we will work with them to not only build that race, but encourage participation in that. So we are not only supporting elite events, we are also supporting smaller events so we can ultimately, those who can and 99 percent, 99.99 percent of us will never in our lifetime run a marathon, but those 1.1 percent will certainly support them.

So we are looking forward to the beautiful Cape Town Marathon in a few months' time, but before that is the Two Oceans Ultra Marathon and of course the Two Oceans 21K. And as the Western Cape Government, we were proud and present at the official launch a few weeks back where we will continue to support running in the Western Cape. Hon members, I am proud to say that we have reached the R1 billion mark, but we need, thank you, Finance Chair, Finance Minister, we need another billion. Thank you.

But we cannot do this on our own, as I said, and to all our partners, all our stakeholders, everyone joining us today, thank you for your support. Thank you for working with the Western Cape Government. Thank you for seeing us as a partner to deal with the challenges in our community and we will continue to work with you to support sports, arts and culture in this province. And I want to thank the Head of Department, the HOD and the top management team who has been working tirelessly to make this happen.

Any good system functions on a great foundation and we are very privileged in this province that we have a great foundation that we can stand on that we need

to build on from there. So thank you to the team. Thank you for your support that you have given me as a Ministry and thank you to my predecessors and to the whole Western Cape Government infrastructure of nearly 90,000 people that continue to support sports, arts and culture.

And of course to my colleagues in the Standing Committee, my hon Benson, I do not see, maybe they went for tea, to all of them, thank you for joining us and providing oversight to the Standing Committee and to the team in my Ministry. Thank you for supporting me. I know I am a 4.00, half past 4.00 riser and the WhatsApps start coming through at five o'clock, but thank you for dealing with me. Thank you for supporting me and we will continue to support the arts and continue to make South Africa shine in our contribution to social cohesion. I hereby table our billion rand Western Cape DKS budget. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. I recognise the hon Windvogel.

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Agbare Speaker, geagte lede, die mense van die Wes-Kaap, ek staan op namens die African National Congress om deel te neem aan hierdie debat oor Begrotingspos 13. Die Begroting van die Departement van Kultuursake en Sport, laat ek dit duidelik stel, die ANC sal nie hierdie begroting steun nie. Ons verwerp hierdie begroting nie omdat ons teen sport, kuns, kultuur of erfenis gekant is nie, ons verwerp dit, omdat hierdie begroting nie die oomblik aanspreek nie.

Dit stem nie ooreen met die omvang van die krisis in ons gemeenskappe nie. Dit weerspieël nie dringendheid nie, dit weerspieël nie transformasie nie en die belangrikste, dit weerspieël nie die werklike ervaring van jong mense van die Wes-Kaap nie. Agbare Speaker, die Departement praat die taal van deelname, geleenthede en ontwikkeling, dit praat van die bou van veerkragtige gemeenskappe, dit praat van voorkoming en vroeë ingryping, maar wanneer ons verby die woorde kyk en die begroting self ontleed, sien ons 'n ander prentjie.

Ons word meegedeel dat die Departement se begroting met meer as R134 miljoen toeneem in die 2026 en 2027 finansiële jaar, maar laat ons eerlik wees, dit is nie 'n volhoubare groeitrajek nie. Die toename spreek skerp tot net meer as 24 miljoen in die daaropvolgende jaar en daarna weer af. Dit is nie langtermyn beplanning nie, dit is 'n korttermyn aanpassing, sonder 'n duidelike groeiplan. Nog meer kommerwekkend, is dat 55 miljoen van hierdie toename bloot van die Onderwysdepartement verskuif is, om skoolspport te finansier.

Dit is nie nuwe geld nie, dit is 'n verskuiwing van verantwoordelikheid, so moet ons weer vra, waar is die werklike uitbreiding van geleenthede? Want die begroting gaan nie oor teorie nie, dit gaan oor impak. Dit gaan daaroor of 'n jong seun in Nyanga 'n veilige plek het om te speel. Dit gaan daaroor of 'n jong meisie in Delft 'n biblioteek kan ingaan wat ook veilig en behoorlik toegerus is. Dit gaan daaroor of jongmense in Khayelitsha en Mitchells Plain werklik alternatiewe kry tot dwelms, bende en geweld. En die waarheid is dat hierdie begroting nie daardie alternatiewe bied nie.

Agbare Speaker, laat ek terugkeer na die storie wat ons, baie van ons steeds bybly, die storie van Siphon, 'n sportsman. Siphon was nie net 'n naam nie, hy was 'n jongman vol potensiaal, vol energie, vol drome, maar hy het in 'n stelsel geleef wat nie in hom belê het nie. 'n Stelsel wat nie vir hom geleentheid geskep het nie. 'n Stelsel wat hom blootgestel het aan armoede, werkloosheid en bendes. Vandag leef Siphon nie meer nie. Hy het nie gesterf omdat hy nie potensiaal gehad het nie, hy het gesterf omdat hy nie die geleentheid gehad het nie.

Hy het gesterf omdat die Staat nie betyds ingegryp het nie. Hy het gesterf omdat die program wat hom kon gered het, te klein, te swak of eenvoudig nie daar was nie. En die pynlike waarheid is, dat daar duisende meer Siphon's in hierdie provinsie is. Elke dag word jongmense in bendes ingetrek. Elke dag word jongmense aan dwelms blootgestel. Elke dag verloor jongmense hoop en tog word daar van ons verwag om 'n begroting goed te keur wat nie in hierdie krisis aanspreek nie.

Agbare Speaker, ons leef in 'n provinsie waar bykans 900,000 jongmense nie in onderwys, werk of opleiding is nie. Dit is nie net 'n statistiek nie, dit is a waarskuwing. Dit is 'n krisis wat daadwerklik ingryping vereis. In plaas daarvan, sien ons programme wat beperk in omvang is, ongelyk geïmplementeer word en onafhanklik is van vennootskappe, eerder as 'n bekwame en sigbare Staat. Ons hoor van 'n bestuurder netwerk model, ons hoor van vennootskappe met munisipaliteite en die privaatsektor. Maar, in die praktyk beteken dit

dikwels dat die Staat terugstaan en dienslewering oneweredig en onbetroubaar raak.

Gemeenskappe word gelaat om staat te maak op waar vennootskappe bestaan, waar dit nie bestaan nie, dit is nie 'n gelykheid nie, dit is verwaarlosing. Agbare Speaker, as ons ernstig is oor sport en kulturele ontwikkeling, moet ons ernstig wees oor infrastruktuur, maar wat sien ons mense op die grond? Hulle sien sportvelde wat verwaarloos word. Hulle sien fasiliteite wat gevandaliseer word en nie herstel word nie. Hulle sien gemeenskappe wat uitmekaarval. Hulle sien biblioteke wat onderbefonds is en in sommige gevalle onveilig is.

In baie van ons gemeenskappe speel kinders steeds op stof- en gevaarlike velde. In landelike gebiede is toegang selfs erger. Tog wys hierdie begroting nie 'n beslissende skuif om hierdie werklikheid reg te stel nie. Agbare Speaker, ons moet ook aanspreeklik praat. Jaar na jaar gee hierdie Departement fondse terug aan Tesourie. Jaar na jaar hoor ons van verdragings, van verkrygingsprobleme en van planne wat nie uitgevoer kan word nie. Ons hoor dat fondse nie bestee is nie en as gevolg van verdragings in instandhouding, sekuriteit en basiese verkrygings, maar wat beteken dit vir ons mense?

Dit beteken dienste het nie gemeenskappe bereik nie. Dit beteken biblioteke is nie toegerus nie. Dit beteken fasiliteite is nie onderhou nie en dit is onaanvaarbaar. Agbare Speaker, ons neem kennis dat slegs R2.2 miljoen vir biblioteekboeke toegeken is. Ons neem ook kennis van R9 miljoen oor die medium termyn vir die sogenaamde Duisend Stories Jeugprogram. Alhoewel

dit as vlagskip inisiatiewe aangebied word, is dit eenvoudig te klein om die geletterdheidskrisis in hierdie provinsie aan te spreek.

Terselfdertyd word meer as 31 miljoen aan geleende en toerisme-gedrewe inisiatiewe bestee en 15 miljoen word opsygesit vir infrastruktuur wat met 'n internasionale kriekettoernooi verband hou. Ons moet onself eerlik afvra, is dit die prioriteite van 'n provinsie in *crisis*? Hoe regverdig ons dit, wanneer ons gemeenskapsbiblioteke sukkel? Hoe regverdig ons dit wanneer plaaslike sportfasiliteite verval? Hoe regverdig ons dit wanneer jongmense nêrens veiligheid het om na of om veilig te wees om na skole te gaan nie?

Agbare Speaker, ons neem kennis dat om ondersteuning vir tradisionele inisiasiepraktyke te versterk, 'n bykomende R6.468 miljoen oor die medium termyn toegeken is vir beter opleiding, monitering en gesondheid- en veiligheidsbeheer om inisiate te beskerm en voorkombare sterftes te verminder. Hoewel ons hierdie toekenning verwelkom, wys die werklikheid op die grond, dat daar steeds ernstige uitdagings bestaan. In baie dele van die provinsie is daar nie voldoende en geskikte terreine waar hierdie belangrike oorgang-*ritual* na man-wees veilig kan plaasvind nie.

Indien ons werklik ernstig is oor die beskerming van die instansie en die behoud van hierdie kulturele praktyk met waardigheid, moet die Regering verder gaan. Ons doen 'n beroep op die Provinsiale Regering om saam met die munisipaliteite te werk, om te verseker dat daar in elke munisipaliteit behoorlik aangewese en ondersteunende terreine beskikbaar is, waar hierdie praktyk

veilig kan plaasvind. Agbare Speaker, ons moet ook die breër sosiale *crisis* in die provinsie aanspreek. Dwelmmisbruik vernietig steeds lewens, tog is baie plaaslike Dwelms Aksiekomitees nie funksioneel nie of bestaan eenvoudig nie.

Dit wys dat koördinerings swak is en dat impak beperk bly. Wanneer die Departement dus praat van voorkoming en veerkragtigheid, moet ons vra waar is die bewys, want as 'n stelsel werk, moet gemeenskappe die verskil voel. Agbare Speaker, in wese weerspieël hierdie begroting 'n regering wat maklik is om simptome te bestuur eerder as om die oorsake aan te spreek. As ons ernstig is oor die jeugontwikkeling, moet ons belê op 'n skaal wat die *crisis* weerspieël.

Ons moet infrastruktuur bou en onderhou. Ons moet programme betekenisvol uitbrei. Ons moet die mense aanstel wat hierdie dienste moet lewer. Ons moet verseker dat geen gemeenskap agtergelaat word nie. Agbare Speaker, hierdie Departement het 'n belangrike mandaat, dit het die potensiaal om lewens te verander, dit het die potensiaal om veiliger en meer samehangende gemeenskappe te bou, maar potensiaal sonder hulpbronne beteken baie min en beleid sonder implementering beteken nog minder.

Die mense van die Wes-Kaap verdien meer as beloftes. Hulle verdien werklike belegging. Hulle verdien werklike toegang. Hulle verdien werklike geleenthede. Hierdie begroting bied dit nie. Voordat ek afsluit, agbare Speaker, wil ek namens die African National Congress ons opregte medelye aan die Speaker agbare Daylin Mitchell en familie betuig met die afsterwe van sy

moeder. Ons erken die pyn van so 'n verlies en hou hom in ons gebede in hierdie moeilike tyd. Mag u krag en vertroosting vind in die dae wat voorlê.

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Hon Speaker, hon members, the people of the Western Cape, I rise on behalf of the African National Congress to participate on Vote 13. The Budget of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, let me put it clearly, the ANC Will not support this budget. We reject this Budget not because we are against sport, art, culture, or heritage, We reject it because this budget does not address the moment.

It does not correspond with the extent of the crisis in our communities. It does not reflect the urgency, It does not reflect transformation. And most important, it does not reflect the real experience of young people of the Western Cape. Hon Speaker, The department speaks the language of participation, opportunities and development, it speaks of building resilient communities, it speaks of prevention and early intervention, but when we look past the words and analyze the budget itself we see a different picture.

We are told that's the Department's Budget is increasing with more than 134 million in the 2026 and 2027 financial year, but let us be honest it is not a sustainable growth trajectory. The increase speaks sharply to the just more than 24,000,000 in the following year and then down again. It is not long term planning, it is a short term adjustment, without a clear growth plan. Even more concerning is that 55 million of this increase has simply been shifted from the Department of Education to finance a school sport.

It is not new money, it is a transfer of responsibility, so we have to ask again, where is the real expansion of opportunities? Because the budget is not about theory, it's about impact. It is about whether a young boy in Nyanga Has a safe place to play. It is about whether a young girl in Delft Can go into a library that is also safe And properly equipped. It is about whether young people in Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain really get alternatives to drugs, gangs and violence. And the truth is that this Budget does not offer those alternatives.

Hon Speaker, let me return to the story that still remain with many of us, the story of Sipho, a sportsman. Sipho was not only a name, He was a young man full of potential, full of energy, full of dreams, but he lived in A system that didn't invest in him. A system that did not create opportunity for him. A system that exposed him to poverty, uemployment and gangs. Today, Sipho is not alive anymore. He did not die because he did not have potential, he died because he did not have opportunity.

He died because of the state did not intervene in time. He died because the program that could have saved him was too small, two week, or simply just not there. And the painful truth is that there are thousands more CFOs in this province. Every day young people are drawn into gangs. Every day young people are exposed to drugs. Every day young people lose hope and yet we are expected to approve a budget that doesn't address this crisis.

Hon Speaker, We live in province we almost 900,000 young people ohh not in education work or training. It is not just a statistic it is a warning. It is a crisis

that requires real intervention. Instead we see programs that are limited in extent call mom are implemented unequally and are independent of partnerships rather than are you a capable and visible state. We hear about a manager network model, we hear about partnerships with municipalities and the private sector. But in practice it often means that the state ohh standing back and service delivery becomes unequal and unreliable.

Communities are left to depend on where partnerships exist, where it does not exist it is not equality, it is neglect. Hon Speaker, if we are serious about sport and cultural development we must be serious about infrastructure, but what do our people on the ground see? They see sports fields that are being neglected They see facilities that are vandalized and not being repaired. They see communities falling apart. They see libraries that are underfunded and in some instances unsafe.

In many of our communities children are still playing on dusty and unsafe fields. In rural areas the access even worse. Yet this budget does not show the definite shift to rectify this reality. Hon Speaker, We have to speak accountability. Year after year this give funds back to treasury. Yeah after year We hear about delays of acquisition problems and plans that Cannot be executed. We hear that funds were not spent because of delays in maintenance, security and basic acquisition, But what does that mean to our people?

It means services did not reach communities. It means libraries are not equipped. It means facilities were not maintained and that is unacceptable. Hon

Speaker, we note that only 2.2 million was allocated for library books. We also take note there is 9 million over the medium term for the so-called *Duisend Stories* youth program. Although it is presented as flagship initiatives it is simply too small to address the literacy crisis in this province.

At the same time more than 31 million is spent on borrowed and tourism driven initiatives and 15 million is set aside for infrastructure relating to the international cricket tournament. We should honestly ask ourselves are these the priorities of a province in crisis? How do we justify that when our community libraries are struggling? How fair is it when local sports facilities are deteriorating? How do we justify it when young people have safety nowhere to go to or to be safe to go to schools?

Hon Speaker, we take note that To strengthen support for traditional initiation practices an additional 6.468 million is allocated over the medium term for better training, monitoring and health and safety to protect initiates and reduce preventable deaths. Although we welcome this allocation, the reality on the ground shows that there are still serious challenges. In many parts of the province there are no sufficient and suitable terrains where this important transition to being a man can safely take place.

If we are really serious about the protection of the institution and retention of this cultural practice with dignity, the Government must go further. We call on the Provincial Government to work with the municipalities to ensure that in every municipality there are properly dedicated and supported terrains

available, where this practice can take place. Hon Speaker, We must also address the broader social crisis in the province. Drug abuse already destroys lives, yet many local drug action committees are not functional or simply do not exist.

It shows that coordination is weak and that impact remains limited. When the department therefore speak of prevention and resilience we must ask where is the proof because if a system works communities must feel the difference. Hon Speaker, in reality this budget reflects a government that finds it easy to manage symptoms rather than address the causes. If we are serious about youth development we must invest on the scale that reflects this crisis.

We must build infrastructure and maintain it. We must expand programs and meaningfully. We must appoint people that deliver these services. We must ensure that no community is left behind. Hon Speaker, This department has an important mandate, it has the potential to change lives, it has the potential to build safer and more coherent communities, but potential without resources mean very little and policy without implementation means even less.

The people of the Western Cape deserve more than promises. They deserve real investment. They deserve real access. They deserve real opportunities. This Budget does not offer that. Before I conclude hon Speaker I want to express our sincere condolences on behalf of the African National Congress to the Speaker, hon Daylin Mitchell, and family on the passing of his mother. We acknowledge the pain of such a loss and keep him in our prayers in this difficult time. May

you find strength and solace in the days ahead.

In conclusion, hon Speaker, while the Department claims that the MOT programme is expanding inclusion, building after communities and creating opportunities, the reality on the ground is starkly different. Neighbourhood schools have been collapsed into MOT centres without real expansion, no new jobs created, and community-based sports weaken. The MEC stands in the House and grants them about the job creation, yet at this very moment workers in the MOT programme are receiving letters notifying them of the expiring of their contracts.

These are workers, some with over 17 years of services, kept on nominal salaries. Why no benefits, no security, and no opportunities for growth or study, despite producing provincial and national talent? A mere 5.31 percent increase in the MOT budget cannot correct this injustice. While we welcome the over 65 percent increase for school sports, it cannot mask the exploitation and abandonment of MOT workers. The budget fails them and we reject it.

I want to use the words of member Nkondlo, let me put it simply, history will teach us what we do not want to learn from history. We were there in the Health Department, we were there in the Department of Education. †Agbare Speaker, om al hierdie redes, verwerp die African National Congress hierdie Begroting. Ek dank u. [Hon Speaker, for all these reasons the African National Congress rejects this Budget. I thank you.]

†Die ADJUNKSPEAKER: Baie dankie, agbare Windvogel. [The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Windvogel.] I recognise the hon Stephens.

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, culture and sports are not luxuries. They are the heartbeat of our communities. They shape identity, build unity, and give our young people a sense of belonging and purpose. The Patriotic Alliance supports Budget Vote 13. But hon Deputy Speaker, we cannot speak about cultural affairs in this province without acknowledging the Koi people and their heritage. The Koi heritage is not a footnote in our history. It is foundational to who we are in Western Cape.

And yet, the recognition, preservation, and inclusion in mainstream cultural programmes remain limited. There is still not enough being done to actively protect Khoi heritage sites, promote their history, and ensure that future generations understand and celebrate this identity. Cultural justice delayed is cultural justice denied. Hon Deputy Speaker, sports, too, tells a story, and right now, it tells a story of inequality.

In Caledon, the sports field is in a shocking condition. This is not just a field. It is where club rugby is played, where young talent is developed, and where communities gather. Yet, it is neglected, under-maintained, and disregarded. And Caledon, it is not an isolated case. Across the province, facilities like Scottsdene and Hands and Heart sports fields in Kraaifontein are crying out for two years for urgent attention and upgrading. These spaces host multiple

sporting codes serving hundreds of young people, yet they are left to deteriorate.

What message are we sending to our children when the very spaces meant to uplift them are allowed to fall apart? Hon Deputy Speaker, sport is not separate from culture. It is part of our children's culture. It keeps them off the streets, away from substance abuse, and away from crime. It builds discipline, teamwork, and hope, but how can we speak of opportunity when rural communities are consistently overlooked?

There is a clear lack of sporting opportunities for children in rural areas, even in provincial sports awards. It is evident that certain areas and codes dominate, while others are underrepresented, and not because of a lack of talent, but because of a lack of access and investment. Talent exists everywhere. Opportunity does not. A child in sport is indeed a child out of court. There is a quote that says, the hood was never deprived of talent, it was deprived of resources and opportunities.

Hon Speaker, we are also seeing a growing number of young athletes being selected to participate in international sporting events, an incredible achievement, but for many families this opportunity becomes a burden. Parents simply cannot afford the costs associated with overseas participation, and so dreams are deferred, not because of a lack of ability, but because of a lack of funding. This is where the Government must step in. Our Government, we need to start thinking differently. We need to dedicate funding mechanisms or

support programmes to assist young athletes representing their communities and provinces on international stages.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kindly conclude, hon member.

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): If we are serious about development, then we must invest in excellence wherever it emerges. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Stephens. I now recognise the hon Van Minnen.

Ms B M VAN MINNEN (DA): Thank you, hon Mr Deputy Speaker. I rise today to support the Cultural Affairs and Sports Main Budget, and to champion it, because this financial document is a bold declaration of who we are, what we value, and the future we are determined to build in the Western Cape. An allocation of 1.103 billion for the 26/27 financial year, backed by a substantial increase of more than 134 million, or 13.87, is growth in opportunity. It is growth in dignity. It is growth in hope.

In the Western Cape, under DA governance, cultural affairs and sports are not luxuries reserved for a few. They are essential tools for transformation, for social cohesion, and for safer communities, because we understand a simple truth. When young people are given platforms, they build pathways. When communities are given resources, they do not collapse into crisis. When culture is invested in, identity becomes a source of strength, not division. This is what

sets this Budget apart.

It does not react, it builds. It does not patch, it transforms. Hon Deputy Speaker, let us turn to Programme 2, where we see a focused increase of 16.53 million, bringing the allocation to 159.59 million. This programme speaks directly to the heart of who we are as a people. Through the allocation for customary initiation practices, the Department is striking a critical balance, preserving cultural heritage while safeguarding the lives and well-being of young initiates.

For too long, we have seen tragedy where there should be pride. Today, we say never again. Culture must uplift, not endanger. At the same time, the investment in hallmark and incubator cultural events is a powerful economic and social lever. These are platforms for emerging artists, engines of tourism, and spaces where communities come together to celebrate their shared identity. In every performance, in every exhibition, and in every gathering, we are building a more inclusive and vibrant Western Cape.

Hon Deputy Speaker, Programme 3 reflects our commitment to access and fairness, with an increase of over 34 million, bringing the total to just over 479 million. Here, the allocation of 106 million for municipal replacement funding is particularly significant. It ensures that even municipalities under financial strain can continue to deliver sports, recreation, and cultural services, because your postcode should never determine your access to opportunity, and neither should your political ideology.

Whether you are in a rural town or in an urban centre, this Government is saying, you matter, your community matters, and your access to facilities and programmes matter. You are not, and never will be, dismissed as just a Cape Flats problem. Equally important is the investment in Broadband connectivity for libraries. In today's world, a library is a gateway to knowledge, to digital access, to education, and to opportunity.

By strengthening library services and expanding internet access, we are closing the digital divide and opening doors to the future. Or to quote from the Freedom Charter, the doors of learning and culture shall be opened. Deputy Speaker, if Programme 2 speaks to identity and Programme 3 to access, then Programme 4 speaks to impact, and what an impact that is.

With a remarkable increase of over 75 million, bringing the allocation to over 377 million, this programme is a direct investment in the lives of our young people. This is where we take prevention seriously. Through funding for afternoon positive peer networks, we are creating environments where young people are supported, mentored, and guided. Because we know that the hours after school are most often the most vulnerable, and we are choosing to fill those hours with purpose, not risk.

The continued investment in MOT centres ensures that learners have access to safe, well-maintained spaces where they can participate in sports, arts, and cultural activities. These are sanctuaries of growth, discipline, and belonging.

We are not cutting corners. With significant funding allocated to the procurement, refurbishment, and maintenance of equipment, the Department is ensuring that these programmes are effective, dignified, and inspiring. The Department is also looking ahead.

The allocation of R15 million for World Cup legacy infrastructure, ahead of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027, is a strategic investment. It prepares us for a global event, but more importantly, it leaves behind infrastructure that communities will benefit from for years to come. That is the DA difference. We do not spend for the moment. We invest for the future. One of the most inspiring elements of this Budget is the Thousand Stories Youth Programme.

With dedicated funding over the MTEF, young people are given a voice, an opportunity to tell their stories themselves, to express themselves, and to shape their own narratives. Because young people are heard, they are empowered, and when they are empowered, they become agents of change in their communities. Add to this the R55 million allocated to the Western Cape School Sports Strategy, in partnership with the Western Cape Education Department, and a further R10 million to expand MOT and after-school programmes, and the message becomes undeniable.

This Government is investing in youth at scale. They are building pathways, not barriers. They are creating opportunities, not excuses. They are shaping futures, not managing failures. The Western Cape knows the power of investment done right. Our Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport is making

waves, not noise. With 181 MOT centres reaching over 40,000 participants from disadvantaged communities, and nearly 700 community workers empowered through sport, art, and culture, there are no afterthoughts. These are lifelines.

Over the next MTEF, the MOT also receives over 234 million, library services, 1.327 billion, and an extra 130 million for school sport. Education and creativity do not end when the bell rings. We scale, we expand, we include. That is political leadership in action. Contrast that with the national stage, where the PA Minister, Gayton McKenzie, tries to dazzle the cameras in Springbok jerseys and Formula One high-octane spectacles, yet allows our cultural heart to starve.

Defunding festivals like the Cape Town International Jazz Festival and the Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees under the guise of self-sustainability is no policy. It is betrayal. It is strangulation. A festival that pumps nearly R900 million into the Western Cape economy and supports 5,000 jobs is not a luxury. It is livelihood. Meanwhile, R20 million flows to VAR. Millions go to Grand Prix illusions, and the soul of our nation waits in the wings.

The National Minister's favourite slogan is, †Ons biza nie [We are not scared.] Funny, because looking at the mess he has left behind, it seems the Minister has turned biza into a full-time job. Formula One. First 2027, then 2028, now 2029. Because logistics were underestimated. Hon Minister, if that is not a master class in biza, what is? He is treating the Western Cape's patience like a

racetrack. Fast to promise, slow to deliver.

Pre-rugby. A once-off match packages a miracle, but really a PR stunt hiding policy failure. The war with broadcasters drags on. And the poor?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon van Minnen, are you able to take your seat? I recognise the hon Adams.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Deputy Speaker, is the hon member able to answer a question? Let me ask very nicely.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Hon Van Minnen, are you prepared to take a question?

Ms B R VAN MINNEN (DA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I am able to answer a question, but I have no intention of answering a question at this particular moment. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Based on that response, it is my interpretation that the member is not prepared to take your question. You may take your seat, hon Adams.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Deputy Speaker, I understand that the hon member is not able. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon van Minnen, please proceed.

Ms B R VAN MINNEN (DA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I am not going to enter into a grammar debate at this point. The war with broadcasters drags on. And the poor? Still staring at blank screens, wondering why their government cares more about optics than access. In short, †ons biza nie [we are not scared] Sounds more like †ons biza te veel [we are too scared.] The slogan sounds catchy, but the record screams incompetence. After all, what happened to Dubai West? Hon Deputy Speaker, I also want to draw your attention to the fact that there is a game called Where's Wally? Increasingly, we should actually in this House be asking, where is the hon where's the hon Ngqentsu? Not here this week.

An apparent attempt to replace him last week in the Standing Committee meeting with an alternate. Instead of the best prepared member of the ANC Opposition, a member who reads and who loves libraries, we get word salad. †Om dit in Afrikaans te stel, woordeslaai. [To put it in Afrikaans, *woordeslaai*.] So where is the hon Ngqentsu? Campaigning against the ANC in Dunoon? Somewhere else? Very clearly ...[intervenes]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon van Minnen, if you are able to take your seat, I recognise the hon Nkondlo.

Ms D G NKONDLO (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, can you please rule on these members of the DA? Because if we were

to take what they are doing every time, they argue and they want to cast aspersions on individuals. Then we will play the very game and it will not be nice in this House. If a member of Van Minnen has got a substantive motion on the credibility and qualifications of member Windvogel, she must bring it through the proper channels. She must not cast aspersions on her ability to present here on behalf of the ANC. We are equal to the task. We can also do that to your own personality and you will not like it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I will refer to the Hansard and, if need be, come back to the House. But I would want to indicate to all the members, when the Presiding Officer has the floor, but I would want to again highlight the comments made by the Speaker earlier on. We are needing to maintain the decorum of the House and I trust that we will be able to proceed and I have already indicated that I will then revert back to Hansard and if need be, come back to the house. Hon Adams, is that a new point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): No hon speaker. I just want to say that one must not cast aspersions. Hon Deputy Speaker, the word biza means †ons doen [we do.] The hon Minister, the National Minister has proven that he †doen, nè, in terms of bringing ...[intervenes]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No explanation needed. †Ek is van Mitchells Plain. [I'm from Mitchells Plain.] No explanation needed. Please take your seat.

†Mnr B ADAMS (PA): Salute ma se kind, maar die hon *members* is nie van

Mitchells Plain nie, so die hon member leer nie onse taal nie.

[Mr B ADAMS (PA): Salute mother's child, but the hon members are not from Mitchells Plain, so the hon member does not learn our language.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

†Mnr B ADAMS (PA): Die hon member ken nie onse taal nie, salute.

[Mr B ADAMS (PA): The hon member does not know our language, salute.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I have already dealt with that particular point of order and input. We will now proceed. And I recognise the hon Van Minnen.

Ms B R VAN MINNEN (DA): Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Culture is not entertainment. Sport is not a show. True leadership bridges national glamour with provincial grit. We will continue to grow MOTs, support our libraries and expand access to art and sport. Not for applause. But for the children, the communities and the future of South Africa. The deer understands that you cannot arrest your way out of social challenges. You must out-build them. You must out-invest them. You must out-empower them. And that is exactly what this Budget achieves.

It tackles the root causes of crime by investing in prevention. It strengthens communities by investing in culture. It unlocks potential by investing in young people. This is smart governance. While others may talk, we deliver. We

deliver programmes that keep young people off the streets. We deliver facilities the communities can be proud of. We deliver opportunities that change lives. It is about building a province where culture is celebrated, where diversity is embraced and where opportunity is a right.

And so, hon Deputy Speaker, as the Democratic Alliance, we stand firmly behind this Budget, because it reflects our values, it reflects our priorities. And most importantly, it reflects our unwavering commitment to the people of the Western Cape. So let me also take the opportunity to say thank you to the real Mackenzie, to the DCAS Ministry, to the Standing Committee and the DA proudly supports this Budget. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon van Minnen. I have noted first the hon Sayed before the hon Adams.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Chair, on a point of order, I think that was quite frivolous. We cannot determine who is a real Mackenzie and not a real Mackenzie. People have surnames. It must be treated with dignity. We have never stood in this House and attacked members of another House by saying that they are not real. Let us keep it mature.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Before I rule on that, I see the hon Adams.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Yes, yes, hon Deputy Speaker, I want the hon member to

retract what she said about the real Mackenzie, she must please retract that, thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, what I will do, I will refer back to the Hansard in that regard and come back to the House. But I would also want to again indicate to members, that we are unable to curtail parliamentary privileges, but I will ultimately revert back to the House in this regard. The member has already concluded her speech and I will now recognise the hon Minister to conclude the debate.

The MINISTER OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, we have discussed the Budget that was tabled in the Standing Committee in detail and I know members of the House were present on that day, so I am not going to respond to every single comment that was made, because it was discussed in the Standing Committee in detail.

But have you also welcomed many of our other members that are here. If I did not recognise you, please accept apologies. Thank you for joining us and for welcoming us, and for welcoming this afternoon. Hon member, if I can just say, I am not sure if I should tell the story again, but when I attended the 1995 World Cup at that game, it gave me a perspective on the world I never had. So our investment in the Cricket World Cup, it is about giving other young people a perspective that they will never have, and they do not currently have.

And that is really as simple as that. To allow those young people to go to those games, to see the stadium, and to leave legacy behind. So our investment in the Cricket World Cup is, and I appreciate my colleagues from the PA who are supporting this Budget, because that is what legacy is about. It is about leaving things behind for people that are not able to do so at the time, and we appreciate our colleagues for supporting us in this infrastructure investment.

Libraries are very important to us. Libraries are very important to us, and we have 375 or 376 libraries in the Western Cape, and I am very privileged to visit many of them, because I understand the value that they have, and I understand the value they hold for the future of those young people. So if there is any particular library the hon member wishes to raise, and wishes to come and discuss with us that has an issue, we are welcome to look at it, and we are welcome to address that concern.

The hon colleague who is not here today wrote us a communication. Hon Benson wrote to me last week about a library, I think in Caledon. He asked a question by email, and I responded to him formally. Is there any other library that needs attention? We will certainly look at it. Our library book budget for this is close to R20 million. So we do invest in libraries and in books, and I think the e-books budget is close to R3 million. So we are not only investing in physical libraries, but also online libraries for those that cannot get there.

And I think it is a story worth telling, if you have heard it before, it cannot change because it is the truth. The Mitchells Library in Westridge, when I

visited that library, hon member, what they did in the morning, they are expanding the services that they offer. So ECDs in that library go in the morning, and the kids of those ECDs, Westridge, Eastridge, hon Deputy Speaker, I know that area very well, go in the morning to that library. They make use of the toys in that library.

So they have now, and that gives them that safe space that they need to go there, and that is the expansion of the library services that we offer. The Oudtshoorn Library, that librarian has allowed those young boys and girls to play games in that library. What is so fascinating about it, they must first read five pages from a book. So you see a queue of the kids wanting to read because they want to play games. That is the services that we offer and expand.

So when I travel and visit libraries, which is on every single programme of mine when I travel this province, is how do we build and expand our libraries, because that is an incredible opportunity that we have to get our young kids out of it. So when we allocate funding to libraries, when we talk about libraries, we do so from a real lived experience and we understand it. Where there is a gap, please share with us and we will certainly work on that.

With regarding the Khoi and the South African, hon Stephens, one of the things that we all know, I wish I could decide who should be a king or queen, would have been done already. But unfortunately, he is not with us. It sits with, as you rightfully both my colleague there also knows, it sits with the National Government and that has been coming on for many years and it is still an

ongoing process as the hon Stamoos, who is from the community, knows very well.

But what are we doing to promote the culture? And I think perhaps that is the point that you wanted to make, but it got slightly lost perhaps in how you address it. So we have 22 cultural councils in the Western Cape. 22 cultural councils in the Western Cape that we support, that we encourage to apply for funding. It is also on my programme to go to them and say, hey, †hier is geld, doen aansoek [here's money, apply.] Not even the Lotto does that. We do that, to say †hier is geld, doen aansoek [here's money, apply.]

And we have now recently expanded that service, which was a once-off process, but we are looking at how do we in the future get it to do much better to say, and you were present at the one in Mossel Bay and you could not do the one in George. I think you have another. Oh, you were in George as well.

Yes, you were present at both. How do we promote the culture? In Mossel Bay, you were present in Mossel Bay, hon Mmmber, and that is how we lift [indistinct – 2:50:32]...

The recognition part, like I said, is something I wish I had the authority to do so, would have been done already, but it has not been done yet. But from a cultural part, we certainly do that. As you also know, we have a new World Heritage Site. So that is a world that has recognised the Khoi and the San have universal value, not just for us, universal for the world. And that is a World Heritage Site in the promotion and protection of our culture in this province.

So we certainly do that.

One of the things that we also do, and sometimes people misunderstand it. If my cousin gets an invitation from somebody in London to go play soccer there, he does not represent South Africa. It is my cousin who was invited by a school there. So I cannot give him money. It is a great story to tell. Because I do not know if he goes to play, if he is on holiday, there is no legal mechanism to determine why my cousin is going to London. It sounds wonderful on Facebook. And it is great. And it is fantastic. He is going to London, but he is not representing South Africa.

He is going there through some cousin, a friend has invited him to go play soccer at a school on a Saturday in London. He does not represent the country. If somebody's been selected, that beautiful person who puts on the Proteas jacket or, it has got colours, we call it colours actually now, of course, we support that person. Of course, we send them and provide it because they go and represent us.

But if my cousin, who just randomly knows somebody in London, and they invited him to come and join us on a Saturday afternoon somewhere in London, he does not represent us. So there is a difference between supporting an individual who goes and plays against some high school because his mother knows somebody and somebody who has been selected to represent all of us. And that is who we certainly support and we will continue to support.

The facilities thing is we were invited to the standing National Standing Committee of Parliament to come and talk about facilities. And there were two other committees before us, the Eastern Cape and another province was before us. And we were the third committee. And we are going back there on the 31st of March. And there is a fundamental misunderstanding and it requires all of us together to put our heads together. What is the role of all of our provinces and municipalities and looking after facilities?

In fact, hon member, it is something that we have talked about for a very long time. And I hope and I am asking your genuine help, hon members. I have written six letters, and I will give you copies of it, to National Minister McKenzie. He is here on Friday, by the way, we are having a MINMEC meeting, asking, let us deal with this problem once and for all. Because Local Government gets the R300 million, then it is transferred to this side. By the time it gets to George Municipality, who is responsible for managing the facility, implementing, looking after all the issues that you have rightfully raised.

So we can deal with that matter and I have written to him and sometimes, I have been honest with you, some emails go and die in Pretoria. No acknowledgement of receipt. No, no communication. But hopefully Thursday's meeting will raise that. I am being honest and sincere and I am being genuine with you. So how do we deal with that municipal infrastructure grant? And I hope through that we can deal with the problem, not only in this province, nationally, because it is a national problem. And hopefully we can deal with that challenge there.

So I agree with you. These are not, sport is not luxury. All the things that you talk about, that you have rightfully raised, member Windvogel, every member have raised, it is things that we know. That is why through my colleague, David Maynier, we have asked for that R130 million to implement School Sports Strategy, to say, let us give the young boy a fair chance in life. And that is what we are doing. And we really need your help in ensuring that we implement that with a fierce sense of urgency.

And I actually did ask my colleague that we want to come and present the strategy to the Standing Committee. So if there is any criticism against that plan, how do we do it? How do we improve on it? How do we do better? So that every single child in this province have fair access, and hopefully they can all represent us at the Olympic Games. So that is just some of the feedback, hon members, and I appreciate it, and we will certainly, as I said, more of the technical details are in the Budget.

We have discussed it with the Standing Committee, and we will continue to invest in it. Again, thank you, colleagues. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Thank you for the positive feedback. We will certainly work together in how we can improve sport in this region and continue to be the breadbasket of sport in this country. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. That concludes the debate on the Vote. Allow me to also say thank you to the Mitchells Plain Senior

Sporting Club, the MOD Centre officials from Lavender Hill and other places, Deaf SA. I think some in the crowd could be categorised as industry legends already. I have also seen Mr Lukmaan Adams in attendance earlier on. Thank you so much for your attendance. HOD Redman, to the entire top management, thank you so much for your attendance. You may now leave the officials' bay and continue with all the good work that we just heard about.

Hon members, we are going to proceed. Minister Londt, are you able to indicate if you are awaiting guests from the... So we will give it two minutes. We have already engaged what was supposed to happen directly later, that it will be kept warm and fresh. So we will promptly commence.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 7 – Social Development – Western Cape Appropriation Bill (B 1-2026).

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I recognise the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, the hon Premier, Cabinet colleagues, members of the Provincial Parliament, the media and the public, and those citizens following online. It is a pleasure to rise to table the Appropriation Bill for the Department of Social Development.

During his State of the Province Address hon Premier Alan Winde said, “We are a government that gets it done.” This is the embodiment of the Western

Cape Department of Social Development, we get things done, and more importantly we get it done with kindness and care. As Finance Minister Deidré Baartman said during her tabling of the Budget, “We are delivering growth with discipline and with care.”

Our Department has persevered through immense challenges, such as a grim global and national economic outlook, and an increased demand in services that fail to match the scarce resources, but not only have we persevered, but I believe we are now at a stage where we are continuously able to expand services for vulnerable residents thanks to the ingenuity and innovation of management and staff effectively utilising the available resources, and most crucial of all, the partnerships that we have, but this does not mean we are complacent. In fact it means we are working harder than ever to ensure that the money we are entrusted with continues to stretch for the benefits of the residents we serve, especially the most vulnerable.

The Department received a 4,98% increase in its Budget allocation for the 2026/2027 financial year, increasing from R2,76 billion in the previous financial year, to R2,897 billion. The Budget is projected to further increase to just over R3 billion.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I remain committed to honouring the pledge I made upon taking office, to enhance support to our valued partners in the non-profit and non-governmental organisations. The Cape Care Fund was launched last June in partnership with the Health Foundation to mobilise off-budget funding for

social service NPOs. The fund has already mobilised significant amounts and it has gone to organisations that service vulnerable women, children and persons living with disabilities.

Further donations are coming up with the Turkish Corporation, a coordination agency, that is going to build an inclusive playground for children with disabilities to the value of just over R220 000, while the Department of Infrastructure, with hon Minister Simmers, has also ensured that there will be a diaper donation for our old-age homes that will go via the Cape Care Fund. The fund continues to work hard in building partnerships that can benefit more credible and registered organisations.

I want to thank the Cabinet colleagues for their continued support with the fund, the Cape Care Fund, especially the hon Premier, hon Ministers Baartman and Simmers, for assisting us in getting the word out to potential donors.

Furthermore, the Department's funding for transfers and subsidies to NPOs increased from R1,138 billion to R1,19 billion, and contrary to what some of the Opposition believe, this money is not only for child protection, gender-based violence prevention and substance abuse, it is for all 1 072 organisations across various sectors in the province.

Thank you to the many incredible organisations that work with us, many of whom rely on volunteers for support. This is why we always encourage residents, through media and social media, to get involved. We especially need

the youth to be front and centre of this.

Thank you to my guests, both from the UCT Radio and uDubs Radio, who joined me today to help get this message out to the next generation to get involved.

Last week we opened Huis Spitskop Child and Youth Care Centre in Murraysburg. This NPO-run facility is a first for the Karoo, a place of safety for vulnerable children, such as those who have been abandoned, abused or neglected. Our Department invested an initial R2 million into Huis Spitskop, with a further R1,9 million being allocated in the 2026/27 financial period. This will be for the funding of 24 bed spaces and the purchasing of a vehicle.

This amazing project was spearheaded by Huis Andrew Murray. Thank you to Karen Petersen and Jaco Holtzhausen, who is also here today, for taking a bit of risk, but also in the belief that this will come off. It is through your dedication together with the Department that Huis Spitskop is now more than just accommodation. It is a place of hope, healing and care, and here we envision children being transformed into powerful change agents that will go on to do amazing things in their families and communities. I have heard incredible stories of children who have entered the care system in desperate need and who have left stronger, more resilient and more hopeful.

The Opposition also claimed we are failing to see measurable improvement into the lives of children. I want you to tell it to each one of those children whose lives have been improved for the betterment. I encourage them to speak to

young people like Lipumlo Mahlube [3:04:00], who was my guest at last year's Budget, and he even helped me with my speech. Lipumlo was in foster care and he matriculated last year, and thanks to the guidance from so many people, including this Department, he is now in Johannesburg Studying Public Management and Governance, something that is sorely missing in the northern part of this country.

You can also speak to Odwa Ngwanga [3:04:31], who grew up in Baphumelele CYCC, and we have representatives from Baphumelele also here. He recently matriculated and is currently studying engineering. Odwa hopes to one day have a career in the STEM field.

These are just a few stories that inspire us, the powerful impact of the care system, and this is what Spitskop CYCC will mean to so many children in the Karoo.

I must commend hon Minister Maynier and his Department that do great work under incredible pressure, to provide quality education for vulnerable children, along with hon Minister Mackenzie, for continuously advocating for the overall well-being of children through art, sport and reading for fun.

Furthermore, we recently launched our Independent Living Programme pilot designed for young people turning 18, who are exiting child and youth care centres and the foster care system. For this financial year we are allocating R3 million in additional funding towards this visionary programme. The

Independent Living Model spearheaded by several NPOs, some of them who are here today, Isibindi Initiatives, Mamelani Projects, Baphumelele Fountain of Hope. They fill a critical gap in the social services net, providing a safe space, structured support, mentoring, life skills development and psychosocial care, so that these young adults do not simply turn 18 and fall through the cracks and become clients of the Government again, but they are becoming self-sustaining adults adding positively to the environment. Hon Deputy Speaker, an investment in our children is an investment in the future of this province and the country.

We are providing additional funding of R10 million in inflationary adjustments for designated child protection organisations. These are organisations that support the Department in rendering crucial and sometimes life-saving services for vulnerable children, such as those who have been abused, neglected and abandoned.

Funding for our Child and Youth Care Programme has increased by over R11 million, from R134 million in 25/26 to R145 million.

Our Child Care and Protection Programme funding also increased from R277 million to R292 million over the same periods.

For Children and Youth at Risk we are increasing funding for crime prevention and support from R377 million to R388 million. R5 million is going towards the opening of a CYCC for Children at Risk who are differently abled. This

facility will be opened in Grabouw in April. The additional funding will also enable us to increase bed spaces at centres that are already accommodating children with disabilities, while also increasing the per capita fee for children in these facilities.

We are also in conversation with international organisations like Global Camps Africa and Camp Sizanani, who is also here today, to have vulnerable children go on retreats that provide holistic development skills and learning opportunities. We have already been able to get a group of foster children to join Camp Sizanani in Johannesburg last year and we are looking forward to more of these, but more importantly, we are looking forward to adding what they do to our basket of services here in the Western Cape. Thank you to Emily, Phil and Neo, for being here today and for the continued partnership.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I am going to get to older persons. Our children are our future, but where would we be without our older persons, the custodians of knowledge and history? We are increasing funding for our Older Persons Programme from R276 million to R286 million. R12 million in additional funding will go towards subsidising bed spaces for non-frail, destitute older persons. Thank you to hon Minister Wenger and the Health and Wellness Department that also work in this space to further enhance services to the elderly.

Next month we observe Autism Awareness Month and as a department we support various organisations that provide support services to persons with

disabilities, including those with Autism Spectrum Disorder. For this financial year we will increase funding for the Services for Persons with Disabilities Programme from R233 million to R235 million. Although this is a slight increase we are hopeful that through innovation and continued partnerships with Government Departments, municipalities and organisations, we can continue to advocate for and improve accessibility and support for persons with disabilities.

During the 2026/27 financial period we are handing over an additional four specially adapted vehicles to NGOs serving children with profound intellectual disabilities and their families. These vehicles ensure safe, affordable and dignified access to quality basic education. This will bring the total number of adapted vehicles delivered to 25, thanks to the collaboration with hon Minister Sileku and his Department and the Department of Education.

We also continue to be partners with the Mossel Bay Municipality in its Disability Accessibility Movement. This initiative aims to make Mossel Bay the first disability-friendly town.

I am excited to now announce that we are allocating R1,5 million towards the Adopt-a-Dorpie Flagship Programme. Through this programme we are aiming to enhance support for persons with disabilities, increasing accessibility and promoting inclusivity. We have already made inroads in this front in rural areas through the allocation of R5,7 million for the refurbishment of 22 gender-based violence shelters across the province. Through this project we have

ensured that GBV survivors, who are differently abled, are able to adequately access services at these facilities.

Hon Deputy Speaker, last year President Cyril Ramaphosa classified gender-based violence as a national disaster, yet we are still waiting for the practical implementation of this classification. In the meantime, here in the Western Cape, we are getting things done.

We have increased funding for the Department's Victim Empowerment Programme from R80 million to R83 million. GBV remains a scourge that plagues far too many people and while we will welcome any funding that may emanate from the disaster classification so that we may do more, we will not wait to spring into action.

We are allocating R1,5 million in additional funding to the House of Hope Shelter in Caledon, which we launched last year in partnership with the Theewaterskloof Municipality and the NGO, Reconnect Youth Development.

An additional R1,5 million will also be allocated to the Thuthuzela Care Centre in Mitchells Plain, which provides holistic, therapeutic, medical and legal support to survivors of abuse.

R1 million additional funding will go towards the GBV Ambassador Programme. These GBV ambassadors play an important role in helping us to get things done. They work with our Department to raise awareness about

support services and they offer comfort to survivors, sometimes in the aftermath of abuse or violence. To hon Minister Marais and her Department, thank you for supporting this programme and for continuously holding the police accountable so that they treat victims who come to the stations with dignity, respect and sensitivity.

A major contributing factor to GBV incidents is substance use disorders, a challenge the Department, along with its partners, are committed to addressing. Funding for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Rehabilitation Programme will increase by R6 million, from R122 million to R128 million.

Hon Deputy Speaker, hunger, poverty and homelessness are issues we cannot ignore. As with many socio-economic ills it requires a holistic approach, one that requires us all to work together. We have increased funding for the Social Relief Programme from R23,5 million to R24,6 million.

When a disaster strikes there is no province better prepared than ours, and that is largely thanks to hon Minister Bredell, his Department and the Provincial Disaster Management Centre, always at the forefront of disaster risk management efforts, but it is always indigent households most adversely affected when a disaster strikes, that need that extra support. We are allocating R2 million towards nutritional support for indigent households as part of our disaster relief efforts, and when it comes to homelessness we know the situation is dire, and while we cannot force adults to enter shelters or accept help, we can do our part in strengthening the support that is available. R1,3 million in

additional funding will go towards bed space expansion at homeless shelters in the Cape Metro.

R2 million has been allocated to bed space expansion at the family shelter in Somerset West. This is a space where parents can stay with their children while trying to rebuild their lives after becoming destitute. Just speak to the [Inaudible 3:14:03] family. After father Kyle was retrenched he needed reliable housing for him, his wife and their children, and this is where the family shelter came in, providing them not only with temporary accommodation, but with skills development to get back into the job market.

Hon Deputy Speaker, as we are in Social Work Month, I want to bring my message to a close by thanking the incredible social work professionals in our Department, in the sister departments and our partner NPOs. They are those who go above and beyond, like DSD social worker Shandre Smith-Juris [3:14:41] from the Witzenberg office, who is here today. Where is she? We received a glowing email in December from Lieutenant Colonel Robertson who thanked Ms Smith-Juris for responding to a sexual assault case. Not only did Ms Smith-Juris respond quickly to provide trauma counselling, but she delivered a comprehensive, and in the words of the colonel, “excellent report” in a short period. It is rare to have our social workers be thanked for the work they do every day. Theirs is a thankless task. So often they do the work not in the spotlight and it is wonderful to receive positive feedback like this so that we may shine a spotlight on the work that you did, but also all the other social workers within the Department and the NPOs.

We also have Michael Swarts. Where is Michael? Michael Swarts joining Shandre. He was instrumental in planning the Tankwa Family Day last year, which brought Government services and business closer to the people in one of the most rural parts of the province. Thank you to both of you for going the extra mile and thank you also to all the other DSD social workers who are here today. Zodwa, Vuyane, Annalisa, Tandasa, you are but a small sample of the social workers in this province, but the work that you do are valued and we appreciate that, thank you so much. It is staff like you that inspire me to continue fighting for our fair share of the pie so that we may invest it in you. Thank you for getting it done, but more importantly getting it done with kindness.

I am pleased that we have been able to allocate an additional R2 million in the Social Work Integrated Management System application, or if you run out of breath, just the SWIMS app. This is to roll out this system to more designated child protection organisations. This groundbreaking system, that has already changed the way over 1 000 social work professionals within the Department, other Departments and organisations, are doing their work.

We currently have 1 217 active DSD users on the system, 75 social workers from the Western Cape Education Department, as well as 49 social workers from the NGO, [Inaudible 3:17:17], 17 from Valley Development Projects and 200 ACVV social workers, like Stacey Dippenaar, who is here today. They will all go live on the system from 1 April, along with 37 social workers from the

Department of Health and Wellness. Together we are revolutionising the social work profession by cutting administrative time to allow staff more time for therapeutic interventions and face-to-face time with the clients.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the common thread in the Department being able to get things done, is the partnerships that we have with other departments, organisations and the private sector, and we can only effectively address social ills such as gender-based violence, crime, high unemployment rates, through collaboration, and these must be collaborations aimed at making a difference, getting it done, but getting it done with kindness.

Thank you to the NGOs and NPOs that strengthened this Department's hand to support as many vulnerable people as possible. Those who are here today, Project Playground, Khayelitsha Cycle Academy and Bright Path, you are also but a sample of those thousands that support us in the province.

Thank you to our sister Departments and to the municipalities who work with us side-by-side on many of these successful projects, such as the City of Cape Town and Drakenstein, who their Mayco members are here today. Thank you so much for what you are doing in strengthening our hands.

To the DSD staff, the management, the HOD, Robert Madonald, thank you for your tireless commitment and dedication to serving the residents of this province. I must tell you, there does not go an hour past, whether it is 9 o'clock, 10 o'clock at night, or early in the morning, that these people are not on their

phones responding to queries. Thank you for what you are doing.

I am going to single – ja, give them a big round of applause. I am going to single out one whose last Budget [Inaudible 3:19:26] is today, Mr Charles Jordan.

So he has had 15 MECs before me. So I do not know when I came into the Department whether that was a threat or a promise, but he survived them all, but, Mr Jordan, you did not survive me, but I do hope that you enjoy your retirement, well deserved. There is many individuals like yourself that have served this Department and this Government with honour and with dignity over the years, and thank you, your leaving the Government is going to leave a massive hole, but you deserve your retirement, and I also know with your passion you will come and reinvest it in some other way. So, Mr Jordan, thank you so much.

To my Ministry staff, led by Bernhard, it is not easy working with me. The pace at which we run is hard, but thank you for keeping all the balls in the air. Thank you for trying to get me to all the meetings, thank you for all the commitments I make and you guys just need to follow up on that. I really appreciate the work that each and every one of you are doing.

Then to my hon Minister of Home Affairs who allows me to service this province, thank you, Dorcas, [3:20:51] for being by my side, being the strength for me, I really appreciate it. I could not do this without you. She keeps saying

that she entered the NGO field before I did, so that is my cheat code at night when I need any advice. I phone her before I phone the hon Premier.

So, Dorcas, thank you so much, and to each and every one of you, thank you for allowing me to table this Budget. I can only do it because of your hard work, your dedication, your commitment, servicing the province, servicing the residents of this province, getting it done, but getting it done with kindness. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. I recognise the hon member Kamfer.

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier, hon Leader of the Opposition, hon members in the House, thank you to our Administration here, my colleagues, citizens of the Western Cape.

We are here today to rise on behalf of the African National Congress to participate on Vote 7, the Budget of Social Development. Let me put it straight, the ANC will not support this Vote. Yes.

Let me outline the reason why I do not support this Vote. I must say thank you for our staff, you do a great job, but I think there is a lack of certain things and I do not blame you. I think you as Administration you do a very well and a good job for the people of the Western Cape.

Hon Speaker – †agb Adjunkspeaker, ons verwerp hierdie Begroting omdat dit reageer nie op die toenemende maatskaplike krisis vir die mense van die Wes-Kaap, wat hulle in die gesig staar nie. Dit faal die armes, dit faal die kwesbares, dit faal die werkersklas, en dit faal die honderde duisende wat op hierdie Departement staatmaak, nie vir luuksheid nie, maar vir die oorlewing.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, hierdie Departement praat van [Onduidelik 3:23:48] ontwikkelingsdienste, van vennootskappe met gemeenskappe, van programme wat in navorsing gebaseer is, maar as ons kyk na die werklikheid van ons mense waarin hulle leef, sien ons 'n heel ander prentjie. Ons is in 'n provinsie waar een uit elke 500 waarna die MEC nou sopas verwys het hier bo, een uit elke [Onduidelik 3:24:14] kan ons na verwys, terwyl duisende buitekant sit met groter probleme as wat ons besef.

Dit is nie die statistiek nie, dit is 'n humanitêre *crisis* in hierdie provinsie, en tog bly dit 'n reaksie van hierdie Departement [Onduidelik 3:24:32] en heeltemal onvoldoende om net meer as 22 000 mense te voed, gemeenskaplike programme nie as voldoende reaksie voor te stel word in die provinsie met meer as 7,7 miljoen mense nie. Dit is 'n druppel in die emmer, veral die Departement se totale Begroting van R2,9 miljard word slegs vir R24,9 miljoen vir maatskaplike verrigtinge toegeken.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, die stygende lewenskoste druk huishoudings tot op die breekpunt. Gesinne sukkel om kos op die tafel te sit, ouers word gedwing om onmoontlike keuses te maak tussen kos en basiese behoeftes, maar waar is die

sterk en die daadwerklike krisisreaksie van hierdie Departement? Waar is die skaal van ingryping wat pas by die omvang van hierdie krisis?

Agb Adjunkspeaker, kom ek draai die saak na die dringende aandag, middelmisbruik van R128 miljard is eenvoudig nie genoeg om die provinsie se reaksie om die plaag van die dwelms te befonds nie. Hierdie provinsie word steeds verwoes deur dwelms. Ons gemeenskappe is onder beleg, gesinne word vernietig, jongmense raak verlore in die samelewing, en tog word ons vertel dat uit elke 25 munisipaliteite slegs 16 plaaslike dwelmkomitees, waarvan net 10 ten volle funksioneer. Dit wys hoe min die regering, hierdie regering, die krisis van gemeenskappe ernstig opvat. Waar is die ander komitees? Hoekom is hulle nie gestig nie? Hoekom werk die bestaandes nie behoorlik nie? Plaaslike dwelmkomitees is nie operasioneel nie, hulle is in 'n kritiese voorstel vir die stryd teen mishandelinge. Hierdie Departement kan nie sê hy is – hierdie Departement kan nie sê hy is ernstig oor die stryd teen dwelms nie, terwyl nie een kan verseker dat elke munisipaliteit 'n werkende dwelmkomitee op die been het nie.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, dit is nie 'n gaping nie, dit is 'n leier... leierskapmislukking.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, ons moet ook voortdurende krisisse, geslagbaseerheid en vroue geweld, moorde, aanspreek. Ons leef – soos die LUR nou genoem het, ons leef in 'n land waar *GBV* as 'n nasionale ramp verklaar is, en tog word slegs R83 miljoen in hierdie Provinsie vir geslagsgebaseerde toegeken. Kom ons

wees eerlik, dit is nie genoeg nie. Nie in 'n provinsie van hierdie grootte, nie vir die vlak van geweld wat ons sien nie, nie vir duisende vroue en kinders wat beskerming en ondersteuning en waardigheid nodig het nie. Ons sien 27 skuilings in hierdie provinsie, is dit genoeg? Natuurlik nie, agb Adjunkspeaker, en tog hoor ons jaar na jaar dieselfde stories: Beperkte hulpbronne, klein veranderings, geen dringendheid nie.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, slagoffers van *GBV* kan nie wag nie. Hulle het daadwerklike optrede nodig, hulle het hulpbronne nodig, hulle het 'n regering nodig wat hulle veiligheid eerste stel.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, kom ek draai na die ander kant, na die mees ontstellende werklikheid in ons samelewing, kinderswangerskap. In 2024 is 10 259 geboortes geskenk in meisies tussen 10 en 19 jaar. Hiervan was 293 meisies tussen die ouderdom van 10 en 14 jaar oud. Laat dit insink. Meisies so jonk as 10 jaar kry kinders. Dit is nie normaal nie, dit is nie aanvaarbaar, dit is 'n krisis en ons moet die vraag vra aan hierdie Departement: Wie maak die kinders swanger? Wie kan dit nie anders – ander kinders kan nie ander kinders swanger maak nie.

Dit is moontlik honderde oortreders wat vrylik rondloop in ons gemeenskappe. Waar is die ondersoek? Waar is die samewerking tussen hierdie departemente en die Departement van Gesondheid? Waar is die dringendheid? Ons kan nie praat van kinderbeskerming terwyl ons wegkyk van hierdie duidelike skending van ons kinders nie, en tog sê hierdie Departement dat hulle net meer as 10 700

jongmense deur jeugkafes bereik het. 10 000 uit 300 000 van ons jongmense in hierdie provinsie. Dit is nie net tragies nie, dit is simbolies. Ons kan nie maak asof dit genoeg is nie.

As ons ernstig is oor jeugwerkloosheid en mishandelinge voorkom en bou van toekoms, moet ons ingryping by die omvang van probleme pas. Hierdie Begroting doen dit nie.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, ons moet kyk na die interne kapasiteit van hierdie Departement. Volgens sy eie verslae het hierdie Departement 'n vakaturekoers van byna 29%. Dit is ver bo die aanvaarbare norm van 10%, en nog meer ontstellend is dat ons ingelig is dat die Departement beplan om nog van hierdie poste nie te vul nie, maar om heeltemal uit die organogram te verwyder. Dit is baie kommerwekkend. Terwyl gemeenskappe meer maatskaplike werkers en ondersteuning nodig het, krimp hierdie Departement homself. Dit is – dit beplan minder maatskaplike werkers, minder personeel om op krisis te reageer, minder kapasiteit om dienste te lewer. Dit is nie doeltreffend nie, dit is 'n verswakking van die Staat.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, die gevolge hiervan is duidelik sigbaar. Ons het kinders wat op straat lewe, maar die Departement sê hulle het amptelike statistieke oor hoeveel kinders geraak word.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, ons gee die Departement eenvoudig nie – ons Departement gee eenvoudig nie genoeg om nie.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, ons kan nie die probleem oplos nie, ons wil nie meer nie.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, ons het die toestande in ouetehuse gesien, insluitende fasiliteite in Kraaifontein en in Mitchells Plain. Dankie, ons hoor die LUR sê hy is tans besig met nog in die Karoo, terwyl die ander ene vroeër toegemaak is. Ons verwelkom dit, maar dit is steeds nie genoeg vir ons ouer persone nie. Daar is berigte van verwaarlosing, mishandelinge en swak lewensomstandighede, en tog bly die begroting vir ouer persone minimaal. 'n Bykomende R12 miljoen per jaar is eenvoudig nie genoeg om waardigheid en behoorlike sorg vir bejaardes te verseker nie. Hulle verdien 'n departement wat ten volle toegerus is, hulle verdien programme wat by hulle behoeftes pas, hulle verdien leierskap wat sterk, beslissend en aanspreeklik is. Hierdie Begroting bied dit nie.

Om hierdie rede, agb Adjunkspeaker, verwerp die African National Congress hierdie Begroting, dankie.

[Hon Speaker – hon Deputy Speaker, we reject this Budget as it does not react to the increasing social crisis for the people of the Western Cape, that is staring them in the face. It fails the poor, it fails the vulnerable, it fails the workers class, it fails the hundreds of thousands depending on this Department, not for luxury but for survival.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this Department speaks about [Inaudible.], development services, of partnerships, of programmes with communities based in research,

but if we look at the reality of our people in which they live, we see a totally different picture. We are in a province where everyone out of 500 to which the MEC has just referred above, one from each [inaudible.] we can refer to, while thousands outside have larger problems than we imagine.

It is not the statistic, it is a humanitarian crisis in this province and yet it remains a reaction of this Department [inaudible.] and totally insufficient to feed just over 22,000 people, communal programmes cannot be presented as sufficient reaction in the province with more than 7.7 million people. It is a drop in the bucket, especially when of the Department's total Budget of 2.9 billion, only 24, 9 million is allocated to social services.

Hon Deputy speaker, the increasing cost of living pushes households to the breaking point. Families are struggling to put food on the table, parents are forced to make impossible choices between food and basic needs, but where is the strong and the real crisis reaction of this Department? Where is the scale of intervention that suits the extent of this crisis?

Hon Deputy Speaker, let me turn to the urgent issue of substance abuse, R128 billion is simply not enough to fund the Province's reaction to the plague of drugs. This province is still being devastated by drugs. Our communities are under siege, families are being destroyed, young people get lost in society and yet we are told that out of 25 municipalities there are only 16 local drug committees of which 10 function properly. It shows how little the Government, this Government, cares about the crises of communities. Where are the other

committees? Why have they not been established? Why do the existing not work properly, local drug committees are not operational, they are a critical example of the battle against abuses. This Department cannot say it is - this Department cannot say it is serious about the fight against drugs while not one can probably say that every municipality has a working drug committee in action.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is not a gap, it is a leadership failure.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we must also continually address crises, gender-based and female violence, murders. We live as the MEC just mentioned, in a country where GBV has been declared a national disaster, and yet only R83 million is allocated in this province for gender-based violence. Let us be honest, it is not enough. Not in a province of this size, not for the level of violence that we see, not for thousands of women and children who need protection and support of dignity. We see 27 shelters in this province, is it enough? Of course not, hon Deputy Speaker, and yet we hear year after year the same stories: limited resources, small changes, no urgency.

Hon Deputy Speaker, victims of GBV cannot wait. They require urgent action, require resources, they need a government that puts their safety first.

Hon Deputy Speaker, Let me turn to the other side, to the most upsetting reality in our society, teenage pregnancy. In 2024, 10 259 births were recorded of girls between 10 and 14 years old. Let that sink in. Girls as young as 10 years bear children. That is not normal, it is not acceptable, it is a crisis and we have to

ask the question to this Department: who are making these children pregnant? Who can it be other than - other children cannot make other children pregnant.

It is probably hundreds of culprits walking around freely in our communities. Where are the investigations? Where is the cooperation between these departments and the Department of Health. Where is the urgency? We cannot speak of child protection while we look away from this clear abuse of our children and yet this Department says that they have reached more than 10,700 out of 300,000 youth in this province. It is not only tragic, it is symbolic. We cannot pretend that it is enough.

If we are serious about youth and unemployment and prevention of abuse and building a future, our intervention must suit the extent of the problems. This Budget does not do that.

Hon Deputy Speaker, We must look at the internal capacity of this Department. According to its own reports this Department has a vacancy rate of almost 29%. It is far above the acceptable norm of 10% and even more concerning is that the Department plans not to fill more of these posts but to remove it completely out of the organogram. It is very concerning. Our communities need more social workers and support, this Department shrinks itself. It plans for fewer social workers, less staff to react to crises, less capacity to deliver services, it is not effective, it is a weakening of the State.

Hon Deputy Speaker, The consequences of this is clearly visible. We have

children living on the street, but the Department says they have official statistics about how many children are being affected.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the Department simply does not - our Department simply does not care enough.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we cannot solve the problem, we can no more.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we have seen the conditions in the old age homes, including facilities in Kraaifontein en in Mitchells Plain. Thank you, we hear the MEC says he is currently busy with more in the Karoo, while the other one was closed earlier. We welcome that but it is still not enough for our elderly people. There are reports of neglect, abuse and poor living conditions, and yet the budget for older people remains minimal. An additional R12 million per year is simply not enough to ensure dignity and proper care for the aged. They deserve a department that is fully equipped, and they deserve programmes that suit their needs, they deserve leadership that is strong, decisive and accountable. This Budget does not offer that.

For this reason, honorable Deputy Speaker, the African National Congress rejects this Budget, thank you.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Kamfer. We proceed and I recognise the hon member Stephens.

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The Patriotic Alliance supports Budget Vote 7.

Budget Vote 7 is meant to reflect a government that cares, a government that protects, a government that responds to the cries of its most vulnerable, but let us be honest in this House today, our people are not feeling that care.

Across the Western Cape Social Development is failing those who depend on it most. Our elderly, who have spent their lives building this country, are now left to navigate a system that does not prioritise their dignity. Old age homes remain overcrowded, under-resourced and in many cases neglected. We cannot stand here and speak of progress while our senior citizens are treated as an afterthought.

Then we have SASSA, a never-ending story. An institution that should be a pillar of support, but has instead become a source of frustration and despair. †SASSA kantore wat nie reg beman word nie [SASSA offices that are not staffed properly] is not just an administrative issue, it is a direct injustice. It is the grandmother who stands in a queue from sunrise, only to be told to come back another day. It is a single mother who lives empty-handed, unsure how she will feed her children. In Kraaifontein the situation is unacceptable. A growing community, yet no properly functioning SASSA office that meets the needs of its people.

The community deserves a fully operational office with extended, realistic

operating hours and sufficient staff to serve with dignity and efficiency. Anything less is a betrayal of the very people this system is meant to serve.

Hon Deputy Speaker, when social development fails the consequences are not abstract, they are lived daily in our communities. Unemployment among our youth is not just an economic issue, it is a social crisis. It is what drives our young people into substance abuse, it is what pushes them into crime. When opportunity is absent desperation fills the gap.

At the same time gender-based violence continues to tear through our communities. Women and children are living in fear and far too often the support systems meant to protect them are either overwhelmed or inaccessible. We cannot keep issuing statements of condemnation while failing to fund and strengthen the very services that provide refuge and justice.

What of those who lose their grants through no fault of their own, whether due to administrative failures, documentation issues or systematic ineffectiveness? Thousands are cut off from the only support they have. No plan, no intervention, no urgency, just silence. The silence is dangerous, because when vulnerable people are left without support we are not just failing them, we are pushing them deeper into poverty, deeper into hunger and deeper into hopelessness.

Hon Deputy Speaker, social development cannot be reduced to ticking boxes and balancing reports, it must be felt in the lives of the people. It must mean

that an elderly person lives with dignity, it must mean that a mother can access a grant without humiliation, it means that a young person has hope beyond streets, it means that a woman can find safety when she needs it most.

Right now ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kindly conclude, hon member.

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): Right now that is not the reality. We need urgency, we need accountability and above all we need a government that stops managing poverty and starts actively fighting it ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you ...[Interjections.]

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): ...thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I recognise the hon member Marais.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, the Freedom Front Plus welcomes the increase of 4,98%.

We must remember that this is in the – remember the background that this Department has not been funded previously, receiving increases in the past. It resulted in NPOs being underfunded for a number of years and have been

neglected. In fact, their underfunding in the past has led to old-age homes and old-aged people being neglected.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we therefore expect to see an improvement in the conditions of the old-age homes and we also welcome the initiatives in rolling out more initiatives to help with the drug problem in the Western Cape.

Crime has a socio-economic root and that root must be pulled out, hon Deputy Speaker. This Department has a very important role to play in preventing crime, which is a more softer approach for a more safer Western Cape.

GBV is declared a national disaster. We, as South Africans, have failed our women. We have failed them for far too long and this tide of violence against women and children must be stopped. We welcome the additional GBV centres that will be rolled out.

Hon Deputy Speaker, Youth Cadet Programmes must be incorporated into the existing Department's plans, especially as the hon Minister referred to the child and youth centres that will be built. Give them that sense of belonging and family and let respect and discipline be part of their upbringing.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to also thank Mr Jordan, who is completing his term of office in serving the Western Cape and the Department and we, as the Freedom Front Plus, want to thank him for his years of service in serving the people of the Western Cape. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Marais. I recognise the hon Kaizer-Philander.

†Me W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Baie dankie, agb Adjunkspeaker, en dis 'n groot teleurstelling om te sien dat die ANC het die Huis verlaat, veral agb lid Kamfer, maar nietemin. [Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, an it's a great disappointment to see that the ANC has left the House, especially hon member Kamfer, but nevertheless.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, hon members, I rise today on Vote 7, Social Development, a Budget that in a very real sense demonstrates the Western Cape Government's commitment to dignity, care and protection for its people.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the allocation of over R2 billion for 2026/2027, a 4,98% increase, shows that even within a constrained fiscal environment the Department is placing people at the centre of its work. It reflects a deliberate choice to protect the most vulnerable, strengthen families and restore dignity where it has been eroded.

Hon Deputy Speaker and hon members, dignity begins where care is felt. Programme 2: Social Welfare Services, increases by over R70 million and this enables the Department to expand support for older persons, enhance care for persons with disabilities and strengthen social relief during times of disaster. In a province where many continue to face daily hardships this funding ensures

that the Department does not turn away. It steps in to provide support where it is needed most.

When we speak about dignity we must speak about children. Hon Deputy Speaker, Programme 3: Children and Families, grows by R34,8 million. This is a clear investment in protection, safety and the future of the province. It strengthens child protection organisations and ensure that frontline services continue reaching those most at risk.

The Department is also increasing funding for child protection services, and child and youth care centres, including facilities supporting differently abled children at risk. This reflects a clear commitment to ensuring that every child, regardless of your circumstances, has access to safety, care and opportunity.

†Agb Adjunkspeaker, 'n departement moet bewus wees van gemeenskappe se sosiale omstandighede en moet daarvolgens kan intree en lewens aanraak. Program 4: Hersteldienste, styg tot meer as R607 miljoen. Dit handhaaf ondersteuning vir 26 GBV skuilings, versterk misdaad voorkomingsprogramme en hierdeur word dwelm en verslawende middel misbruik intervensies uitgebrei. Die wys dat die departement erken dat waardigheid gaan oor genesing, die herstel van hoop en die herbou van lewens, agb Adjunkspeaker, wat veiliger gemeenskappe skeep en tweede kanse bied.

Hierdie Begroting weerspieël 'n praktiese verbintenis tot sosiale geregtigheid, nie as 'n abstrakte ideaal nie, maar as iets wat geïmplementeer, befonds en

gemeet word deur werklike impak in ons gemeenskappe, *and, hon Deputy Speaker, is it enough?*

[Hon Deputy Speaker, a department should be aware of communities' social circumstances and must accordingly intervene and touch lives. Programme 4: Repair services increase to more than R607 million. That maintains support for 26 GBV shelters, strengthen crime prevention programmes and through this drug and substance addiction interventions are extended. It shows that the Department acknowledges that dignity is about healing, the recovery of hope, and the rebuilding of lives, hon Deputy Speaker, that create safer communities and offer second chances.

This Budget reflects a practical commitment to social justice, not as an abstract ideal, but as something that is implemented, funded and measured by real impact in our communities, *and, hon Deputy Speaker, is it enough?*]

The need remains significant and the challenges persist, but this Budget demonstrates a department that is responsive, that listens and that acts.

Hon Deputy Speaker, over the MTEF the Department is investing over R1,2 billion to support adults and children in conflict with the law. This includes diversion programmes that provide pathways away from the justice system and towards reintegration into society. A further R9,5 million is allocated to support young people leaving alternative care, ensuring that they are assisted in transitioning into independent living with the necessary support and dignity.

†Agb Adjunkspeaker, ons inwoners, veral ouer persone, het steeds bekommernisse oor toegang tot bekostigbare sorg. In reaksie hierop het die departement 'n bykomende R36 miljoen toegewys om ouer persone te ondersteun deur onafhanklike leefstyl, bystand sorg, kwesbare sorg en gemeenskapsgebaseerde dienste. Dit weerspieël 'n begrip dat die welsyn van ouer persone sentraal staan in 'n omgewingsbewuste samelewing.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, hierdie departement se werk begin en eindig by mense se omstandighede. Agb Adjunkspeaker, dit gaan oor elke lewe wat saak maak.

[Hon Deputy Speaker, our citizens, especially older persons, still have concerns about access to affordable care. In reaction, the Department allocated an additional R36 million to support older persons through independent lifestyle, support care, vulnerability care and community-based services. It reflects an understanding that the welfare of older persons stand centrally in an environmentally conscious society.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, this Department's work starts and finishes with people's circumstances. Hon Deputy Speaker, it is about every life that matters.]

An additional R22,8 million is allocated to fund 32 social worker posts, strengthening frontline capacity and ensuring services reach communities effectively. †Agb Adjunkspeaker, en dit gaan nie net oor 'n pos nie, maar dit gaan oor 32 ekstra pare hande wat hoop dra, wat betyds kan ingryp. [Hon Deputy Speaker, and it's not just about a position, but it is about 32 extra pairs

of hands that carry hope, that can intervene in time.]

In addition R6 million is invested in upgrading the SWIMS system to improve efficiency and service delivery. †Agb Adjunkspeaker, die mobiele kantoorprogram is 'n praktiese voorbeeld van hoe die departement dienste direk na gemeenskappe bring in landelike en onderbediende gebiede. Waar toegang tot vaste kantore beperk is lewer mobiele kantore noodsaaklike dienste, insluitend kinderbeskerming, gesinsondersteuning, dienste vir ouer persone, hulp aan persone met gestremdhede, en dwelm en middelmisbruik intervensies.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, oor die afgelope twee boekjare is 776 begunstigdes deur hierdie program bereik. Dit is 'n duidelik aanduiding van die departement se verbintenis om sy bereik uit te brei en te verseker dat geen gemeenskap agtergeblewe is nie.

[Hon Deputy Speaker, the mobile office programme is a practical example of how the Department brings services directly to communities in rural and underserviced areas. Where access to fixed offices is limited, mobile offices deliver essential services, including child protection, family support, services for older persons, aid to persons with disabilities, and drug and drug abuse interventions.

Hon Deputy Speaker, over the past two financial years, 776 beneficiaries were reached through this programme. That is a clear indication of the Department's commitment to expand its reach and to ensure that no communities are left behind.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, this is what disciplined, caring governance looks like. While others make promises the Western Cape delivers, building a province that is resilient, capable and most importantly humane, and that is the difference.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I heard yesterday the African National Congress stands here and proudly talks about a whole-of-society approach. Hon Deputy Speaker, let me tell you, provinces like ours have been carrying that commitment on our backs while nationally they continue to fail the people of South Africa.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are constantly told by the hon members on that side of the House, which only two, three of them are left at the moment, we are constantly told by them to work together, to collaborate, to stretch every rand ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Kaizer-Philander, are you able to take your seat? I recognise the hon member Sayed.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Deputy Speaker, has the hon member Philander looked at who is online?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Hon members, you are fully aware that this is a political debate, it is a hybrid Sitting. I will allow hon

member Kaizer-Philander to proceed.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and I am speaking to those in front of me.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are constantly told by the members on that side of the [Interjections.] House to work together, to collaborate, to stretch every rand. What kind of partnership is that, hon Deputy Speaker? When one sphere delivers and the other collapses under the crushing weight of mismanagement, corruption and incompetence?

Hon Deputy Speaker, South Africa faces one of the highest unemployment rates in the world. Yes, grants have been expanded, but let us be brutally honest, they do not lift people out of poverty. A child support grant cannot replace a job, a pension cannot sustain a household, and what of the millions of unemployed young people? Their futures have been reduced to a R370 a month through the COVID-era social relief of distress grant paid, inconsistently by the way, wholly inadequate, a band-aid on a gaping wound.

†Agb Adjunkspeaker, onder die leiding van die ANC se Minister, Nasionale Minister Tolashe, is 'n skandelike R85-verhoging toegestaan, en soos in my area en my kultuur en my dorp, sê ons “oumens *pension*”. 'n Skamele R85. Dis nie 'n verhoging nie, agb Adjunkspeaker, dit is verraad, en dit is 'n bewys dat die ANC verwag dat ons bejaardes net bloot moet oorleef terwyl hulle hul waardigheid moet prysgee.

[Hon Deputy Speaker, under the leadership of the ANC's Minister, National Minister Tolashe, a disgraceful increase has been awarded, and as in my area and my culture and my town, we say "oumens pension". A mere R85. Ththa is not increase, hon Deputy Speaker, it is treason, and it is proof that the ANC expects the ages to just survive while they have to sacrifice their dignity.]

†Agb Adjunkspeaker – [Hon Deputy Speaker] - meantime, the National Government has been squandering the resources that are entrusted to them. The cost of State capture linked to the Gupta family is estimated at R49 billion. At Eskom alone billions vanished, leaving us with relentless loadshedding that strangles our economy and destroys livelihoods.

Hon Deputy Speaker, over R1 billion of taxpayers' money was spent on the State Capture Commission and yet where is the accountability? Where are the consequences? And then again there is the South African Social Security Agency, and hon member Stephens touched on that, that is meant to protect our most vulnerable citizens. Millions still face missed payments each and every month, system failures and corruption scandals. Hundreds of millions of rands that are lost. Hon Deputy Speaker, this is not a safety net, this is a net that is stretched and that is shredded.

Then comes the so-called national dialogue. We must speak about these things, Hon Deputy Speaker, we were told it would cost between R700 million and R? billion, and, yes, it did. Another talk shop, another extravagant expense. While ordinary South Africans were being told to tighten their belts, to make

do with less, to survive on scraps, Government was counting out millions for speeches, panels and empty promises.

Hon Deputy Speaker, while the unemployed queued for opportunities that never materialised the ANC hosted yet another costly conversation with zero tangible relief for the people of this country, and so I ask again, hon Deputy Speaker, how can the ANC speak of a whole-of-society approach when society itself is repeatedly forced to compensate for ANC National Government failure?

Hon Deputy Speaker, we in this province are holding up our end of the bargain. We are governing responsibly, we are delivering services, we are building systems, hon members, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, systems that work, but partnership requires trust, hon Deputy Speaker, and trust requires competence, accountability and integrity.

Hon Deputy Speaker, until the ANC fixes its failures, stop the waste and put the people of South Africa first, this talk of a whole-of-society approach will remain exactly that, and that is talk.

Hon Deputy Speaker, through you, as I said hon member Kamfer has left the building. I must say I am taken aback, hon Deputy Speaker, but I am not surprised. The ANC always campaign loudly during elections, singing praises and making promises when it comes to the people, †maar daar is eintlik niks, agb Adjunkspeaker [but there is actually nothing, hon Deputy Speaker.]

So we should not shock you that at a national level not a single cent will be given to the Department that has been meaningfully allocated to confront the devastating scourge of gender-based violence, †en agb lid Kamfer was absoluut reg toe hy sê met die aankondiging oor geslagsgebaseerde geweld, die fanfare daar rondom, agb Adjunkspeaker, nie 'n sent geallokeer aan die Departement om daardie saak te versterk nie. So die ANC is nie ernstig nie [and hon member Kamfer was absolutely right when he said with the announcement on gender-based violence, the fanfare around it, hon Deputy Speaker, not a cent allocated to the Department to strengthen that matter. So the ANC is not serious.]

That is the reality of ANC governance, plenty of theatre and very little action.

Hon Deputy Speaker, in a country where too many promises fade the Western Cape continues to deliver, and this Budget is about dignity in action, it is about ensuring that every person, hon Deputy Speaker, especially the most vulnerable, is seen that they are supported and that they are protected.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we protect core services in this province. [Interjections.] We stretch every rand and we keep people at the centre of everything we do, always, hon Deputy Speaker, and that is something, hon Deputy Speaker, that the hon members of this side of the House understand and will continue to stand for.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I also want to acknowledge that the DA in this House has been exceptional in exercising its oversight mandate over the Western Cape

Department of Social Development. We have been consistent in holding also National DSD and SASSA accountable. We continue to fight for our social workers to ensure their work is recognised and their safety secured. We stand by those who raised us, who nurtured us and who have been failed by National DSD, and, hon Deputy Speaker, our fight will continue. †Die manier waarop die ANC ons bejaarde mense behandel sou mens sweer die ooievaar het hulle aangebring, agb Adjunkspeaker. [The way the ANC treats our elderly people one would swear the stork brought them, hon Deputy Speaker.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, this oversight body has embodied the principles, the reason we are here to serve the people of the Western Cape. †Ek wil vandag baie dankie sê aan mnr Charles Jordan, baie dankie vir u harde werk. Baie dankie dat ons kon uitreik as 'n komitee en u altyd bereidwillig was om komiteevergaderings by te woon en ons van die nodige antwoorde te voorsien, ons waardeer.

Ek wil ook vandag, agb Adjunkspeaker, baie dankie sê aan agb Minister Londt en die departement vir u-hulle se etiese leierskap en se diensbaarheid. Ons sal aanhou, agb Minister Londt, en u-hulle moet uithou.

Agb Adjunkspeaker, laat my toe ook om vandag my waardering uit te spreek aan my ondersteuningspan op die vyfde vloer, veral my navorser, Cassidy Lapperts, wat my passie deel, agb Adjunkspeaker, vir sy harde en deeglike werk en fenomenale ondersteuning.

[I want to say thank you very much to Mr Charles Jordan, thank you for your

hard work. Thank you that we could reach out as a committee and you were always prepared to attend committee meetings and provide us with the necessary replies, we appreciate.

Today, hon Deputy Speaker, I also want to say thank you very much to hon Minister Londt and the Department for your ethical leadership and serviceability. We will carry on, hon Minister Londt, and you will have to hold out.

Hon Deputy Speaker, allow me to today also express my appreciation to my support team on the fifth floor, especially my researcher, Cassidy Lapperts, who shares my passion, hon Deputy Speaker, for his hard and thorough work and phenomenal support.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, without a doubt the Democratic Alliance supports this Vote. I thank you.

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Kaizer-Philander. I recognise the hon Minister to conclude the Vote.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

I am going to start with hon member Kaizer-Philander, because, yes, indeed you and the Committee, you do exceptional oversight and I do not know if that was a promise or a threat, but the number of questions we get from you, you definitely keep us on our toes. So thank you for that. We do appreciate, because that is how democracy works. That we have that effective oversight, they do not try and play politics, they do the job, and I also then also in that sense want to say thanks to the staff that has to make sure that all of this information gets gathered week in and week out on all the questions that get submitted. So I do want to thank you for that.

Also for your contribution. You have listed several things that I failed to mention. So that also helps to remind the listeners and the citizens in the Western Cape of what we do as a department, but I am truly blessed to have you chairing this Committee and keep up the good work.

I want to say you can give her a round of applause, but the crowd may not [Inaudible 3:57:33] – and then to the hon members of the Opposition as a collective, before I get to each one individually.

When we are in the Committee you do add constructive engagements. I do know when it comes to the speeches you need to get your soundbites in, hon Leader of the Opposition, through the hon Deputy Speaker, because he is holding you accountable, but in the Committee your members do add constructively. So for that I want to say thank you.

Coming to the speeches that were done today. Hon member Marais, I tried to discern what you said, but I think overall you supported the Budget, so thank you for that.

Hon member Stephens, thank you for your support, also continuously holding us accountable for advocating for the elderly. I visited KSE there myself two weeks ago and I could see the turnaround as well, and that is how, when there is an institution that there are some red flags around, same with Vermont earlier, and others, it is shining that spotlight on them. So thank you so much and hopefully you can teach the new member next year what is constructive engagements and inputs.

Then to hon member Kamfer, who is probably watching online, I hope. I do not think there is anything that we can say that will satisfy the ANC in supporting this Budget, that it is part of democracy, you have got an ever-decreasing caucus. The province is rejecting you election upon election, but you are still represented here and you still have a vote, so I will honour that vote that you have got.

Firstly that, through – hon Deputy Speaker, I will try and finish first or quickly. What the hon member Kamfer does not acknowledge is that every single day this Western Cape Government gives 540 000 children meals. Every single day. So it is nice to just selectively throw up a number, but you do not want to acknowledge the excellent work that this Government is doing, and that is just one example, and it is not just here in the Western Cape.

Nationally, when Minister Siviwe Gwarube came on board, she cancelled a R10 billion tender that was illegally awarded just before the election, probably to award another crony. Now imagine if that tender came through. 540 000 children in this province were probably left without meals because it is some ANC crony that got that, because it would have been like SASSA, because hon member Stephens flagged SASSA, hon member Kamfer flagged SASSA, and we flagged SASSA.

I will try and explain this slowly to the ANC so they can understand. SASSA is a national competency. SASSA does not report to the Western Cape. Minister Sisisi Tolashe is the one that is responsible for SASSA, the one that does not ensure there is accountability and those old people standing in the queues, in the heat, in the rain. Imagine if we can get SASSA under the Western Cape Government how we will address that, because the ANC has proven every single year they cannot govern, but I am actually glad we have got some youth here, because you are the future that must actually determine on whether you want to get back to this ANC Government or whether you want to go to a competent government.

The GBV efforts in this province, I want to thank this Department. We are the leading province in fighting gender-based violence on every metric, but it is not enough. It is not enough. Even with the little bit we have got we make sure that we stretch that rand, we try and spread the services as widely as possible, but we do not just pay lip service to a scourge like our President, we

actually spend the money where it is needed.

Just imagine if money flows from National and we can actually look after the people in this province, but that is the ANC, talk, talk, talk, talk, gololo action. Nothing.

The last thing, and I will also try and explain this to hon member Kamfer *in absentia*. There are funded posts and there are unfunded posts. I mean your researchers give you this question every single committee meeting, we answer it every single committee, but it does not land, okay?

So we are going to try and explain that at the next committee and here again. We are actually increasing our social workers in the Department. That is what we are doing. It is in the Budget.

So, hon member Kamfer, if you – I will not put it on you, I will maybe put it on your researchers, cannot read that, we are trying to increase the social workers, we are trying to make it easier for social workers to do their job, but, like I said at the beginning, there is nothing we will say that can satisfy the ANC. [Interjections.] I do know that we are on our way to lunch.

So on that note, hon Deputy Speaker, thank you so much for pushing through.

Dr Macdonald, to you and the entire team, thank you so much. I almost want to put a challenge to anybody, if you have a conversation with Dr Macdonald,

he never ever takes a single note. I have tried and I have had long conversations and to-do lists, he never takes a note, but every single thing you raise with him he remembers it and comes back, and that exemplifies what your entire Department does. So, Dr Macdonald, you and your team, thank you so much.

Then to my dear colleagues, hon member Philander, for holding me accountable, but also for the rest of the colleagues for having my back, I really appreciate it and enjoy lunch. Thank you so much, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, that concludes the Vote. Proceedings will now be suspended and we will resume at 15:15, at quarter past three. Once again to the stakeholders within Social Development, thank you for your attendance. HOD and management team, thank you. The House is now suspended. 15:15 we will return. 15:15 we will return.

[The House is suspended.]

[The House resumes at 15:15.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, please be seated. I have noted that the HOD, together with Senior Management, is already present. I will now note the Secretary.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 3 – Provincial Treasury – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B 1-2026].

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I recognise the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Speaker and hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier and Cabinet members, Leader of the Opposition, members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, special guests, residents of the Western Cape, today I present the 2026/27 Budget for Vote 3: Provincial Treasury, under a theme that speaks directly to the fiscal reality of this day.

If the Western Cape Government is to deliver growth and jobs then the Provincial Treasury must match that task with discipline, with speed and with care. It means making sure that public money works harder, reaches further and delivers real impact in the lives of the residents we serve. It means building a Treasury that is fair in its reach, trusted in its judgement, modern in its systems and relentless in its pursuit for value for money. This is the standard we continue to set for ourselves.

Ours is a Treasury that must turn limited resources into practical results. We must support our Government to hold the line where pressure is rising, while still finding room to improve services, strengthen institutions and support growth.

We table this Budget in a demanding service delivery environment. Population growth continues to place pressure on the provincial fiscus. Municipal

governance weaknesses and financial strain are becoming more acute in many parts of the province. Infrastructure backlogs remain stubborn, while the costs of maintaining and expanding services continue to rise. Against that backdrop the Provincial Treasury remains firmly focused on its central task, which is to protect the financial health of the Western Cape and to strengthen the systems through which Government delivers.

In order for our Government to deliver growth with discipline and care, the 2026 MTEC positions Provincial Treasury as a strategic enabler of fiscal sustainability, service delivery and economic resilience within a constrained funding environment. Our Budget aims to secure alternative funding sources, modernise procurement, strengthen the capacity of our Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board and deepen our support to municipalities.

We thus table a Budget of R420,069 million for 2026/27; R414,311 million for 2027/28, and R426,947 million for 2028/29.

Hon Deputy Speaker, even within a constrained national fiscal environment Provincial Treasury continues to provide stability, oversight and direction across the Western Cape system of government. Through the 2025/26 financial year and within budget, we carried out our mandate with discipline and with a clear focus on keeping the Province's finances sound.

A major part of that work has been our direct support to local Government. Through the Western Cape Financial Management Capability Grant we

transferred R22,17 million in the concluding 2025/26 financial year to strengthen municipal governance, improve financial systems and support more sustainable service delivery. That support is producing practical outcomes in municipalities where better financial management can make a real difference to daily lives.

- In Prince Albert we supported the roll-out of smart utility metres.
- In Saldanha Bay we backed the development of a formal revenue enhancement strategy.
- In Bergvliet and Oudtshoorn we supported work on cost-reflective tariffs.
- In Cape Agulhas we assisted with the development of a development charges policy and calculation tool.
- In Overstrand we supported a feasibility study for a credit control and debt collection unit.
- In Kannaland we are supporting municipal performance management data system and the roll-out across the municipal organogram.
- In the Overberg we supported revenue enhancement and optimisation for municipal health services, tourism enhancements, a feasibility study and business plan for the Uilenkraalsmond Holiday Resort ownership restructuring, as well as a feasibility study for the establishment of a crematorium.
- We supported Hessequa with asset verification.
- We supported Matzikama with replacement of induction meters.
- Beaufort West with a comprehensive cost of supply study and revenue optimisation within a changing energy landscape.

- Laingsburg with restructuring and modelling of water tariffs to optimise revenue and enhance water management.
- We supported three municipalities through financial recovery plans: Beaufort West, Kannaland and Theewaterskloof. Kannaland and Theewaterskloof are in their first phase, with the first statutory reporting deadline approaching soon, and Beaufort West is in phase 2 of its recovery plan, focussing on stabilisation. While progress has been made discipline in implementing the financial recovery plans will be key to progressing these municipalities to financial sustainability over time.

These are a few of the focused interventions that speak to a wider approach of how we are helping municipalities to build the tools they need to manage revenue better, to plan with more accuracy and sustain services over time.

At the same time we continue to modernise our systems through which Government buys, plans and accounts. Important groundwork has been laid for our evergreen legacy systems, including the e-procurement solution, electronic supply chain management and our procurement planning toolkit. This work matters because a better State is built through better systems. When procurement is more efficient and more transparent, delays are reduced, accountability will improve and public money then goes further.

We also continue to produce crucial economic intelligence reports that supports better provincial decision-making. The municipal economic review and outlook and provincial economic review and outlook remain important tools in

helping us understand economic conditions, assess pressures and guide policy and budget choices on a sound footing, and our Local Government budget performance overview provides a consolidated overview of the financial performance of municipalities across our province, fostering greater public transparency and trust, and focussing on strengthening the financial integrity of Local Government. I know Minister Ricardo Mackenzie said earlier today, hon Deputy Speaker, that on Wednesdays we read, so I am going to encourage that everyone please read our publications.

As national transfers come under strain we have also continued to widen our focus beyond traditional sources of funding. We strengthened our work on alternative and blended finance through our new alternative and blended finance framework, expanding our thinking around new revenue and established an infrastructure panel of experts to help improve project assessment and value extraction from capital spending across the province.

On the governance side we expanded accounting training for our clients, deployed dedicated mSCOA project management support and maintained strong internal audit support.

Taken together this work helps keep the Western Cape amongst the best governed administrations in South Africa. It shows again what disciplined financial management can make possible when it is backed by capable and caring people, practical systems and a clear sense of purpose.

Hon Deputy Speaker, these allocations and achievements are not accidents of circumstance, they are deliberate and funded choices. They are the direct result of a Treasury that understands that the scarcity of capital, budgets with strict discipline and forces every allocation to really yield maximum public value.

For the 2026/27 financial year, as mentioned previously, the Vote 3 is allocated R420,069 million, and R414,3 million in 2027/28, and R426,9 million in 2028/29. It reflects a year-on-year increase of 25,61% from the revised 2025/26 estimate of R334,421 million. This increase is driven by a clear set of pressures and priorities. It provides for the filling of critical vacant posts, cost of living adjustments, support to municipalities and transfers to the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board to fund organisational changes, system improvements and office accommodation enhancements.

Of this total allocation:

- R266,212 million, or 63,4%, goes to Compensation of Employees. That is the largest share of this Budget because the work of the Treasury depends on capable, caring, world-class professionals who can manage risk, guide departments, intervene when systems fail and build the tools that make Government work better.
- R59,964 million is allocated to goods and services.
- R89,536 million to transfers and subsidies.
- R4,357 million to capital assets.

Our Budget will back our people, our systems and our oversight.

For Programme 1: Administration, it will receive R73,738 million, which is 17,5% of the total Vote. This allocation will sustain ministerial office, management services and financial management support. It also funds core operational requirements that keep the Treasury functional and responsive.

Within this programme the key items include:

- R2,936 million for dedicated capacity to explore alternative revenue sources;
- R2,5 million for the external bursary programme;
- R4,655 million for audit fees;
- R1,418 million for Microsoft licences;
- R1,972 million for GG vehicles;
- R3,677 million for computer equipment, and
- R582,000 for the office printing solution.

And this matters because a Treasury that cannot recruit, retain, train or equip our people cannot credibly support the rest of Government. Administration in this sense is the operating base from which financial discipline, institutional memory and execution is maintained.

Hon Deputy Speaker, with us today we have two interns and two trainee accountants who are helping the Treasury care at the speed of growth, and we

welcome Anita Hanama and Zodwa Sakauli, [0:13:22] interns in our MFMA coordination [Inaudible 0:13:27]. Just rise, just rise so that everyone can see you. Anita holds a diploma in Accounting and recently completed her advanced diploma in Accounting and will be graduating in a few weeks, and Zodwa holds a BCom in Financial Accounting, and welcome to the Provincial Parliament.

We further welcome Asanda Mashluzi and Danelle Keon, [0:13:50] trainee accountants within our Chartered Accounted Academy. Asanda is within our Local Government Supply Chain Management Directorate and Danelle is supporting our Department of Health and Wellness. Danelle wrote her final board exam in December 2025 and passed, and she is now in her final year of traineeship as well. Welcome to the Provincial Parliament, thank you.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is because of brilliant minds like Anita, Zodwa, Asanda and Danelle, that we will be increasing our number of CA trainees, our graduate interns and pay interns to help create a pipeline for our Treasury.

Programme 2: Sustainable Resource Management, remains the centre of gravity in our Vote with an allocation of R204,496 million, or 48,7% of the total Budget. This is where we anchor our fiscal policy, budget management, public finance oversight and support to municipalities.

Within this programme the Budget makes room for some of the most important levers available to a modern Treasury. It includes:

- R17,411 million for the Western Cape Financial Management Capability Grant;
- R60,267 million as a transfer to the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board;
- R1,994 million for Alternative and Blended Finance Work;
- R1,172 million for Tax and Alternative Revenue Sources;
- R2,116 million for municipal interventions;
- R2,573 million for MERO and PERO;
- R1,027 million for expenditure reviews, and
- R2,243 million for Infrastructure Panel of Experts.

This is really where the Treasury forces every rand to do more within the broader sense. It is where we test our fiscal choices against our evidence, it is where we search for new revenue options, it is where we help municipalities stabilise their finances before failure spills into service delivery collapse, and it is where we work to stretch the infrastructure funding envelope through blended finance and better project preparation.

Alternative and blended finance, hon Deputy Speaker, is central in our work. Recognising the scale of infrastructure backlogs and the limits of traditional funding, the Treasury is investing in dedicated expert capacity to operationalise the ABF Programme. This work will move a pipeline of bankable infrastructure projects into structuring crowd in private and development finance, and diversify funding sources while managing fiscal risk prudently. ABF is positioned as a critical mechanism to close infrastructure gaps, support

inclusive growth and improve long-term service delivery.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this year we have also created a dedicated Alternative and Blended Finance reserve over the MTEF, totalling R518,814 million, which will serve as a stable recurring funding source for the servicing of borrowings linked to infrastructure and related projects.

Our current and planned ABF pipeline amounts to R34,626 billion. Also it reflects a diversified and strategically targeted portfolio across transport, human settlements, water security, health, education, agriculture, municipal infrastructure, governance strengthening and catalytic flagship projects.

This portfolio includes R10,088 billion supported and leveraged through the budget facility of infrastructure for three health projects, one education project and three municipal projects supporting sanitation, water and transport, R490 million supported, assessed and monitored through two public-private partnerships supporting road and ecological infrastructure, and R24,048 billion in collective Alternative and Blended Finance projects across our Government secured, supported, funded or leveraged.

- Our Department of the Premier received donor funding supporting energy resilience, totalling R12 million.
- Our Department of Social Development created a special purpose vehicle, the Cape Care Fund, having leveraged R253 000.
- Our Department of Agriculture leveraged R140 million in agricultural

partnerships.

- Our Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport has leveraged R77 million in youth, sports and cultural partnerships.
- Our Department of Local Government has leveraged R72 million in project preparation and transaction support to facilitate Alternative and Blended Financing for municipalities through the SECO and IFD organisations.

We are working with the Department of Economic Development and Tourism on tourism research to assess the impact of international tourism on our economy and related revenue strategies, and we are supporting the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning with the development of biodiversity credit schemes, and we are working with the National Treasury and World Bank to create a credit guarantee vehicle to de-risk projects in energy, water and the transport sectors.

Hon Deputy Speaker, support to municipalities remains a clear priority in this Budget. Under the Western Cape Financial Management Capability Grant funded projects for 2026/27 include:

- R280 000 for a cost-reflective tariff study in Bergrivier;
- R2,55 million for Development Charges Policy and Calculation Tool in Cape Agulhas;
- R600 000 for a supplier portal in Drakenstein;
- R350 000 for long-term financial planning operating costs in Hessequa;
- R2,717 million for asset management planning in Laingsburg;

- R1 million for a cost of supply study and updating of cost-reflective tariff tools, compiling asset maintenance plans, SEM model and internal audit support in Oudtshoorn;
- R2,5 million for smart utility metres in Prince Albert;
- R1,5 million for formal revenue enhancement strategy and development charges work in Saldanha Bay, and
- R1,5 million for Asset Register Completeness in Theewaterskloof.

The funded project package reflected in the presentation totals R12,997 million for 2026/27 as per our Vote. We will further set aside R10,031 million for future projects from municipalities for this financial year, as completed business plans are approved aligned to the grant criteria. For 2027/28 and 2028/29 we will allocate R24,002 million and R24,746 million for this grant, showing that the grant is increasing each year.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I wish to welcome Elderman Lindile Ntsabo, Speaker of the Overstrand Local Municipality, and MMC for Municipal Public Safety, Mr Andrew Komani, in the box with us today. You can rise. They join us in the audience today and their municipality was also a recipient of this grant in the 2025/26 financial year.

Each one of these interventions deals with the practical pressure points: tariffs, billing, asset registers, revenue collection, development charges, supplier systems, internal controls. These are the mechanics of whether municipalities can keep lights on, keep the water flowing, maintain assets and budget on a

credible basis.

Programme 3 in Asset Management will receive R87,692 million, or 20,9% of the Vote. The programme is central to our drive to modernise systems, improve supply chain management and support more efficient infrastructure investment.

Key items in this programme include:

- R8,002 million for the Provincial Treasury Evergreen Legacy Systems, covering the e-procurement solution, procurement planning toolkit, electronic supply chain management, IT service management, supplier evidence bank and e-learning tools. It also includes
- R1,5 million for application transformation readiness;
- R3,563 million for the Provincial Treasury Data Centre;
- R5,117 million for the Western Care Financial Management Capability Grant within the programme, and
- R1 million for the Smart Procurement Conference.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this programme is about making it easier to do work with Government and making it harder to misuse. When procurement planning is weak, departments end up buying late, they pay more and they deliver less. So when systems are fragmented information arrives too slowly to prevent waste. When supplier verification is clumsy good businesses are then discouraged from participating. So this allocation responds to the reality by backing a procurement system that is faster, cleaner, more transparent and better aligned to service delivery.

Hon Deputy Speaker, during the 2024/25 financial year 34,6% of the Western Cape Government's total procurement spend, amounting to R6,84 billion, was awarded to women-owned businesses. This was the first time in the history of the province to surpass the National Treasury's 30% benchmark and represents a steep rise from 23,4% in the 2023/24 year.

It may also be the first verifiable instance globally of a national or sub-national government achieving a minimum of 30% of its total procurement spend directed to women-owned businesses, without set-asides or mandatory subcontracting. This achievement is a result of years of reform, growing a diverse pool of suppliers and investment in digital tools such as the Western Care Supplier Evidence Bank, which makes it easier for departments to identify and contract with credible women-owned suppliers who can get the job done. It demonstrates the direct effect of integrated digital supply chain tools with procurement reforms.

We are now working with the World Bank to verify whether this is indeed the first time a government or sub-national government in the world has surpassed the 30% milestone without set-asides or mandatory subcontracting, and with that, hon Deputy Speaker, I wish to welcome Garanesa Gabriels, the Head of Operations and representative today of one of our women-owned businesses who do business with the Western Cape Government, the DLK Group. They provide IT services to the value of R46 million to the Western Cape Government, and I convey my message of appreciation for the work that you

do and as well to the owners of the organisation. Just so by the way, they also do IT services for Health and Wellness, hon Minister Wenger.

I also welcome Sharla Grantham joining us today representing Grobir Medical Supplies. The Province directed R53,7 million in procurement spend to this enterprise with the provision of medical supplies. Integrating suppliers like Grobir into our system is a direct outcome of a procurement model designed to expand market participation while securing the material needs of our healthcare sector. Welcome today. It is important, hon Deputy Speaker, that we show our young girls in our province that we cannot grow our economy without them. So really welcome to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.

Programme 4: Financial Governance, receives R54,143 million, or 12,9% of our total allocation. This programme strengthens accounting services, corporate governance, risk management, audit support and broader compliance support across Government. Within this programme the Budget provides:

- R500 000 for the Western Cape Financial Management Capability Grant;
- R677 000 for the mSCOA project manager;
- R280 000 for accounting training to clients;
- R354 000 for internal audit support, and
- R500 000 for internal audit and risk management research.

This work, hon Deputy Speaker, is often less visible than a road or a clinic or a school, yet it does shape whether those assets are properly budgeted for,

properly accounted for and properly protected.

Financial governance is where public trust is either built or it could be lost. It is where we must check whether our bad habits are corrected early, where we must check that the risks that are surfaced before they turn into losses and where the province protects the standard of administration that residents expect from us. Taken together these allocations reflect a Treasury that understands its multiplier role.

We manage a relatively modest departmental budget, the smallest budget of the province and the smallest Treasury in the country, to support 13 provincial departments, 30 municipalities and 11 entities. That is the true reach and impact of this Vote. Our impact is measured by how effectively we help our Government spend, plan, procure, account and govern. Every rand leveraged, every improvement in a procurement process, every stronger municipal budget, every better tariff model, every cleaner audit outcome and every credible infrastructure decision carries effects far beyond this Department.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this Budget does not pretend that the environment is easy, it does not assume that fiscal pressure will ease on its own. It responds in the only way a serious Treasury can respond and that is by building capability, by modernising our systems, by making sure that we are backing our municipalities where they are weakest, by widening the search for revenue and finance, by guarding the financial integrity of the province with a steady hand and by showing we care with our capabilities, our capacity and through our discipline.

So, hon Deputy Speaker, I wish to thank the Standing Committee on Finance for its oversight and engagement. To the Chairperson, Mr Leon van Wyk, and the hon members of this House, our Head of Department, Ms Julinda Gantana, our head official, our CFO, Ms Annamarie Smit, our Senior Management and officials from the Provincial Treasury, our entity, the Western Gambling and Racing Board, my Ministry team and our team finance partners across National, Provincial and Local Government, for the continued work and commitment.

Hon Deputy Speaker, for the consideration of this House I table Vote 3 for Provincial Treasury. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. Thank you, I recognise hon member Nkondlo.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker, Aldous Huxley says:

“He stacks the cards against the truth, he uses under-emphasis and over-emphasis to dodge issues and evade facts, he omits facts.”

This is what we have experienced in this House in the past two days. This is when a set of facts are denounced so to loud hail others, as blue lies remain the only truth allowed by a DA mob.

This Provincial Treasury suffers from leadership for its time as DA and its

Ministers for the past 17 years have misgoverned this provincial economy by failing to align public finances to the National Development Plan and its goals, with no clear plan against hunger, inequality and inclusive economy, a story and lived reality of many low-income earners were a majority in this province.

The ANC does not support this Vote. Marais Swart wrote in an article last week:

“Rising living costs threaten the affordability for the Western Cape's elderly.”

That is the topic of the article. It reflects on the Stats SA data that shows Western Cape as having the largest share of elderly residents in the country at 12,3%, well above national average.

The article further laments the outcry that behind these numbers lies a growing public concern whether residents can afford to age with dignity in a province where housing, food and transport costs continue to climb. Dr E V Rapiti further writes an article titled:

“The City of Cape Town is not in touch with its people.”

Just two days ago, and further elaborates the burden that the City tariffs have an eroding value and asset wealth of elderly which they worked over years of their productive lives. He makes the point:

“Using property value as a determinant of tariff category the City has created a system that overcharges the poor, subsidises the wealthy, punishes low usage households, ignores the lived reality of pensioners and undermines the principle of fair and just service delivery.”

He further argues that Cape Town needs an electricity tariff system that recognises income usage and vulnerability, not just property value. These two articles confirm the discussion we had in the Standing Committee about the work done by this Department around cost reflective tariffs, and I hear the hon Minister talking about this tool here and the tool there.

The question is the extent of these tools being able to influence these municipalities in the responsibility that this Provincial Treasury in aligning with the national development plan and the national objectives of ensuring we manage cost of living and the burden to citizens.

The officials informed us about their work, but fell short in telling us which and how this work has actually realised a cost reflective tariff environment in our municipalities. The truth that is lived by citizens of this province bears testimony under the DA Administration as citizens had to take it upon themselves to litigate the DA-run City of Cape Town for ignoring a public participation input against their 2025/2026 Budget due to unreasonable and not so cost reflective tariffs. The South African Property Owners Association,

joined by NGOs and Freedom Front Plus, took to the courts against what they view as an unfair burden on ratepayers, challenging three property linked tariffs introduced by the 2025/2026 Budget.

The Tshwane ruling stands a clear ruling to the City of Cape Town as it ruled against the city cleansing levy and found the municipality acted unlawfully by increasing bills without:

“Proper consultation.”

And Tshwane was then ordered to restore residents to their original position within 90 days.

It is actually hypocritical that this very DA and Provincial Treasury has initiated a court action against the Public Procurement Act of 2024, and one of their arguments is that the NA and NCOP failed in their duty to facilitate meaningful public participation. This is laughable. Talk about throwing stones whilst the glass house is cracking. It can only be stupidity that some are boldly standing here, even in their professional capacity, and regurgitate such foolishness and mediocrity.

The double-speak and schizophrenia of DA are glaring in this province. As in 2023/24 the City implemented a 17,6% tariff increase despite NERSA's 15,1%, and further incorporated additional unregulated surcharges of 37 cents per unit. These fixed charges introduced reduces the amount of electricity a low-income

consumer gets for their money. Let alone the City that has used electricity purchases as a debt collection for those owing rates, further eroding the kilowatts per unit purchased by owing households. Where are kindness and care in this blatant abuse of tariffs?

The City is not alone, with Breede Vallei, Bergrivier also criticised on the application of tariffs. Another DA municipality, Cape Agulhas, was found wanting when it imposed a whopping R620 monthly surcharge on residents and businesses that installed solar power. A twisted decision if you think this hon Premier in 2019 in his candidacy, with this hon Minister, were choking in their voice, promising [Inaudible 0:34:56] of the Western Cape economy from the national grid, and to date this economy is clasped tight to Eskom grid.

DA suffers from dissociative identity disorder, a complex mental health condition where the carrier personality fragments into two or more alternative personalities.

Like DA, when SAPS is in the room and commissioners, Minister Godongwana was in here, and all praises to them. In their absence they are highly criticised with National Government. Municipalities that talk left as hon member Bryant introduced some warped working class liberalism, but walk in the extreme right wing as proxy of the orange men, the champions.

The R12,468 million, a 16,65% reduction of Local Government budget office, R11,844 million in Local Government finance, one, and a further 28% decrease.

With R14,374 million of Local Government finance, two, how is the function of the various sub-programs help sustain municipal fiscal resources?

We continue to be told by officials of this Department of the great analytical work and reports they produce to share and advise the various municipalities as directed by PFMA. The question though is still outstanding if the extent to which these reports are appreciating this intel and actually utilising the observation and recommendations to relook at the socio-economic challenges and innovation required to drive agility in local economies and prudent municipal resource management.

GDPR per capita in page 28 of the Central Karoo MERO book states that the Central Karoo had the lowest per capita GDPR in 2024, and as such highlight clear differences between the City and rural districts, and the varied economic realities of the urban and rural divide continue to show the challenge of economic development, which the book says:

“District differences in GDPR per capita help identify where economic support measures may have the greatest impact.”

The question is how is this Budget allocation tampering with this trajectory that reproduces underdevelopment on the basis of your geography? On the basis of an apartheid geography that we inherited, where vulnerable local economies are deliberately excluded to the benefit and the dividend of economic development. When are we deliberately disrupting this order so that

urban economies, also which are struggling, are able to deal with the pressure of urban growth and immigration.

Laingsburg Gini index regressed from 0,509 in 2021 to 0,521 in 2024, and this is coupled with wage distribution levels of a concentration of low income earners at 0 to R1 660, with 51,9% of this population defined as poor living at lower bound poverty line, which is R1 109 per person per month. This figure does not equal the average food basket price at R5 300, with cost tables measured at R2 800 in minimum wages.

In page 84 of the Budget Book Provincial Treasury makes a claim that it has adopted a forward-looking approach and used PERO and MERO intelligence to guide trade-offs, funding shifts and risk informed decision-making in its reprioritisation to channel funds towards high value programmes. Please show us in which areas this Budget has done that to respond and shift the needle of poverty and low income patterns that sustain inequality in the provincial economy, so we could deliver the high valued jobs.

In page 106 a R7,5 million has been reallocated, meaning it was unspent from the last financial year, to appoint an expert support for implementation of alternative finance. This is about four times an annual salary of an HOD in a provincial department. That, I am sure, could have been spared for establishing a full sub-programme with its staff of public finance specialists with requisite skills.

We must consider alternative blended finance as a funding alternative, spoken to passionately by the hon Minister, that has been adopted by this Government. So surely must have – this Department must have internal capacity to manage this critical funding approach. [Interjections.]

Can I proceed? The Budget for consultants in this Provincial Treasury in Programme 1: Administration, has increased by 1 818,95% from R153 000 in the last financial year to R2,936 million, and 861,29% increase for catering in this very programme, from R31 000 in the last year to R298 000 this year. We wish to request to the Provincial Treasury with a 45,70% increase of the Infrastructure Budget of R12,568 million in Programme 4, that under the infrastructure project site visits they consider and report to this House, through the Standing Committee, about the situation of gangsters and criminal syndicates that are involved in infrastructure projects in provincial projects. Like in the School of Skills in Manenberg where project cost has increased from R48 million to R161,7 million as the site is being manned by gangs.

During our engagement with emerging contractors in the Garden Route the blatant employment of undocumented and illegal immigrants was decried by these contractors, reporting this criminal act by contracted companies of public infrastructure projects. An act that is against the law and current immigration laws, and the BCCEI regulations, which is the industry for civil engineering.

These big construction companies are enjoying an unfettered privilege of using their higher CIDP grading experience and financial muscle to outcompete these

low-grade contractors who can only manage just sub-contracting. This includes a Black woman-owned company with Grade 5 CE and Grade 4 GB, who is also reduced to sub-contracting with a sea of many other Grade 1s who are lounging in less than 50 000 sub-contracts where they are grouped, in some instances, as six women companies to a road project in Thembaletu, for three parts of such a road. One woman from Cornville, who has a painting company, told us of last securing a painting job in 2015, and even with developments in her area she has been submitting her bid with no success.

So we would love for hon Minister, in your celebration of women-owned companies, that you also consider these women in the infrastructure projects. This situation painted a picture of some of these infrastructure projects delivered in the main at the back of emerging contractors, with big contractors, just purely the †Mantshingelanes [Security] project managing, whilst the financial benefit is not relatively distributed.

It is quite shameful that the big contractors benefit from consolidation of projects which shoots the grading level of these projects to their favour, especially because they are in the level of Grade 6 to Grade 9, and yet when they sub-contract they cannot extend the same benefit. Instead they either unbundle the projects to a level that does not drive value for emerging contractors to graduate to the next grade, and they fraud the very State coffers by replacing the labour cost that would have been cited, costed and approved as successful bidders, only to then pay labourers EPWP rates. These emerging contractors are asking how and who is monitoring these acts by big business

who bully and exploit sub-contractors and deprive local employment opportunities.

This Provincial Treasury cannot just be a conveyor belt of capital ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kindly conclude, hon member.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): ...and enable unregulated behaviour of private players in public projects. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): The ANC does not support this Vote.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Nkondlo. I now recognise the hon member Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AJA): Thank you very much hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Deputy Speaker, in accordance with the current ongoing challenges mainly affecting communities on the Cape Flats and townships, the Al Jama-ah party views the 2026 Budget cycle as a crucial time for economic transformation towards effective service delivery.

This province is well-known for underspending budgets in sectors such as health, education and community safety. Al Jama-ah calls on the DA-run province to take heed of President Cyril Ramaphosa's call that 2026 is a year to fix Local Government and stabilise the economy.

This means that the Budget must be practical and pro-poor. The economic growth which the Province so often boasts about ignores key factors, such as balancing it with social needs, sustaining social protection, address poverty with sustainable outcomes, create long-term job opportunities, tackle the failing infrastructure in communities where people often have to endure sewage overflows, and more support for SMMEs.

Al Jama-ah reiterates that the 2026 Budget be used to establish economic stability that will bring about rapid and meaningful changes in the lives of the most vulnerable communities. Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Hon members, before we proceed, if there is any mobile device or laptop device, if you are able to ensure that it is on silent. I now firstly recognise in the order – are you no longer raising a point of order, hon member Adams? Okay, hon member Sayed.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Deputy Speaker, I have just been notified and I think I saw it now, that hon member Adams was supposed to be the speaker after hon member Nkondlo. If you look at this particular – I am not sure whether they changed it. It says here Nkondlo, Petrus

and then Brinkhuis.

So I just wanted to know whether the hon member of the Patriotic Alliance is still going to be on the speakers list and whether it was correct?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, thank you so much for raising the matter. I am going to recognise the Chief Whip as we, as Presiding Officers, receive the speakers list.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, we received an updated speakers list this morning from the Patriotic Alliance, indicating that hon member Petrus will not be speaking on any of the Votes, and the speakers lists were updated with where the hon members asked for space. They did not ask to participate in Vote 3.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me firstly engage the Table Staff.

Hon members, I have engaged the Table Staff and having received the speakers list my side, the Table Staff confirms the comments made by the hon Chief Whip in terms of the speakers list. I am unable to amend the speakers list at this particular stage. I trust you will find that in order.

I am so delighted to see the Opposition working together. So thank you so much, hon member Adams. Hon colleagues, we will promptly commence and I recognise the hon member Van Wyk.

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, during the course of the 2026/27 Budget deliberations it has become clear that the Western Cape wishes to forge ahead in managing its Budget in such a manner that it can promote increased economic activity that will in turn promote growth in employment.

This approach is contained within the G4J strategy. To successfully achieve such objectives it is essential that public sector institutions across society demonstrate the necessary proactive good governance and service delivery, decision-making and implementation of projects that becomes infectious in translating this attitude to private sector businesses and investors.

The impact of demonstration is powerful. When George Municipality was upgrading the Market Street link for the GoGeorge bus service and simultaneously did essential maintenance and painting of one of its office buildings on that street, it did not take long for private owners of commercial properties to follow suit.

Across our country most of the buildings occupied by Government departments or municipalities are not maintained and in desperate need of refurbishment. This sends a negative message which, when combined with the encumbering and restrictive legislation and regulations that make it onerous and time-consuming to comply without adding real benefit, it sends a negative signal in relation to investment.

We need to consciously take note of the needs and expectations of citizens, the private sector and investors, and the policies that enable them to participate meaningfully in the economy and society. It is therefore the attitude of the public sector displayed through its actions in practice that becomes a positive signal to the investors.

The Western Cape Budget has been tabled and serves to chart a way forward in targeting improvement and economic growth. This has been achieved through applying the 4,25% increase in the Provincial Budget to give practical effect to the objectives of enabling citizens, the economy and society.

The poor policy choices that have been taken by National Government are reflected in dismal economic growth and the fiscal constraints reflected in the budgets of recent years. The ANC have been architects of this, driven by corruption and the inability to deliver services and to govern, and this has affected all of our citizens. We only need to take a glance at the challenges being faced in other provinces when comparing the work being done by our Education and Health Departments.

In using KwaZulu-Natal as an example. The revised estimates of expenditure for Education for 25/26 will exceed the Budget approved during the Adjustment Appropriation only a few months ago, by over R500 million. Their Budget increases by 3,7% above the 25/26 revised estimates.

However, this leaves financial pressures of R1,8 billion in 26/27 as 3 000

teacher posts are unaffordable. 1 600 schools are in need of refurbishment or upgrades, with expenditure on goods and services, in other words, school learner materials, declining by 5,5% in this year compared to last year.

Also in KZN, their Health Department's revised estimated spending for the 25/26 year is expected to exceed the amount in Adjustment Appropriation by R4 billion. For 26/27 the Health Budget is R1,8 billion less than the revised estimates. This means that the Compensation of Employees figure will be almost R100 million less than has been spent in this current financial year, with goods and services R1,4 billion less.

These examples sketch how the Western Cape has been more effective in managing to balance the two biggest budgets. The examples also demonstrate that a growing population requires well-run education and health services. The funding of these needs is not sustainable in an environment of economic growth below 1%, as we have experienced over the past decade.

Hon Deputy Speaker, in turning attention to the work of the Provincial Treasury and its budget for 26/27 of R420,069 million, it is worthwhile to examine some of the activities being undertaken by this Department at the heart of the Provincial Government's operations. As we forge ahead with the overall objectives it is critical to undertake forecasting and planning for long-term financial stability.

Provincial Treasury has been examining our portion of our 26/27 own generated

revenue arising from motor licence fees and gambling revenue, being R130 million in this projected financial year. How that can be used as a reserve fund that can be applied as a [Inaudible 0:53:42] revenue to support the payment of interest if the Western Cape Government were to raise a loan of R1,3 billion payable over 10 years, being the example based on the provision for this year. Over the MTEF this reserve will be expanded to R518,8 million.

This is one of the complexities being examined in exploring the establishment of an alternative and blended finance, also known as an ABF portfolio, that will enable additional infrastructure projects to be undertaken.

Planning is underway on a number of projects for which budget facility for infrastructure applications are being prepared. This includes:

- Schools as part of the Rapid Build Schools Programme to the value of R2,5 billion;
- Sanitation and water security projects for Drakenstein and George Municipalities to the value of R2,3 billion;
- My City Phase 2A for the City of Cape Town to the value of R4,7 billion, and
- R600 million towards the development of one of the first phases of the new Tygerberg and Metro Hospitals.

In addition there are infrastructure projects to the value of over R24 billion that would assist to propel economic growth. It is expected that many of these

projects will require partnership funding and participation in the form of grants, donor, concession funding or development facilitation funding to ensure they come to fruition.

Provincial Treasury has also created reserves, established from revenue receipts, to cater for unforeseen and unavoidable expenditure and a stabilisation reserve to mitigate in-year fiscal risks or revenue shocks arising across volatile cycles.

Provincial Treasury undertakes annual strategic integrated municipal engagement processes with municipalities that focusses on the alignment, responsiveness and sustainability of integrated development plans, budgets and infrastructure pipelines. These engagements are crucial to ensure that policies and planning are integrated to ensure development takes place across the province.

Municipalities are increasingly facing challenges in relation to their own financial sustainability in terms of debtor collection rates, the setting of cost reflective tariffs for services being delivered, dealing with water and distribution losses, maintenance of infrastructure and identifying indigent households to receive free basic services.

The affordability of municipal services and any tariff increases is under pressure as households find it increasingly difficult to make ends meet, given poor economic growth and only modest prospects of employment. The draft

municipal budgets, being tabled by the end of March, will need to take into account that Eskom electricity tariffs will once again increase above the inflation rate as from July 2026. There is increasing resistance from domestic and business consumers of electricity as Eskom's electricity prices are higher relative to the cost of renewable energy.

It will become imperative that electricity reforms are urgently implemented to enable the integration of energy purchased from renewable sources into national and regional grid networks to provide electricity at a more affordable price.

Water security and resilience is also becoming more urgent given prospects of a prolonged drought. In addition, the ageing water infrastructure within municipalities will need to be upgraded and refurbished. It is worth noting that many municipalities are experiencing water distribution losses exceeding 20%. This will require replacement of networks over a period of time.

Apart from focussing on energy and water, provincial departments have ongoing engagements with municipalities in the areas of promoting economic development and tourism, the township economy, agricultural initiatives, expanding exports, development planning, being some of the examples of collaboration. In this way the Province is assisting municipalities in their role to enable the growth of local and regional economies and employment, as we all strive to meet the objectives of the Growth for Job strategy.

In conclusion, hon Deputy Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to thank hon Minister Baartman, the HOD and team at Provincial Treasury, not only for their excellent work in preparing this Budget, but also for consistently working under pressure on regular deadlines, ranging from debates to MERO documents to Local Government analysis, pushing boundaries on data analysis. The work being done by the Standing Committee is also appreciated.

On behalf of the DA I support appropriating R420,069 million for Vote 3: Provincial Treasury.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Van Wyk. I recognise the hon Minister to conclude the Vote.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, I am going to attempt my best to answer both the Vote questions as well as the overall Budget questions. I will start with just some of the general budgeting questions.

In terms of cost of living, poverty, hunger, I just want to reiterate some information. So of our Budget R36,7 billion will go for growth and jobs, and if we want to know what does growth and jobs have to do with poverty, is we will be able to really decrease that pressure on our province if our economy is growing and if jobs is added to our province. It is a dignified life to be able to say that you have a job, that you are able to put food on the table.

So we want our economy to grow, we want jobs to increase in our province. We are currently at 18,1% unemployment in our province, it is the lowest in the country. We still want it to go lower. We have a new target that the hon Premier set for us. He said, “Okay, now that we have gotten to 18,1%, can we get to 10%?”

So as a province we need to keep on working on reducing that unemployment amount, and if you are able to really work on reducing that unemployment amount, you are also going to tackle poverty in this regard.

We are allocating R8,6 billion for Safety. You might ask what does safety have to do with the economy? But if it is not safe for you to get to your job, if it is not safe for you to get to your place of entertainment, or your place of worship, or your place of school, or your – you know, the clinic, the hospital, if it is not safe for you to get to your home, then we will not be able to grow our economy, we will not be able to create jobs, because our people's lives are at risk.

If we do not invest in an educated, healthy and caring society, 77% of our Budget is going to Education, Health and Social Development Departments.

For the EAC's policy priority, R208,6 billion is going to this priority to make sure that we increase the social development workers, that we increase the amount that we put into the older persons programme, for example.

In agriculture, for example, we are increasing mobile abattoirs. We want

mobile abattoirs for the informal economy, because we want to make sure that we are helping people grow their economy, creating jobs.

We want to be able to make sure, that in education, that our children are not only entering into our schools, but that they are finishing Matric and able to go forward. We want to be able to make sure that people have quality healthcare. We want to make sure that people have opportunities for employment and employability, and that youth have youth programmes. That is why, for example, we have heard some of the increases in the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport that we have heard.

If you also want a growing economy and able to create jobs, we have to make sure that we have credible systems for things like ICT, for things like procurement, that we are using AI ethically, that we are making sure that we are responsibly approaching alternative and blended finance, and that is why we are going to be spending R31,9 billion on innovation, culture and governance in our province.

In terms of hunger specifically, I know I did mention it both in the Budget as well as in second reading, but I will just quickly go through some of the allocations again. In terms of nutrition specifically:

- Separate to the disaster nutrition funding of adding R6,225 million into the Budget, agriculture will be spending R64,41 million on food gardens.
- The Education Department, through the nutrition programme, will be

spending R1,771 billion feeding children every single day.

- Health, as partnering with the private sector, to help moms and their babies through the Khulisa Programme for malnutrition.
- Social Development is going to be spending R12,256 million on food security through community feeding and nutrition programmes. They are going to be spending R56,736 million on food distribution centres and community nutrition development programmes, and they are also spending R81,413 million on food relief under social distress.

Now the reason it is like that is because we have a transversal approach in our Government. Jobs does not belong to one department, safety does not belong to one department. Having an educated, healthy and caring society does not belong to one department. Innovation, culture and governance do not belong to one department. So the way that we approach our Budget really is in a transversal manner.

In terms of the cost of living, part of the reason that we help municipalities with these cost of supply tariffs and tariff tools, is to make sure that our tariffs are cost reflective and there are input costs in tariffs that you have to account for in costs. If someone says to you the input cost is R5 and you must now go sell it, are you then able to sell it for less than R5 without being able to cover your costs? No. So you need to take into account those input costs.

So let us have a conversation about what those input costs are. NERSA is an input cost. When NERSA increases the tariffs for energy then you have to take

it into consideration into your cost of supply. Part of the court case previously that was brought against Government, and not just the Western Cape Government it was the whole government, where it was saying – against NERSA, was you must have a cost of supply study. So the Court said that you cannot then increase if you do not have the cost of supply studies. So we have to help municipalities to make sure that those cost of supply studies are concluded.

If you have food inflation it is going to affect your goods and services budget. I was having a conversation a little bit earlier about medical inflation. If your medical inflation increases then the R10 that you maybe have for those needles or pens or whatever, it is going to be less, because if you are spending the same amount that you spent on needles, R10 and R10 again, and medical inflation is increasing, you are going to be able to buy less medical supplies in this regard. That is what it means.

When you have rising fuel costs, for example, the impact of what is happening in the Middle East at the moment in terms of the conflict, you will start seeing that the input cost into agriculture is going to start increasing. You will see that the input costs in terms of GG vehicles – hon Minister of Mobility is going to come and say this is the impact that the conflict is having on us. Health and Education have big budgets when it comes to fuel that they need to transport learners, EMS services. An ambulance needs to be able to get to someone. So if the petrol cost increases, if the diesel cost increases, that is an input cost. So that increases the Budget and that is the type of pressure.

Residents also feel that exact same pressure; residents, households. Part of what we are doing in the Western Cape Government in our energy and water portfolios, again, I know this is outside the Vote, but it was asked of me, hon Deputy Speaker, so I will just quickly go through some of these items.

On page 117 of our overview book you will see that there are – it is six, seven, eight, nine, nine departments where R452,529 million will be spent on our energy portfolio. It is from things like energy capacity to affordable energy solutions, alternative energy procurement, mechanisms and platforms, LED lighting, solar PV. It is to make sure that we have industrial decarbonisation, sectoral emission target programme. For example, we are helping with IBP procurement, we are helping with grid and transmission infrastructure upgrading and planning, we are assisting with project preparation facility.

Agriculture came and said they want solar PV for farm worker homes, for example. Those are things that affect cost of living. We said, for example, we want to make sure that we are going forward with green hydrogen with the Three Cape proposal. We said that we want to make sure that we have additional capacity when it comes to energy.

Also municipalities have to then finish their respective master plans. So some municipalities unfortunately do not have the same capacity as maybe some bigger municipalities or even the Province. So some of this money that we are putting on the table is to help with the technical and specialised skills that

municipalities require in terms of energy, and we are well on track for 2035 to become an energy net exporter, bringing in 5 200 megawatts into the system by then.

In terms of water, for example, there are three key departments in our water portfolio, the same page of the overview book, that we are allocating R177,942 million for water. It includes, for example, clearing of invasive alien vegetation. We all know if you have alien vegetation in the river it is going to take up more water, but not only is it going to take up more water, the hon Minister of Infrastructure is going to come, when there is another disaster, and say we need more money to clear the alien vegetation, because if we do not and a disaster comes then it is going to affect the infrastructure. So it is important that we invest in alien vegetation clearing.

It is important that we invest in BFI programmes, for example, for ecological infrastructure preparation, because if we do not look after our infrastructure, if we do not plan for the amount of people that are moving into the Western Cape, then we are going to run into a problem. We need to make sure, for example, bulk raw water supply, water balancing reservoirs, telemetry and installation of additional bulk water meters, groundwater augmentation, as well as the drought response, municipal borehole support and potable water tanks for municipalities.

I know that the respective Votes have also gone into great detail as to where these particular programmes will be, but part of the reason why energy and

water is part of Growth for Jobs is because you cannot grow an economy, you cannot create jobs if the basics are not in place. So we said energy and water is important to us. We are going to allocate funding extra for energy and water.

In terms of employment and employability, and this is also again across programmes:

- The Year Beyond Programme in DCAS is increasing with R15,764 million.
- The MOD expansion is increasing by R15,8 million.
- The Community Resilience Programme in [Inaudible 1:10:47] is increasing by R18,588 million.
- Mental health for youth in Social Development is increasing by R6 million.
- Independent living for young adults is increasing by R9,5 million.
- The Street Coaching Programme in DCAS is increasing by R20,961 million.
- The jobseekers travel voucher, where you can go and find work, is increasing by R5,080 million.
- Agricultural education and training, because hon Minister Meyer said that we need to make sure that agriculture has a pipeline, is increasing by R18,5 million.
- Mobile e-centres in the Department of the Premier is increasing by R21,5 million.
- The e-Kiosks for digital services, because if you want to find a job, are you able to have Wi-Fi for the job you want to find? So we are going to

increase the e-Kiosks for digital services with R6 million.

- We are going to increase our graduate and pay interns with plus R34,372 million.
- The Department of Economic Development and Tourism is creating a new Enterprise and Employment Development Outcomes Fund to leverage private sector funding. We are adding R3,098 million.
- The Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport and Education said, “You know what, schools and sport is important to us. It is important to redress. [Interjections.] It is important to transformation in our province.” So we are going to redirect R130 million for it. [Interjections.]
- The Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports said, “We are going to increase our *1 000 Stories* programme.” So they are going to increase R9 million.

No, I need to get through all the questions the Opposition asked me, hon Deputy Speaker, [Interjections.] including the ones that are not in Vote 3. [Interjections.]

In terms of – no, no, in terms of the tools for municipalities. I am glad that the hon member spoke about auctions, and while we are on auctions, hon Deputy Speaker, hon Minister Meyer said [Interjections.] specifically that because we are dealing with foot-and-mouth disease in our province, please, things must be online, things must be digital, please do not move animals around unnecessarily. [Interjections.]

So us, in the Western Cape Government, when we speak about moving with discipline, with care, we do not move irresponsibly like the ANC moves. [Interjections.] We move to make sure that what we do we are able to stretch our money as far as possible and making sure that we are actually looking after the safety of the people in our province. [Interjections.]

Police Oversight and Community Safety is going to be working with the Department of Mobility, because the Department of Mobility is getting R80 million for diagnostic scanners. What I found out about these diagnostic scanners during the budget process, they came and they said, “You know what, hon Deputy Speaker, you know what we can do? We can actually track and see what is in a truck, we can see the illegal movement of firearms. We can see the illegal movements of goods. We can see the illegal movement of animals. We can see people doing child trafficking with those diagnostic scanners.” [Interjections.]

So we are going to deploy those diagnostic scanners because we want to address crime in our province, and that is what we mean when we talk about a transversal approach. That every single department must come to the table for Growth for Jobs, for e-hacks. Every department must come to the table for safety, every department must come to the table for ICG. [Interjections.]

When I speak about ABF in the Vote, hon Deputy Speaker, you will notice I do not only speak about what is in the Treasury Vote, I speak about how we are working with every single department on alternative and blended financing,

because if 95% of your budget comes from national transfers and only 5% comes from your actual own provincial revenue, you need to start thinking differently, you need to start thinking innovatively about where is this going to come from. So we have to work with the private sector, we have to, and it is not just PPPs.

I know some of the hon members on the other side they love to only ask you about PPPs, but it is like 10 years ago that we have moved forward from just PPPs. Some things are suitable for PPPs and some things are not suitable for PPPs. Some things like water, for example, you might want, for example, project finance. Some things are more suitable for concessional funding in terms of loans. Some things you might do off balance sheet, like a special purpose vehicle, like education is doing Edu Invest, the Department of Social Development is doing Cape Care Fund. There are different models for everyone in alternative and blended finance.

I am glad the hon member did bring up the Public Procurement Act. We have launched a constitutional action against the Public Procurement Act and the hon member was going on about, oh, we are complaining about public participation, but the hon member might forget that the NA included a whole new chapter after the Bill was with all nine provinces. It came to provinces through the NCOP, we were so-called consulted. It went back and now you add a whole chapter, but you do not come back to us to ask us our views on this matter. Not only do not you ask us our views on the matter, majority of the things that we submit then during the process, you just ignore. You do not just

– you do not even take it into consideration. [Interjections.]

So we are going to the Constitutional Court. We are in the Constitutional Court, we have lodged our papers and we will make sure that we fight this, and this, hon Deputy Speaker, this particular case, because you cannot bring a substantive matter directly to the Constitutional Court, but public participation you can go directly to the Constitutional Court. We have substantive problems with this Act as well.

So with public participation we are in the Constitutional Court and we are also making sure that – because if you win the court case everything else falls away, [Interjections.] but if you do not win that court case we still have substantive matters that we must lodge in the High Court on this Public Procurement Act, because you cannot have 34% women-owned procurement in the Western Cape without set-asides and without mandatory sub-contracting, and I ask you why is it the other provinces cannot do this? [Interjections.] Why is it that people think that transformation and value for money are mutually exclusive? [Interjections.] It is not mutually exclusive. We have shown evidence that if you are making sure that you increase the pool of your suppliers that you are [Interjections.] really able to make sure that you bring people into your system.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, thank you. I recognise the hon member Adams.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Deputy Speaker, is the hon Minister willing to take

a question?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, you are responding to questions, but let me ask, are you prepared to take a question from hon member Adams?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Hon Deputy Speaker, because hon member Adams was not allowed to do a speech earlier, I will take a question and I am going to try my best to answer whatever that question is.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, you may go ahead.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Shame, hon Deputy Speaker, I do not know why the hon Minister of Infrastructure do not speak through you, but I was going to be nice with the hon Minister, and I was going to ask what type of Red Bull was the hon Minister drinking, because she is going on like crazy.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question has no relevance.

An HON MEMBER: No, man.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, because the hon Minister of Health is sitting here, I just want to quickly show you. This is the little bag that I got from the Department of Infrastructure. So I am going to take the water bottle out, that is important for my hydration. I am going to take the snackles out that my doctor said I must

have a look at, and I am going to take the closed Red Bull bottle that I have not even opened out to show the member that I have not had Red Bull.
[Interjections.]

However, speaking about making sure that energy is important. Energy is not just important for your personal life, energy is also important for our Government, which is why R452 million has been included into energy in our Province, and that is also why, for example, the Western Cape IRP, we have received extra funding that we have leveraged from other organisations for the IRP, so that we do not have to take on that funding on our own book specifically.

So I am glad that the hon member raised my energy levels and the same in my personal life. We must invest in energy in the Western Cape Government programmes as well.

Coming to just on the ABF funding. So what happens is because we are doing an organisational redesign those posts that we need are not there yet. In the meantime, while we do the organisational redesign, we must bring in the capacity, we must source the capacity.

So that is what we are currently doing and we are also working with organisations such as the World Bank to make sure that we have the technical ability and the capacity to deal with our ABF projects and our programmes so that by the time the Department comes and says, “Min, we want to maybe go

out on loan, please can we go to National Treasury,” or, you know, then we must be able to make sure we have the technical capacity to assess the respective projects.

In terms of infrastructure, gangs, mafia, undocumented and illegal foreigners. I would please ask that the hon member just submit the respective matters directly to both DOI and Provincial Treasury. I do not recall having received a complaint on this particular matter from the hon member that was speaking about it, hon Deputy Speaker, but if there are specific matters that we need to deal with between the Minister of Infrastructure that deals with the infrastructure and construction, and PT, that also assists with things like procurement, please do submit those.

Similarly regarding – I do not know the specifics of particular people losing bids, but, please, it was also related to infrastructure, the conversation earlier. So that can also be just sent to hon Minister Simmers and myself so we can have a look at what specifically is being referred to.

On SMME training, because we were speaking about SMMEs and procurement. For example, something that the Department of Social Development came to us about is we do not have enough suppliers, for example, in the Central Karoo. So one of the things we actually did as a Provincial Treasury and Procurement, is we actually went to the Central Karoo to help train people as to how our systems work, how procurement and working with the Western Cape Government work, so that you can then do business with the Western Cape

Government, because again, if you increase the pool of suppliers you will have a diverse procurement system. You will then be able to have transformation without compromising on value for money.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I know also that the City of Cape Town has proposed a 10,2% reduction in general property rates, but again, we really do try to work with all municipalities as to when they need assistance with things like cost of reflective tariff tools. The ones I mentioned in Vote 3 under the grant specifically, are those that applied for the grant and not every municipality has the same challenges.

So if you, for example, want to apply for a feasibility study for holiday resort in order to increase your revenue, in order to increase your finances in your province, that is something that you can apply for. Some municipalities might apply for systems for the indigent registers, some municipalities might apply for smart meters for electricity or water in order to manage their particular matters. In Kannaland, for example, the electricity meters that National Treasury is doing through the transversal contract, has already increased their revenue already by about 5%.

So it just shows that every little bit counts. We need to make sure that we do the basics correctly so that we are able to make sure that our municipalities are financially sustainable. So, please, if there is a municipality that has not submitted for some reason, please do submit and we will go through those applications. Like I have mentioned previously, we have put money aside for

applications that are still coming in in this regard, because the [Inaudible 1:22:24] processes in Provincial Treasury and municipalities and Department of Local Government, as well as the budget process for municipalities, are still ongoing. So that is part of the reason why some of those allocations have not specifically been allocated.

In terms of – yes, I think I have dealt with majority. In terms of the [Inaudible 1:22:45] increases. I just want to deal with it. In terms of the catering increase, that is because the actual events in Provincial Treasury for the whole Treasury has increased. If you want to go do SMME training, if you want to go put up a procurement table somewhere, if you want to host the Smart Procurement Conference, if we want to have the Provincial Governance and Budget Forum more than once a year, twice a year to see people, you know what is going to end up happening if you have people there for eight hours? You are going to have to give them lunch. So catering increases.

Smart procurement, it increases. The Smart Procurement Conference is getting bigger and bigger every single year. If we go do training in different parts of the province, and hon members will often ask us to do extra SMME training in certain areas, you know what ends up happening? The fuel costs in the Department increases because you have to drive to the area, your overtime increases because if it is far and you have to sleep over. It is the input cost. If you need to make sure that there is catering or food, that also increases, because depending on the amount of people you have, depending on how big the event is. Obviously we try our best to make sure that we have cost

containment and that we really do not – that we are not ridiculous in terms of our catering budget, but if you want the Treasury to do more and to be more places, then it is only natural that the catering, the fuel, those type of things are going to increase, and that is what that is referring to.

Hon Deputy Speaker, given that I was not really asked anything else on the actual Vote, I just want to thank our HOD, our CFO again, our Senior Management. Paul, I know †jy sit lekker daar stil daar agter, [you are sitting lekker still there at the back,] but Paul is also retiring, Paul Pienaar, soon, and we wish you all the best. I think this will probably be the last Budget Vote that you will be part of and last budget process that you will be part of, †en ek hoop rêrig dat jy lekker op die see gaan sit saam met jou vrou, en dat jy nie dink aan al die begrotingsprosesse nie, [and I really hope that you will go and sit by the sea with your wife and that you will not think of all the budget processes] and I am sure that we will make sure that we continue the work on the green tagging that hon Minister Bredell said we must continue doing. We must continue that work, because that green tagging is also then going to link again to alternative and blended financing. †Ek weet nie hoe baie om vir jou dankie te sê vir al die werk wat jy doen in ons Tesourie nie. [I don't know how much I have to thank you for all the work that you do in our Treasury.]

To our interns, our accountants, trainees, please, when you finish your internship and your traineeship, I know the private sector is very lucrative, but we also need wonderful treasurers. So please take us into consideration when you think about your future plans.

To our partners in the supply and procurement world, really thank you so much. It is not easy running a business in the current South African economy, not even the current global economy, it is not easy, and when you are a woman even, I can say, hon Deputy Speaker, in life we have seen over the years in history that there has been barriers towards women in our history.

So the fact that we are able to speak about some of these achievements means that we are moving forward, and we need to keep moving forward. It is not enough, we need to keep moving forward to make sure that we really are a Treasury that makes sure that we are able to bring people into our economy and help with that Growth for Jobs, for example.

To the chairperson and the members of the committee, really thank you so much for the robust questions. Some of the questions it always even gets you thinking, and we really make sure that we try to get as comprehensive of answers for you as possible. It is not always easy, but that is also your job, is to hold us accountable.

To our partners in Team Finance, in the municipalities, Fin Min was at the Budget a while ago as well, the National Government, the National Treasury specifically, the other provincial governments that we have been engaging with, Gauteng, KZN and so on, really thank you for Team Finance, everyone together.

To my Ministry, to my team there, really thank you for making sure that our

Treasury is running smoothly and making sure that all the T's are crossed and the I's are dotted, and just to my colleagues as well, really thank you for this process because a budget does not just get put together by the Provincial Treasury, it is all the officials of our Government come together and we agree on priorities. All our officials in Government we come together and we agree what is the best balance for our Government, how can we grow this economy and how can we do it with that discipline we spoke about? How can we do it with that care we spoke about?

With that, hon Deputy Speaker, I thank you and I hope that the House supports this Vote.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. That concludes the Vote. Allow me to say thank you once again to the hon Minister's special guests on my left, as well as those that are in the gallery, HOD and the entire management team, thank you so much. You are now excused from the officials bay, and before I recognise the Secretary to introduce the next Vote, can I get an indication from the hon Minister if he is expecting any guests?

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: [Indistinct], yes, the officials are supposed to be here.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: So we will give it two minutes.

Hon members, welcome to officials in the Department of Mobility. To any

other person that is logged in for this particular Vote, please feel welcomed. I will now recognise the Secretary.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, welcome to the officials in the Department of Mobility. To any other person that is logged in for this particular Vote, please feel welcome. I will now recognise the Secretary.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 8: Mobility – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B 1–2026].

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, you may now proceed.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: †Mandibulele Sekela Somlomo. Ndibulise inkulu mbuso yephondo engekho yo phakathi kwethu. Ndiphinde ndikwabulisa no gxa bam abasegqebasa ne province. Ndiphinde ndibulise amalungu alendlu yo loyiso mthetho asuka kumaqela ngamaqela. Ndiphinde ndibulise amagosa e-Mobility akhona phakathi kwethu. Ndiphinde ndibulise abantu endisebenzisana nabo kwi-office ka-Minister ka-Mobility kwalapha ephondweni. Kwaye ndibulisa wonke umntu ongumhlali walapha eMzantsi Afrika oxhomekeke kumsebenzi owenziwa yi-Mobility ukuze bakwazi ukufikelela kwezi ndawo bafuna ukuya kuzo. [Let me thank the Deputy Speaker. I greet the Premier of the province who is not here with us. I also greet my colleagues who are currently serving in the province. I also greet the members of this house of justice from various parties. I also greet the Mobility officers who are among us. I also greet my colleagues in the office of the Minister of Mobility here in

the province. And I greet every South African citizen who relies on the work done by Mobility to be able to get to the places they want to go.] Hon Deputy Speaker, good afternoon, *goeie middag*.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Deputy Speaker, mobility is often reduced to transport as busses, trains and taxis, but in reality, mobility is what enables the State to function and society to thrive. It is what allows an ambulance to reach a patient in time to save a life.

It is what ensures a learner attending a special needs school can travel safely and consistently each day. It is what enables a social worker to reach vulnerable households, to intervene, to protect, and to care. It is also what enables our traffic officers to stand on the frontlines intercepting crime, combating human trafficking, and protecting the most vulnerable. It is what allows them to implement critical roadblocks to contain Foot-and-Mouth Disease, safeguarding our agricultural sector and food security.

Mobility is the invisible backbone of service delivery. It connects departments. It enables frontline workers. And it determines whether Government reaches the people it serves. Without mobility, healthcare slows down, education becomes inaccessible, and social services cannot reach those most in need in our province.

That is why this Department is not only about moving people: it is about enabling Government to deliver, enabling access, and enabling society to

function. It is for this reason, hon Deputy Speaker, that today I want to begin with a simple, but powerful announcement: we are expanding our renowned Jobseeker Travel Voucher Programme.

For many jobseekers, the cost of getting to an interview can be the difference between staying unemployed and the difference of staying unemployed. Building on the success of the Jobseeker Travel Voucher Programme in Cape Town, and in partnership with George Municipality, we will expand it to George in 2026.

Approximately, 7 500 jobseekers will be provided with free travel on all GoGeorge bus routes. Hon Deputy Speaker, these include residents of Thembaletu, Pacaltsdorp, Blanco and Lawaaikamp, just to name a few. The programme uses a simple self-registration process, enabling eligible residents to access free public transport.

By removing transport costs as a barrier, the programme will help residents to pursue work and access economic opportunities. This programme does one simple but powerful thing: it removes the cost of getting to opportunity. The results, hon Deputy Speaker, speak for themselves. To date, 35% of beneficiaries have indeed secured employment; and almost 95% say that the vouchers made a difference in their quest for employment. This is not theory, hon Deputy Speaker, this is mobility changing lives directly.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the R3,5 billion Budget is an investment in dignity,

access, and opportunity. As we continue to invest in daily mobility, R1,3 billion will be allocated to the Golden Arrow Bus Services (GABS) to continue subsidising 230 000 commuters on a daily basis. The service connects communities such as Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Mitchells Plain, Elsies River and Strand to places of work, education and opportunity.

Now focussing on rural mobility, hon Deputy Speaker, GoGeorge continues to be a trailblazer of the Integrated Public Transport Network (IPTN). With a R269 million allocation for the 2026/2027 financial year, we will complete the rollout of Phase 4A routes, expand services to Uniondale, and introduce an airport service, further strengthening connectivity. We have been making a noise about Uniondale: †ons is op pad! [we're on our way!] We will be taking the services to where the people need it most.

Based on current planning and surveys, the Uniondale service will operate four days a week, making approximately 70 to 90 passenger trips weekly. Hon Deputy Speaker, the introduction of this service is expected to save passengers who are the most vulnerable in our province, between R134,000 to R201,000 per annually in transport costs. That is what we are busy with, making sure that the most vulnerable are able to get to places at a minimal rate.

The current fiscal constraints in National Conditional Grants continue to threaten flagship projects like GoGeorge. However, hon Deputy Speaker, we are therefore pleased to have received R184 million from the National Government. It is indeed a reflection of the confidence they have in our service

and its positive multiplier effect.

†Hon Deputy Speaker, ek moet nou my taal praat want ek praat van die Karoo waar ek gebore is. When we had SOPA in Beaufort West, het die agb Hoofleier van die Opposisie iets vir ons gevra aan mobiliteit in terme van dienslewering om seker te maak dat die mense van Moorreesburg mense van Nelspoort ook die geleentheid kan kry om Beaufort-Wes toe te kom oor die minimale bedrag van vervoer kostes.

So, dit is vir my 'n voorreg om vir haar nou die antwoord te gee in terme van 'n versoek. Mobiliteit verbind gemeenskappe, en die Sentraal-Karoo bly 'n belangrike fokusgebied vir ons. Nie omdat ek van die Sentraal-Karoo is nie, maar omdat ons seker maak dat elke een aan hierdie provinsie ook 'n behoefte het en dat ons as Mobiliteit 'n verantwoordelik het om seker te maak elke persoon se behoefte word gekyk deur Mobiliteit.

Die streek se geografie maak mobiliteit uitdagend en ingewikkeld. Vir baie inwoners beteken dit beperkte vervoer opsies en beperkte toegang tot geleenthede. Agb Adjunk-Speaker, daarom is ons R2,1 miljoen belegging in 'n interstedelike landelike vervoersoplossing 'n doelbewuste stap om hierdie ongelykheid aan te spreek.

In vennootskap met die Beaufort-Wes Munisipaliteit sal ons 'n geskeduleerde diens instel wat Nelspoort, Leeu Gamka en Merweville met Beaufort-Wes verbind. [*Hon Deputy Speaker*, I must now speak my language because I speak

of the Karoo where I was born. When we had SOPA in Beaufort West, the Leader of the Opposition asked us something to mobility in terms of service delivery to make sure that the people of Moorreesburg, people of Nelspoort also get the opportunity to come to Beaufort West because of the minimal amount of transport costs.

So, it is my privilege to give her the reply now in terms of a request. Mobility connects communities, and the Central Karoo remains an important focus area to us. Not because I am from the Central Karoo, but because we make sure that everyone in this province also have a need and that we as Mobility have a responsibility to make sure that every person's need is looked after by Mobility.

The region's geography makes mobility a challenge and complicated. For many citizens it means limited transport options and limited access to opportunities. Hon Deputy Speaker, therefore our R2,1 million investment in an inter-city rural transport solution is a concerted step to address this inequality.

In partnership with the Beaufort West Municipality, we will introduce a scheduled service that connects Nelspoort, Leeu-Gamka and Merweville with Beaufort West.] The service will include reduced fares for passengers to improve The service will include reduced fares for passengers to improve affordability, alongside enhanced service and safety standards to ensure reliable and dignified journeys. This is indeed a small but meaningful step, serving as a proof of concept that can be expanded as resources allow us.

Hon Deputy Speaker, non-motorised transport continues to play a vital role, especially in rural communities where it complements existing public transport and helps bridge gaps in mobility. We have therefore developed a proposal for a Non-Motorised Transport Demonstration Town, and I am glad I have got public representatives coming from Overstrand because it is, indeed, the town that we have selected where we are going to demonstrate how a non-motorised town looks like in reality.

It is designed to provide rural communities with safer, more accessible, and connected NMT networks. Over 3 240 bicycles have been distributed. Because for many, a bicycle is not a lifestyle choice, it is a lifeline. We will expand this programme and advance plans for an NMT Demonstration Town.

Hon Deputy Speaker, universal accessibility is not a nice-to-have, but a necessity for a thriving province. All residents of the province, regardless of their abilities, should have free and equal access to public transport. That is why our R10 million allocation to the Dial-A-Ride service is critical and reflects our commitment to dignity.

Hon Deputy Speaker, now turning our attention to the dynamic mini-bus taxi industry. The industry continues to fulfil a critical service, connecting communities both locally and interprovincially. It provides unscheduled services and remains on the frontlines of public commuting. Despite this, hon Deputy Speaker, its critical role is overshadowed by violence, intimidation, extortion, illegal operators, and route invasions which dominate their public

image.

Hon Deputy Speaker, these negative images not only undermine the Government's efforts to formalise the industry but also impacts law-abiding taxi operators who are simply trying to support their families. It is against this background that we are taking a stronger stance against violence.

Hon Deputy Speaker, violence has no place in the industry. It places children, commuters, small businesses at taxi ranks at great danger. I am proud to announce, hon Deputy Speaker, in the coming weeks, I will make bold pronouncements on how we, together with other law enforcement agencies, plan to combat violence in the mini-bus taxi industry.

In the 2026/2027 financial year, we will incrementally roll out the Taxi Academy, which will commence the registration of drivers. The first registration, hon Deputy Speaker, will be taking place tomorrow, here in the Metro. The Academy will also provide training in driving and customer care. Drivers are frontline service providers, and we must empower them to drive responsibly, follow the rules of the road and provide dignified customer service to each and every commuter.

All our efforts to change the image of the industry, hon Deputy Speaker, will fall short without the buy-in of the leadership of SANTACO. That is why the SANTACO leadership is a critical partner, and why we must indeed, strengthen this relationship with the leadership of SANTACO in the Western Cape.

With the upcoming SANTACO elective conference taking place in April 2026, I look forward to working with the incoming leadership to advance reforms. The mini-bus taxi reforms will not happen overnight, hon Deputy Speaker, but together with the industry and other partners, it is indeed possible. But we are also clear on this: there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Tailored solutions are essential, and they must be co-created with the industry.

Hon Deputy Speaker, now turning to passenger rail, the backbone of public transport. Passenger rail is recovering, with numbers increasing significantly. We welcome, hon Deputy Speaker, that all 121 stations are now operational. This is real progress, but hon Deputy Speaker, there is still a challenge when it comes to reliability and safety which are issues that we, as Mobility together with our counterparts from National and PRASA, need to attend to so that we are able to deal with the challenges.

Why are we willing to do that, hon Deputy Speaker? Because the residents need trains they can rely on every day, on time, and they must be safe. That is the standard we must meet, hon Deputy Speaker. That is why my ongoing engagements with PRASA, at both National and Regional levels, are focused on repositioning passenger rail as the backbone of public transport.

Passenger rail remains a lifeline for many thousands of residents, offering an efficient mode of travel. Beyond moving residents, passenger rail is crucial in easing congestion on our roads and promoting more sustainable,

environmentally friendly urban mobility. While there is still considerable work to be done to improve reliability and frequency of services, the progress achieved thus far is indeed commendable.

A great example, hon Deputy Speaker, is how the passenger numbers have significantly risen to over 34 million in the current financial year, a far cry from the 2 million passengers in the 2021/2022 financial year. This is indeed a clear indication that our rail network is regaining the trust of the public and claiming its rightful place as the backbone of public transport.

Hon Deputy Speaker, mobility is not only about people. It is about goods. It is about moving an economy. And increasingly, it is about something more: it is about resilience.

Hon Deputy Speaker, across the world, freight and logistics systems are under pressure like never before. Geopolitical instability is disrupting trade routes. Conflict and uncertainty are increasing costs, delays, and risk. Climate events and shifting trade patterns are exposing weaknesses in global supply chains. What was once seen as a support function is now recognised for what it truly is: a strategic asset. Countries and regions that get logistics right will not only grow, they will endure. Those that do not, will fall behind, hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Deputy Speaker, unfortunately, South Africa is not immune to these pressures. While we have seen improvements in port performance in both Durban and Cape Town, challenges remain in term of congestion, weather

disruptions, and operational inefficiencies. Across our road and border networks, pressure continues to build during peak periods. This is the reality we must respond to.

Hon Deputy Speaker, our response in the Western Cape is clear. We are not reacting, we are preparing. With our R3 million allocation, we are strengthening a logistics system that is modern, resilient, and fit for the future.

[The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON (Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER).]

By advancing the Overberg Freight Rail Business Case, investing in freight rail revitalisation, expanding the Freight Demand Model, piloting the RTMS Digital Toolkit and why we are doing that, hon House Chair, is because when goods move efficiently, the economy grows.

Hon House Chair, every life lost on our roads is one too many. We are investing R80 million in advanced diagnostic scanners to strengthen enforcement. But road safety is not only about enforcement. It is about vigilance. It is about preparedness. It is about the men and women who stand on the frontlines every day to protect our communities. Our traffic officers continue to play a critical role beyond the roadway.

Hon House Chair, a mobility system is only as strong as the people who run it. We are investing R672 million in people, skills, and a human rights-based approach to mobility. Our officials are the backbone of this Department. When

we invest in our people, we are investing in delivery and that investment is reflected in the Western Cape Government's recognition as a Top Employer for four consecutive years.

Hon House Chair, this is not about accolades. It is about building a professional, capable, and committed public service that can meet the needs of a growing province. Because at the heart of every functioning system are people who care, and people who deliver.

Part of this allocation will be used to recruit a new cohort of traffic cadets. I also want to take this opportunity, hon House Chair, to thank every officer who stepped forward to support efforts to combat Foot-and-Mouth Disease. Time and again, our officers go beyond the call of duty. They are not only enforcing the law; they are protecting our economy, supporting public health, and safeguarding our communities. The men and women in blue are often the unsung heroes of our province.

Through the Chief Directorate: Traffic Management, I want to express my sincere appreciation to what, I firmly believe, that the finest traffic law enforcement officers are indeed, in this province. No one compares to you. It has been said over and over again. Thank you very much, for the work that you are doing. We are, indeed, the only 24/7 service in our country. Let us give them a round of applause, please. ...[Applause.] They plan, deliver, and keep the system moving, often under immense pressure.

Hon House Chair, with a R1,7 billion Budget, the Government Motor Transport, our self-funded Trading Entity, will modernise the fleet and invest in new energy vehicle infrastructure. Because why? A government must lead by example.

In conclusion, hon House Chair, Mobility is what allows Government to serve. It is what allows residents to live with dignity. It is what allows opportunity to reach every corner of our province. This Budget, hon House Chair, is a plan to make that a reality. Therefore, hon House Chair, I hereby table the R3,5 billion Budget for Vote 8. I thank you.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON (Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER): Thank you very much, hon Minister Seleku. I recognise the hon member Nkondlo. Apologies, hon member Nkondlo. Before you speak, hon member Lekker, you wanted to address the Chair?

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Yes, hon House Chair. I was saying the young man in the box there is a [Inaudible.] [1:53:48??]. He must contain himself.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON (Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER): Thank you, hon member. Noted. Whenever you are ready, hon member Nkondlo, you may proceed.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Thank you, hon House Chair. Hon House Chair, we were not told whether this blue pack has been declared. [Interjections.] We

know. We do not want to overburden hon member Van Minnen in the Conduct Committee. Can we at least be told that these have been[Interjection.] have been declared so that we can also join the energy in the House with the blue drinks.

Hon House Chair, mobility indeed, Duduze says, is the backbone of any functioning economy. It is the arteries through which economic activity flows connecting people to opportunities and linking production to markets. Every day, millions of workers rely on transport systems to move from point A to point B, getting to work, accessing education and participating in the economy.

The R3,5 billion allocation with a lion's share that goes to Programme 2, Transport Operations, where more than R300 million is allocated to GoGeorge for over the remaining MTEF till 2028/2029. GoGeorge remains an important intervention by the ANC policy choices to deliver an integrated transport system that recognises the critical role of the only Black-owned and originated industry, the minibus taxis, that in good faith ceded their roots and operating permits to make way for this one-of-a-kind model in South Africa.

This ANC policy continues to be a direct intervention in managing transport costs, ensuring reliable safe and affordable public transport. We continue to celebrate the existence of this system and its implementation by DA administration both in Cape Town through MyCiTi and GoGeorge in the Garden Route.

Whilst we celebrate this *nom diem*, we must raise sharply the concerns of how, under the DA rule, the taxi industry has been treated with suspicion, has been criminalised and the DA Leader, Hellen Zille, even referred to this industry as the biggest mafia in South Africa. These types of comments and blatant generalised comments over men and women who built an industry that the State is able now to draw benefit and revenue from, are unwarranted.

Indeed, isolating the rogue elements in the taxi industry is something that must be done. Surely, this attitude is living under the DA in this province where there is skewed infrastructure allocation. In the very Thembalethu, [indistinct] that you mentioned, there are no dedicated lanes and bus stops causing traffic havoc as a sign of poor planning. So, this is important for you to take note in the work that you are doing.

GoGeorge had to be taken to court by the VOC to enforce a contractual obligation of transferring some of the Cape Town assets like busses to them and the Court ruled in their favour, including a maintenance contract that they would have asked of the municipality which refused VOC to build substantive resources and wealth for the very taxi industry that acted in good faith with Government to enter into this project.

This is the very *modus operandi* we see in the City where MyCiTi at some point was taken to court by the taxi industry on how the City made Golden Arrow the biggest benefactor from the routes ceded to them and abusing permitting to limit the taxi industry share.

So, we are asking that this implementation of this must not necessarily be a confrontation between the taxi or used as a confrontation or reducing the market share of the taxi industry in public transport. We remain concerned if as we draw close to the end of the term of this project, if we could register positive impact from this project across the country where it has been implemented.

We asked the National Department of Transport to commission an external impact assessment in this regard, so we do not hand over this project to private interest ready with their deep pockets to just wait and buy out the taxi industry, further leaving them worse off.

We must welcome the consideration, as you indicate in the House, of introduction of public busses for Central Karoo, TWK, not because we know [indistinct]. We call on this Government to ensure a rural urban transport connection for both goods and passengers to include Grabouw, Saldanha, Malmesbury to Cape Town to ensure we use mobility to break the urban/rural divide and ensure those in rural small towns can still enterprise easily with less burden of exorbitant transport costs.

In the R696 million in Transport Regulation, a 5,3% increase must also consider the supply side issues of the permitting process. An issue, we believe, is crucial to realise a fair, transparent and fair licencing environment, but also meet the rapid growth and infrastructure development we finance both in the municipality and provincial projects.

This issue remains a challenge. Whilst we acknowledge that it is a competence of the municipality, but we think it has a direct impact in the hoarding of routes and a lack of agility in capturing the economic spinoff in transport provision which actually emanates from new developments that go up.

These municipalities, through their land use function, receive applications for developments for zoning or rezoning and yet, they fail to translate these with the requisite transport network opportunities that result from their very approvals. One does not understand whether the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing.

Also, there is an outcry at local level of the exclusion of the transport stakeholders, both the passengers and the very local taxi operators in the integrated transport plans which municipalities must develop. This is a gap. The truth is these operators are the first ones to see these opportunities, and they are driven by the demand. They will ferry people to jobs in the new development spaces and what is the response of municipalities? Instead, what they do, they unleash law enforcement on the taxi industry, leaving passengers on the road, late at work and that affects productivity of the industries that these workers must actually contribute to.

This has led to havoc and at times, infights amongst the various taxi operators where at times one permit gets rented out to others for use. So, with this challenge, we are then enabling illegality within the permitting environment.

We must resolve this problem [indistinct].

This problem is also experienced in the E-hailing services as currently, the different companies operating E-hailing are flooded with illegal operators, including undocumented foreign nationals who drive with no permits. Others will tell you their stories of waiting endlessly for permits. This is rather unfortunate and does not enable our economic potential both for safety of passengers and for revenue for the operators.

How do we confront this red tape in this area and a huge opportunity for low-skilled jobs, and a central feature for our bustling tourism? So, it is important that we deal with these inefficiencies.

When transport systems are efficient, affordable and reliable, they unlock productivity. They expand access to jobs, reduce the cost of doing business and help us to grow closer to our R3 trillion economy as our target in the province. But when they fail, the entire economy slows down, and it is the most vulnerable who are pushed even further to the margins. This Department received over R3,5 billion, but what does that mean for the ordinary person who wakes up at 4 AM, takes two taxis and spends almost half their income just to get to work.

By the Department's own admission, low-income households spend up to 40% of their income on transport, 40% of R1,600 for the low-income earners in Laingsburg, which is R640, and more in a sparsely, vast region like the Central

Karoo. So, it means somebody there is left with only R960 for food, for rental, for children, for survival and other things. In the province, that has been the cost of living which continues to rise and rise over the years.

Now, hon House Chair, this crisis is about to deepen and we know that. The recent conflict in the Middle East is already driving a sharp increase in global oil prices and South Africans are bracing for a fuel hike of nearly R5 per litre in April. This will hit the transport system first and hardest. Taxi fares will rise, bus fares will rise, the cost of simply moving will become even more unaffordable.

This will also have an effect on food prices and essential goods. Food insecurity will deepen and once again, it is the working class and the poor who will carry the burden of a crisis they did not create. What work is currently being done by your Department [indistinct] to study and advise on managing escalating transport costs that erodes exposable income?

I have a burden to many, both the working class and the middle class who are concerned that whilst on page 360 the Budget Vote speaks about developing a provincial public transport strategy. What Budget in the R2 billion of Transport Operations where this function lies and its five subprogrammes, do we see the work on how you are studying and how to advise Cabinet on managing transport costs in the province, but also in municipalities working with the Provincial Treasury around the issue of the different tools that they have.

This work is central in managing this common problem that runs through all areas in the lives of ordinary citizens in this province. You would have listened to us as though we were being silenced by colleagues that since yesterday, all we are crying out in this province is what many, even studies, have confirmed. The cost of living in the Western Cape is very high, and transport is one of those that actually contributes to this cost of living. We are just appealing for your Department to actually lead in this particular policy area, to assist in managing the cost of living. Our province has become very expensive to its residents that daily wake up to build this economy.

We must celebrate the work done by PRASA to finish the restoration of the Central Line that has been heard by many commuters who are able to move in the Southern Suburbs with rates as low as a R20 return trip with shorter travel times. This is what we mean by integrated, reliable and affordable public transport.

We are also concerned about governance in your Department. The sudden departure of the Head of Department who was recently appointed, raises serious questions about stability and leadership in your Department. We call on this Department to pioneer the disruption of the apartheid spatial legacy. The apartheid geography and the segregation-based infrastructure and network that continue to divide our people.

This new Mobility Department with the right focus, can actually leverage of being a standalone by doing the right things for the country's economy, but also

by redesigning how people work, how people stay, how people play and how people are connected.

For now, such is an uphill for [indistinct] under DA rule and we remain not in support of this Vote. Thank you very much.

[The Deputy Speaker takes the Chair.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Nkondlo. As the podium is being moved, I recognise the hon Adams.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, instability around the GoGeorge services in George continues to frustrate commuters. The system meant to improve mobility has instead been plied with disputed, uncertainty and poor coordination, particularly around the role of the minibus industry, hon Minister.

Serious questions also remain about the funding going forward for GoGeorge for the future. Hon Minister, we must also not forget the victims of the petrol bomb attack on the GoGeorge bus a couple of years ago. Those who were injured have waited far too long for justice. When will these victims finally receive compensation, hon Minister?

At the same time, excessive red tap around the Scholar Transport Programme continues to delay support for learners in the province, forcing many in rural

communities to walk long and dangerous distances to schools. Hon Minister, when will the Department move beyond the bureaucracy and deliver real solutions to stabilise GoGeorge and the taxi industry in the Western Cape?

Work constructively with the taxi industry and remove the barriers preventing scholar transport from reaching the learners who need it. And hon Minister, I want to thank you for acknowledging the 24-hour service in the Western Cape. I think it is only in Cape Town, Mossel Bay and in George. And I think I can †n bietjie van daardie vrugte eet want dit was onder my leierskap as MMC van Community Safety and Development in George wat daardie 24-ure diens gekom het, nè agb Minister Anroux Marais. ...[Gelag.] [eat some of those fruits because it was under my leadership as MCC of Community Safety and Development in George that that 24-hour service came about, hey Minister Anroux Marais ...[Laughter.]] I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Adams. I recognise the hon Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, this Budget rightfully recognises economic growth. It depends on how efficiently we move people and goods. We welcome the allocations to the George Integrated Public Transport Network, as well as to interventions like the Job Seeker Travel Voucher Programme, which acknowledges the real cost of looking for work in a deeply unequal city.

Though we have argued that with more innovation, this could be expanded to

free public transport for all in the off-peak, but the fact that free public transport in the off-peak cannot be implemented is because we have failed to integrate our public transport network and services. The Department continues to acknowledge this fundamental problem: the lack of integration and interoperability across our public transport network. And yet, where it has the power to act, it has failed to do so.

This Province frequently calls for the devolution of functions. We have had strong arguments for greater control over rail, and we have calls for policing powers to be assigned. But when it comes to public transport integration, something already within reach, there has been silence and more importantly, inaction.

In 2014, an agreement was signed between the City, the Province and Golden Arrow Bus Services. Thereafter, the assignment of the contracting authority was formalised right through to the financial and fiscal commission's approval. This created a clear, practical pathway for the City to integrate Golden Arrow and MyCiti's services into a single, coordinated system. That was 12 years ago and in those 12 years, there has been no meaningful progress to integrate this public transport network at all.

It is not even mentioned as a solution to the Department's own cited risk in its book, being lack of integration. How can this Government continue to call for devolution and principle, while failing to implement it in practice where it already has both the framework and some authority. If we are serious about

lowering the costs of job seeking by improving mobility and by enabling economic growth, then we must move beyond pilot programmes and fragmented investments. We must act, and this means the Government must implement its integration plans. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Herron. I recognise the hon Prof Mbombo.

Prof N MBOMBO (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Premier in absentia, hon members and the people of the Western Cape. †Molweni. [Greetings]

The Mobility Budget must address the daily reality of the millions of residents across this province who rely on our transport system to access jobs, education, health care and opportunity. This is because mobility is the lifeblood of our economy. It is the connector of people, goods and institutions, as my other hon members have already mentioned. It is the difference between securing a job or remaining unemployed, between a child attending school or staying home, between a business striving or struggling.

In fact, a government that truly cares about the people will make sure that the auntie Sarah is able to arrive at work, at a healthcare facility, at a government institution alive and on time. The Western Cape Mobility's Budget 2026/2027 financial year demonstrates the DA-led Government's unwavering commitment to building a safer, more dignified and more connected Western Cape.

Let me start with the numbers, hon Deputy Speaker, that underpin this commitment. The Mobility Department's Main Budget for the 2026/2027 is R3,52 billion. This represents a R158 million increase from the previous year's revised estimate, a 4,7% injection of additional resources into the transport network. This growth is a clear signal of our priorities. We are investing in the systems that get people moving and the economy growing.

Looking ahead, this upward trajectory continues with the Budget projected to Bto nearly R4 billion by 2028/2029. Over 50% of these funds come from the Provincial Equitable Share. A further 38% comes from the National Conditional Grants, including the R1,3 billion from the Public Transport Operations Grant. These Budget allocations are strategic. It is about making sure every Rand is working to deliver tangible wins for the people of the Western Cape.

Hon Deputy Speaker, Traffic Management has seen the largest percentage increase, growing by a significant 14,9% to R649 million. Why? Because we are serious about safety. This allocation includes an earmarked R80 million for the two new diagnostic scanners within the Traffic Management. These scanners will revolutionise our province identifying illegal substances before they hit our streets and have crippling impacts on families.

Hon Deputy Speaker, safety on the roads is a big concern. To address safety on our roads, the traffic officers have made a commitment to make sure to conduct 3 700 speed operations, 600 000 vehicle-weighing to combat

overloading, 3 950 drunken driving operations. We cannot lose innocent lives on our roads. One life is one too many.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the Department is investing heavily in transport operations, our Frontline Public Transport Delivery, with a budget of R2,03 billion. They will continue to support the Golden Arrow Bus Service which provides an essential service to 230 000 passengers every single day. This year, the Department will subsidise 1 700 public transport routes, monitoring over 300 million kilometres of bus services to ensure accountability and value for money.

Hon Deputy Speaker, but you also have to think about the future. In the Central Karoo, where Duduze comes from, they already, the Department, they are piloting the Inter-Town Rural Transport Solution in Beaufort West. This is a direct response to the mobility constraints found by the rural communities, aiming to connect them to jobs and services in a way that has never been done before.

In Stellenbosch, the Department continues to work with the local municipality to implement a Congestion Management Plan including investing in parking right facilities. This is a practical step to tackle the estimated R3 billion annual costs of lost productivity caused by congestion in our City.

A truly modern Mobility Department, hon Deputy Speaker, must serve everyone, especially those who have been left behind. The Department

investment, of course, in GoGeorge, continues to be a national success story with nearly R140 million earmarked for the George Integrated Public Transport Network. The Department is targeting about 6,2 million passenger trips this year, planning to expand the service to Uniondale, introduce a dedicated airport service and also, roll out the final phase A routes.

Furthermore, hon Deputy Speaker, the Department is expanding the Job Seeker Travel Voucher Programme to George, as the hon Minister has alluded to, with an investment of R5,8 million. This programme has been a gamechanger in Cape Town, removing the cost of transport as a barrier to employment. By expanding it, we are telling the job seekers across the province that we are on their side.

By having Job Seekers Travel Voucher, the people of the Western Cape are able to commute for free for job interviews, you are removing barriers to access jobs. The Department is also strengthening our commitment to universal accessibility. They continue to support the Dial-a-Ride service, ensuring that persons with disabilities have dignified access to the public transport. Through programmes like the Bicycle Distribution Initiative, they are providing sustainable low-cost mobility to learners and communities, ensuring young people in rural communities are able to move around to schools or to jobs.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are aware. We do know, as my former hon colleagues have mentioned, that the minibus taxi industry remains the backbone of public transport for over 75% of our commuters. We also acknowledge the challenges

this industry faces. The Minibus Task Team helps address some of the challenges that are being faced by the industry. The MET Executive Leadership course through the University of Cape Town, helps with these challenges faced by the industry. Importantly, they are moving ahead with the Shayela Smart Programme. This is for real structural reform in partnership with the City of Cape Town and SANTACO.

Hon Deputy Speaker, a growing economy depends on the efficient movement of goods. The Budget should reflect such. The Department has established a Ports Logistics Development Project Management Unit to tackle the inefficiencies at the Port of Cape Town in partnership with Transnet and other stakeholders, to operationalise this unit aiming to get goods to the market faster.

They are also developing a Freight Rail Revitalisation Programme earmarked with about R3 million for this purpose. By exploring the potential of branches like these, like the Overberg backline, the Department is actively working to shift freight from our congested roads to rail. This is about sustainability and not merely only the economics.

Hon Deputy Speaker, PRASA is still currently trying to find its feet. With the Metro Rail partially operating with limited trains, long intervals and availability times, we need PRASA to step up. If PRASA steps up, we can address congestion in the Metro.

To give PRASA a push, we will continue to work in partnership with PRASA to support the restoration of the passenger rail. It is a must! Everyone should be able to do so because we believe in a functional, safe and reliable rail system which is the backbone of any successful urban mobility network. It will reduce transport costs for more people in the province and save time for most people in this province.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the fairly new mode of transport on which more and more people depend on, the E-hailing sector, has now seen the Second Amendment of the National Land Transport Regulations which is said to formally recognise this sector. The E-hailing sector is now a vital part of the Western Cape's mobility ecosystem, providing flexible door-to-door transport, enabling access to work and services, and supporting thousands of livelihoods in the province.

Major concerns are raised regarding safety standards across the platforms. The rise in unlicensed operators and inconsistent enforcements across municipalities. More must be done to make this sector safe.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this Budget is a plan for action. It is a plan that puts safety first with a massive injection into the traffic enforcement and technology. It is a plan that connects communities by expanding GoGeorge and investing in rural transport solutions. It is a plan that unlocks economic growth by tackling congestion, reforming the taxi industry and improving our freight and port logistics. It is an action plan that dignifies mobility by expanding Job Seeker programmes and ensuring services are accessible to people.

Yes, challenges remain. The rising cost of public transport, the pressure of immigration and the need to complete national rail reforms are all realities we face. But with this Budget, the DA-led Western Cape is showing we have the will and the plan to confront these challenges head on. We are building a province where mobility is a true connector, a force for good, a driver of jobs and a pathway to a better life for all.

But we will not be able to do this without our staff. So, I want to thank the staff under the circumstances where also they still do not have an HOD, but also, they have been able to employ more staff, but we have to thank them for such challenges. Of course, without the capabilities and the constructive criticism coming from the Committee. I want to thank the Mobility Committee for being able to be there and also, for the hon Minister to be able to make sure that he is available when he is needed.

In those words, hon Deputy Speaker, I also want to urge us, ourselves, and also the communities there that as we approach the Easter Holiday, please drive safely, please walk safely. Do not drink and drive. Do not walk and drink. Do not drive recklessly. The DA supports this Vote. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Prof Mbombo. I recognise the hon Minister to conclude the Vote.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. I

am asked to spend only three minutes. So, I am going to keep it sweet and short.

But let us firstly give the issue of the HOD that will be departing at the end of the month. It is indeed unfortunate that someone who joined a department, a very complex, difficult department, and then within a period of six months you ask for early retirement. While all we can do from the side of Mobility and for the Ministry is just to wish her well as she will be retiring at the end of the month.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I would really, if I had time, I would spend the whole day talking about the minibus taxi industry. Just last week at the National Transport Conference, I ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, kindly take your seat. I recognise the hon Sayed.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Just a point of order, and perhaps to give the hon MEC the opportunity. He does have enough time. Remember, the MECs have got unlimited time to respond. I am not saying he must use the time, but it is not correct to say, 'if I have time'. He has got unlimited. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. That time is dependent on how the hon MEC responds and the time that he ultimately grants himself.

The MINISTER OF MOBILITY: Hon Leader of the Opposition [indistinct]
Like I was saying, we would spend the whole day talking about the MBT and I was fortunate enough to be one of the panellists last week at the National Transport Conference and I had to do a presentation. I only had one slide. The slide that I share with the conference was what was happening in Delft and what we have been confronted with in the last few weeks when there have been a lot of killings, where innocent people have been affected.

My Department can tell you now, I have said to the Department it can no longer be that. We allow the minibus taxi industry to operate like they've operated in 1985. There is a specific reason whenever there was a torching of nine minibus taxis that I personally went to Nyanga myself. Guess what, hon Deputy Speaker, not one of the owners wanted to open a case. No one wanted to open a case!

Our responsibility as a Department of Mobility when it comes to the MBT is to make sure that we are able to protect the ones that want to earn a living for their families that have been bullied in the industry. They have been bullied for many years and we, as a department, are going to make pronouncements in how we are going to force the industry to self-correct if they do not want to self-correct.

We do not apologise for protecting the residents of this particular province. The safety of the residents of this province is a priority and there are elements

in the minibus taxi industry that when they do things wrong, then they say no, the DA does taxi industry, which is a lie!

We have been supporting the minibus taxi industry for years and we continue supporting them. But what is also important: they need to come to the table. I am a willing partner. If they want to change, I will help them change. But if they do not want to change, I am going to make sure that whatever I am able to do in terms of my powers, I am going to act for the sake of the residents of this province.

So, that is what we are going to be doing. So, this thing that the DA does not want the minibus taxi industry, that thing must die. It must die! Because there were none, not even one of them went to Nyanga and looked at the torching of the busses. They were not there. All they needed to do, whenever something goes wrong, they want to make a lot of noise. But when things are done right, they keep quiet and that is what we need to deal with.

I am also grateful that there is one thing that we agree on, hon Deputy Speaker, there is only one thing that we agree on that the GoGeorge is a trailblazer, and it was a very great initiative. We were able to demonstrate that you can move from being a taxi operator to being a bus operator. Those are possibilities.

So, I think that is the future of the minibus taxi industry. That is where we are going, but they must be willing to take that route. We are going to hold their hands. We are going to support them. We will make sure that those that want

to change, we will help them change. But those that do not want to change, †die poppe sal dans [the fight is on.] It is simple. It is simple!

Let us deal with the issue of the capacity of municipalities. We have come to understand that some of our municipalities do not have the capacity to deal with issues of mobility. We, as a department, have identified that gap and as a result, we will be supporting those municipalities so that issues of mobility do not only become just an issue for a few minutes and then it disappears. We will support them so that we are able to make sure that we move mobility going forward.

Also, in terms of operating licences and routes, a lot has been said about it. The Department is actually undertaking a study now to make sure which of the routes are over-saturated because at times, hon Deputy Speaker, you need to get off the bicycle and start walking, and then, get on the bike again. So, that is what we are currently doing. We need to look at what we have in terms of the routes that are over-saturated so that we are able to deal with the problems that we are always confronted with.

I also welcome what people are saying in terms of making public transport free. Now, if I won the Lotto, hon Deputy Speaker, I would have a fund for public transport in this province so that each and every individual that is indigent can get to a place without having to pay anything. That is what would have in a real world. That is the vision. We have been able to demonstrate that that is what we want to see. But if you are able to quantify the Job Seeker Voucher,

you would see how much money it is actually saving someone if they had to pay.

Also, the intervention that we are doing in Central Karoo is also a step in the right direction to make sure that we are able to, for those that cannot afford public transport, we are able to help them as the State.

Of course, in terms of devolution of powers, in terms of rail, passenger rail, that is a fight that we are not going to abandon. We are clear and from National Government it is also clear that we as a province, advocate for the devolution of passenger rail to a competent State. But also, what we have agreed on while we are still waiting for the rail policy to come to the fore, we will be working with PRASA because at the end of the day, the most vulnerable in our province must be able to get that service. When the time comes and the policy, we have then a responsibility to comment, we will definitely comment.

So, with those few words, hon Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank the outgoing HOD in absentia and also the Acting HOD, I all her D, and also the new CFO who was recently appointed, and my CD Traffic Management and Mr G who is also retiring because of age, of course. He will be finishing at the end of the month. Just to say thank you very much for what you have done for the Department and I really hope that you are going to enjoy yourself. †Jy gaan 'n bietjie by die see loop, kaalvoet en nou as jy die Ferarri van jou gaan ry, ry dit. *You know*, en jy geniet dit. [You are going to walk by the sea, barefoot and if you are now going to drive your Ferrari, drive it. You know, and you

enjoy it.] You know, just enjoy because life is too short. So, when you have an opportunity to enjoy life, you should do that, and we wish you all the best.

And not forgetting my Ministry. I have got a young team, with all the difficulties that we go through as a department, we always have a positive attitude when we get to work and when we leave work because we understand the role that we play as the Ministry is to make sure that the most vulnerable in our province [indistinct] conditions are able to be changed and then, they are catered for. That is what give us a friend.

Hon Deputy Speaker, there are those that we meet at the garages and then they say to us as the Department of Mobility, 'thank you very much for what you are doing for us making sure that you prioritise our safety as commuters.' And there are those that send us DMs that say, 'we can see what you are doing, but we are praying for you.' Without those kinds of individuals, we would not be here today. I want to say to them once more: keep on praying for us because the task that has been bestowed upon us is a huge one. But with your prayers, we will ultimately go where we want to go to. With those few words, thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. That concludes the Vote. The officials are more than welcome to vacate the officials' bay. Thank you so much for being here together with the Ministry officials. Thank you for your attendance during the previous Vote.

Hon members, we will provide the Administration a minute or so to take up their place in the officials' bay.

Hon members, we will provide the Administration a minute or so to take up their place in the officials' bay. Hon members, we will proceed. Welcome to the Secretary and Senior Management of the WCPP. I will now recognise the Table Staff.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 2: Provincial Parliament – Western Cape Appropriation Bill.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I recognise the hon Speaker, hon Mr Daylin Mitchell.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, hon members. Hon members, across the world democratic institutions are being asked to do more under greater scrutiny with fewer resources. At the same time, public trust, the very foundation upon which these institutions rest, has become more fragile, more contested and more difficult to sustain. Citizens are asking harder questions of these institutions and demanding greater transparency, greater responsiveness and greater impact.

In this environment, the role of a legislature cannot remain static and must evolve. Our Institution must deliver consistently, credibly and in ways that are experienced by the people we serve.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is within this context that I present the 2026/2027 Budget of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. Hon Deputy Speaker, our Budget gives effect to the strategic direction of the 7th Parliament anchored in five strategic priorities that guide our planning, resource allocation and delivery.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are working towards: building a credible Provincial Parliament; improving and expanding services and the experiences of the people of the Western Cape; we are strengthening the core business of oversight, law-making and public participation; strengthening the support that we provide to members; and strengthening organisational culture, capability, performance and resilience.

Hon Deputy Speaker, each of these strategic priorities is directly linked to specific outcomes, outcomes that strengthen public trust, improve institutional effectiveness, enhance participation and ultimately, deepen democracy in the Western Cape.

Hon Deputy Speaker, at the highest level the impact remains clear: a deepened democracy in the Western Cape.

Hon members, in the 2026/2027 financial year, the total allocation to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament amounts to R282,472 million, representing an increase of R18,199 million or 6,64% from the previous financial year. In a constrained fiscal environment, our Budget reflects the discipline and the

deliberate allocation of resources, one that balances sustainability with impact. Our approach requires that every allocation is purposeful, that trade-offs are carefully considered and that resources are directed towards those areas that most effectively advance our mandate and deliver measurable outcomes.

Hon Deputy Speaker, our Budget is therefore structured to ensure alignment between priorities, programmes and outcomes, ensuring the implementation is realistic, performance is trackable, and delivery is meaningful. We are operating within a context defined by fiscal pressure, uneven public trust, unequal access and rapidly evolving technological risks. Our Budget responds to these conditions by prioritising investment that strengthen institutional credibility, improve capability, and expand meaningful public engagement.

Hon Deputy Speaker, let me turn to the various programmes and under Programme 1, under Governance, Leadership and Administration, in the 2026/2027 financial year an amount of R111,191 million is allocated to Programme 1. Our allocation to this programme gives effect to the strategic priority of building a credible Provincial Parliament with a clear outcome in mind: strengthening public trust through improved transparency, accountability and institutional performance.

Hon Deputy Speaker, our Budget provides for continued modernisation of our infrastructure and systems, including audiovisual upgrades and ICT enhancements, improving the efficiency, accessibility and responsiveness of parliamentary processes. Our Budget further provides for targeted investments

in cyber security with over R2,3 million allocated in the 2026/2027 financial year, increasing over the Medium-Term. These investments, hon Deputy Speaker, are essential to safeguarding institutional integrity and maintaining public confidence.

Hon Deputy Speaker, in advancing transparency, our Budget makes provision for public-facing dashboards, open data initiatives and province-wide public perception surveys, enabling us to assess progress against outcomes and strengthening our responsiveness.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this programme also advances the strategic priority of strengthening organisational capability and resilience, with the focus of improved staff performance, capacity and institutional readiness to deliver on our mandate. In parallel, our focus on organisational redesign remains critical to ensure that our Institution is appropriately structured, agile and responsive to a changing environment. This work will strengthen alignment between strategy, structure and capability, enabling improved performance and sustained institutional resilience.

Hon members, let us move to Programme 3: Parliamentary Support Services, which as our core business, remains central to achieving meaningful institutional outcomes. In the 2026/2027 financial year, an amount of R27,97 million has been allocated for Parliamentary Support Services. This allocation to this programme strengthens oversight, law-making and public participation, with an outcome of enhancing accountability, improved legislative

effectiveness and a greater impact in the execution of our mandate.

Hon Deputy Speaker, through sustained investment in committees, including R3,764 million annually over the Medium Term, our Budget strengthens the ability of committees to conduct structured evidence-based oversight. We are entering a more dynamic phase on how we plan and resource committee work over the remainder of the term.

Hon Deputy Speaker, under your leadership, this approach will elevate the effectiveness and impact of oversight over committees, ensuring closer alignment between planning, budgeting and strategic priorities. As a demonstration of our commitment to evidence-based decision-making, we have incorporated key findings from GTAC study undertaken in the 2025/2026 financial year.

Hon Deputy Speaker, these insights are guiding how we strengthen our core business, improve efficiency and enhance the effectiveness of oversight and law-making processes. At the same time, strengthening engagement with civil society improves the relevance and responsiveness of our processes, ensuring that public input meaningfully informs legislative outcomes.

The organised strategic or stakeholder survey currently underway, will provide valuable insight to deepen our engagement with institutional stakeholders across the province and strengthen these relationships. We will also actively position other organs of State, including Chapter 9 Institutions as partners in

oversight, enhancing the depth, credibility and reach of our work. In addition, we will pursue strategic partnerships in the capacity building space, enabling us to draw on external expertise while maintaining a clear focus on our core mandate.

Hon members, under Programme 3, Public Engagement, and improving and expanding services and the experiences of the people of the Western Cape which require a deliberate and an inclusive approach to public engagement. In the 2026/2027 financial year, an amount of R21,999 million is allocated to this under Programme 3 for Public Engagement. Our Budget supports outcomes that include increased public awareness and understanding the work of the Provincial Parliament, improved access to its processes and enhanced public participation.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this includes an investment of R1,75 million in the 2026/2027 financial year in a digital platform linked to our website, alongside funding for public education outreach programmes and expanded communications channels.

Hon Deputy Speaker, our Budget also provides for reversed billing to ensure that access to parliamentary platforms remain cost-free. Importantly, our Budget supports the implementation of a revised public participation framework which will ensure that engagement is not only broader, but more meaningful, with a particular emphasis on ensuring feedback loops to communities.

Hon Deputy Speaker, let us move on to Programme 4 under Member Support, and the effectiveness of our Institution which is closely linked to the ability of hon members to perform their roles effectively. In the 2026/2027 financial year, an amount of R71,339 million is allocated for Member Support. Our Budget provides for hon members enabling allowances, averaging approximately R7,4 million over the Medium Term, as well as R58,7 million in the 2026/2027 financial year for secretarial and constituency support.

Hon Deputy Speaker, these allocations strengthen the capability of hon members, ensuring that they are supported to engage with constituents, participate meaningfully in legislative processes and contribute effectively to oversight.

Hon Deputy Speaker, this includes a growing focus on equipping hon members to engage with emerging and complex policy areas, including Artificial Intelligence. As departments increasingly integrate digital technologies and AI into governance and service delivery, it is essential that hon members are appropriately equipped to exercise, inform and effective oversight in this evolving landscape.

Hon Deputy Speaker and hon members, our Budget is underpinned by a structure approach that links strategic priorities to our outputs, and outputs to clearly defined outcomes. This ensures that our work results in tangible improvements, including increased public trust, enhanced oversight and

accountability, improved public participation, and strengthening institutional capacity.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we remain mindful of these risks, of the risks that we face, including the fiscal constraints, capacity limitations, cybersecurity threats and most importantly, the declining public trust.

Hon Deputy Speaker, at the same time, our Budget positions our Institution to take advantage of opportunities, to strengthen partnerships, to expand our reach and to enhance the visibility and the impact of our work.

Hon Deputy Speaker and hon members, in administering our Budget, we will continue to uphold the highest standards of governance, ethics and accountability. We will maintain our commitment to sound financial management and clean audit outcomes.

But beyond compliance, hon Deputy Speaker, our focus is clear: to ensure that our Institution is credible in our conduct, effective in our performance and meaningful in our impact. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Speaker. As the podium is being transported, I recognise the hon Bans.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Speaker, hon Deputy Speaker and hon members. Allow me to begin by extending, on behalf

of the African National Congress, our deepest condolences to you, hon Speaker, on the passing of your late mother. A mother is a pillar of strength, wisdom and guidance. A person leaves a void that cannot be filled. We wish you and your family strength during this difficult time. May her soul rest in peace and may you find comfort in the love and memories you shared. As this House, we stand with you!

Hon Deputy Speaker, †uSomlomo undenza intliziyo ebuhlungu. Uyazi kuthiwa umntu xa ebhujelwe ezilile kunzima into yokokuba mawumbethe. [indistinct]. [The Speaker is making my heart ache. You know, it is said that when a person is mourning it is difficult to beat them.]

UNKNOWN SPEAKERS: †Myeke kaloku, myeke. [Leave him alone then. Leave him alone.] This Budget is presented under ...[Laughter.] the banner of a responsive citizen-centric Parliament with a robust approach to oversight. It speaks of deepened democracy. It speaks of credibility, transparency and accountability. It speaks of an agile and capable Institution.

But the reality is far, far more sobering. This Legislature is underpowered, under-resourced and increasingly unable to assert itself and this is not an accident. It is a political choice.

Hon Deputy Speaker, let us return to comparisons we raised in December last year because it exposes the truth that the DA would rather avoid. In the Western Cape, this Legislature is allocated with just over R200 million. In Gauteng, the Legislature receives R1 billion. In Gauteng, the Legislature is funded to

stand toe-to-toe with the Executive.

Here, it is treated as an afterthought, the least funded Institution in the Provincial system. This is not a budgeting constraint, but a deliberate political decision because a weak Legislature does not challenge the Executive. A weak Legislature does not demand accountability. A weak Legislature does not disrupt power.

Hon Deputy Speaker, even the Legislature's own Annual Report confirms the crisis. Only 86% of targets were achieved. Key programmes responsible for oversight are underperforming. Committees are inconsistent in their work. Infrastructure is failing. Vacancies remain unfilled. These are not isolated issues, but systematic failures. Yes, this Budget does not confront them an urgency. It manages them, it normalises them.

Hon Deputy Speaker, let us speak about the people who keep these Institutions running, our staff. In 2022, the staff component stood at 145. In 2025, it dropped to 138. Now, we are told it will increase to 148. But behind these numbers is a deeper crisis. This Legislature remains understaffed. Workers are overworked. Many are forced to carry the responsibility of two or more people, while management continues to hide behind austerity.

At the same time, the Institution itself, admits that demand for service is increasing. More legislations, more oversight, more public engagement, yet human capacity to deliver on this mandate is not keeping the pace. You cannot

speak of a capable and modern Parliament whilst stretching workers beyond their limits.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are also losing some of our best people. Our experienced staff are being absorbed by National Parliament and other Legislatures. That is, indeed, because they are skilled, committed and in demand. But here, we are failing to retain them. We have lost people like Dustin Davids, and we continue to feel that void. What happens if tomorrow we lose Mr Poggenpoel who remains underutilised without clear progression? What happens if we lose Ms Simon, Mr Maasdorp, or others who carry institutional memory?

What happens if another senior procedural officer leaves tomorrow? How do we sustain clusters? We are not building a second layer of leadership. We are not creating career pathways. We are not offering conditions that encourage staff to stay. A Legislature that cannot retain its talent is a Legislature that is weakening itself from within.

Hon Deputy Speaker and hon members, we must also question decisions that undermine staff morale. What is the logic of barring committee staff from attending SOPA? We transport staff across the province only to send them back a day before SOPA. This is not only irrational, but it borders on wasteful expenditure and reflects a lack of trust in our own staff.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we must speak frankly about committees because this is

where the real work of Parliament must happen. There are clear patterns of underspending and nowhere is this more alarming than in the Standing Committee of Police Oversight and Community Safety. This Committee meets when required to process budgets and reports, but when the province records 345 murders in a single month, there is no urgency to convene. No sustained inquiry, no proactive oversight. What message does this send to the people living in fear every day?

It raises a serious concern, hon Deputy Speaker. There appears to be a lack of appetite from both the hon MEC and the Chairperson to confront crime. It is a crisis. Both are from the DA. When oversight becomes soft on the Executive because of political alignment, it ceases to be oversight.

Hon Deputy Speaker, let us remind ourselves what oversight means. Parliamentary oversight is the core constitutional function of a Legislature to monitor, scrutinise and review the actions and expenditure of its Executive. It ensures accountability, prevents abuse of power and verifies that laws and budgets are implemented effectively. This is not ceremonial. It is the reason for this Legislature to exist. Oversight must be active, responsive and fearless, but what we are seeing is oversight that is controlled and at times, avoided.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the Budget reflects contradictions. Programme 1 receives R111 million. Programme 2, the core oversight and lawmaking receive R27 million. This is where plenary committees and Hansard services sit. This is where oversight lives, yet it is underfunded. This tells us that administration

is prioritised over accountability and the very machinery that is meant to hold the Executive to account is weakened.

Hon Deputy Speaker, oversight cannot be reduced to compliance or scheduled meetings. It must respond to the lived realities of our people. Right now, our people face a crime crisis. If committees do not convene with urgency, then we are failing in our constitutional duty. This is not a capacity issue, but a failure of political will.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the decision to terminate the Petitions Committee in this Administration is deeply troubling. This Committee was one of the few direct channels for communities to bring their grievances to Parliament. To remove it is to silence the people. To remove it is to weaken democracy. To remove it is to close the doors of this Institution to those who need it the most.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are told that this Budget prioritises public participation and improving the experience of the people. We are told of a new strategy, digital platforms and engagement frameworks, but the lived reality tells us a different story. Communities are blocked from meaningful participation. Urgent debates are declined. Public involvement is managed, not empowered and nowhere is this contradiction clearer than in the Women's Parliament.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the Women's Parliament should be one of the most powerful platforms in this Institution. It should shape policy. It should

influence budgets. It should hold this Legislature to account for the lived realities of women. But instead, it risks becoming symbolic, an annual event, a report, a set of the recommendations with no binding impact. Meanwhile, women in this province face daily violence. They face economic exclusion. They carry the burden of poverty in both rural and urban communities.

If we are serious about deepening democracy, then the Women's Parliament must be elevated in a standing, influential structure that feeds directly into legislation and oversight processes. Otherwise, we are not empowering women. We are managing their voices.

Again, hon Deputy Speaker, we must also confront the continued failure to appoint the Commissioner for Environment. This is a constitutional obligation. Yet, Legislature continues to ignore it at a time when environmental risks are increasing. When communities are exposed to pollution and climate pressures, we are choosing inaction. The question is: what is being protected by this silence?

There is a deeper issue here. The myth of Western Cape exceptionalism. We are told this province is different, better and efficient, but the reality is clear. A Legislature that cannot fill posts is not efficient. A Legislature that underspends while failing its mandate, is not effective. A Legislature that bends to the Executive is not independent. This is the DA contradiction. They speak of good governance, yet they weaken oversight. They speak of transparency, yet they avoid accountability. They speak of excellence, yet they

underfund the very Institution meant to hold them accountable.

Hon Deputy Speaker, even where there is a clean audit, we must ask what does this mean, because compliance without impact is meaningless. Hon Deputy Speaker and hon members, this Budget does not build a strong Legislature. It maintains a weak one. It does not empower the people. It distances them. It does not strengthen oversight. It limits it.

For these reasons, the position of the African National Congress is clear and unapologetic. We reject the Budget because it fails the people of the Western Cape. We reject this Budget because it weakens democratic oversight. And we say this without hesitation: a Legislation that fears accountability will always protect power. But the ANC will always stand with the people.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I would also like to thank both yourself and the hon Speaker for realising the need of taking Parliament to the people. That includes the management as well. As we finalised SOPA in George, the question remains: what legacy did we leave behind with the interaction we made? What we will be leaving behind with the communities of Bitou, the same hope that we left with the people of Murraysburg, the people in the Karoo, that one day they will receive houses under the DA Government even if it means they must wait another 20 years on top of the years that they have been waiting for already.

Hon Deputy Speaker, let us leave no one behind. If this Parliament is a citizen-

centric, let the Budget indicate that this Parliament has considered the auntie of Letjiesbos, the uncle of Phupha? that is 625 kilometres away from Wale Street? The vision can be there, hon Deputy Speaker, but without the Budget, it cannot be realised.

On this basis, hon Deputy Speaker, the ANC will not be supporting this Budget. I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Bans. I recognise the hon Adams. Hon members, let us not point. Please proceed. On your first word, the clock will commence.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Deputy Speaker, first of all, once again, condolences to the hon Speaker for the loss of his mother, from the Patriotic Alliance.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the Patriotic Alliance cannot support this Budget Vote. Year after year, we are presented with what appears to be the revised vision and missions dressed in a new language to create the impression of progress. But when we look beyond the wording, the reality remains unchanged. The same plans are repeated, different actors. The same commitments are made yet there is little evidence of meaningful transformation or practical implementation.

A budget must be more than a document of good intentions. It must be a tool for real change. What we see before us today is a continuation of a pattern, strategic plans that sound promising on paper, but fail to translate into tangible

outcomes for the people of the Western Cape.

If this Parliament is serious about fulfilling its mandate, then adequate funding must be directed towards the actual implementation of its programmes. Resources must not only be allocated but must be used effectively to ensure that the objectives outlined in strategic sessions are achieved. Without this, these plans remain nothing more than theoretical exercises.

We cannot continue to approve budgets where there is no clear disconnect between planning and delivery. The lack of visibility progress raises serious concerns about accountability, oversight and effective use of public funds. Reports are tabled, discussions are held but lived life realities of communities do not reflect improvement.

This has a direct impact on service delivery when Parliament, itself, does not function optimally. When oversight is weak and follow-through is lacking, it is the people who suffer. Our communities deserve better. They deserve a Parliament that is not only active in words, but active in action. We cannot continue to endorse the same report with no real change. The people of the province expect more than recycled commitments. They expect results, accountability and progress.

Until we see a budget that prioritises implementation, measurable outcomes and real impact, the Patriotic Alliance will not support this Vote. †Ons biza nie.
[We are not scared.] Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Adams. I recognise the Chief Whip, hon Bosman.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, hon Speaker, the hon Premier and hon members of the House, the Secretary of Parliament and the staff.

It is a privilege today to rise on behalf of the Democratic Alliance to speak in support of this Budget for Vote 2: the Western Cape Provincial Parliament. We stand at a significant milestone in the life of the 7th Parliament. The 2025/2026 financial year was our foundational year, a time for laying groundwork, establishing baselines and building the strategic frameworks that will carry this Institution through its term.

Today we cross a threshold. We move from design into delivery, from intention into execution. The DA has always believed that good governance is not an accident. It is the product of deliberate choices, sound planning and the political will to follow through. This Budget truly reflects that.

Our mission remains unchanged: to be a credible, transparent and accountable Parliament. One, that is genuinely responsive to the needs of our citizens through robust oversight, effective lawmaking and meaningful representation. Our ultimate purpose is the deepening of democracy in the Western Cape. In the DA's view, that means a Parliament that works not for political parties, not

for the Executive, but for the people.

The Budget we present today totals R232,504 million when we include the direct charge against the Provincial Revenue Fund for members' remuneration of R59,968 million. The total estimated payment for this Institution amounts to a 0.64% increase on the previous revised estimate. This is not growth for its own sake, but a clearly justified investment in ensuring that Parliament remains future fit in an era of rapid change and constraint resources.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I asked myself how can hon members who draw a salary not support the very budget that that salary comes from? Hon Deputy Speaker, the DA governs very differently, and this Parliament reflects that difference. Our work is not measured by figures on a page. It is measured by the tangible difference we make in the lived experiences of the people we serve. A budget is only as good as the outcomes it produces. To achieve that, the WCPP has adopted a theory of change that connects our daily activities to long term societal impact.

This framework rests on five strategic priorities: building a credible Western Cape Provincial Parliament through enhanced public trust, through transparency and ethical conduct; improving the citizens experience and ensuring our services are accessible and genuinely responsive; strengthening core business and achieving excellence in lawmaking and oversight; supporting the very legislators that are sitting in this room, by empowering hon members to fulfil their constitutional duties; and by building administrative resilience

and building a motivated workforce, and modernising our systems.

These are not aspirations, hon Deputy Speaker. They are commitments with budgets attached and performance measures that will hold us to account.

The DA has consistently demonstrated that where we govern, we govern well and in the Western Cape, very well. The foundation of that record is a professional, nonpartisan and capable administration. Programme 1 receives the largest share of the Vote, representing a 47,8% of our Appropriated Budget. This is a 9,34% increase that is driven by two urgent imperatives: our IT modernisation project and the critical infrastructure upgrades to the Chamber and our Committee Rooms.

The DA believes in the Government that is modern, efficient and fit for purpose. We are investing in augmented IT services and a carefully designed low-risk Artificial Intelligence pilot. We are clear-eyed about the risks that AI carries and the real dangers, including disinformation. That is precisely why we are implementing a robust AI governance framework with clear guardrails to ensure that technology enhances rather than undermines our democratic traditions.

Innovation without accountability is not progress. It is reckless. The DA's commitment to clean governance is non-negotiable. We remain committed to maintaining an unqualified audit opinion with no material findings. This Budget also supports the systemic publication of member and staff claims and expenditure. We do not merely demand accountability from others: we practice

it ourselves. That is truly the DA difference.

We acknowledge the current vacancy rate of 10,17% and we understand that the Legislature is prioritising the recruitment of key specialists in content, advisory and research whilst they are simultaneously implementing a culture change strategy and annual climate surveys to make the WCPP an employer of choice. The DA believes in investing in people because motivated, skilled public servants are the engine of good governance.

Hon Deputy Speaker, Parliament's constitutional mandate is lawmaking and oversight. It is not a rubber stamp for the Executive and under the Democratic Alliance, this Institution takes that mandate seriously. Programme 2 receives R27,975 million to strengthen exactly that. This year marks the rollout of our new Oversight and Accountability Strategy, one that moves us decisively beyond procedural compliance. We are transitioning to evidence-based oversight, measuring the real impact of Government actions on ordinary people.

We believe that oversight must have teeth and that accountability must have consequences. A landmark initiative for the 2026/2027 financial year is the pilot of a post-legislative scrutiny methodology. For the first time, we will systematically assess whether a specific Act has achieved its intended goals. This is the Legislature holding itself and the Executive accountable because good laws change lives, but only if they work and we intend to know whether they do.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the DA's vision of democracy is one where citizens are active participants, not passive recipients. Democracy is not an event that happens once every five years at the ballot box. It is an ongoing, active and inclusive conversation. Programme 3 receives R21,99 million, the highest percentage increase in this Budget because meaningful public participation is not a luxury. It is a constitutional obligation. In the DA's Western Cape, it is a political priority.

Parliament is in the process of launching a new website and a sophisticated stakeholder database that will enable e-petitions and significantly improve our reach into geographically remote and under-resourced communities. We believe in a Parliament for all, not just those with the means and the connections to engage. This investment is about access, inclusion and making democracy real for every resident in the Western Cape.

Public participation will take place this very Saturday, when we convene the Annual Youth Parliament in these Chambers because public participation must be purposeful. We are expanding on our District-based Awareness programmes to ensure that communities receive consistent, structured feedback on Committee work because citizens deserve to know what their Parliament has done with the issues that they have raised. That is accountability in practice.

To ensure that our 42 hon members can effectively serve their constituencies, Programme 4 is allocated just over R71 million, and this funding will provide for constituency and secretarial allowances, enabling political parties to

maintain the infrastructure necessary to serve the people. The Administration will also be supporting the implementation of capacity building strategy for hon members, offering targeted professional development to sharpen the effectiveness in oversight and lawmaking of hon members. Something that we can all agree is desperately needed.

An empowered hon member is a more effective voice for the people. The DA invests in its legislators because we believe that representation done well changes outcomes in communities, in committees and in the lives of our constituents.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the DA has never believed in spending money the public does not have. Fiscal discipline is not austerity for its own sake; it is respect for the taxpayer. We face real budget constraints in this country, and the pressures of provincial austerity continue. Our lack of budgetary autonomy remains a structural challenge, one that constitutionally effectively subordinates the Legislature to the Provincial Treasury. This is a matter we must continue to address with conviction because an independent legislature is a stronger legislature.

To manage expenditure risk, the Legislature will conduct an independent performance and expenditure review to prioritise high-value activities and eliminate non-essential costs. This, without compromising our core constitutional mandate because every Rand, hon Deputy Speaker, must be justified and every Rand must deliver.

We are also prioritising cybersecurity through an outsourced security operation centre, protecting the Institution and its hon members from the escalating global threat of cyberattacks. A Parliament's integrity must be defended not only in its Chambers, but in its systems.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the Democratic Alliance has built a reputation on one simple proposition: where we govern, we govern in the interest of all the people. As we look towards the end of this five-year cycle, the measure of this Parliament's success will not be found in audit reports alone. It will be found in whether the people of the Western Cape can say with confidence that their Parliament made a real difference in their lives and that it held the powerful to account, that it brought Government closer to the governed and that it protected and deepened democracy in this province.

This Budget is our roadmap to that outcome. It reflects the DA's enduring commitment to good governance, clean administration and a Legislature that serves the public, not itself.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it would be remiss of me not to respond to the hon Bans because we cannot say that the Western Cape Legislature is a weak legislature. Some hon members of this Legislature may self-identify as weak hon members of the Legislature, but we have a responsibility to make this space work for the people of this province. It is interesting that the hon Bans takes issue ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Chief Whip, kindly take your seat. Hon members, we are drawing to the end of business soon. Can we please ...[Interjections.] Hon members. Hon members, the Rules are very sure. Hon member Nkondlo and hon member Bans, the Rules are very clear that when the hon Presiding Officer has the floor, that hon members will give their attention. I recognise the hon Adams.

†Mnr B ADAMS (PA): Ja, ja, agb Adjunkspeaker. [Mr B ADAMS (PA): Yes, yes, hon Deputy Speaker.] The hon member must not cast aspersions here about people who are weak when he is weak. Please, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, honourable ...[Interjections.] I will not adjudicate on the content. We will proceed. Like I have said, we have two additional Orders for the Day, so I will allow the hon Chief Whip to continue.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to repeat for clarity.

We cannot say that the Western Cape Legislature is a weak legislature. Some hon members may self-identify as weak hon members, but in the interest of growth and development we recognise that some hon members are new because there is a constant reshuffling of hon members from certain political parties.

When an hon member is accused of casting aspersions, you have to identify a specific ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): So, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, to those who self-identify as weak that lesson must be learned.

It is interesting that hon members take issue ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): ...with staff leaving the Legislature. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members. Hon members, I am going to take this point and at this stage, name the hon Nkondlo as well as the hon Bans. I have already previously indicated because your running commentary is bordering on not only interrupting the current speaker on the floor, but also those that are listening to the inputs. I was looking at you attentively for 24 seconds and it was nonstop. So, hon members ...[Interjections.] Hon members, let us please keep the decorum. Rule 29 and Rule 40 are very clear. Hon Chief Whip, please proceed.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. It is interesting that hon members take issue with staff members leaving. It is a

compliment to an institution when staff move on to other institutions. The former Secretary of the WCPP exited the position; a new Secretary was appointed. We have to worry when political parties start wondering about staff members moving on to other positions because if we look at the people in this Parliament and we look at the political parties in this Parliament, and we look at the previous term, the African National Congress seems to be the only entity that have lost members and gained very little.

Hon Deputy Speaker, in conclusion I wish to thank Ms Kamish-Achmat, our Procedural Officer, for her support, as well as the members of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee. Thank you to the hon Speaker, the hon Deputy Speaker, the Secretary and the entire administrative team of the WCPP for your professionalism and dedication.

Public service done with integrity is a calling worth honouring. Together, guided by our values and accountable to our people, we will ensure that the Western Cape Provincial Parliament remains a beacon of democratic governance, transparency and genuine service delivery. On behalf of the Democratic Alliance, I support this Vote and I move that the House supports the Budget for Vote 2. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Bosman. I recognise the hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy

Speaker, I think I heard that the interjections or commentary that this is not a DA Parliament, it is a multi-party Parliament, so I am going to try my best not to fall into the trap and respond to, as a multi-party Parliament. But it would be remiss of me not to start with the comments, and I quote:

"A weak Legislature."

Hon Deputy Speaker, I think I need to remind all 42 hon members that you are the Legislature. You are the ones that either make or break this Legislature. It is not a political party, and I always make the example. I always remind hon members in our interactions that Government implements a party-political policy or manifesto, but when we get elected and we serve our constituents in this House, we are a multi-party Provincial Parliament represented by nine political parties.

So, I do take exception to and I quote:

"A weak Legislature."

Because that includes all 42 hon members, and I do not think that we are 42 weak hon members and a weak Legislature.

Hon members, let me start by responding to a few of the comments and one of the comments that has been continuously raised, hon Deputy Speaker, is the fact that the Budget comparison between the Western Cape and Gauteng.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the harsh reality is that this Legislature consists of 42 hon members. Gauteng consists of 80 members. So, if you want to compare apples with apples, we must put all the facts on the table. There was previously an opportunity to increase the size of this Legislature. This Legislature did not proceed on that basis. That process is currently again in front of a Standing Committee and again, that Standing Committee being an extension of this House must deal with that. Which brings me to the point of the Environmental Commissioner.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is our duty as hon members of this Legislature, that is not part of the Executive, to process legislation. We are the legislators. I cannot recall that that legislation has served before this Institution, this very House, but we highlight policy directives and it is not the role of Parliament to adjudicate on policy directives. That is the difference between Government and Parliament.

So, if an hon member feels so strongly about an Environmental Commissioner, submit the Private Members' Bill and let the House decide. But we cannot make random statements and not follow the parliamentary legislative process available to this Institution, and then just every year, just raise the same, the same concerns without using your power as an elected representative with legislative powers that the citizens have given you by the ballot box, and then come here and not raise it.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to also move on. There was a comment made about 144 staff members on the organogram. Hon Deputy Speaker, since 2019, there have never been 144 staff members on the organogram. In 2019, there were 108. We are currently on 106. Now, basic mathematics, hon Deputy Speaker, it is a 0,89% vacancy rate in this Institution.

What I do agree with the hon member is that, and that is why we are undertaking an Organisation Design study, is because the 106 staff members that are carrying this Institution to deliver this world-class service to the citizens, there is strain on the administration. So, for that reason there has been budget allocated for that OD study that is currently underway.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to move on to Public Education and Outreach and petitions because hon Deputy Speaker, there is a Petitions Framework that has been agreed upon by all the hon members, by hon members of this Parliament. The Petitions Committee was not just randomly removed. The Petitions Framework empowers members through committees to address the petitions.

So, what actually happens is that the petition is being received, and I must acknowledge the Public Education and Outreach unit that deals with the petitioner, receives the petition. That petition reaches my office, and it gets referred to a Standing Committee to deal with. So again, the hon members are responsible for executing the petitions of the petitioner and to report back to this House so that we can deal with it.

But to say that the Petitions Committee has been taken away and Public Education and Outreach is not happening is not true. There is a Petitions Framework and maybe, and I am going to put on record as an Executive undertaking which is also a mechanism in this House, that I will make sure that the Administration redistributes the Petitions Framework to all hon members so that that process is provided to hon members.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I also want to move on to hon Adams and hon Adams, you raised a point about impact, which is very important or I am not sure if it was hon Adams or hon Bans, about the impact of George and taking Parliament to the people. Now, the impact to the local community of George, for example, 49% of local spend happened in George: 49% of services was procured directly from George and so 49%, if you talk about economic opportunities and you are talking about empowerment, that is what we leave behind when we leave after SOPA.

But before we even get to SOPA, this Parliament and I say 'this Parliament' because committees are an extension of Parliament, for a week goes out to communities, does oversight. It is the beauty of the committees to go back and report back to the communities. Hon Deputy Speaker, post-legislative scrutiny and post doing oversight, I mean, we can never get to a point as an Institution where oversight becomes a tick boxing exercise. If there is no real meaningful oversight happening, then what is the point of even going there in the first place if your intention as a committee, is not to go back there.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I also and I have addressed it in the committee meeting about the staff for SOPA. Again, and as I indicated at that meeting, hon Deputy Speaker, SOPA is not a once-off event. There is a lead-up to SOPA. There is a lot of staff behind, in the background. So, it is not that being physically there does not mean that the staff is not incorporated or included in SOPA. I think we need to break that narrative that if you are not physically sitting in a chair in SOPA that you did not contribute to SOPA.

But those committee staff played a vital role to execute a successful SOPA a week later. So, thank you very much to all those committee staff members for the work that has been done. I trust that hon Deputy Speaker, and I am going to use this platform, that the committees that did oversight during that week will go back to the people of George and go and follow-up on those commitments that have been made or issues that have been raised.

Hon Deputy Speaker, for that reason the Committee Budget has also been increased. So, there is funding allocated to ensure ...[Interjections.] I will respond to you now, hon Nkondlo. I do not want to break the Rules.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please speak to the Chair.

The SPEAKER: So, I will, hon Deputy Speaker, funding has been allocated for committees for exactly that purpose.

Hon Deputy Speaker, but also, if you look at and we have just come from a

strategic session with members and committees because budgeting and planning for execution are the responsibility of all of us as hon members of this House. We are all accountable, we are all responsible for the execution of this particular Budget.

Hon Deputy Speaker, if you go further on accountability, the Enabling Allowances that have been allocated in this Budget, allow hon members to enable them to further their mandate as elected representatives of the people of this province. This Parliament, this Budget, the citizens of this province provides for that Budget to enable and empower hon members to go out to communities to serve them. I think it is important that we all take notice and take cognisance of the fact that we are all accountable, in particular with this Vote: in particular with this Vote!

Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to get to hon Adams. Hon Adams, you raised a point about we are doing the same thing, and the same thing is being said, but I mean again, if you look at, I think it is page 26 to 27 in the Annual Performance Plan, it is all outlined there. I am not going to go and reiterate that because you have the documents and it is provided there.

Hon Deputy Speaker, with that being said, I think I want to take this opportunity to thank, in particular, all the criticisms and all the comments going forward. Thank you very much for the robust manner in which we can always engage. I think at the end of the day, hon Deputy Speaker, we all want what is best for our communities, we all want what is best for our constituents, but we must

also always be mindful that when we are representing our constituents that we do it in a manner that they will benefit from us.

I was in the Chair earlier on and I made the comment that it is not about us. We are merely the voices for the people that elected us. So, thank you very much for the manner in which we could engage and for the robust engagement in the Parliamentary Oversight Committee.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it would also be remiss of me not to thank the Secretary and the team: thank you very much for your support. Thank you very much for what you do and to echo hon Bans, with the limited resources, limited staff capacity: thank you very much for what you do on a daily basis to make sure that we are a world class Institution and we deliver on our constitutional mandates because we only have three.

Amongst all of us, we only have three constitutional mandates. That we deliver and we execute our constitutional mandates to the best of our ability. And to all 106 staff members as part of the Administration, thank you very much for what you do on a daily basis to make sure that this Institution functions and that we are the best possible 42 hon members, for now, elected to serve the seven-point odd million citizens.

Hon Deputy Speaker, and by no means to you. Lastly, thank you very much for the support daily, for what you do and for your support to make sure that we can function.

Then, to my Office †baie, baie dankie [thank you very much] and thank you very much, hon colleagues for the condolences and for carrying my family in your prayers during this very difficult time. We do appreciate it. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Speaker. That concludes the Vote. Officials are now more than welcome to vacate the officials' bay. Thank you so much for your attendance.

It would be remiss of me not to say the following. This morning when the hon Speaker arrived at the office, no one was surprised. No one was surprised because there was an indication that he will be here, which shows that his continued commitment during a difficult time and once again, thank you for keeping him and his family in your prayers.

Hon members, I will now recognise the Table Staff.

The TABLE STAFF: Consideration of Votes and Schedule – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B 1-2026].

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I am confirming with the Table Staff in terms of the amount of hon members. I can confirm that we have 33 hon members present, and the House is therefore quorate. I will now hand over to the hon Speaker, to conclude item number 7 and 8.

[The Speaker takes the Chair.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I now afford an opportunity for hon members to make a declaration if they so wish. I recognise the ANC? No declarations. The PA? The EFF? The NCC? The Freedom Front Plus? Al Jama-ah?

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AL JAMA-AH): No declaration, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The ACDP?

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): No declaration, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: GOOD? And the Democratic Alliance.

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): Hon Speaker, I rise today to speak on a Budget that is a roadmap for the economic resilience and future of this province. In the context of rising global tensions, the need to secure our growth prospects has never been more profound.

South Africa's national economy is idling. The Western Cape's growth rate of 1,6% is a significant achievement. But hon Speaker, while we are outperforming the national average, 1,6% is not enough. Our residents and our youth deserve more. That is why this Budget is a launchpad to move from being good enough to a lot better, and to push our growth figures even higher.

The Western Cape is open for business. We have secured an additional R1,2 billion in the Provincial Equitable Share with a total Appropriation of R93,5 million, we are proving that fiscal discipline is key to furthering the dignity of our people. We are allocating R799 million to secure 701 new educator posts. As in-migration brings more families to our shores, we are ensuring that the quality of our education does not falter.

Over the next three years, R31,1 billion will go into construction, R11,1 billion for roads, R6,4 billion for schools and R5,2 billion for health facilities. Furthermore, our R518,8 million ABF provides a buffer against national failure, ensuring that critical projects move forward even when the wind blows from Pretoria.

Hon Speaker, this Budget says to the investor: your capital is safe here. It says to the worker: there is opportunity here. And it says to the rest of South Africa: this is how you govern.

The DA supports this Budget, including all the Votes, 1 to 14, and all the Schedules comprising the Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B 1–2026]. I propose our support.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon members. Hon members, that concludes the deliberation on the Consideration of Votes and the Schedule of the Bill. Are there any objections to Votes 1 to 14, and the Schedule of the

Western Cape Appropriation Bill?

Hon MEMBERS: Yes.

Hon MEMBERS: No.

The SPEAKER: There is an objection. [Interjections.] Order! Hon members, we are busy with the Vote. You had an opportunity to debate it. We are now busy with the Vote.

Those in favour of the Votes and the Schedule of the Western Cape Appropriation Bill being adopted, please say 'yes'.

Hon MEMBERS: Yes!

The SPEAKER: Those not in favour of the Votes and the Schedule of the Western Cape Appropriation Bill being adopted, please say 'no'.

Hon MEMBERS: No!

The SPEAKER: I think the 'ayes' have it. Votes and the Schedule of the Western Cape Appropriation Bill have therefore been adopted. The Secretary will read the Eighth Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Finalisation of the Western Cape Appropriation Bill,

including the clauses and short title.

The SPEAKER: I recognise the hon Minister of Finance, hon Minister Baartman.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Speaker. †Ek vra dat hierdie Huis die Wes-Kaapse Begrotingswetsontwerp Wet [B 1-2026] finaliseer vandag. Baie dankie. [I ask that this House finalises the Western Cape Appropriation Bill [W 1-2026] today. Thank you.]

The SPEAKER: Hon members, there being no list of speakers. Are there any objections to the Bill, the clauses and the short title being finalised. Are there any objections?

An HON MEMBER: Object!

The SPEAKER: There is an objection. I have to announce that there are currently 33 hon members present and entitled to vote, and the House is therefore quorate. Those in favour of the Bill, the clauses and the short title being finalised, please say 'yes'.

Hon MEMBERS: Yes!

The SPEAKER: Those not in favour of the Bill, the clauses and the short title being finalised, please say 'no'.

Hon MEMBERS: No!

The SPEAKER: I think the 'ayes' have it. The finalisation, including clauses and the short title of the Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B 1–2026] are therefore approved. The Secretary will read the Bill.

The SECRETARY: Western Cape Appropriation Bill.

The SPEAKER: The Bill will be sent to the hon Premier for assent. Hon members, that concludes the business for the day. The Secretary will now end the meeting and hon members will be exited from this Sitting. The House is adjourned.

[House adjourned at 19:23.]