
TUESDAY, 29 MARCH 2022

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

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

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

The House met at 10:00.

The Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER: Good morning and welcome hon members and to the first citizen of the Province, The Premier, His Excellency, Mr Alan Winde; hon members who are virtually connected and of course, I see here in the Chamber it is nice and warm. There is a †klomp mense hier [lot of people here.] Welcome, hon members. I will not individually identify you, but I noticed that on my right-hand side where the DA is sitting, there are many. The Opposition is sitting on the left-hand side, led by hon Sayed. So, you are alone there. If there is a vote now ... [Interjections.] [Laughter.] So, you

stand for everyone there. I welcome also the hon members who are virtually here, the political parties, you are all welcome; HODs, Staff of the Western Cape Parliament, people of the Western Cape and hon guests.

Now, we are about to start with the hybrid session. I just want to say without taking much time, that the statute, which since April 2020 that has been guiding us, is that if you are connected virtually, please behave. Do you not press the microphone if you have not been identified by the Presiding Officer. You must do so by a press of the button and lift your hand or you must just indicate by doing so in the chatroom, and you will be recognised.

So, do not feel that you will not be recognised if you do not speak because heckling, in terms of Rule 40 and of course, in terms of the same directives issued by myself, agreed to by this House, say we may not heckle virtually because it affects the quality of the debates in the House.

Now, furthermore, if you are a member of the media, you know the House works with the media as a very strategic and important partner, but please do not activate your camera, do not activate your microphone. Do what you do when you are in the Chamber here, because you are sitting in the gallery, and therefore, please observe the rules as such and everybody else connected virtually, please do not activate any of those, as indicated herein above.

I now recognise the Secretary and the Secretary will read the Secretary will read the first Order of the Day.

†UNOBHALA: INgxoxo-mpikiswano ngeVoti 6: ezeMpilo – yoMthetho oSayilwayo woLwabiwo-mali weNtshona Koloni [B2 – 2022]

[The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 6 – Health – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2 – 2022].]

The SPEAKER: †Enkosi, [Thank you,] Mr Stemele. Hon members I now recognise the hon Minister of Health, Doctor Mbombo.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker; hon Deputy Speaker; hon Premier and hon Cabinet Ministers; hon Leaders of the Opposition Parties; Members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament; the Heads of the Departments; Media Houses; and the People of the Western Cape; I greet you in this State of Health Address, SOHA. Hon Speaker, I rise to table the 2022/2023 Western Cape Health Budget of about R29 billion.

This is my eighth Health Budget Speech, and in all these past years, I reported on the progress made in implementing the previous budget promises. This year, I want to take this accountability further back to the past seven years and also share a some of the progress on the promises I made each year.

This Budget is about the journey to health recovery and post-COVID-19 pandemic healing, ngu Vulimpilo [health recovery] budget, hon Speaker. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us flames and has left our health system more fragile. Not only are we taking care of a COVID-19 wounded society, but also psychologically wounded healthcare workers. We all need to heal,

and non-COVID-19 health services have to recover. Let us all come together and rebuild the walls of the healthcare system. Later, hon Speaker, I will highlight some of the non-COVID-19 health services we are recovering and also our budget commitments to them.

Hon Speaker, the 2022/23 budget is not only †uVulimpilo, [health recovery] but also the †kujika izinto [turn things around] budget. I once reminded this House that we are a Department of Health that focuses on both illness and wellness. We also offer preventive and promotive health services just as we also offer curative and hospital-based services. Our Western Cape Healthcare 2030 plan, the Road to Wellness, a third Western Cape health reform after the Comprehensive Service Plan 2010, is the long-term strategic vision and direction of the Department endorsed by the Provincial Cabinet, just in case people do not remember what it was. It is still here.

So, hon Speaker, we have implemented some of the provisions since 2015; this includes bringing in a more preventive and promotive health focus through Community-Oriented Primary Care (COPC), a slight shift from a hospicentric health system and we also offer patient-centred quality care with the community's voice being integral.

Wellness is defined by the World Health Organisation, as not merely the absence of disease, but a complete state of physical, mental and social wellbeing. Hon Speaker, that is the promise I made in 2015 and also, what I said was that delivering a health service will be business unusual. We cannot

continue mopping the floor; we have to close the tap by tackling the upstream factors, which means the social determinants on health.

Hon Speaker, in 2015 I introduced new legislation to strengthen the voice of the community to be partners in health service delivery. The late uncle Polly Jacobs, who used to be the Chairperson of the Belhar Forum – wherever you are Uncle Polly, may you give us a sign. You should be happy to see that we not only passed the legislation in 2016, because when I passed that legislation, I was dedicating it to Uncle Polly, but as of today in all of our statutory structures that require community participation, we have made almost 80% of the appointments.

Not only that, in those structures, the representation is about 50% of community membership that is mandatory in hospital boards and the clinic committees to ensure that we provide a voice to the community.

Hon Speaker, two weeks ago, the Department of Health hosted our Health Indaba to remind us indeed, of our journey to recover health, †Vulimpilo, and recovery which is to do as unusual, and that health is everybody's business. It is written on the back of my T-shirt. I am proud to announce that we are no longer the Western Cape Department of Health. I need to repeat that: we no longer call ourselves the Western Cape Department of Health, but we remain ourselves.

As the Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness, the first and only

one in the country †zajika izinto [things have changed] – I am not sure you heard that, on Speaker – The first one in the country to be called the Department of Health and Wellness because this journey started long time ago. [Applause.] The journey started long ago, and I appreciate that the hon Premier and the hon Cabinet has approved that.

Hon Speaker, it is this Western Cape Healthcare 2030 reform that made provision for us to tackle the social determinants of health, with violence prevention as one of those. As Health, what lands on our shores is not only health problems, but socio-economic and politic-cultural problems that lead to illness and a burden that drains our health system.

The hon Premier announced that there will be a dedicated Violence Prevention Unit that will be established within the Department. We do welcome the challenge, hon Premier. Thank you for providing such an opportunity. Actually, in most parts of the world, a public health approach which uses the Cardiff model, where trauma morbidity and mortality data is shared with other sectors for prompt intervention, has always been there.

Thanks to our HECTIS (Hospital Emergency Centres Trauma Information System) an innovation we actually showcased in my 2016/2017 budget speech, where – if I could just quickly remind you, hon Speaker that during that budget speech, I made a promise of digital innovations in the health system through the E-vision strategy which I introduced then.

HECTIS was one innovation I bragged about. Others were to develop a unique patient identifier, which we have done and establishing electronic health records, which we have also done. Now, this HECTIS, which has actually been escalated to more than 20 of our emergency care centres, is also helping us to determine the impact of alcohol as well as the impact on the mental health of our trauma centres.

This HECTIS is now central to gathering data for VPU – the Violence Prevention Unit. The VPU will utilise data and evidence, develop policy, and work with relevant stakeholders at a local geographic level to implement measures that reduce violence. It is critical to note that this will not only involve the Department but will also be a collaborative effort with all the government departments that need to participate.

Actually, hon Speaker, we already have transversal WoSA, which is the whole of society approach and the whole of government approach, that is co-chaired by the HODs of Health and also, the HOD of Safety. We are continuing what we have already started. It is not about something new when the hon Premier was making the announcement, it is based on the work that has already been done. This unit will straddle the Strategic Cluster, Emergency and Clinical Support Services within the Department.

This will be the first Violence Prevention Unit to be established in Health in South Africa. Can I repeat that, hon Speaker? This will be the first Violence Prevention Unit in the Department of Health, which is the Department of

Health and Wellness, that it established in South Africa as part of social determinants on health. The amount committed to this in the budget is R10 million. †Zajika izinto. [Things have changed.] [Applause.]

The PREMIER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Speaker, let me talk briefly about COVID-19. This pandemic has been brutal to our healthcare workers. As of today, about 209 did not make it. This is tragic: 209. Yes, it may be less than 2%, but we are talking about faces, about humans. I convey my words of condolence to their families: May God continue to comfort them, but again, we are talking about the faces of the soldiers that died fighting the COVID-19 battle for you and for me. So, we want to, as a Department, be able to say thank you to them.

I do want to actually acknowledge the hon member Windvogel who reminded us about the Wall of Remembrance for these soldiers, to which we agreed, but because we are still in the waves, because we are coming from the fourth wave, we do not know what is going to happen in the fifth wave and all of that, so it is part of the work in progress that we are looking at. So, thank you hon member Windvogel for the suggestion.

This virus will still be around and is predicted to be around for the next two years, hence the need to reintegrate with other non-COVID-19 healthcare. We cannot run a health system where other health services, non-COVID-19

services are put on holiday. It cannot be. This virus has taught us that we are able to manoeuvre within it. People can now access vaccines at their health facilities together with other health services as we decommission more vaccination sites, for example, the stadiums.

So, we are integrating COVID-19 health services within other aspects of COVID-19 services and therefore, in this budget we are committing about R770 000 to make sure we are able to do that. We also welcome that health regulations will be used to manage the pandemic or endemic, as is always the case with other categories of medically notifiable conditions. I encourage people to engage and make submissions, and input to the National Department of Health because now it will not be managed as a disaster, which we do welcome.

Hon Speaker, I did mention that I want to showcase some to the non-COVID-19 health services that we want to make sure we recover. †Vulimpilo. The Province has had to manage more acute mental health admissions in the last two years, which is challenging at all levels. The concern is that vulnerable groups, including children and adolescents, elderly patients, and persons with intellectual disabilities, require tailored management.

Last week I engaged with the Mental Health Review Board, who are the ombuds for mental health users in the provinces where each and every province appoints one. They also shared similar concerns about mental health users who defaulted treatments and others who came for readmission during

the COVID-19 lockdowns. COVID-19 has actually worsened the mental health well-being of the community in general.

It is for this reason that the Western Cape identified a need for a transversal response to wellbeing beyond pathologising mental health, but as a state of wellness. As with the Violence Prevention Unit, the HODs of Health, the HOD of Social Development, the HOD of the DCAS, co-chair this and are making sure that we focus on mental health throughout the life span and not only as a mental health illness.

Weeks ago, we opened an Adolescent Centre of Excellence under Groote Schuur Hospital, which provides a full range of social, psychological, psychiatric, and endocrine/physical needs for these adolescents. The response to the mental health pressures requires a whole-of-society, a whole-of-government approach.

For example, dealing with substance abuse requires an intensive effort from all of society, not only the health sector, if we are to effectively deal with the impacts of substance abuse on one's mental and physical health. For this budget, we are allocating an additional R30 million because health services still have to continue. We are allocating an additional R30 million for this aspect. This is what you call †Vulimpilo. Thank you, hon Speaker.

On surgical backlogs, COVID-19 meant that elective surgical services had to be significantly de-escalated as staff were deployed to COVID-19 services

and this resulted in an increase in the backlog of operations. Hence a specific practicable plan to address this backlog in the short and long term has been developed. We have procured two da Vinci surgical robotic machines for both Groote Schuur and Tygerberg Hospital to fast track these surgeries. This is actually a first for the Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness, and not only in Southern Africa, but I also think in Africa, for a public health hospital to perform robotic operations, [Applause.] Thank you.

The advantage of robotics is the system's versatility and its use by multiple surgical specialities will maximise the number of patients who will benefit from this sophisticated medical technology. These robotics will be beneficial in reducing our theatre slate and it is a less invasive surgery with a low blood loss and with faster and better recovery periods. The main disease conditions that the programme will focus on are colorectal, liver, prostate, kidney and bladder cancers, and women with severe endometriosis.

For this, hon Speaker, for surgical backlogs, we are allocating an additional R20 million to recover from surgical backlogs. That is what we want to state that when you talk †Vulimpilo, health recovery, we must put our money where our mouths are. I also want to thank the private hospitals for assisting us to reduce some of our theatre slates by using their corporate social investment funds to operate free of charge on many of our patients that are waiting for their surgeries and one in particular, of course, is Mediclinic.

Whilst we are talking about that I would just like to showcase because then

people think that these things, we just do there and then, not necessarily showcase here.

In the House we have got Mrs Gys from Eerste Rivier. She is the first patient to be operated on by a robotic machine. Thank you very much Mrs Gys, where are you? [Applause.] So, as you can see, she is not even in a wheelchair. Actually, she was up and about on the first day of her surgery. Thank you very much.

Now, on the realignment of health services in the Metro, hon Speaker, as part of the Western Cape Healthcare 2030, we did commit to engage the City of Cape Town to explore efficiency, effectiveness, to realign the City and Provincial health facilities to improve health outcomes. The discussions on provincialisation actually started way back after we completed the provincialisation of rural health services. That was a decade ago.

So, last year, the City council approved that provincial – where the Province and the City of Cape Town function alongside in the provision of comprehensive health services. The City will therefore let go of those health services and they will be managed by the Province. The nine Joint Facilities now need to be transferred to the Province in this budget year, I think by June 2022, and whilst the processes related to the assets and staff are being followed, we are allocating R18,094 million this year towards the transfer. The City has indicated that there will be another tenth one that we need to transfer, but it has to still go via the Council. So, those facilities, hon

Speaker, are not closed. They have been functioning; they are still going to function, but because they were managed by the two spheres of government, they are now being transferred to the Department for that.

Hon Speaker, on innovation, because I have already spoken about the robotics, as you probably have been aware, I always brag about our technological innovations and our Fourth Industrial Revolution readiness. In addition to e-Vision, which I mentioned and also in addition to the robotics and others, this year I also want to brag and share a few practical innovations to show our versatility. Innovations, Hon Speaker, are not only about devices but also, ideas.

Just to give an example of one of those that I want to brag about, we have dashboards that the public are able to access. It started with a dashboard on COVID-19, in terms of plotting the cases and also, where they are and then, using that platform, we ended up having a dashboard on vaccinations so that people can know who has been vaccinated and also, who has been registered in terms of the EVDS.

We use that same platform to plot TB because we have got a TB emergency response plan where one is able to plot and see the TB cases, which is also open to the public. The other dashboard now, which uses the same platform, is the one that we are using for Violence Prevention, where you will be able to plot and see what happens to the trauma cases, where they are, where the people died and all of that. Is that not wonderful? It is part of the

innovation, and we are the only ones who are doing this in the whole country.

†Zajika izinto. [Things have changed.] [Laughter.]

The other part of it is the *Ask a Doctor* initiative, which was also part of the COVID-19 response. This initiative was activated when we experienced vaccine apathy. The medical specialists go to taxi ranks, to the malls. They promote vaccines. People get an opportunity to ask a qualified doctor about all their vaccine concerns which helped to increase vaccine uptake. Thank you, hon Premier to your Department for this initiative because it was actually something new for the medical fraternity just to be outside a health facility, to be sitting in a mall and responding to questions from the public.

The Vaxi-Taxi, which Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, the director of the WHO has been bragging about all over the world, was not only a well-renowned Vaxi-Taxi transport where we transformed EMS ambulances from not only being vehicles ferrying patients but bringing vaccinations to the taxi rank. So, this is part of the innovation. No-one would have thought about it and not only about them bringing vaccines, but also, bringing other services under the same roof in those same taxi ranks: from family planning, TB screening and everything else.

The Groote Schuur Hospital Diabetes Centre is another great example of innovation at its best. At this centre, we focus on complicated diabetes such as Type 1 diabetes, diabetes in pregnancy, diabetes in special situations such as patients with organs transplants, cystic fibrosis, preoperative optimisation

of diabetes and this centre is the first one in the country, hon Speaker. ...

[Interjection.]

The PREMIER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: †Vulimpilo.

On infrastructure, hon Speaker, the 2019 budget speech was more on infrastructure. Probably, I thought it was my last budget for Health at the time, that it was the end of our term. It was a budget of bringing dignity to people through new infrastructure, maintenance, and refurbishments. We requested input from our statutory structures, only to realise that for the next two years we will be held ransom by the COVID-19 pandemic, but through it all, we manoeuvred and made a way in a seemingly impossible solution under lockdowns. As you are aware during the lockdowns it was difficult for contractors to continue with building, but I am proud to announce these projects that have actually been completed.

For example, in the Winelands, the De Doorns EMS and Avian Park will be opening soon. They are supposed to have opened it. It is completed, under the circumstances.

The Oudtshoorn Clinic in the Garden Route, the Overberg Clinic; actually, in the Moravian Mission Stations, both of them, the Genadendal and Elim Clinic. That was also completed during this time.

In the City of Cape Town: all three emergency units in the Victoria Hospital, the Red Cross Hospital and also Heidelberg Hospital. They were completed during this time of COVID-19.

In the Central Karoo, we completed KwaMandlenkosi and we completed Laingsburg Clinic during this time of lockdown and so forth and so on.

I can add many, but as a Department that is moving forward, we also have other infrastructure buildings that we plan to prioritise for the 2023 financial year. I also want to, specifically – because I know that my colleague hon member Windvogel is going to ask about Klipfontein's Children's Hospital. I must say it. Just a reminder, hon Speaker, this hospital, when we decommissioned it, was serving the whole community. The population was about 1 million in that area, made up from the communities of Klipfontein. Patients were referred by community clinics, day hospitals and private general practitioners there, but after the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research confirmed that the old GF Jooste Hospital infrastructure was inappropriate and also that they recommended it to be demolished, it had to be demolished. Besides that, it was offering a limited service. There was no maternal and child health care there. There were no paediatrics there. The focus was more on emergencies, which now is being covered by the Heideveld EC.

Therefore, where we are sitting as a Department, this is the most crucial

hospital that we have to build. I even said in a previous speech that Jooste has to rise, but unfortunately, it has to take longer with regard to the capital project, but it is not that we are not doing anything. The tender evaluation is currently in progress to procure multi-disciplinary professional services. This we are anticipating now in April/May, but noting that as a Department, we have agencies that are doing this on our behalf. We are the clients of those agencies, but as I am saying that I am still committed. This hospital is going to rise, but as we know it is such a big project because it will take more than 600 beds. Previously it used to have 200 and we want it to be a Level 2 hospital, to bring all the specialisation there. So, it is our priority. Jooste is going to rise.

The Observatory Forensic Pathology Service is complete with just minor snags that are being fixed before commencing operations. So, the commissioning of this facility is in phases. Actually, the admin component is already there. They have already moved in a long time ago, but because it is a facility that will provide chemical forensic pathology and toxicology and all of those, some of the packs will be undertaken by the Police.

So, it is actually going to be the first of its kind and also, we also want to include the students, those who are training for forensic pathology. So, the full commissioning of this facility is expected to take place by the end of August, but everything else is complete, however we have to look in terms of the technology that will also be servicing some of what I have already indicated.

Due to the size and complexity of the Belhar-Tygerberg Regional Hospital, its redevelopment is classified as a megaproject and the support is not only from the Province, but also from the National stakeholders. I am aware that National Treasury has also been engaging Provincial Treasury with regard to that. The process of consultation and refinement of the draft Feasibility Study commenced a long time ago; further refinement and consultations are underway following positive feedback and constructive comments received from National Treasury.

The aim of this process, which has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is to attain stakeholder support and National Treasury approval for the most suitable approach to procuring value for money, fit-for-purpose health infrastructure that is affordable.

Also, why this is important is because Tygerberg Hospital, the current one, was also assessed by the CSIR where they found that some parts of Tygerberg also need to be reworked. There was a whole issue about the piping and everything. Besides that, Tygerberg Hospital is the second biggest hospital in South Africa, after Baragwanath Hospital, and it is supposed to be a central hospital, but it also does the work of a Level 1 and Level 2 hospital.

Just to add, hon Speaker, as you know that whilst we understand that it takes longer to build new hospitals, we are not blind to the realities of the population increasing in other areas like Khayelitsha, hence we have already

done improvements. So, it may not be that we are going to add extra beds and all of those or rebuild.

For example, the Health Improvement Plan, which we implemented in Khayelitsha include HECTIS because during that time, it was not operative in terms of the information systems. So, that is why when you go there, the system will tell you how many people have been seen, where they are in the system, whether they are waiting for their bloods and all of that. We filled many posts, for example for an EC consultant, which initially was not there previously. We even increased the intermediate beds, the stepdown beds as part of the intermediate care.

During COVID-19, Khayelitsha also had a field hospital attached to it that was managed by the MSF, in the Thusong Centre. So, it was part of the Khayelitsha establishment. We have done quite a lot and now what we are busy with is adding a psychiatry ward as part of the psychiatry units and beds, that we are dealing with in most of the Level 1 hospitals. So, they will have, in this budget year, additional beds for the psychiatric section.

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, will you please take your seat? There is a point of order. Hon Sayed, what is your point of order?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Hon Chair, I just want to know, hon Speaker, whether the hon Minister is willing to take a question?

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Sayed. Hon Minister, would you like to take

a question?

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: I think just let me just finish my budget speech and I would suggest that the hon member give that comment to the next person who will be debating in case that I will not be able to. I think hon member Windvogel will be able to assist me with that. ... [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Alright, thank you, hon Minister. Hon Sayed, I think the message does not need any translation. [Laughing] It is okay ... [Interjection.]. Thank you, hon Minister, you may proceed. Order, hon members.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Just in closing, on the infrastructure, because I love infrastructure, the other priorities for 2022/2023 are for example, in the Cape Winelands, the Ceres Hospital. We are adding a new Acute Psychiatric Ward, we are extending more beds for intermediate care, and we are, as part of the Cape Winelands; we are upgrading the extension to the Paarl Community Day Centre and also, as part of the pipeline is the Robertson CDC.

And then in the Overberg, the Villiersdorp Clinic is almost done. Yes, de Doorns CDC is part of it. Remember in De Doorns we have already opened the EMS as well ... [Interjections.] Then, the Central Karoo, the Nelspoort Hospital ... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. Order, hon members. Hon Minister,

please proceed.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: In the Central Karoo, the Nelspoort Hospital, in which there have been some delays in the new ward that is there, but it is going to be ready soon.

The Beaufort West Hospital expansion and upgrades, which we are doing in phases starting with the EC, the Matjiesfontein Satellite Clinic.

In the Metro, I have mentioned these two big hospitals. On the West Coast, part of it the Swartland, the Sandy Point Satellite Clinic, the Vredenburg CDC.

In the Garden Route, Hornlee Clinic is also part of it. I am just listing, hon Speaker.

Now, tabling the budget. This is the last time we will get such a large allocation, hon Speaker. In this 2022/23 financial year, what I am tabling is R29 094 331 billion to provide quality health services to a population of approximately 7 million in the Western Cape.

Firstly, I would also like to commend the HOD and the team for the sterling work they do ... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: ... as reflected by the clean audit findings [Applause.] Hon Speaker, I think you have to clap again because what I wanted to say, hon Speaker because it must not disappear, we are the only Department of Health, that for three consecutive years has clean audits. We are the only Department that I am aware of, that never stole PPE; where we use all our monies, where even the Auditor-General had no findings with regard to that. So, thank you, Dr Cloete and your team. [Applause.]

In terms of the budget, hon Speaker, again as I said that it will be the first time, we have received a bigger budget. The National Treasury has already made a recommendation with regards to the MTEF, the outer years and with regard to the Western Cape and ... [Interjection.]

Mr P J MARAIS: Point of order, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Hon Marais, you have just broken the Rule because we either indicate by a sign of raising a hand or indicate in the chatroom. I will forgive you for the last time as you ... [Interjection.]

Mr P J MARAIS: My hand has been raised, sir. My hand has been raised. I want to just bring your attention to it, sir, but if you do not think I should be allowed, I will withhold my question, but I did raise my hand, sir.

The SPEAKER: You may proceed, hon Marais, you are recognised.

Mr P J MARAIS: Thank you. The hon Minister said her Department is the only department with a clean audit. Is that a reflection on the other departments in the Western Cape ... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Point of order. Hon Marais?

Mr P J MARAIS: Yes?

The SPEAKER: Please take your seat, hon Marais. If you would like to ask a question, you ask the Presiding Officer and you will then get the message to the Speaker. If the Speaker on the floor does not want to accept the question, then that is the discretion of the person who is speaking. Now, in this case, I will ask the hon Minister whether she would like to take a question? Hon Minister?

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: I am left with only a few minutes, hon Speaker. I think after that, if time allows. I do not know what the time is, if the time allows it, I can take any questions, but you will guide me in that

The SPEAKER: What I would like to indicate to the House is that we do not give a time limit to the Executive when they speak on budget.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: So, I can take questions?

The SPEAKER: But what we do, what we certainly ... [Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Oh? Then I will take all the questions, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order, hon members. The Speaker is still speaking. [Laughter.] But what we always rely on is the Programming Authority because they guide us on the limitations in terms of the time. I simply execute what the Programming Authority decides as parties guide the Presiding Authority.

So, in this case, we have got a number of budget votes before us, and our Order Paper has got at least five matters before us. It is quite a long day. So, I would say to the hon Minister: finish your speech. When you respond later, then you can deal with those other matters, if that is the advice you need from the Presiding Officer.

So, to the hon Marais, that is the response. If you are not debating, then that will then be unfortunate, but she will then deal with those issues later on when she responds, if time permits for that, but your point of order was not sustained because it was not a point of order, it was a point of debate. So, let us proceed, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Thank you, hon Speaker. So, on the budget of R29 billion, I just want to mention again what I said earlier, that the Department of Health and Wellness is the only Department in the whole of

South Africa that has ever received a clean audit for three consecutive years.
Not only ... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBERS: Hear-hear![Applause]

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Thank you, Dr Cloete. Now, with the budget, just quickly, hon Speaker, we have got eight budget programmes.

Programme 1: which Administration, R1,4 billion which, is a decrease by 10%.

Programme 2: District Health Services, has been allocated about R11 billion, which is a 3,4% increase.

Programme 3: Emergency Medical Services, has been allocated R1,2 billion, which is a 4,7% increase.

Programme 4: Provincial Hospital Services, has been allocated R4 billion, which is a 4,2% increase.

Programme 5: Central Hospital Services, which are these two hospitals and also, the Red Cross Tertiary Services has been allocated R7 billion, which is a 3,7% increase.

Programme 6: Health Sciences and Training, has been allocated R397 932,

which is a 5,8% increase.

Programme 7: Healthcare Support Services: R5 billion, which is a 1,7% decrease.

Programme 8: Health Facilities Management has been allocated R1,1 billion, an 8,4% increase.

In conclusion, hon Speaker, given the budget pressures, it cannot be business as usual, especially with what National Treasury has indicated. So, it is going to be the first time we are tabling such a budget. We do not know what is going to happen in the outer years, but what we do know is that the Provincial equitable share for the Western Cape for the Department of Health is going to decrease.

The current financial challenges we face are not the first and will not be the last. We have to be innovative and bring solutions. We have to be creative as well. It is important as well, hon Speaker to communicate with our stakeholders and communities, keeping them abreast of our mission, vision, projects and budget.

Two crucial engagements that are coming up include the Health Indaba resolutions, which we are going to take up with our external stakeholders for their input, which as we did during the time of the NHI Bill and also, when we were talking about the UHC. That date has already been set for 29 April

for the first engagement, but we are going to take it throughout the province, as, we did before.

The second one is about community participation and also amplifying the peoples' voices where I will embark on a *Nothing about you, without you*, to the people of the Western Cape with regard to engaging the statutory bodies which are the health committees, the hospital board, the district Health Council, as a committee representative, especially talking about the Department of Health and Wellness.

Furthermore, hon Speaker, I want to, as part of the next two years, strengthen, as I indicated, hon Speaker, the road to wellness as the Western Cape third Health reform. South Africa has only had one health reform after 1994, but where we are going to is universal health coverage, which is what I am now taking up as part of the reform that South Africa needs and if we just sit and wait until National does something, we will end up not doing it, when our health system is so fragile in South Africa.

So, that is why, as the Western Cape, I said that I will championing for that. We will make the Western Cape a lab or a classroom where we will be able to pilot this UHC. UHC, in summary, is about leaving no-one behind. The issues of affordability, the equity, they form part of the UHC, especially now under COVID-19 conditions.

Lastly, hon Speaker, I want to thank the private partnerships for helping us

during our worst moments. To name a few: Local Government is part of those who have been assisting us throughout; to the mayors and councillors, private companies like CIPLA, the Gift of the Givers, Hospital Heroes, Shoprite and Oceana.

I want to thank the hon Premier for leading us, especially during COVID-19 pandemic, because there is nothing as frustrating as when you have all the energy and also the ideas, and then you find that you are not able to spread your wings.

Hon Premier, you listened to us as Health and as much as that sometimes, we were so bossy about it because we always say that 'we have got this'. The hon Premier would say, 'what do you mean when you say you have got this?' So, thank you for allowing us that opportunity to showcase that 'we have got this' and also, my Cabinet colleagues, where I will remind them saying that, when they are asking about how far are we with the vaccinations, we all say, 'why do you not go and find out yourselves'.

Thank you to the Cabinet colleagues for that; our partners for their collaboration and most importantly, we want to thank our staff that are there, Dr Cloete HOD, Dr Krish Vallabhjee – it is going to take long to [Inaudible.] [Applause.]

Also, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee, together with the Standing Committee colleagues for making us accountable and we are taking some of

these ideas and we really apologise for not being able, especially myself and Dr Cloete to attend some of those because we have been asked, we were in demand throughout, if we are not in the Cabinet, extended Cabinet or presenting elsewhere and also for the Ad Hoc Committee that was established through the Chief Whip and also the Opposition, everyone.

Thank you for being there for us and then, to my staff: we do not sleep. Everyone knows that there are more than 24 hours in a day. That is how it has always been, and I always say that RIP does not apply to the living. So, thank you very much for being there.

And then lastly, to my girls, my family, thank you, hon Speaker. Thank you. I table the budget of the Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness.

The PREMIER: Hear-hear [Applause.].

The SPEAKER: †Enkosi [Thank you.] Thank you, hon Minister. Hon members, I now recognise the hon member Windvogel. You may proceed hon Windvogel, you are welcome.

Ms R WINDVOGEL: Thank you, thank you, hon Speaker. Good morning, hon Speaker, hon members †en die mense van die Wes-Kaap [and the people of the Western Cape.] Hon Speaker, I want to bring the following under the MEC's attention: a clean audit does not mean good and quality service delivery because then, Manenberg, De Doorns and Khayelitsha would not

have still been waiting.

Hon Speaker, March 2022 marked the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 600 000 positive cases have been recorded in the Western Cape, resulting in over 21 000 deaths. The Western Cape Public Healthcare System has had to endure two full years of COVID-19 disruptions, including four waves. It has resulted in old and frail patients, on chronic medications like TB and HIV and Aids, being prohibited from visiting the healthcare facilities to receive care due to down-scaled healthcare services and many infrastructure projects were delayed.

As experts continue to warn us of a possible fifth and sixth wave, we must remain concerned with the impact of further disruptions to our public healthcare that is already overloaded with so many frailties, such as widening inequality, increased service pressures, staff and bed shortages, as well as aging infrastructure.

Hon Speaker, we have consistently warned that the Department's budget, including its COVID-19 expenditure, was not focused on permanent solutions. Billions are spent annually, putting a band aid over a gaping wound. We spend millions on Hospitals of Hope, vaccination centres of Hope, and now, there is no more hope as all these centres of Hope have been closed down.

Moreover, huge amounts were spent on expensive agency personnel to assist

in the fight against COVID-19, when that money could rather have been spent on recruiting permanent staff members. All these doctors and nurses are now getting laid off, leaving our healthcare system with large shortages. This will add to our persistent challenges, and we will bear the brunt in the imminent fifth wave. Our healthcare and economy can ill afford to have other disruptions. It is for this reason that we have to encourage people to get vaccinated. Youth under 35 are the most vaccine hesitant. Hon Speaker, Amilcar Cabral teaches us that, and I quote:

“Hide nothing from the masses of our people, tell no lies, expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures.”

As a government and members of the Legislature, we must find ways to engage truthfully with our youth and pursue them to get vaccinated. Let us understand the reason for their hesitancy and be transparent and as truthful as possible about the vaccines and possible side effects. As we are on our path to inoculate as many young people as possible, let us physically go to them and also keep communicating with them through media campaigns.

There is an allocation of R777 million for the continuation of the COVID-19 response, as well as R198,474 million for the vaccination programme. We hope that this R198 million will be used to open up more vaccination centres in working class communities, where we exposed the shortages last year. It must not be a repeat of the stillborn idea of Western Cape vaccine procurement.

Hon Speaker, two years of COVID-19 disruptions have also caused unspeakable trauma and difficulties to families of departed frontline workers. During the deliberation on the Department's Annual Report in 2021, the ANC proposed the building of a Wall of Remembrance in honour of the departed healthcare workers. The ever-reliable hardworking HOD, Dr Cloete, committed to seriously consider that suggestion, yet several months later, there is no progress on this.

The story of Petronella Benjamin, 62, the Western Cape's first health worker to succumb to COVID-19 should be told for a number of years to come. She contracted the virus in line of duty while fighting in the battle against the pandemic. She sadly lost the battle on 29 April 2020, a day before she could retire after 40 years of service. What a sad day. Hon MEC and HOD, it is saddening that two years since her passing there is no Wall of Remembrance to celebrate her and other departed health workers. This signals that their contribution; their sacrifices are undervalued. We demand that this budget makes an allocation for this important project.

Additionally, on the Western Cape Government portal on the COVID-19 dashboard, there must be a COVID-19 memorial wall, telling the stories of the frontline workers. Hon Speaker, there are many lessons to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Professor Amal Amin, commenting on the lessons that leaders should take

from the COVID-19 crisis, she said, I quote:

“The COVID-19 pandemic is not only a global health crisis. It is also a catalyst for reimagining the way we want to live going forward. From economic systems to sustainable development, decision-makers have an opportunity to move away from the status quo and make positive changes for the benefit of humankind.”

This is a clear line that we must do away with the state of health disparities. There is no place for health inequalities in the post-COVID-19 society. We must do away with the healthcare system that serves the rich better, while the poor are subjected to substandard healthcare service, like in the Khayelitsha District Hospital and so many others.

We remain hopeful after this Department has blatantly refused to use the available and additional R150 million for Khayelitsha District Hospital, despite the plea from the hospital’s COO, management and the Board. The challenges that the hospital has come from many years back and is close to a saturation point. Patients were sleeping on the floors in 2018, already when the NCOP conducted an oversight visit, which culminated into the Sigopa Petition re Khayelitsha District Hospital, when the MEC and the Department were summoned to appear before the Committee, they refused this, hiding behind the legal advice they receive from an unnamed senior counsel. This is ridiculous and unacceptable.

The Western Cape Government is not immune to accountability measures.

The 2018 season of patients sleeping on the floors, staff and bad shortage remain unchanged in January 2022, when we had conducted our own oversight visit to the hospital. Rapid population growth, rising poverty levels, drugs and substance abuse, violence and crime are adding to the service pressure at the hospital. In line with the Department's own criteria of allocation of funding in terms of equity and looking at the population and disease profile of people living in the drainage area of any hospital, as explained by the HOD in the Standing Committee meeting, support the case for additional funding to KDH.

Dr Kay, himself, acknowledged in the meeting that the hospital has a history of social determinants, including a higher percentage of trauma and violence compared to other hospital drainage areas. When we raised these as the reason for additional allocation, the MEC linked KDH to a black sheep of the family and said it would not receive special treatment. We are still shocked by her heartless comments, hon Premier and hon members, we demand an additional allocation needed to improve the service at Khayelitsha District Hospital. The continued decline to allocate the funds is leading to unnecessary deaths at the hospital.

Hon member, I was in Botrivier Clinic in December 2021, as invited by the clinic committee, where I learned of shocking news that the clinic had no clinical nurse practitioner. As a result, the cleaner had to assume the responsibility of a nurse. This is not an isolated case. There are many similar stories of chronic staff shortages in health facilities in poor

working-class communities, like it is the case with KDH. The clinic committee's request for departmental intervention fell on deaf ears. I ask myself: is this the idea of the universal health coverage that the DA supports?

Hon Philander, is this what you mean when you reject the NHI in favour of universal health coverage? In response to this call of Professor Amal Amin alluded to above, the National Government is moving away from the status quo and is making positive changes on health for the benefit of the people. It has introduced the National Health Insurance Grant Aid and ...
[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Windvogel, will you please take your seat. There seems to be a point of order. I am going to just pause the time, just help me Table staff, as you usually do. What is your point of order, hon Bosman?

Mr G BOSMAN: Good morning, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, as the Deputy Chief Whip of the Opposition always reminds us, the hon member needs to address hon Philander through you and not directly, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Bosman. I must say, I picked that up, hon Windvogel, but I wanted to know that the Whippery is still on duty. Now, I realise that all of the members are awake and they are guarding you. So, please address the Presiding Officer, ma'am. You may proceed.

Ms R WINDVOGEL: I will do so. Thank you. Thank you, hon Speaker, I will do so.

The SPEAKER: Alright.

Ms R WINDVOGEL: Hon Speaker, it has introduced the National Health Insurance Grant and allocated R43,6 million to the Province in this budget. It includes NHI, HP contracting components allocated R18,2 million and a mental health service component with R25,4 million. The dream of the NHI will soon become a reality, whether the DA likes it or not. We will do away with the status quo and put in place a system that provides equitable access to quality health services for all, despite one's social standing or financial status.

Hon Speaker, further to this, the hon Finance Minister announced in his budget that over the MTEF, an additional R15,6 million will be distributed to provinces to fund COVID-19 responses and to reduce a factor of budget deductions on essential medical goods and services. Moreover, R3,3 billion is allocated to absorb medical interns and community service doctors. As a result, the budget for the Department increased by over R1,7 billion from R27,4 billion in 2021/2022, the Main Appropriation to R29 billion on this budget.

We welcome the increase and we are grateful to the National Government.

Our biggest concern though, is this Department over relies on the expensive agency personnel. We remain vehemently opposed to the Department's overuse of the agency personnel.

Hon Speaker while we welcome that 8,39% increase on the budget for health facility management to a total over R1.1 billion, we are alarmed by the cuts on maintenance and repair projects. The province has a serious challenge of ageing and dilapidated infrastructure in hospitals like Groote Schuur, Tygerberg and various other hospitals in the rural outskirts. The cuts to this budget are not acceptable. We remain alarmed by the snail pace of the rebuilding process of the JF Jooste Hospital. Not a cent has been spent on the project to date. The people of Manenberg will have to wait until December 2032 to get their hospital. To add salt to the wound, the integration of health service in the City will lead to a closure of nine clinics in Mitchells Plain, Nyanga and Khayelitsha. We reiterate our stand that no clinic must be closed as this will further jeopardise public healthcare services. The MEC says no clinic will be closed, when a Mayco member has clearly said there is consideration to permanently shut down some clinics. Hon Speaker, in conclusion. The ANC has used the community healthcare workers as an integral part of the healthcare service delivery. We know that not much focus is given to them in this budget. We continue to be on the side of the workers who demand a monthly stipend of R3 500. We are aware of growing calls from various stakeholders, including unions for the Department to insource security services. The MEC must tell us why her Department is rejecting these calls. The ANC has

already expressed its view to not support this budget as motivated by the strong conviction that the proposed budget is anti-poor. It does not provide sustainable solutions for post-COVID-19 recovery and has failed to address the chronic staff shortages, widening inequality, infrastructure challenges and service delivery backlogs. We do not believe the Department is living up to its mission to provide equitable access to a quality health service to the people of the Western Cape. I thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Windvogel. You were within your time. Thank you very much for that. Hon members, I now recognise hon Xego.

Mr M XEGO: Thank you, †Somlomo. [Speaker.] The EFF in the Western Cape is disappointed to learn about the proposed provincialisation of the City of Cape Town's primary healthcare services. This is a move that we all know that the absorption of these health facilities would mean the closure of some of them. The likes of the Durbanville Clinic, Goodwood Clinic, Khayelitsha Clinic, Nyanga, Parow and Kraaifontein, to mention a few. This latest downward spiral collaboration between the Provincial Health Department and the City of Cape Town is unprecedented when one takes into account that they previously closed down 63 health facilities since 2014. This is a very shocking consideration, the fact that the Department itself acknowledged that the Western Cape population grows by 2% per annum, meaning that there should be the scaling up of the health facilities and resources in the province and not closure of facilities. It is

not acceptable for the Minister to say patients in hospitals, such as Khayelitsha, will continue to sleep on the floor, as she earlier mentioned, and cannot be accommodated. The billions of rands spent on infrastructure were also supposed to be redirected to converting the clinics they intended to close, to hospitals that will accommodate our people and to also consider the piloted project that she initiated in Grabouw, of a 24/7 hour facility to ensure that our people have got access to healthcare. The DA-led Provincial Government should always come up with solutions where there are challenges concerning our service delivery. This is the same Government that will always tell our people about private/public collaboration, when it comes to business development and issues concerning unemployment, but then the question is why is the very same Government not engaging into public/private collaboration in finding resources for our people and making sure the health facilities do not close their doors. The challenge we are facing in this Department, and it does not look like they are in a position to address them, in Ceres, communities are up in arms as the elderly and the disabled, together with the children, are forced to queue for hours outside the health facilities. It is in this regard that we request that this Department should consider opening clinics for 24 hours, so that our people would have access to healthcare. As the EFF, we are not going to promote a budget that does not help our people and we therefore do not support this Vote, as it still talks to the privatisation of health services because our people would now be forced to go to private facilities ... [Interjection.] Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: You are welcome. Thank you, hon Xego. Hon members, the

next speaker is hon August.

Mr S N AUGUST: Hon Speaker, the Western Cape Government boasts that it has the most functional and reactionary health services in the country. This would have been a breakthrough for the many in poor and rural areas, who are struggling to access basic health services. Just last week, we have seen the Ceres health district in the spotlight as residents of Witzenberg Municipality have been complaining for ten years of medicine shortages, overworked staff, shortages of beds and medical infrastructure that is falling apart. The City of Cape Town has without shame, ventured to close down or is trying to close down two clinics in Mitchells Plain amidst cries from the community to halt this action.

So, hon Speaker, when we speak about the best health services, what are we referring to? I personally know of clinics and community day care centres that patients despise going to. Why, because of how they are treated, the type of care that is provided and the services that this Government feels our people deserve. The health budget is an important one of any government. It directly impacts community development, mortality and the future of our nation. Today, I am calling on MEC Nomafrench Mbombo to wake up from her slumber and understand that there exists a real need for proper functional health services that residents can proudly access without fear of intimidation, prejudice or safety challenges. You have a responsibility to do better. This Government has the responsibility to do better. So, do not allow your service delivery mandate to be influenced by your need for self-praise. Do the right

thing and serve. We can have clean audits, but the people of this Western Cape are still suffering.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon August, I presume you have concluded your speech. Hon members, I now recognise the hon member Marais, †agbare [honourable.]

Mr P J MARAIS: Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, in my two minutes I want to try and get as much in as I can, but I want you to know it is two minutes, okay, do not expect such a good presentation. I cannot support this budget, although I supported the Main Budget, because we have been presented a different picture by the Children's Institute of Cape Town on 1 March 2022, about what happens in the Health Department.

We hear about a whole society approach which the hon Minister mentioned, but the hon Minister did not tell you that children's beds, paediatric beds are now being used for COVID-19 patients. So, the children are being neglected. She did not tell us that in the first year of COVID-19, we only had 284 000 cases of COVID-19, of which 12 300 were children and 59 died in the first wave. Four years later, the 284 000 became 658 000 cases with 46 455 being children under the age of 18 and 3 924 had to be hospitalised. She did not tell us these figures, she did not tell us while this, the whole society approach has improved on this. Is there a focus on children? I believe that children under 12, we were told, were put in single rooms at hospitals with no supervision. I also said that mothers and babies who had COVID-19, were kept together.

Now, I do not know how must they? You cannot come and say, 'I have a clean budget', it does not mean you have a very good record of looking after the health of our people. We are going to look at that. I want to know how many ... [Interjection.]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agbare.

[The SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable.]

Mr P J MARAIS: Oh, two minutes are over. Saved by the gong, hon Minister, saved by the gong. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Ja, I even gave you a few second more. [Laughing]

Mr P J MARAIS: It is alright, hon Speaker, that is fine.

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, meneer.

[The SPEAKER: Thank you, sir.] Hon members I now recognise hon Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I am not speaking on this Vote, thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Brinkhuis. If you had negotiated with hon Marais, you could have borrowed from him.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: That is in order, hon Speaker, he can continue.

The SPEAKER: Next time. Hon members, I now recognise the hon Chief Whip of the Majority Party, Hon Wenger

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Good morning, good morning, hon Speaker, good morning members. The Western Cape Health Department has a lot to be proud of. It is the only health department in South Africa that lives by the values of innovation, care, competence, accountability, integrity, responsiveness and respect for all the citizens which they serve. We welcome the hon Minister's announcements in the House today. So many exciting and impactful announcements. Congratulations to the Department of Health and Wellness. This is so much more than just a name change. It speaks to the strategic focus and direction of this Department. If health is the goal and wellness is the active process of achieving it, we cannot have health without wellness. We cannot have one without the other. This is a truly forward looking and holistic approach to ensure that you, the citizen, can live a happy, healthy and fulfilled life. Well done, hon Minister, and well done the Department of Health and Wellness.

We welcome the Violence Prevention Unit established in this Department. Public health can, indeed, make a valuable contribution to violence prevention and cover a much broader spectrum than the criminal justice system alone. This is the whole of society in action. We are so pleased that the Western Cape is following global best practice. Internationally, violence

is a focus of the work of the World Health Organisation and there are moves in developed countries for health departments to be involved in violence prevention. Again, the Western Cape is leading the way in South Africa. Hon Speaker, as South Africans and residents of the Western Cape, we have been through some very difficult times. The reality of COVID-19 has taught us many lessons and one in particular stands out and for me, that is interconnectedness. We saw how a government, civil society and private partners ensured that during this pandemic, instead of being pulled apart, the common purpose of human dignity and wellbeing were at the top of the agenda. We saw how the determination and resilience of healthcare workers instilled hope in all of us.

Hon Speaker, a people-centred government department makes sound policy decisions, in order to enhance the health of society for all residents in this province. Over the 2022 MTEF period, the departmental focus will shift from recovering from the pandemic and implementing six strategies of action: service redesign, governance redesign, health public policy, recovery strategies, surveillance and an agile health platform and vaccinations. This is not only a health system for you, but for all of us and a health system that will push us forward. Hon Speaker, this Department has all the hallmarks and it is clear on addressing the needs of residents, and has a strategically clear policy directive that makes its vision a reality. Healthcare 2030 is intended to enhance the health system's responsiveness to people's needs and expectation, with careful consideration given to person-centredness, integrated care provisioning, continuity of care and the life-course approach.

All of it will ultimately lead to the obtaining of universal health coverage. Hon Speaker, the Western Cape Health Department will continue to push forward with the resurgence, recovery and reset strategy. This plan describes how the Department intends to build and push forward as the health system recovers from the various waves of the pandemic and manages the risk of resurgence in the next few months. The pandemic has provided an opportunity for renewal and a reset of the Department's agenda, as we imbed the lessons that we have learned. Health is everybody's business and a framework of action has been created over the MTEF, which aims to present the Western Cape Health Department's long-term aspirations for a provincial health system, as well as map a course of action to ensure sustainable recovery from the pandemic.

As we take steps to manage the waves of COVID-19 and recover we must be mindful of the fact that social and economic effects of pandemic will influence the decisions we make today in order to shape the future. For this reason we welcome the R29 billion budget, and increase of R900 million or 3,2% from the Revised Estimates of last year. This budget speaks to a wide range of opportunities. R114 million has been reprioritised within the departmental baseline to fund projects linked to addressing surgery backlogs, mental health platform strengthening, addressing tech refresh backlogs, strengthening occupational health incapacity, central warehousing of non-pharmaceutical stock, obstetrics and neonatal improvements, as well as establishing capacity and capability for providing palliative care services. After centralising the procurement of PPE in 2020, it has resulted in a

complete warehouse being set up with PPE valued at R80 million in total.

This year, a significant focus is being placed on infrastructure and here, hon Windvogel would do well to pay attention. Spending on existing infrastructure assets increases by just under 11% with upgrades and additions and refurbishment and rehabilitation spending increasing by 99% and 54% respectively. Moreover, new infrastructure spending is 110% more in comparison to last year, 110% increase since last year. Now, this is a department that ensures quality healthcare for you, our citizens. Infrastructure projects for this year in total equate to 107 in planning, design, tender or construction phase. In the Western Cape, it is clear that we are committed to serving our residents effectively and safely.

Our communities can look forward to the following examples of good governance in action: New Avian Park Clinic, upgrade and additions to the Gansbaai Clinic, a replacement clinic for residents of Gouda and the surrounds, a replacement clinic for Ladismith, a pharmacy, compliance and general maintenance to Nyanga CDC, a replacement clinic for the Sandy Point satellite clinic, a replacement clinic for Villiersdorp, a BMS upgrade for Groote Schuur and an 11 kilovolt generator replacement at Tygerberg Hospital. By contrast, hon Speaker, the Gauteng Provincial Government spent R1,2 billion on COVID-19 ICU hospitals, which as the *Daily Maverick* reported this week, are laying waste. They are weed-riddled, abandoned and unfinished, where no citizen can receive healthcare services. Is that what hon Windvogel rather wants? Four out of the five of these Gauteng hospitals

were the sites for the controversial alternative building technology, field-intensive care units, which were commissioned in March 2020 and which are currently the subject of SIU investigations.

Let us compare this to the Western Cape Hospitals of Hope, world class field hospitals with digital patient records, Wifi for patients and good, quality care. This field hospital was later converted into a world class massive vaccination centre. No ruined dilapidated derelict buildings in the Western Cape, hon Speaker. This is rather an agile Health Department that cares for you, for the citizen, by delivering quality services. The ANC's answer to the same question was spending R1,2 billion on buildings that were never completed and never treated any patients.

Hon Speaker, as South Africans and residents of the Western Cape, we now know why the State of Disaster was not brought to an end because it means that corrupt persons in positions of authority could continue with procurement on an emergency basis, without compliance of any of the normal prescripts regulating public sector procurement. The Western Cape, by contrast, is the only province to have regularly published COVID-19 procurement reports for the province and its entities. This is a continued commitment by the DA-run Western Cape Government to good governance and transparency in public procurement. Hon Speaker, while some in the National Government were bulging ten het blinkbek gevreet [and ate with shiny mouths,] many South Africans did not know where their next meal would come from. While South Africans were struggling under the draconian

State of Disaster Regulations, ANC cadres were unduly befitting through unlawful and illegal activities in procurement processes, as well as their friends and family members. The R500 billion Relief Fund announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa back in April 2020, which was intended to combat the spread of COVID-19 and offset dire economic losses, resulting from lockdown, is now being investigated following cries of corruption.

The SIU spokesperson Kaizer Kganyago confirmed that all allegations of corruption relating to the R500 billion Relief Fund would be consolidated into one investigation within the National COVID-19 Proclamation. The President, who initially certified the Relief Fund which accounts for 10% of the country's GDP and relies on backing from international financial institutions, will need to sign the proclamation before the SIU can begin its investigative work. And as we all know, former Health Minister Zweli Mkhize has also been implicated in corruption. He resigned last year after being linked to an irregular tender, R150 million a Digital Vibes Communication tender, and it was revealed that Digital Vibes allegedly paid renovational costs to another townhouse owned by Mkhize's trust. The tender was apparently awarded to his close associates and apparently benefitted his children, who grotesquely flaunted their pet lamb – lamb, which he dressed in Louis Vuitton clothing and paraded on social media, while patients in hospital did not even have any food. Now, according to media reports, Mkhize is apparently linked to corruption involving the UIF as well.

Once again, this week, the ANC has shown to be rotten to the core even

outside of the parameters of the State. 346 staff members were scammed and robbed by their own employer. Lethuli House has not paid over employee tax, UIF or skills development levy, even though it was deducted from staff members. It is evident that with the ANC around you have to have eyes in the front, in the back and on the side of your head because they do not only steal from communities, they even steal from their own staff. It is unconscionable, hon Speaker.

In the Western Cape, we live a different reality, our doctors and nurses do not have to bring food to our patients in hospitals, a scene in some other provinces. The Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital ran out of food two weeks ago. Things got so bad that nurses had to use their own money to buy bread for patients for breakfast. For lunch, patients had food purchased from street vendors. Speaking to *News24*, one of the doctors said that it was a humanitarian crisis. This signals a complete moral decay and a compromise of National integrity where sick and vulnerable patients cannot be provided with basic healthcare and nutrition. The contrast between the delivery of services to citizens in the Western Cape and other provinces is stark.

I also wanted to respond to hon Windvogel and hon Xego on the clinics and just for noting, hon Speaker, through you, hon Xego, it is not privatisation of clinics, but provincialisation of clinics. As part of the Western Cape Healthcare 2030, the Western Cape made a commitment to engage the City of Cape Town to explore on efficiency, effectiveness and to realign City and provincial health facilities to improve health outcomes. The discussions on

provincialisation started a long time ago, many years ago, after the Health Department completed the provincialisation of rural health services two decades ago. Last year, the City Council approved that where the provision of health services by the City of Cape Town functions alongside the provision of comprehensive healthcare services with the Western Cape Department, the City will let go of those to be managed by the Province. There are nine joint facilities that will be transferred to the Province in this budget year. So, I think it is important for us to clarify that. Hon Speaker, finally and in conclusion, the DA unequivocally supports Vote 6. It is a budget that will push healthcare services in the Western Cape forward, to be even better for you, the citizens of this province. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon Chief Whip of the Majority Party. Hon members, I now recognise the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Thank you, through you, hon Speaker, thank you for the input from the colleagues, starting with hon member Windvogel. I do understand that when we write speeches, we write them beforehand and then, sometimes it can be difficult to make changes when the new information comes up because some of what she is responding to is what I have already tabled. Maybe it was for her to scratch, scratch, scratch and maybe comment around some of those. But having said that, thank you for the input.

I do not want to go through all that she indicated because it is part of her

speech and also, hon Speaker, they will distribute a summary of this and I think the speech has already been sent to your office for dissemination. But hon Speaker, I just also want to make use of this opportunity to explain further because when you deliver a speech, you just make an assumption on some of the things. So, sometimes it is better to give effect in regard to that.

Now, starting with the issue of clean audits: It is not the Western Cape Government who came up with the Auditor-General in terms of how the governments in South Africa need to be run. So, we started post-apartheid and then we ended up having a Constitution. If you look at Chapter 13 of the Constitution, it talks about finance and how governments should be run. If you look at the role of the A-G, in terms of the Chapter 9 institutions, this is what it is. It is not that we... because he was talking about the DA. We are not a National Government yet in as much as we make contributions to some of these, for example, as part of the Constitution.

Secondly, the issue about understanding what a clean audit is, it is not only – I think the hon member Xego also alluded to that, we are very aware that financing generally, without even looking at the auditing, health financing is a system on its own. The Health System is made up of many systems and one of the systems is health financing and then, the other system is human resources, the agents and all of that. If I had to talk about each and every system that builds a health system, hon Speaker, it would take very long. So, a health financing system, human resource system – leadership and governance is a system, health information is a system, research and access

to availability of medicine is a system and then, a service, which is the type of package of services you bring, is influenced by the other systems, like HR, if you need a specialist to do renal care and so forth, and all of those things. And then, we normally add another system when we say a people system because people should form an integral part of it.

So, we cannot just brag about clean audits out of context. It is part of building a health finance system that feeds to the whole overall system in order to see what packages of care we are dealing with. So, the bragging is about – you do not understand the amount of work that they have to undertake. Things that need to be put in place, the checks and balances and then, having smaller units out there looking at this part of this, which is too much compliance.

It is this National Government that came up with this where now the officials have to spend so much time on compliance. It is how it was made that it is crucial about it. So, it is part of it and here, hon Speaker, when I did orientation as a member of the Legislature in the first days, when we started in 2014, we were given a lot of books, which are – I am not sure if there are some? I always carry them with me. One of them talks about accountability and financing and all of that. It talks about this.

So, that is why we come and appear before SCOPA in the committees and account in terms of what we do with the monies. That is how things are. So, it is not that we brag out of context. So, just make sure that you understand

that it is not out of context when we talk about clean audits or unqualified or qualified and all of that. It is part of the system that was formulated nationally, where each and every government has to do that.

Now, on NHI, I think she was talking about “thanking the ANC Government for the NHI.” But the NHI, you do not want. Let me just give you some background about the NHI. Firstly, National Health Insurance, is an insurance, it is just like OUTsurance, it is like A&G – It is insurance. [Interjections.] It is an insurance. It talks about insurance in terms of the part that feeds into health financing as part of the building blocks. Now, what we are saying ... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. Please proceed, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Yes, what we are saying is about that. Indeed, financing of a health system is part of what needs to happen. That is how you deal with it because it is part of what needs to happen, but in doing that, the end goal must be a health reform that leaves no one behind, which is universal health coverage.

Health coverage rests on the pillars of equity, so it cannot be that the people of Muldersvlei or people of Moorreesburg only see a mobile clinic once a week. I am just giving an example on the issue of equity in comparison to the Metro. That is how it is. You cannot leave people behind. The issue of affordability: it cannot be then that I need a renal dialysis and just because I

cannot afford it, I cannot have it because there is no money, I have to pay. It is a part of all of those things and also, about the quality of care.

So when the NHI was introduced, it was supposed to be in three phases. Inasmuch when they say it is part of UHC, it is not because it only talks about one side, which is insurance funding and NHI is also supposed to form part of the UHC. NHI is a form of financing and is done in a few countries. There are different kinds of financing like in the UK, they use Bismarck NHI, I think it is also a part of New Zealand and all of those. It is an insurance.

So, when they started it, it was going to be in three phases. The first phase was 2012 to 2017. That phase 1 was about strengthening the health system, I mean the primary healthcare system and it was about piloting that. Then they started with eleven districts and then they added, I think, KZN and the Eastern Cape. Then for us, in the Western Cape, they identified Eden, which is the Garden Route, as part of it. It was about a ward-based community of workers, about school health and about infrastructure and so forth.

Now Phase 1 ended in 2017, yet you have, for example the PAC, the Pacaltsdorp Clinic. They identified that as part of the NHI. How come the Pacaltsdorp Clinic is still not built, yet it was part of that? I can name many others; the Parkdene, the De Rust Clinic in Oudtshoorn; they only did it later because they managed it themselves and then they wanted to appoint the contractors themselves, like in the case of the PACs. So, the first phase that was supposed to have been completed in 2017, you will find †dololo

[nothing] and now we have to pick up the pieces because how do I go to Pacaltsdorp and explain to them that that extension they were promised by National, actually that R14 million for it, keeps on decreasing. We are appointing professional services, we are doing this. It is managed by them.

The issue of appointing GPs as part of NHI, they said, no, they would do it themselves. We have got a company where we will just appoint whoever there, doctor so-and-so, in that district and they will come. That is why in the Western Cape we said, no ways, because you are strangling the health system. You cannot just appoint. Give us the money and we will do it ourselves and we did it ourselves. But now this thing about, “we have got extra money”, this was supposed to have been done long ago to bring these GPs in the rural areas because now they end up not using the money, they just †gooi, gooi, gooi [throw, throw, throw.] yet they were supposed to have established that.

Now, with phase 2 of the NHI, which is supposed to be 2017 to 2022 – the first phase was about legislation. They were supposed to have completed the amendments of the legislation by 2022. In addition to that, the NHI Bill, according to their process is long overdue and they were supposed to repeal twelve Acts out of those that include medical schemes. Where are we in repealing those Acts because even if the Bill gets passed in Parliament, nothing will happen without repealing those twelve Acts and replacing them the others, †dololo. [nothing.]

The third phase of the NHI is about taxes. Yes, taxes now, in regard to where they are going to get the money. We have already made inputs in terms of where they would be able to do it and the issues of the taxes and everything, but it will never happen until they fix and the repeal the Bills with regard to private hospitals, that were long due overdue to be regulated, it never happened.

That is the NHI we are talking about, which is supposedly the first ANC health reform. They never had any reform since 2000 - and. ... [Interjection.] Community workers were also also part of the NHI ... [Interjection.] Now, let me just talk about that because I also mentioned them ... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order! Order, hon members.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Community workers are part of a ward base which was part of Phase 1 of the NHI. Do you know that even up to now they do not know where to place them because they are supposed to be part of the health system? It went to the Bargaining Council where they talked about, I think it was Resolution 1, about salaries and whatever, and now, they are taking it back to the Department of Labour because nobody knows how to deal with it.

That is an issue and then for us, they will say go in there, we are going to pay whatever. They must fix it there because it is their own thing and we cannot do much. However, we do not fold our arms whilst they are snoring and wait

for them to wake up. What we do is make it a point that – and that is why we are going to have a health summit, which we actually did in 2016 on home and community-based services and we are going to do it again. Further conversations will take place with NPOs, civil society and community health workers as part of that. So I just wanted to be clear in regard to the NHI.

And then, lastly, on hon member Windvogel, I spoke – there is a reason we added “wellness” – I spoke about the upstream factors. You said Khayelitsha is not a black sheep or whatever. Health absorbs everything, every social ill; socio-economic and political ills get absorbed by health. All the inequalities that are generated outside the health system, we have to absorb and then we are expected to fix it.

For example, if I am in a school that is full, it comes to enrolment and then they will say go find another school. Nobody worries much about what is going to happen to uSizwe for not getting a school and by 2 o'clock, everyone goes home, the schools close and the learners are with their parents. If it is about their housing, if you are number 450 on the housing list, irrespective of whether you are staying in Emkhukhwini, it is not that the Department of Housing will have sleepless nights about that.

Someone has to fix the issue about not having housing and so forth, but when it comes to health, when Khayelitsha has got 300 beds and they are full, I still have to take responsibility for those ones, that wave. We cannot say, we are closing that gate now, Khayelitsha is full. You cannot.

In any health system, not only do we do not close but it means the whole cycle of 24 hours, seven days a week, 365 days; nobody gets a break. We even have to worry about those patients who are in private facilities, when they charge higher prices, when the outcomes are bad. As a Province, it does reflect on us. If there is a likelihood that there is a high infection or whatever and this happens in a private facility, it is our responsibility. We are responsible for the health of learners whilst at school, even if they are under other sectors. We are responsible for the homeless whilst they are under Social Development or whatever. That is what we do.

Now, that is why I was saying that with these upstream factors, like in the case of Khayelitsha, that the issue of trauma, especially over the weekends where people come in that have been shot, ... [Interjection.] have been beaten and whatever, it does have a bigger impact. So, the issue is how do I address the socio-economic factors in that regard because that is the main thing, but how can we work together in that regard? So, that is why we step up when the hon Premier challenges us to take over in terms of the Violence Prevention Unit.

We gave a presentation even when there were multi stakeholders in Khayelitsha, after those multi killings that happened there. Unfortunately most of the people who get beaten go directly to the hospital and get treatment, but in some cases, they will not go to the police station to report it. So, that is why it becomes skewed because the police will not have this information, but we already have the information. That is what has happened.

So, it is a whole of society and a whole of government approach and everyone needs to look at the socio-economic factors. So, that is why we participate in a whole of government approach in regard to jobs because for us, we want to see where we make appointments. We have a high level of employment because we know that economy and health, they are like this; when the economy is down you have the most social ills.

Similarly, if you have got sick people, it means that there will be an impact on production. Hence, we are also participating in the spaces of dignity and wellbeing, led by social development because we have got a footprint everywhere and we have to absorb all of those things.

So, hon member Windvogel, on the Khayelitsha situation, we can pump and add 500 beds, but it is not ideal to institutionalise people ... [Interjection.]. Do not focus so much on the beds for sleeping but you have to close the tap elsewhere so that you do not end up having all these social ills that are happening there. You cannot have a situation where we have got a high-level number of ... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon Minister, will you please take your seat? Hon Windvogel? What is your point of order?

Ms R WINDVOGEL: Ask the MEC to speak through you, hon Speaker, please?

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Windvogel. I just want to say to you, hon Windvogel, let us not break one rule to correct the breaking of another rule because we have to lift our hand in order to address the Presiding Officer and that has not occurred in this case. So, please just follow that rule. It makes it easier. Hon Minister, will you please address the Chair as you continue to speak.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Thank you, hon Chair, I thought that was exactly what I was doing. No, it is fine thanks. Now, I am going to skip the others.

On the the vaccination centres, I did not want to mention it, because I have mentioned it in previous speeches, but we are the only province that has built an 800-plus hospital within one month. China built their field hospital within a week, we built ours within a month. We are the only hospital that has done that and also, without wanting to waste time when we were out of the wave and at least we have got our ducks in a row because as you know, hon Speaker, we kept on learning because there was no way with this COVID-19 pandemic you would be able to transplant lessons from elsewhere. You have to use the local data and be informed about this. So, we have done it before, a similar thing.

When we had to say Athlone, we need a drive through in terms of the vaccinations, that was part of it. You cannot say that it was a waste of money. Now there is no need because we are going towards the integration of

COVID-19 vaccines with other services. That is why we even had a pilot, I mean testing through the Vaxi-Taxi, where you would go to a taxi rank. There in that gazebo someone is screening for TB, for HIV, someone is giving vaccinations and all of those things which are happening at the facilities. So, we cannot say that it was a waste of money for us to build those.

But, hon Speaker, I did indicate that we are ready for the fifth wave because we still have field hospitals like Sonstraal for the Weskus and the Cape Winelands and the Harry Comay for the Garden Route. We have got Mitchells Plain also, in terms of field hospitals and also, additional hospitals like Stellenbosch Hospital and Vredendal Hospital.

We already have staff everywhere. Like any province, even internationally, we implemented contract staffing during the highest peaks of the pandemic and so forth. So, the contracts have to end. The question we have now is why we are not employing them? We have seen in the Eastern Cape, they toyi-toyi, they even went to National about it, but it is the nature of the game.

You will have permanent staff and you will have contract staff. If we were to have another pandemic we would appoint staff on a contract basis, but we always mix. It is not only about agency staff. Now, hon member Xego, I did mention that we are not closing those nine centres. It is not the first time actually, where we will have both Local Government and Provincial Government under one roof. The issue is about someone having to absorb the

overhead costs and so forth.

For example, you are probably familiar with Nolungile Clinic Site C, where we both were. So, it is about that. It cannot be when you are dealing with children, child health is done by the City, so, you go that side, you turn right, you go to child health and then, whilst you are waiting, you find that you are also ill, and then when you are done with your child and then go. When you are ill as an adult, now, they will say go to that provincial site, which is under the same roof. And then, when you go there you start another queue. So, why can they not do it all under one roof?

So, when I say I am sick, the same person who is looking after me is looking after the child, instead of going to another queue. That is what you are trying to do, it is about doing it all at once. The question is why can you not do it? It is because each and every sphere has got responsibilities with regard to what type of a package they need to provide, and where we are now is about people who need a whole package of comprehensive care, according to the provisions of the ideal clinic.

So, in Durbanville they are not being closed there, Scottsdene, they are not being closed, Dirkie Uys, they are not being closed. We have done it before. We have Bothasig, you can see. That is what we have done. The patients will not even feel the difference because they did not know that actually there is a Sister in charge from the City, there is a Sister in charge from the Province, under the one roof. Nobody knows the difference. That is what we are doing.

So, NB, NB here in the province, there are no facilities being closed. If the City is closing any of their clinics, Mitchells Plain or whatever, we do not know anything about it. It is not our ...[inaudible] there is this fear of Government. They have got ownership of that. We do not know. So, it is up to them to make those kinds of announcements.

Hon member August, the other thing is because this is a budget speech you do not want to bring everything. The other services that we are bringing back like renal care, are already in areas like Saldanha, for example, where we make sure that people do not have to go all the way to Groote Schuur and all of those. So, we are opening up many of the services. Maternal and child health: Recently, I was in the Central Karoo where we saw how they are assisting high-risk women and babies that are coming not only from Laingsburg but even from the Moorreesburg side. So, there are many of those that we are opening up.

Thanks hon member Marais and hon member Brinkhuis for your [Inaudible.] concern, hon member Brinkhuis. Hon Chief Whip, thank you for all the inputs that you have made. Actually, you have responded to many of the issues that have been alluded to and also, just because I think the main part that I was excited about is about when you reflected again on the infrastructure because here, earlier it was about when are we going to build this? I did mention in terms of the EG, in the Garden Route, these are the kind of services we will be focusing on this year and all of those.

What we do is we have a manual of the health infrastructure. Actually, even in the APP, at the back of it, you will see each and every infrastructure project according to the delivery phase, where it says: concept, ending when, we will say that it is a replacement, new, or refurbishment, starting from when, ending when. In most instances I will ask the team to please fast-track one but it means that you have to rob Paul and pay Pauline, especially in the cases where we find that there is a high level of pressure in a particular clinic.

For example, at the Hani Coetzee you will find that the team – it was about prioritising Diazville. I said no, start with the Hani Coetzee and then we do Diazville later because they banned the clinic anyway, but the Hani Coetzee, at least you can see how the environment is. So that is what we do.

Hon Speaker, I think I have responded to all the questions. Thank you to the hon members for those. Lastly, again, I want to acknowledge the staff properly because I was not aware that there are others connected virtually. Again, doctor, I call him KV, Dr Vallabhjee, Chief Director of Support Services. He has been with us for 41 years. ... [Interjection.] if I take it altogether. [Applause] He was CEO of Victoria Hospital. It might be his last time.

Of course, you know Dr Cloete, not only the HOD of COVID-19, he is the HOD of everything, also of clean audits. He is the HOD of Wellness, he is also now the HOD of universal health coverage. Dr Cloete is known to me as

KC.

Then, we have got Dr Sadiq Karim. So, KS. He is the DDG and COO ... [Interjections.] We do not do politics in our field. As some of you know he used to be the CEO or Medical Sup for Groote Schuur ... [Interjection.]. Chief, †wag 'n bietjie [wait a minute.] The chief director for finance, I might not put it clearly in terms ... but financial management, Sisi Andankosi.

Somewhere we have Mr K, who is our DDG for Corporate Services – the money man. There he is. And then the Supply Chain Chief Director, Esmereldah Isaacs and also, with the team, the Director for Supply Chain Management, Ronel Gouws.

We have got the Director for Health Impact Assessments, the dashboard man, Dr Melvin Moodley. He is also there. The Director who deals with the appointment of clinic committees, statutory bodies and also the licensing of private hospitals, Ndoda Mavela, is also there.

Kariem Singh who is the Director for Strategic Planning is also there. uBoetie Konzama, who is the Director for Information Technology, I think he is there as well and then, the last person who I can see whilst I am here, the Chief Director for People Management, Bernadette. So, these are the people who make us look so good. Thank you very much the team, thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. Order, hon members. Hon Leader

of the Opposition, is that a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Yes, thank you, hon Speaker. Just a point of order. As far as we are aware, hon Speaker, hon Philander is the Chair of the Health Committee, the Portfolio Committee. Could you explain why she did not speak today and the Chief Whip instead took her place?

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Leader of the Opposition. Just before the response is given to this ... [Interjection.] Order, hon member. I want to release everybody in Health, unless you want to stay because I need the box for the hon Premier. Thank you very much and to the retiring gentleman, thank you very much. May God be with you. The hon Deputy Chief Whip of the Majority Party?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (DA): Hon Speaker, hon member Philander, due to family reasons was not able to join us here today and someone is standing in for her and it is becoming actually quite annoying when members of the Opposition are trying to pry into the information of peoples' private lives ... [Interjection.] and it has been happening like week after week after week. If they want to know about someone's private life, they can either go and ask the person themselves or through you, hon Speaker, ask for the information, but it is becoming very annoying now that people are prying into other peoples' private lives, and they do not even regard the POPI Act in this regard. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon Deputy Chief Whip. I think for the House, it suffices to say what is the basis of her absence. I think anything beyond that, it is not for the House to deal with. May I then stop any more discussion on this matter, otherwise it will just turn into something else. I am going to request a five-minute comfort break, hon Premier, and then we will just proceed with the – yes, yes, okay. It seems everyone is here, but nature just does need to allow members who have been seated here, just a bit of comfort break. Just five minutes. Please, I will suspend the House until five minutes past 12. Thank you.

[The House suspended and resumed after a short break]

The SPEAKER: Please be seated. Thank you, hon members. Now I am comforted. I am sure many of you are, it was a good comfort break. Now we move to the next Order, and I recognise the Secretary to do so. Mr Stemele?

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 1 – Premier – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2 – 2022]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Stemele. Hon members, I now recognise His Excellency, the hon Premier of the Western Cape, Mr Alan Winde.

The PREMIER: Thank you very, very much, hon Speaker, to the hon members of the House that are here, the Opposition, members online, to the members of the media, to all of the citizens at home, to the DG and the CFO that are

here today. Thank you very much for this opportunity to put forward the Budget for the Department of the Premier. A budget that is going to push forward for you, the citizen in this province.

Hon Speaker, the vision of the Department is to enable and lead a capable Western Cape Government. We aim to do so by embedding a culture of innovation and collaboration in all that we do to achieve this. We are guided by our values of being caring, competent, innovative, responsive and an accountable Government that acts with integrity.

We do this in the very best interest of the citizens of this province, and in all that we do we also do in the very best of interest of our country, South Africa.

Hon Speaker, we are driving innovation and collaboration within the Government by leading the response to the Provincial Strategic Plan, the Provincial Recovery Plan and by driving our Vision-Inspired Priorities, or VIPs, and specifically in this Department VIP 5. I also sometimes think about these VIPs as not only visioned-inspired, but also values-based vision-inspired priorities. Everything must be anchored in our values.

Hon Speaker, the Department does this by providing support in corporate services, including legal services, corporate communications, human resources, internal auditing, enterprise risk management, provincial forensic services and of course not forgetting IT support.

Hon Speaker, this Department is the centre of our Government. To ensure that we deliver these critical services, the Department's Main Budget Allocation for 2022/23 is R1,825 billion. I am pleased to note, hon Speaker, that this is a 4,6% increase over and above the 2021/22 Adjusted Budget and will assist us in service delivery mitigation and the implementation of VIP 5, or creating a culture of innovation and collaboration, and this increase, hon Speaker, I must thank the Minister of Finance, Mr Maynier, but I must go further than that.

You know, in preparation of this budget, as we have seen over years and specifically exacerbated by this pandemic, you go into the process with a bit of angst because you know that you are generally not going to increase our budgets, we are going to be cutting, and this year it is a bit different in this province.

I really want to thank the Minister, I want to thank the Provincial Treasury, I want to thank the Ministers, the HODs, the CFOs, because much of this is not only because SARS managed to get some extra income through commodity sales, but in actual fact through good governance; responsible governance; disciplined governance. That unlike other parts of the country who run out of their budget before the end of the financial year, they cannot even feed, as we heard in this previous debate, they cannot even feed even citizens in their hospital. They run out of funding because they do not have that good governance background; they do not have the good governance basis and

foundation. Those disciplines.

So I want to use this opportunity to celebrate the 4,6% increase, but also to thank everyone across this Government for the hard work in making sure, and the tough choices that you have to make in making sure that we do not only get those clean audits, the unqualified audits, but that we also through that discipline we actually end up making a difference in our budgets that can only make it better for you, the citizen in our province.

Hon Speaker, by increasing our allocation towards risk mitigation, and it is really important that we understand this important task in a government, we will be able to prevent breaches and target cybercrime. Cyber security breaches pose a significant threat to the Western Cape Government and our residents who are becoming increasingly dependent on our digital platforms and our digital channels. That is why information security has now been elevated to a provincial strategic risk.

During the past year alone two significant cyber-attacks were successfully thwarted. We do, however, expect this to increase due to a growing trend of cyber-attacks worldwide. It is a big, big issue, and we have seen that in this last year. We saw specifically a cyber attack that attacked our very Port here in Cape Town, and that halted exports, its massive economic and brand damage to our region.

So we have to make sure that we are preparing more and more for this new

environment that we are moving into, and especially because of COVID-19, how this new way of work really launched us into the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and so we have to take it very, very seriously.

The allocations for risk mitigation over the medium-term include R40,039 million for 2022/23; R80,98 million for 23/24, and R71,492 million for 2024/25 financial years. A further R2,5 million has been allocated as a contingency, should any external expertise be needed over the next three year.

I also want to take this opportunity to really thank our team and, hon Speaker, through you, the DG, the vigilance, the on-the-job 24/7, making sure that we are mitigating that risk, and of course through this budget actually just taking it to a new level.

Hon Speaker, in prioritising IT infrastructure, the Department's Broadband Project will continue driving the delivery of a high-speed network and connectivity, specifically into our rural areas. This, along with the free public Wi-Fi service, will ensure that vulnerable communities can bridge the digital divide.

Hon Speaker, a feasibility study to the value of approximately R20 million is currently underway to determine how best to improve internet services to all of our people across this province. The feasibility study will be funded by the United States Trade and Development Agency.

It will further bolster the Western Cape Government's Broadband Infrastructure Project by assessing the economic and technical viability and deploying new Broadband infrastructure across the province. It will also assess potential ownership and operation models for future Broadband deployments, and obviously we have to try and project what is going to happen into the future in this very fast changing and dynamic world.

Practically this will empower those living in areas with limited internet access by enabling them to apply for work opportunities, study, research and improve their overall career prospects. I look forward to launching this innovative project in May through this signing of the grant; we will do that in a ceremony. Perhaps here I must also once again thank Will Stevens and of course USA Aid, who have on a number of occasions come along with solutions for us and helped us in many ways in making a difference for the citizens in this province.

Hon Speaker, through VIP 5, an area in which we have also received an additional budget allocation, we are determined not to waste the lessons and the innovations that were born because of this COVID-19 pandemic, and I am not going to go through them, but I think everybody is aware, some really amazing innovations that came out of this pandemic time by all of our departments across this Government in making sure that we responded, but also using this opportunity to innovate.

The COVID-19 pandemic not only changed the way we live, but the way we work too. This resulted in the need to create a New Way of Work. In creating a New Way of Work, we are focused on what capabilities are required to foster greater innovation in service delivery and embed a new culture benefitting residents. This approach will be embedded in all four Recovery Plan focus areas and is intended to shift mindsets and include the behaviours required for the successful implementation of the Recovery Plan.

During the pandemic, innovative and collaborative solutions were speedily identified to improve internal operations and citizen-facing service delivery processes. We will therefore be finding ways to become a smarter and more agile Government.

To that end, the New Way of Work and Culture Change Programmes have been allocated R4,3 million through the adjusted Budget, to promote a client-centred culture, innovation for impact, integrated service delivery, governance transformation, talent and staff development and transversal foresight.

Practically, hon Speaker, this will include:

- An allocation of R2 million towards Kromme Rhee to fund innovation projects, especially the reconfiguration of the Provincial Treasury Instructions and the establishment of an Innovation Hub. That work has already begun, and I was very happy that the DG facilitated that top

management meeting and meeting everybody involved in the transformation of Kromme Rhee.

- Hon Speaker, a Skills Audit to be conducted among senior managers, to be followed by middle management. This is to ensure alignment with data in the Future-fit Skills Strategy in line with international best-practice.
- Hon Speaker, it will also be forming partnerships with local and international Higher Education institutions and training providers which feature prominently in the new PTI strategy. The final recommendations will be received by 30 November 2022.

Hon Speaker, during my SOPA, I committed this Government to listen more to the people it serves. To this aligned with our vision of being more collaborative and innovative.

That is why each programme in the Department will now report quarterly on the results of visits to frontline service delivery sites across our province and write an improvement report per site to benefit residents who use those specific sites, and those citizens will then, through this process, be able to witness the changes that come about.

This could include visiting clinics in Hanover Park or Thusong Centres in Beaufort West, and it will be conducted by chief directors and programme

managers. These reports will contain observations, recommendations for service delivery improvement, and this will ensure that the service delivery becomes more accessible to residents, that there is an improvement in frontline services and most importantly, that we are truly listening to the people of our province, and, hon Speaker, I also want to add that it is not necessarily only our own frontline services.

We must be bold enough to go further than that. To, for example, go to a Sassa queue, and here I must also ask this Legislature to also join us in helping in their oversight role in improving these services, at our frontline spaces, but also any frontline space where a citizen of this province is perhaps facing an issue.

I think about the Sassa queues, I think about perhaps the SARS queue. Those of you that drive through past the SARS office at the bottom of town just up from the Convention Centre, will generally see a queue around the building. We need to visit; we need to understand. It is not an announced visit but make recommendations and let us send those recommendations to Ed Kieswetter. I am pretty certain he will embrace them, and at the end of the day, just from that visit, we could actually improve the citizen's life.

I think of the Deeds Office here in the city. Something that really does hamper our economy and of course we have to change efficiencies and effectiveness there as well. So let us use this platform to really make a difference in the interest of our citizens.

Hon Speaker, through this budget we will further be implementing the commitments made during the SOPA, which include the establishment of a new Infrastructure and a new Mobility Department; a special unit dedicated to Violence Prevention, and the renaming of the Provincial Department of Community Safety to the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety. We will also now, as the Minister announced a short while ago, be renaming the Department of Health to the Department of Health and Wellbeing, and can I also say that this is something, as the Minister said, we have spoken about for a long time. I am really glad that it has happened, and it was really exciting that it happened through the consultation process.

We were talking about the Violence Prevention Unit and the Department themselves said is it not about time we added “and Wellbeing” to their Department’s name, and so thank you to that. Thank you to those involved, and I really am looking forward to this journey, this new part of our journey here in the province.

Hon Speaker, during the SOPA I further outlined that the Western Cape Government is guided by its three north stars of jobs, of safety and wellbeing, which are critical in our recovery. This Department is playing a part to promote safety through the Policy and Strategy Unit.

Hon Speaker, that unit will continue with its researching, its legislative and its policy amendments to reduce alcohol-related harms, the support that it

gives to the Department of Community Safety.

It will continue partnering with the Department of Social Development (DSD) to develop norms and standards and improve family strengthening programmes and referral pathways here in the Western Cape. The Minister continues in her trips around the province to highlight these issues that are facing our citizens, and this Department will continue with its support there.

We will continue commissioning research to map all current youth and youth-at-risk programmes offered in the Western Cape. The unit has been allocated R400 000 in 2022/23 on this project, and it will work in partnership with the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports and the Department of Social Development.

This unit will also continue partnering with the Provincial Department of Education, DCAS and the University of Cape Town, to pilot the VPI@Schools – Violence Prevention Initiative at Schools – behavioural programme in schools, to give young people the tools to regulate emotions, to improve mental well-being and reduce violence.

The pilot will be rolled out in 50 high schools in priority areas, empowering approximately 2,000 learners, just short of R2 million has been earmarked in 2022/23 financial year for this programme.

Hon Speaker, the Children's Commissioner, Christina Nomdo, is further playing a vital role in promoting safety through her office's work, where she

works with child participation strategies, for which she has already started gaining international interest.

This requires children to participate in the work of the office of either attending a Community Child Rights workshop, contributing to consultations with children, or becoming a child government monitor in the Office of the Commissioner.

For the 2022/23 Adjusted Budget, a total of R10,413 million will be allocated to the Children Commissioner's Office, of which R6,754 million has been allocated towards the Compensation of Employees. This also includes an additional R1 million to fill posts, empowering this office further.

Thank you and well done, Ms Nomdo, for the important work that you do in promoting the rights of our children.

The second recovery area in which our Department is playing a key part in supporting well-being. That is why earmarked funding has been allocated to optimise the Western Cape Government's communications and ensure that its messaging is impactful and responsive.

A total of R25 million has been allocated towards strategic communications. The communications, which result from these allocations, empower residents with the necessary information to get, for example, vaccinated, or practice the necessary behaviour change, and of course to promote personal

responsibility.

This is critical as we begin to normalise our response to the pandemic and focus our attention on economic recovery.

Hon Speaker, included in this is an allocation towards strategic communication in the continued roll-out of the Department's Anti-Gender Based Violence campaign, which aims to foster awareness of sexism, misogyny and GBV, which presents itself in everyday life, calling on men to take a stand against it.

Our province, and indeed our country too, are plagued by GBV. Hon Speaker, we have normalised treating women and members of the LGBTQIA+ community as if they were objects and not human beings. That is why we are taking a stand against GBV through this important campaign that specifically speaks to and encourages men to play their part in ending GBV. We need to confront this issue head-on, and all of us, every single one of us in Government, in private sector, citizens of our province, every one of us need to tackle this head-on.

Hon Speaker, a further commitment to promoting well-being, we are continuing to provide in-house telephonic psycho-social support through the Department's Employee Health and Wellness services to those in need of support. This support is provided through our designated call centre. Also, a really, really valuable service, and you can feel it when you speak to people from the call centre, or people who receive calls from this call centre.

Hon Speaker, the total support provided by this programme since the start of the pandemic has benefitted particularly those employees serving on the frontline. A total of 67% of services rendered since the start of this pandemic were provided to employees in the Provincial Department of Health, and you heard the Minister of Health speaking about it in the previous debate. It is those frontline workers that have been on duty for over two years now, and of course it is not over. We are still in the middle of this, and so that is why this is such a critical support service.

Hon Speaker, 29% of the officials are from the Provincial Department of Education, who again also have always been on the frontline dealing directly with our children, their parents and this pandemic during some very, very difficult times.

Hon Speaker, we have seen concerning mental health statistics due to the pandemic, which is why we are continuing to provide our employees' well-being. The Department is also recruiting wellness interns to assist citizens at the coalface. To this end, R3,261 million was allocated for the 2022/23 financial year towards mental health services, because it is not only about those frontline workers in Government, but also about our citizens. This is a service for you.

Hon Speaker, a key stakeholder in ensuring that safety, jobs and well-being are supported is Local Government. However, a wide range of challenges

exist impacting service delivery at the local level.

We need to support local governments in addressing any challenges they face. For this reason, we have earmarked funding for governance and legal advisory support to municipalities to promote stability following the 2021 municipal elections. This includes an allocation of R5 million for Local Government assistance; R2,5 million for legal advice and R2,5 million for forensic assistance. By improving Local Governments' ability to deliver services, we will ensure that residents can live a life with dignity.

Hon Speaker, the Western Cape Government is dedicated to ensuring that our province's local governments thrive, particularly where challenges are identified. That said, we will not tolerate corruption where it rears its ugly head. Our duty as a Provincial Government is to serve the residents of this province and should we identify corruption at the local level, we will immediately act against it by using every single tool at our disposal.

Hon Speaker, one of the things that I have long called for to promote jobs, is ending the National State of Disaster once and for all. There is still no hard commitment by the President to end the National State of Disaster by 15 April. The removal of some restrictions on the economy should not be viewed as a license to dither yet again. The State of Disaster is an extraordinary measure that cannot be extended indefinitely.

Hon Speaker, the Western Cape Government is closely studying the proposed

health regulations that will be introduced under the existing Public Healthcare legislation, as mentioned by the President. We will push back hard against any measures that hurt the provincial economy, and which are not rooted in the best possible science or scientific advice, factoring in all recent evidence. It cannot be allowed to be a backdoor to sneak unnecessary disaster regulations back in again.

Hon Speaker, as I close off, I want to acknowledge the resilience shown by those working in the events, the hospitality, the tourism and the catering industry, our artists. What I call the “experiential economy”. I really know that these last two years have taken their toll on you, on your industry, on the people that have lost their jobs in that industry, and I really want to say that while it has been crippling, we must be there to support you to open again, and I think those last comments and last changes have already given us a step forward, and we must embrace in helping all of you in this experiential economy, claw back those jobs that we have lost.

Hon Speaker, as a Provincial Government we will continue to play our part ensuring that you can bounce back stronger than ever, and an approach to supporting you will be guided by our culture of collaboration and innovation.

Then, hon Speaker, finally before tabling this budget for debate, I would like to say first of all to the Chair, thank you very much for the role you play, and of course the Standing Committee, and of course need to continue to play. As I have said one of these new innovations that we want to bring into

Government is actually unannounced visits to the coalface. I think this Committee should be doing exactly the same thing.

I also want to thank the Director General and everyone in the Department of the Premier. I want to thank my office and everyone in my office. I want to thank each and every public servant in this province who has gone above and beyond the call of duty over the past two years. I want to thank you on behalf of the citizens of this province. Thank you, hon Speaker. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Premier. I am just going to request that we move the stage. The hon the Leader of the Opposition has requested to speak from the podium. So, there is a mobile podium here, hon members. It is moving to his chair, to his desk rather. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon members, order. Hon members, I now recognise the hon the Leader of the Opposition, hon member Dugmore.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Also, greetings to the hon Premier and other members in the House and outside.

Hon Speaker, I want to actually invite the Premier. He comes here today, and he talks about queues at SARS, and we support making proposals to reduce those, but why does this Premier not talk about the lived reality of potholes, of leaking drains, of sewerage spewed across the streets in many of our

communities, running drains, the filth, the state of our water?

He does not mention that, and I challenge him today when he responds, to come with the ANC, to come with me as Leader of the Opposition and our other MPLs, to actually see the service delivery which is going on in the biggest city in this province. We have seen the absolute unwillingness to even confront the City when they set up a concentration camp for the homeless. That is what the Premier should be worried about in his Department in terms of their oversight role.

So make the proposals about SARS, that is good, and Ed Kieswetter, I am sure would listen, but come with us and actually see the reality of Cape Town. That is what I challenge you to do, and while we are about it, let us go and look at the Philippi Stadium, which has been allowed to actually – you talk about wellness and well-being, go and look at the Philippi Stadium and the absolute state of uncaring, and the unkept nature of that stadium right in the middle of our communities, which you are supposed to serve, and that is the problem, hon Premier, because in what you and your Department do, there is a thread of denialism about how race, class and gender have impacted on the lived realities of people, and the inequalities which actually exist.

It is the Premier and his Department who are supposed to give leadership in the Western Cape, not just in regard to this budget that we are debating today, but in regard to the province as a whole. We are asked, hon Speaker, today to approve R1,8 billion; a R103 million to support the Office of the

Premier; R86 million for Provincial Strategic Management; R209 million for People Management; R1,2 billion for the Center for E-Innovation; R126 million for Corporate Assurance, and R54 million for Legal Services.

Last week during the Second Reading debate I said that budgets are not neutral. They reflect choices and the ideological orientation of the governing party. This budget is there to support the leadership that the Premier's Department is supposed to provide for the entire province. I do not doubt, on Speaker, the energy of the Premier, but what concerns me, hon Premier, is that you are leading this province deeper and deeper into inequality.

What concerns me, hon Premier, is your blatant disregard for the redress provisions in both the National as well as the Provincial Constitution. I am arguing today, hon Speaker, that the conduct of this Provincial Government is in certain material respects unconstitutional. This is because the party that the Premier belongs to does not believe in redress for those unfairly discriminated against under apartheid.

So that is why he would not be concerned about potholes, about the stench, about the filth, about block drains in the City of Cape Town for hundreds of thousands of people. This Premier is thus under instruction to undermine employment equity, broad-based black economic empowerment, land distribution, as well as the minimum wage.

Hon Speaker, in the Portfolio Committee discussion the hon Premier could

not name, and I hope he has come here today with the name of a single provincial law or policy, that, as required by the Directives of Provincial Policy, Section 10, enshrined in our Provincial Constitution, actually advances those who are victims of unfair discrimination. I am looking forward to him just mentioning one of those policies or provincial laws.

It is obvious that under your leadership, hon Premier, through the hon Speaker, that this Province has finally abandoned any pretence of establishing a representative public service in our province, seeing Coloured, African and White public servants fairly represented at the senior management level. You have abandoned this. Instead, you have continued using the Zille term “fit for purpose” in the most cynical of ways to block employment equity in your own Department and in this province.

There is irrefutable evidence of how the DA has practiced cadre deployment, and in the process deliberately undermined employment equity. There is proof of that, and on that score, hon Speaker, we as the ANC will now launch a PAIA application to obtain all the minutes and correspondence regarding DA cadre deployment from 2009 to date. This application will be launched in April.

Hon Speaker, the hon Premier cannot make an oath to uphold the National and the provincial Constitution and the laws of this country and the province, and yet simply undermine those laws that his party does not like or support, because that is what is happening. At best you have allowed senior officials

of this very Department to preside over the culling of African public servants in the Western Cape. The tragedy is that a representative and diverse public service would actually lead to a more capable, a more in tune with the needs and demands of the communities that this Government serves, but the Premier must face up to the fact that he has continued the cynical approach of the Premier but that came before him, of so-called “fit for purpose” and in the process undermined the capability of this Government. It is a tragedy, hon Speaker, that the Premier has abandoned any notion of the Western Cape as a home for all of its people.

So, hon Speaker, this is my first concern with this budget, the Department which is supposed to be inclusive and representative of the people of this province, has no plans in its own Annual Performance Plan to change this. Not a word about employment equity. When black and coloured prospective tenants, for instance, are blocked by racist landlords in this city, there is not a whimper of objection from the Premier's Office.

Hon Premier, you lead a Government which has never said a word to defend the Palestinian people against Israeli occupation, and the brutality used to deny the very right to self-determination.

This Legislature has never lit up this building in green and black and red and white of the Palestinian flag, and worst, hon Speaker, it is you, hon Speaker, who refuse to debate the Palestinian issue when that was requested by hon member Brinkhuis from Al-Jama Ah, and we have a situation where the hon

member McKenzie, who is sitting in this House, wanted to call to order a staff member of this Legislature because she was wearing a Palestinian flag, or a Palestinian scarf. Yes, it is the Premier, without any authority to do so, that decides to boycott Russian Federation diplomats.

By doing so this Government and this Legislature undermine the efforts of President Ramaphosa to assist with negotiation and mediation to end the war in Ukraine, which is what we need to do. Instead, his Cabinet slavishly backs the United States of America and NATO's approach.

In essence this DA stands exposed, in fact, as the shop stewards for neo-colonialism and right-wing liberalism. In essence it is actually, hon Speaker, about seeing white lives as more valuable than black ones. I want to place on record here today that I support the position of our Government not to take sides in this war. We trust that the talks in Turkey today will result in a cessation of hostilities. This war must come to an end, the human suffering must stop, but the Cabinet's double standards, the duplicity and the racism are there for all to see.

Also from you, hon Speaker, for refusing this House to debate the Palestinian issue with, and then without consulting us, wanting to light up this Legislature. What about lighting up with the Palestinian colours? Why not? Why the double standards? Why the hypocrisy? Let us support President Ramaphosa's efforts to bring peace and security to the Ukraine.

As we discuss this Budget Vote today ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [DA]: Point of order.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ... it is your party, hon Premier, which will ...

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon the Leader of the Opposition.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [DA]: Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. Is it parliamentary for the Leader of the Opposition to engage you where you in the Chair cannot have an opinion or rebut his claims? Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister Mitchell. It is always very tempting because members have this one opportunity to debate. He is not part of the POC, the hon the Leader of the Opposition, but he knows the Rules and he is breaking his own rules.

So, for highlighting that, it is very important because the Chief Whip must engage the speaker in the platform that has been set for that purpose, but not here, and I would have expected that his [Inaudible.] from the majority, from the Opposition party, would actually draw his attention to that.

So, thank you for protecting the Presiding Officer. That is exactly why the

Rules predetermine. Will you please proceed, hon member Dugmore, with that determination so that we do not draw the Presiding Officer into the debate, because it is procedurally unfair, and it is flawed.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, could I just be reminded about how much time I still have? [Interjections.] I have got 16 minutes ... [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: I will tell you now – order, order, hon members! Order, hon members. You have ...[Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Eleven.

The SPEAKER: You have used nine minutes 18 seconds. So you are left with just over six minutes.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you, hon Speaker.

As we discuss this Budget Vote today, it is the party of the hon Premier, the DA, that will tomorrow move a motion of no confidence against President Ramaphosa's Cabinet. This provides us with a good opportunity to actually reflect on what has been achieved under the leadership of President Ramaphosa and compare this to the leadership as provided by the Premier, and what is being done in terms of this budget.

One of the most significant articles which captures what President Ramaphosa and the ANC have achieved since his election at the ANC's 54th National Conference in 2019 at NASREC, was written by Dr Oscar van Heerden, Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Fort Hare.

The article tells the story about the race between the tortoise and the hare, and Dr Van Heerden writes, and I quote:

“Since he was elected in February 2018, President Ramaphosa has taken decisive steps to end State-capture, fight corruption and rebuild damaged public institutions. With regard to his promise to rid us of corruption, these are some of the measures. He replaced boards in several captured SOEs with competent, credible people. Eskom in January 2018; Denel April 2018; Transnet May 2018. He instituted the Nugent Commission of Inquiry into SARS, which found severe governance and operational failures in May 2018. He appointed new leadership at the Directorate of Priority Crime Investigation (the Hawks), which has restored the credibility and stability and led to tangible action against alleged corruption. He appointed a high-level panel on the State Security Agency towards rebuilding and restoring the integrity of our intelligence services that had been stolen dry by the enemies of this country.” [Interjections.]

Yes, enemies, the enemies. Ja, the enemies. That is right.

“He appointed a high-level panel, and these are being implemented. He then rightfully terminated the employment of the then Commissioner of SARS, Mr Tom Moyane; replaced him with Mr Kieswetter following the Nugent Commission, and it does not stop there. He appointed a new National Director of Public Prosecutions.”

We now have a new Director of Public Prosecutions in the Western Cape. I want to congratulate Advocate Bell.

“The President then appointed the SIU Special Tribunal to expedite civil claims against corrupt individuals and the recovery of stolen funds. He removed Advocates Jiba and Mrwebi from the NPA based on the findings of the inquiry into their fitness to hold office. He then established the National Prosecuting Investigating Directorate.”

And I will provide a copy of all these achievements because it is the Premier’s party who tomorrow wants to put in place a motion of no confidence against the National Cabinet, and I want to say specifically, specifically I want to say that the Premier ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ... that in terms of doing all of these things, this was the President and his Cabinet, but now, and the particular thing that I would like the Premier to take note of, is that when you

say that the tortoise is too slow, or that he has done very little in the way of advancing the fight against corruption. Or better yet, you say that he has no backbone. He is completing this race way ahead of the hare.

President Ramaphosa has achieved the above working with his Cabinet and supported by the ANC. I would like the Premier and his advisors to pay particular attention to the conclusion of the article by Dr Van Heerden when he writes:

“The lesson of the story of the tortoise and the hare is that you can be more successful by doing things slowly and steadily than by ...”

Yes:

“... than by acting carelessly and quickly.”

It is clear that as we discuss the budget of the Department of the Premier, we remind him of the quick fix and careless announcements that he made in his SOPA address, without adequate consultation he simply announced new departments. It now appears that there is uncertainty, division and confusion, not only amongst officials within the Provincial Government, but among some of your own MECs.

More haste, hon Premier, less speed. Too little detailed planning, no concrete impact. Form, but no substance. Just like the Safety Strategy. We have never seen, up until today, a detailed business plan with measurable outcomes for

the Provincial Safety Plan.

Hon member Kama exposed this yesterday. There is no accountability for what each MEC is supposed to do. That is what a Premier's department is supposed to do. What happened to the Safety Cabinet, Premier? When last did it meet? That is your job of your Department, Premier. Hold your MECs and their departments accountable, not demoralise and confuse them with changes that were not thought through. That was simply media announcements. More haste, less speed. Less impact on the ground compared to what the President has actually achieved by simply doing what he is supposed to do.

You are failing because you have failed to plan in detail. The allure of quick fixes which can be spun in the media is tempting, but they are fast losing their sparkle. The SOPA announcements, what we can call "shiny, happy people announcements", no informing theory, no detailed analysis, the energy of the hare is misplaced, and tragically that is why this Government is failing. It is form over substance; it is careless and not thought through.

The Department trumpeted community Wi-Fi access. The people of the Western Cape were promised community Wi-Fi hotspots in every ward. One of these instances is a Broadband rollout. This was marketed as public Broadband rollout for public Wi-Fi access. Then it changed to Western Cape Broadband rollout, and now WCG Broadband. With billions spent we can safely call this project a failure as it has done nothing other than to upgrade Provincial Government and Local Government buildings. Not a single

community Wi-Fi hotspot has been set up, rather some Government buildings have offered public Wi-Fi access, and there is a big difference between that. One official even admitted that while the service is available 24 hours, its range is only 80 metres.

So, what was once referred to as a mechanism to provide public Wi-Fi hotspots ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. Hon member Dugmore ...[Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ... across the province, it now seems to have been done only in a limited way.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Dugmore, you have got less than a minute to conclude.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: Yes.

The SPEAKER: And again, please address the Presiding Officer.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: So that is why, hon Speaker, we, as the ANC, will insist on public Wi-Fi hotspots within our communities, that are planned to take into account safety, proximity and 24-hour access in the 406 wards in this province, in those where poverty, inequality and unemployment

[Inaudible.] the ANC calls for public Wi-Fi hotspots within each VD in the ward. We will mobilise all Councillors in these wards, irrespective ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ... of party affiliation, to demand accessible and safe public Wi-Fi hotspot ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Dugmore.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ... in every VD, in every ward, which you have failed to do ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: ... because you have failed to plan.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. [Applause.]

An HON MEMBER: [Inaudible.] about the ANC.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order, hon members, order. Thank you to the Leader of the Opposition. Before I move to the next speaker, there is a hand. Hon the Deputy Chief Whip of the ANC.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: Hon Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: Hon Speaker, I just wanted to check with you, the hon Minister Mitchell raised on a point of order, that the hon Leader of the Opposition may not address the Presiding Officer without the Presiding Officer having an opportunity to respond, which you ruled was correct, and you then also criticised the Whippery.

Could you please just indicate, hon Speaker, which Rule basically states this, just for ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: ... further reference and so that we can learn, thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, thank you, hon members. Hon member Sayed – order, hon members! You see when you start dealing with the Presiding Officer in that manner, you touch on Rule 59, and the other Rule that is affected by that, is Rule 62.

So, it becomes very difficult, and I think that is why we need to deal with the

Rules correctly, and we continue to improve on our Rules because they are not static, but when we have them and whilst we have them, we need to apply them and respect them.

So that is the basis for which I then made that determination when that point of order was raised. If it was not raised I was not going to do that because I expect the Whippers and the hon members to be active during this debate, but I was going to defend myself when I speak in the POC as the body where I account to for those matters, but I thought it was important that I rule on that matter in the manner in which I have done so. Thank you very much, hon Sayed.

Hon members ... [Interjections.], I see – order, hon members! I see there is another hand in the online platform, hon member Kama, what is your point of order?

Mr M KAMA: No, thank you, hon Speaker. My ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon members, hon member Kama, you may proceed.

Mr M KAMA: Yes, yes, thank you, hon Speaker. I actually raised my hand before hon member Sayed and wanted to check whether perhaps the directives you had given on how we continue with a hybrid, or online system, if we are allowed to clap for that wonderful speech of the Leader of the Opposition, because I am tempted to do so. [Laughter.]

The SPEAKER: [Laughs.] I am sure you will clap alone there; it is difficult. Hon member Kama, if I may, on our members, order. If you recall [Interjections.] if you recall, in the directive that I issued on the 17 April 2020, the difficulty was that if you clap on the microphone and everyone claps, then there is chaos, but for the hon members who are in the hybrid venue, as you will recall I made the same determination in terms of the ruling when we were in the Bergrivier Municipality in Velddrif, that, hon members, we cannot just clip the wings and curtail democracy when members want to freely clap in the Chamber or in the hybrid venue, but online it is difficult.

So hence then it is outruled in terms of the determinations as approved by this House in 2020. So – but you can clap alone and as another member, but switch off the microphone [Laughs], but thanks, hon member Kama, for creating that indication.

May I then proceed, hon members? We are now at 1 o'clock almost, we are four minutes before. I do not like breaking the order, hon members, do not [Inaudible.] the Presiding Officer. Personally, my preference is not to break in the middle of a Budget Vote. However, we will see how far we will go with the remainder of the speakers, and then determine what time we break for lunch, because the reality is that we have service providers and we do not want to have fruitless and wasteful expenditure on the food that has been prepared for members and some of the support teams here.

May I then say let us proceed to the next member. Hon member Xego?

Mr M XEGO: [No audible response]

The SPEAKER: Alright, hon members, in the absence of hon member Xego, we will see whether he pitches before we conclude on the Vote, we go to hon member August.

Mr S N AUGUST: Hon Speaker, over the course of the past couple of weeks, I have listened to members constantly referring that the Western Cape is the best-run province in comparison to other provinces led by the ANC.

As residents of the Western Cape, our people are suffering most as we constantly measure ourselves up to other provinces. It is true that the standard of leadership in South Africa is extremely low, but this in no way gives the DA the moral high ground when it comes to service delivery.

What we need to do is demand accountability. Not by comparing this province with the rest of the country, but by ensuring that we remain at the forefront of meeting the basic needs of services to safeguard the human rights of our people. The Office of the Premier is an important channel in achieving these interventions as it focuses on developing strategy and achieving sound governance.

Hon Speaker, today I would like to call on the Government to consider finding commonality amongst the policy prioritisations and the budgets that

go with it. Entire departments are operating in silos isolated from one another, and as much as that is how things have been since the dispensation of democracy.

We have learned that working alone is equal to working against. I am urging this Administration to start focusing on the functional programmes between Department of Health and Social Development, tackling crime by providing social interventions and community development initiatives. The Transport Department should be able to work with Tourism and Economic Development. This Government and the Office of the Premier need to start considering programmes that share in the collective objective of your departments, and perhaps this year we will start seeing service delivery for the people. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member August, you were within your time limit. I appreciate that. Now we move to the hon member Marais. †Agbare.
[Honourable.]

Mr P J MARAIS: Thank you, hon Speaker.

I would like the Premier to reflect on what he says. He is always guided by the North Star. I want him to start looking south. Let us look at the Western Cape, which is not to the north, hon Premier, and tell me the following: here in the Western Cape the big issue is unemployment, poverty and crime. Low should be your focus if you look south and not north.

For once we have a Court ruling in the High Court about the equity laws, labour equity laws. I was very much involved in that, and we won the court case with the help of Solidarity Trade Union. Are you sure the Western Cape, public and private institutions, comply with provincial demographics when they appoint people in our hospitals, in our schools, in the private sector, the supermarkets? Are they compliant, and does it worry your Department if they are not?

Secondly, our people are already in a state of shock because of COVID. Poor, unemployed and now we allow the City of Cape Town to cut water. If you are unemployed and cannot afford to pay for water, you are put on a drip system. Does it bother you, hon Premier, that people are told to wash their hands, wash their faces, to prevent them from getting contaminated with COVID, but they got no water because it is a drip system? What is our Minister of Local Government doing about it? Does he get conditional grants in order to subsidise the water if people cannot afford?

Thirdly, I want to ask you, hon Premier, the non-filling of posts of Minister Albert Fritz, are you going to look at that? Is this a money saving exercise not to fill that position? Or do you not have competent people ...[Interjections]

The Speaker: [Inaudible.]

Mr P J MARAIS: ... on your side that you can appoint in that position?

The SPEAKER: Thank you [Inaudible.]

Mr P J MARAIS: What is it, sir? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you, hon member Marais. Hon members, I now recognise hon member Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. †Bismillah hieragman nir rajeem. [In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious and The Most Merciful.]

The well-being and holistic growth of children is a matter which needs urgent attention in the Western Cape. The Children's Commissioner, Mrs Nomdo, has expressed that it remains a challenge to deliver on her mandate due to lack of resources and capacity constraints in her office.

It is worrying that the Standing Committee is not exercising proper oversight to address the challenges the Children's Commissioner is faced with. The Committee's 2020/21 Annual Report revealed that 3,000 calls to the Children's Call Centre have drastically increased to 460,000 per year. There is an urgent call from the Children's Commissioner to fully capacitate her office. She must cover a vast area and the Province should look at providing the Commissioner with a helicopter to reach more areas.

The Western Cape has a serious waste problem, and the Department has admitted that the province is running out of landfill space. The situation indicates the need for the appointment of an Environmental Commissioner. Why has the Provincial Government removed the original amendment proposed for the appointment of an Environmental Commissioner?

Residential areas with backyard dwellers and informal settlements are not receiving adequate service delivery in terms of waste removal. There are dumping sites among residential areas on the Cape Flats which are health hazards. If the current legislation in place to deal with waste management is sufficient, as the hon Premier has been stating for the past few years, then why do we have these dumping sites on the Cape Flats? Waste removal services ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: ... are obviously inadequate on the Cape Flats.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Brinkhuis, your time is up. Hon members, I now recognise the hon the Chairperson of the Committee, hon member Botha.

Ms L BOTHA: Thank you, hon Speaker. We are from martial arts now to helicopters.

Hon Speaker, I hope that with the same enthusiasm, the Leader of the Opposition will also call an end to the war of corruption that his party is engulfed in. [Interjections.]

†n AGB LID: Hulle *publish* nou nog [Onduidelik.]

[An HON MEMBER: They are still publishing [Inaudible.]]

Ms L J BOTHA: And then, hon Deputy Speaker – hon Speaker, can you protect me, please? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: I have been begged nicely ...[Interjections.]

Ms L J BOTHA: Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: ... hon the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms L J BOTHA: Ja, ja.

The SPEAKER: I will definitely protect you, hon member Botha. You may proceed, you are protected.

Ms L J BOTHA: Okay, thank you. The Leader of the Opposition and I have a

pact in the Standing Committee, so let us stick to that, Leader of the Opposition. Thank you. [Interjections.]

Hon Speaker, and I hear the young lion say that he is in support of the Leader of the Opposition. I think it is for the upcoming Congress [Interjections.] and I am not too sure whether the Leader of the Opposition, whether he is a tortoise or a hare, and I am just seeing this picture, this young cub lion supporting either a tortoise or a hare. [Interjections.]

†So, through you, hon Speaker, aan die agb Opposisie Leier, ek wil sê jou onderrok steek uit, en ek wil ook daarby sê dat kyk watse gemors het die ANC in Cederberg agtergelaat. So voordat jy voor my deur vee, vee eers voor joune. [Tussenwerpsels.]

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[to the hon Opposition Leader, I want to say your petticoat shows and I want to also say look what mess the ANC has left behind in Cederberg. So before you come and sweep in front of my door, sweep in front of yours first. [Interjections.]]

†Agb Speaker, die ANC is in die media hierdie week aangehaal vir alle kwessies wat hulle liever onder die mat sou wou vee. Agb Leier van die Opposisie, jy moet verseker dat daar nog stemme sal wees om jou in te stem as die Provinsiale Voorsitter. Agb Adjunk Leier, deur u, agb Speaker, jou

onderrok steek uit.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Hon Speaker, the ANC was quoted in the media this week for all kinds of issues they would rather sweep under the carpet. Hon Leader of the Opposition, you should make sure that there will still be votes to vote you in as the Provincial Chairman. Hon Deputy Leader, through you, hon Speaker, your petticoat shows.]

Hon Speaker, a caring citizen centric budget. This role of a good and fair government is not to become a clunky machine and desperately trying to pull society along, but rather to be society's greatest ally and partner, offering opportunity, creating conducive environments for businesses, promoting safe communities, and protecting our most vulnerable is the role that the Western Cape Government, led by the Department of the Premier, plays in making the Western Cape a place where everyone can prosper.

For the 2022/23 financial year, the Department of the Premier has been allocated R1,25 billion to be the awl that smooths the way for this Provincial Government to service our residents by always placing them at the heart of its work.

The Department's primary role is to enable and ensure the delivery of strategic plans and priorities throughout the entire Western Cape

Government. The often-unseen work of the Department sees support offered to the 80,000 Government employees, including mental health support, and it is pushing forward innovation and new ways of delivering the best services to residents.

Consider the broadband initiative which has a two-prong effect: upgrading broadband capabilities at local municipalities and leveraging these to offer free internet connection to residents in the most rural of communities within our province. While we celebrate the access that this gives to residents, often times we underestimate what this means for the local municipalities, who are the ones at the coalface of service delivery.

So we must also welcome the allocation of R1,29 billion over the next three years for the rollout and upgrading of broadband and Wi-Fi services within our municipalities, but as we become more efficient, using technology to reach our citizens wherever they may be in the province, protecting the data and cyber systems must take priority, and so R240,6 million over the MTEF has been allocated.

We have seen how cyberattacks at our Port last year brought the maritime export and import sector to a standstill. Big banks have also been impacted by cyberattacks, where customers' information has been compromised. Ramping up security to incorporate the new culture of hybrid working means that we can ensure that residents' data is safe but protecting public money and ensuring the integrity of this Government has been further increased by a

20,44% increase in the budget for the Provincial Forensic Services.

Jealously guarding our resources is key to stopping the entrenchment of corruption that we have seen in other governments across the country, and another R7,5 million has been allocated to support local governments in the legal governance and investigative needs, and, hon Speaker, it should be pleasing to every member of this House that the budget for the Children's Commissioner has more than doubled for this financial year, in comparison to the estimated budget for the 2021/22 financial year.

More than this, hon Speaker, the budget for the 2023/24 financial year has increased by R2 million since last year. We want to see our children safe and thriving in the Western Cape, and we want a Government that serves them all. This additional funding will further the Commissioner's reach and ensure that this Government is held accountable for how it is serving our youngest residents.

Hon Speaker, the progress made by the Western Cape Safety Plan must be commended. Despite limited mandates and the under capacitation of SAPS within our province, the Western Cape Provincial Government continues to push forward to keep communities safe and root out crime.

Much has been said of the successes of the Safety Plan in the Cape Town Metro, and I commend the work the LEAP officers have done in assisting SAPS and other law enforcement officials in quelling and responding to

violent crime in our communities.

However, I would like to highlight some of the other communities that have benefited from the implementation of the Safety Plan, and some of this has been highlighted by the acting Minister of Community Safety yesterday in her budget speech.

During a joint operation between the Malmesbury SAPS and the Swartland K9 units on Saturday, 25 March, five individuals were arrested for dealing Tik and being in possession of ammunition. The very next day the same K9 unit, in cooperation with the Malmesbury Crime Prevention Unit, led a joint operation that resulted in the arrest of nine individuals for the possession of a firearm. The firearm was later identified as one that was booked in earlier and stolen from a police station.

On Saturday, 19 March, members of the N7 Flying Squad, Piketberg, arrested four individuals after they were found with five shoe boxes filled with button plants with its street name “knopies”. Due to the operations made possible by the Safety Plan, five individuals were arrested recently in Velddrif, who illegally slaughtered over 60 sheep within the space of two weeks.

I have also received reports of sustainable, fruitful partnerships within the Bergrivier area, which was made possible due to the same Safety Plan. It is clear that the research driven, boots on the ground approach to the Safety Plan is working, hon Speaker. It is evident from this budget that the Western

Cape Government, led by the Department of the Premier, is committed to serving the residents of this province with dignity and care.

Hon Speaker, the behind the scenes work of the Department of the Premier to support our Provincial Government, and each and every local municipality in the Western Cape, is the oil that makes sure the wheels of Government turn to see a prosperous future for each and every resident within the Western Cape.

To all our frontline staffers who represent this Western Cape Government, I thank you. Thank you to our D-G, Dr Harry Malila, who leads in this quest, hon speaker. You have shown resilience in a time that this province needed it most. You have come up with innovation in order to service our communities. You are also evaluating the gaps and are addressing such.

Thank you to my colleagues on the Standing Committee who will support me on the journey as Chairperson to this Standing Committee. I also want to say, hon Speaker, that as Chairperson I look forward to welcoming the hon member Sayed to the Standing Committee of the Premier later this year.

[Interjections.]

Hon Speaker, I want to thank the procedural officer, Ms Kamish-Achmat for her support to have made the transition so smoothly. Hon Speaker, the DA supports Vote 1.

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

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker, I appreciate it, and can I say thank you very much to each and every member that took part in this debate, and I would like to probably start in reverse with replying to the debates.

So first of all, to the hon Chair of the Standing Committee, the hon member Botha, thank you very much for your role as Chair, and of course for your inputs. I was not aware of the hon member Sayed actually becoming a main member on this Standing Committee, but I too join you in looking forward to welcoming him to the Standing Committee, and I presume that will obviously follow the ANC Conference.

It is probably going to be a very quick conference because there are three branches that have to get together to choose the person to lead them into the next election, and I mean you could probably do it on a WhatsApp group [Interjections.] but ja, I look forward to welcoming you, hon member Sayed. [Interjections.]

Can I also say – you commented on the Safety Plan and of course there are some other comments coming up on the Safety Plan, which I will deal with as I get to one or two of the other members, but ja, it is interesting because the Safety Plan as we announced it on day one, is an organic growing plan that

continues to change, and of course if you go to the previous debate, where we spoke about the Violence Prevention Unit, that is sort of just again another iteration of the plan, and how it gets centred-learning from the Cardiff Model, learning from the Glasgow Model, learning from our own experiences, and I think Minister Mbombo actually did give everyone a bit of a workshop on that, so I will not go any further, but I will speak to the actual Safety Plan, the targets, in a short while.

I want to also say to the Hon Chairperson who also spoke about Wi-Fi and the impact of Wi-Fi, as well as the hon member Dugmore, and perhaps I will just mention our Wi-Fi rollout programme, and of course I think the hon member Dugmore has been sent a few times the full report on it, but of course we are now at 1,274 free Wi-Fi hotspots across this province. [Interjections.] You know that – and you see, hon Speaker, straightaway he says, “Linked to Government.”

That is exactly because the school is in the middle of the community. The library is in the middle of the community. They are linked to that infrastructure because of course you must link it [Interjections.] to some infrastructure. He does not seem to understand that. It is in the centre of the community; in the centre of the ward that he speaks about, and of course the interesting thing about this Wi-Fi now is that you got 3 gigs that are available free every single month to our citizens.

The exciting part as well is that we are starting to see, we are only supposed

to be doing it in September/October, where we are upping to 1 gig speed, but already it is exciting to see that 22 of our schools, and maybe even more by now, are already sitting at 1 gig speed at our schools.

So it is exactly in the middle of the communities; exactly the point that he raises. What he did raise was that some of them might not be 24 hours, and he was given the answer in the Standing Committee. That where you have a 24 hour hotspot available at a school, wherever it is, what happens is people congregate around that space, and sometimes the citizens who live right there actually come and say, "Please, we have got noise at 3 o'clock in the morning, we cannot sleep because everybody is congregated around the free Wi-Fi hotspot," and so what we do is we turn the aerial system so that people could then maybe be directed to another part of the circumference of that school, or that library, so that they can pick up their Wi Fi hotspot, and if it is not possible then what we do is we will have a 9 o'clock at night or something cut-off for that specific point, because it is an engagement with the citizens and users, and of course we need to be able to care for our citizens, we need to show them that we live our values, and of course through that engagement we might change one or two of those hotspots, but there are very few of them that actually operate outside of a 24 hour run.

Maybe one other thing that is quite interesting. The other day I was, with the report to the DG, an interesting thing on our schools and the Wi-Fi usage of our schools, do you know that the schools operating on our Wi-Fi system, if you take the volume of data that they use on a day or in a month, the schools

in the Western Cape's volume of data for that period of time, is more than the volume of data used by every other school in every other province put together, and this province uses more.

So it shows you that the system is working, it is enabling our education system, it is enabling our learners to really make the biggest difference that we can, and of course this is still ongoing, and as we have said now we have got the support now through this funding grant, where we are going to go and interrogate our system once again, say well, what is the future going to look like, and what else do we need to do to get better and better? We have got to continually improve what we do, the services we give to the citizens of our province.

And then of course, Chair, you spoke about "jou onderrok steek uit." I agree, but I will get to that. I mean you spoke a lot about, you were answering the Leader of the Opposition and his hairy tortoise issues, but I will get to that just now [Interjections.]. He was talking about more haste and less speed, or less speed and more haste, I am not too sure, but ja, the hare and the tortoise, but I will get to that shortly, but thank you very much, Chair, for your inputs. The hon member Brinkhuis, thank you very much. Jeepers, I wish that it was that easy; that the committees –in the debate we stand up and we just start allocating helicopters to people, but I do not think that is a possibility, definitely not in our country at the moment, but I do support you, hon member Brinkhuis, and say that of course we have got to make sure that we have budget available; that the Office of the Children's Commissioner is

supported.

Of course, if you look at the budget in the budget book, and if you look at the support, you will see 2021/22, and obviously this was at a COVID time, she had R6 million to set up her office. It has now gone up to R13,345 million. Then of course next year it is going to be R7,72 million. The year after R7,45 million, and of course on top of that there has been some extra funding, as I announced today, another R1 million that will go to more resources, specifically human resources, R1 million and then R2 million the next year, and R3 million the year after, over the MTEF for staff support. So I agree with you, but you can see in the numbers that that support is definitely there.

You also raised the issue around the Environmental Commissioner, and of course this has been going on for a very, very long time, and again it is about the regulatory environment we find ourselves in versus the budget that we have as a Government, and what can be achieved through this process. So of course in the Constitution there is an Environmental Commissioner. Whether it is now where we sit many, many years later after the Constitution was written in this specific Government, while I sit on this side of the House, where the argument is that in actual fact from the writing of that Constitution to where we sit today, there is a raft of new environmental legislation in place that says why would we want to just create another duplication and take money away from health or take money away from education to create this where it is not really necessary?

But the same applies because you know at one stage I used to sit on that side of the House where you are sitting, and I used to raise the same question, “Why have you not put an Environmental Commissioner in place?” and the hon member Dugmore was sitting on this side, and I remember the answers given by the hon member Essop, who was then in charge that time, and she gave exactly the same answer, that quite frankly there is enough legislation in place that we do not need it.

That is exactly what she said. Go and have a look at the Hansard. I have already sent you a copy of her Hansard. I will send it to you again if you want, but that is exactly what she said, and that is why we have taken this position. It is based on the data ... [Interjections.] but thank you very much.

Then I want to move on to the hon member Marais. Thank you very much, hon member Marais, for your inputs. Yes, I will ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, you must address the Presiding Officer.

The PREMIER: Through you, hon Speaker, to the hon member Marais. Hon Speaker, could you let him know that I definitely will fill the vacancy that was created when Minister Fritz no longer held the position, but of course it probably would be wise to do that after we finished the budget, not in the middle of this process, but shortly that vacancy will be filled. So can you thank him, or through you, for pointing that out to me.

I also would like, it is a pity that, so I cannot really ask the hon member Marais a question directly and get an answer, but perhaps as part of this reply I will form my reply as a question to say it is interesting and I wonder if it is his party's policy, that for people who do in our municipalities receive more free water allocation than any other municipality in South Africa, they get the free water allocation, but when people do not pay for the beyond the free water allocation, they then get put on a drip system. They do not get the water turned off, it goes on to a drip system, but it seems as though his party's policy is it does not matter whether you pay for your water or you do not pay for your water, it should just be left on, and that is an interesting policy position.

One would think that with that policy position he might get more votes, but we will have to see what happens in the next election with that policy of his party.

He also says I must stop looking north and I must look south because I must focus on jobs, safety, dignity and well-being. Well, whether you look north or south, those are the focus areas of this Government: jobs, safety and well-being, and I can assure you that south, north, east or west, they will remain the focus of our Government and our recovery. We have got to get jobs back into our economy because with jobs comes dignity. With jobs also comes safety, but we have also got to focus on safety, and of course dignity and the well-being of our citizens is paramount. So that is the focus of this

Government.

Then hon member Xego, thank you very much for your inputs. You spoke about the system of how we need to work together; there needs to be cross-cutting programmes and processes of how we govern. Well, I can assure you we still do, we do exactly that, and there was also an issue raised by hon member Dugmore, we have extended Cabinets for management of COVID-19, or perhaps when an insurrection is happening in our country, we put the management systems in place that we learned through COVID-19.

We also have the PCF process where we meet with our municipalities. Of course, we have got our Cabinets, and then we have also got those management meetings which we call “Mancos”, which would be a safety focus, or a jobs focus, or a dignity focus, or of course a governance, a VIP 5 focus that we as a Government are making sure that we are managing our Government in the best interests of the citizens of this province.

I also want to say that – then to hon member August. Sorry, I made a mistake there. Hon member Xego, sorry, you did not raise those issues, it was the hon member August. The hon member August, can I say to you thank you very much. I think you are absolutely correct. We must not measure ourselves in the Western Cape against other ANC-run provinces. That is why we put these world class measures in place because we must do that. We must measure ourselves against other competitive regions around the world. That is why we have got regional partnerships, and quite frankly I absolutely agree with you

because measuring yourself against the ANC provinces is, ja, not really stretching anything at all, but thank you very much for those inputs.

And then I want to get to the hon Leader of the Opposition. Thank you very much. I look forward to actually going with you. You said, “Please come along. Let us go and have a look,” and absolutely, I want to go and have a look. Let us go and have a look. I am happy to. You said, “Come with the ANC.” There again I notice that all three branches can come on this visit, we will probably all fit in one bus [Interjections.], and we will go to Beaufort West, and we will go to Kannaland, and we will go to these places, but we will also go to places in the City because they are issues. Absolutely.

There are issues where citizens face potholes, or they face sewage blockage problems, but it is interesting because I have been watching the City of Cape Town quite closely in the last couple of months, and I have been seeing a big focus on making sure that those issues that are being raised are being dealt with. Those potholes, the redoing of those roads, the dealing with the infrastructure issues around sewage. Absolutely.

So I am happy to go and have a look. The Philippi Stadium I am – I actually have asked, and Minister Marais is getting a report on the Philippi Stadium to see exactly what the issue is there. I believe it was put out to Chippa United and that perhaps they have not managed it properly, but we will go and have a look at it. Absolutely. Maybe we must go and have a look at what happened there, and how, when trying to support a local soccer team, that maybe we

have got to do it differently next time, but let us go and have a look, I am very happy and I am waiting for that report so that we can see what we should do.

We need to learn, we need to continually learn as we move forward. You spoke about the deepening inequality and you specifically said in this province deepening inequality, but it is interesting, you know, inequality has got a measurement tool, it is called the Gini Coefficient, And as a member of the ANC it is probably the last thing that you should raise, a Gini Coefficient, when our country has now become the country with the worst Gini Coefficient in the world, under the leadership of the ANC. The whole, I mean it looked like, on this page, I put a heading on top here, listening to your speech which had nothing to do with our budget and everything to do with a campaign launch, or perhaps, I wrote here, a speech that you are going to put forward to address the three branches, because you spoke about Squirrel and everything that he has done, and nothing to do with this budget.

But – and of course the Gini Coefficient is really, really concerning. It is very, very concerning. You know, that while you were speaking I was looking at the jobs numbers that have just come out, and I mean let me first talk about our jobs numbers. I really am worried about this because as a province we are now, our expanded rate of unemployment is now 30,4%. We have now breached the 30% mark. That is really painful. That is really scary.

Of course our unemployment rate is 28%, and expanded, that is narrow, and

expanded is at 30%, but if you want to talk about Gini coefficient, if you want to talk about deepening inequality, if you want to talk about policies that are not taking this country forward to fix the wrongs of the past and to actually find ways in which every citizen in our province, in our country, can find opportunities into the future, quite frankly that Gini Coefficient linked to a report that we have just seen now on the jobs numbers in the last quarterly report in our country, you just have to look at that graph. It is more than frightening. I am scared of the 30,4%. There is no other province with an expanded of 30%. Up to 40%.

The closest expanded unemployment rate is 40% – jeepers, it is 44%. I mean there are one, two, three, four provinces with a 50% expanded unemployment rate. That is the real cause of a Gini Coefficient that takes our citizens basically down the wrong way. It is not the promises that were made in '94 to the citizens of this country, and it is your political party, and your party's policies that are taking us in this direction.

This country has the people, it has the place, it has the raw materials, it has the natural beauty, the environment, it has everything going for it that should be the exact opposite of this, but it is your policies that are going to eventually take us all the way down, but it is also those policies that are going to lose you the next election. They are going to lose you the next election so that we are going to have to then start rebuilding this country, because ... [Interjections.] if you want to say about deeper into inequality, the ANC have really, really taken us in this country far deeper into inequality

than anybody would have ever imagined.

You also mentioned that a number of issues, or a number of areas in this province where our province is being unconstitutional. Can you roll these out? Challenge us if you may or if you want to, but also at the same time I will challenge the Constitution. I will also try new things. I will also push those boundaries because, as I said in the SOPA, we cannot, we cannot have a diminishing income on the one side and more and more demand from our citizens on the other side and do the same thing over and over and over again as a Government in the middle, and expect different outcomes.

We have to do things differently. We have to try things. We must fail in things that perhaps do not work, and we must get up again, and we must go and try new things. Because if we do not do that, I promise you we are all going to crash and burn, and we need to do that, but if there is a constitutional area where we think we are going wrong, that is your job. That is the job of the opposition. That is the job of a democracy. Raise it, push those boundaries, we must either answer it or face the music, but that is exactly what we need to do, but actually give us the detail. Do not just say it, give us the actual detail.

Then you say we are culling African public servants. I want to say to you absolutely untrue. Untrue. Look at the stats. So what you are saying is absolutely untrue. Take it when I started in government two and a half years ago, and measure now, it is untrue. Absolutely.

Then you went on about the Ukraine. So let me say a few words about the Ukraine. Let me say a few words about what is happening at the moment in our northern hemisphere, where this party, who is normally the majority in opposition in this province, this party has a whole lot of stuff to say about imperialism, colonialism, human rights abuses. That is what is happening in the Ukraine right now: imperialism, human rights abuses, and you say nothing. That is unacceptable, and of course it not just a straight war that just happened. There was no Security Council United Nations application; there was no process whatsoever. In actual fact the process is that the United Nations actually condemned it outright. The United Nations condemned it outright, but you say nothing. You say we go for peace.

Quite frankly, right now your stance as a political party really brings you into question. Because of our past this country and the ANC should be someone who really understands what it feels like, and you keep quiet. You say nothing about the atrocities that are happening at the moment in the Ukraine. More than 2 million people ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, will you please take your seat. Hon member Sayed?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: Hon Speaker, just a reminder that the Premier ought to speak through you as the Speaker, not address the hon Leader of the Opposition directly.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, thank you, hon member Sayed. Hon Premier, please address the Chair.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. I will speak directly to you, but I think that the hon member Sayed and the hon member Dugmore need to really listen to this because you say absolutely nothing to the more than 2 million people who have fled to Poland. The more than 4 million people, million people, almost the population of our province, who have been displaced and fled their homes, and you say nothing.

The bombing of maternity hospitals. The bombing of a place of safety where on the paving outside the place of safety they write a big thing to say “children”. Let us try and do that so we at least keep people in this theatre space safe. It is target; bomb it.

It is unacceptable that you say nothing. You have to stand up and condemn in. Like we all have to stand up and condemn this kind of activity that takes place anywhere in the world. You cannot believe that this is happening in this day and age, and you cannot keep that neutral space. I understand the role that Russia played in the ending of apartheid; I understand the role that Russia played in supporting many ANC apartheid activists, training of military veterans. I understand all of that, but that does not forgive what is happening right now.

So then you have got to ask yourself why? Is this last thing about, actually it is about a whole lot of other deals that are being done between the ANC and the Russians? Is that why? What is it? What has to happen in the world for you to say, actually it does not matter what our relationship was in the past. These are human rights atrocities, these are murders, these should not be happening, and we need to stand up against ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Premier, there seems to be another point of order, will you please take your seat. Hon member Sayed?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP [ANC]: Hon Speaker, is the hon Premier willing to take a question?

The PREMIER: I will take a question after my speech.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Sayed, the Premier has just indicated afterwards he will take a question.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. We really do need to come out strongly against this kind of action in our world, especially us as South Africans.

Hon Speaker, then – I have got a whole lot of notes here, and of course I am standing between all of you and lunch. This is the part where I said speech for the three branches, because it did not sound like it had anything to do

with this budget. It was about all of these things that Cyril has done; change the boards, change the panels, put in investigations, done all of these things, because of all of the money that has been stolen by the ANC, but my question is, that is great. Who has been arrested? [Interjections.]

A billion rand on the Zondo Commission; who has been arrested? What are the consequences? It does not help to put a – you know, you now take the A-Team out because they have stolen the money and put the B-Team in, and they keep stealing the money. That does not help anybody, but of course that was actually the wrong speech for this debate, and I will leave it at that. I would like to know who was arrested.

But, of course, he also spoke about more haste and less speed. Quite frankly in South Africa right now we need more haste and more speed. We have to do things differently; we have got to push harder. Those unemployment numbers are shocking. We have to make a change in the citizens' lives in this province, and in this country, and we have to do it quickly. We have to be decisive. We have to try things, and we have to move forward with speed.

You know, it is also interesting, the last point I made on his squirrel speech was we actually need to go back in Hansard because I remember him making the same speech, praising Zuma a few years ago, and now he makes another speech praising Squirrel. I am sure the Zuma one was also just before a conference or something like that. I think they were also down to a few branches at that stage, too.

But, hon Speaker, he then mentions about the new departments, and I must say that I am very excited about these new departments. He then said, “without consultation”, so I just want to say to him absolutely untrue. We have been having discussions for 18 months on these new departments, but of course there is leadership consultation, and then of course there is process once you have enacted it.

So at the last Cabinet, the Cabinet has now passed the process, which puts the timelines in place, and of course that is when, you cannot have a whole lot of scenarios, we consulted with all 87,000 staff in this province. You have first got to then say we are now going through that process.

So obviously in the new Department of Infrastructure, of course which directly affects two departments, but of course will be across all of our governments. So now we go through the process. It is in the datelines and that is going to happen over the next year.

I also want to say that, whether it is the various new departments or some of the changes, every one of them have got a process that is linked to a Cabinet decision that was taken last Wednesday, that comes out of the SOPA, that comes out of the discussions that we have been having as a top management and Cabinet over the last 18 months.

But then the hon member speaks about the Safety Plan, and it is quite

interesting how many times, and perhaps this is also something that we should do a bit of research in Hansard to see how many times over the last two and a half years that members of the opposition have stood up and attacked, complained, moaned, done something or said something negative about the Safety Plan.

Hon Speaker, what really interests me, and they keep on saying what are all the benchmarks and the – you know, in actual fact on the Safety Plan there is one: it is to halve the murder rate in the next seven and a half years, it was 10. Halve the murder rate, and I must say that as we continually change, as we evolve, as we try new things, as we develop new ways, as we use data differently, that for me is going to be really exciting, how the data gets used differently, and those are lessons from when the plan was put in place two and a half years ago to now; the lessons from COVID-19 on using a dashboard and data, and I must say to the Minister of Health, Minister Nomafrench Mbombo, and her data team, they are outstanding in gathering the data, and as she said earlier in the first debate, how it is actually the Health Department that feels the pain of trauma, along with our citizens, because that is where it ends up. That is where it ends up.

So it makes so much sense that when someone is stabbed, or shot, or some kind of violence, because now it is violence prevention, happens, it gets measured. Whether it is that, or the HECTIS Programme that is now administered in 27 hospitals. I mean we were quite proud of the five that we measured during the pandemic. We have rolled it out now to 27 hospitals,

where we pick up trauma. That then gets fed back into every department because we need to know where it happened, why it happened, and we can start to deal with it, but that one measurement, at the end of the day, one is: halve the murder rate.

Now you cannot only police your way out of it, you also have to get to the causalities. That is the violence prevention. That is actually the most important focus area of the Safety Plan and this Government, but the most amazing thing for me is that already when Minister Bheki Cele stands up in the National Assembly and delivers the history lesson called “Crime Stats”, and he says in the 11 hotspots in the City of Cape Town where we have deployed the Safety Plan LEAP officers, it is the only place in South Africa, the only place in South Africa where there has been a stabilisation or reduction in the murder rate.

In actual fact what should be happening is the opposition members should be cheering that along, but no, they are doing the opposite, but we will continue doing what we are doing because the measurements are telling us that we are making a difference, and of course, I mean I am still absolutely astounded by our crime statistics every single day.

I mean that is why this plan is in place, because quite frankly there is no grip or handle on murder in South Africa. More than 3,000 murders in this province every single year. It cannot be. We have to zoom in and focus on it, and in actual fact we actually need every political party to be joining hands,

putting good ideas on the table, really finding ways to reduce murder, crime and violence. Because if we want the Gini Coefficient to change, sorting out crime is part of that journey.

I think I have already answered the issues around the Wi-Fi because he spoke a bit about the Wi-Fi, but with that, hon Speaker, through you, can I say again to everyone who has taken part in the debate today, I want to thank them very much.

I also look forward to not only in budget debates, but anytime. As I have said we have got to be nimble, we have not only got to be, what do you say? More haste and more speed, or less haste and more speed, or more speed and less haste. We need more haste and more speed. In South Africa we need much more haste and much more speed, and we need it in dealing with unemployment, Gini Coefficients, crime, dignity, well-being. All of these areas we have to make sure that there is haste and speed.

And of course we also at the same time look forward to the further report on that speech to the three branches, on the effect of the Zondo Commission, the effect of all of those new boards and investigations, because what we want to do is we want to see the thieves in jail that have been stealing the billions from the citizens of this province. That will also change our Gini Coefficient and make a big difference in people's lives, if that stolen money ended up in services for the citizens of our province and our country. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Your Excellency, the Premier and the hon members who also participated in the budget vote.

That concludes this budget vote, and of course we are delayed for lunch. It was the best decision to remain and conclude this budget vote.

We will break for lunch until half past two, and I hope the hon members are in concurrence and if so, as soon as we are done, we will then begin with the next Budget Vote. With that point I suspend the proceedings. Until then, thank you.

[Business of the House suspended at 13:30 and resumed at 14:30]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Good afternoon, hon members. I will ask the Secretary to read the Third Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 9 – Environment Affairs and Development Planning 13 –Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2 - 2022]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr Secretary. I recognize the hon Minister Bredell.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Speaker, hon Premier of the Western Cape, Provincial Cabinet colleagues and members of the Legislature,

the Head of the Department and the CEO for CapeNature, ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you for the opportunity today to present the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning Budget to the House. Thank you to the management team at the Department for the work in preparing this budget. I believe that this budget is a true reflection of the challenges and opportunities we as a government must address in 2022 and in the near future.

Deputy Speaker, the environment has been placed left, right and centre of the global political and economic agenda in recent times. At COP26 in Glasgow last year, the message was very clear: We are causing harm to the environment, and our actions are contributing to climate change.

Deputy Speaker, for the first time in our history real money was also being committed to finance a transition to a greener economy. R130 billion was offered to South Africa at COP26 to re-imagine our electricity generation systems.

Unfortunately, as we stand here today, it is already several months later, and we are still awaiting our National Government's plan on how to approach this matter. I am concerned that we will lose this opportunity due to our uncoordinated and slow ANC National Government.

Another important international report, the Global Risk Report published by

the World Economic Forum, states in 2022 that our inability to address environmental issues is the number one risk for humanity over the next decade.

Deputy Speaker, these international reports on environmental matters also affect us directly in the Western Cape. Deputy Speaker, no matter what your political affiliation is, the fact of the matter is that if you live in the Western Cape, you will in future have to cope with hotter and drier climates. Droughts and floods will be more frequent, and these events will be more intense when they happen.

That is why we have developed a Climate Change Response Strategy, working towards being a net-zero emissions province by 2050.

Deputy Speaker, the State of Environment Outlook Report 2018 makes for sober reading. It shows that the pressures on our natural systems are unsustainable: more needs to be done to protect critically sensitive and important environmental features, without which the ability of the Western Cape to adapt to the impacts from increasing population and climate change is uncertain. The state of the Western Cape's land, biodiversity and ecosystem health, inland water, climate change, oceans and coasts, and waste management are either declining or in a state of concern.

Not responding to these declining environmental trends will lead to other key risks, failing to meet provincial sustainability and resilience goals. If the

approach to environmental resource management as well as service provision and economic activity do not change, the costs of doing business will increase.

Moving forward, service delivery and economic growth must be resource efficient, low carbon, and enhance societal resilience to find a more balanced approach to using limited resources.

On Estuary Management, hon Deputy Speaker, our Estuary Management Plans have been made available to the public for comment. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, together with CapeNature, are responsible for 29 draft Estuary Management Plans. The Department and CapeNature are currently reviewing the comments received and will be able to advance some of the EMPs to finalisation and approval. In some cases, the team have identified the need to undertake additional stakeholder engagement to address critical concerns, with a view to also advancing these to finalisation and approval for implementation.

These plans set out the coordination and management of various activities and impacts that occur within the estuarine functional zone. For prioritised estuaries, this could ultimately lead to declaring them protected areas or special management areas to protect specific habitat types found in these ecosystems. Such as has been the case with the Berg River Estuary, which was recently declared a Ramsar Site under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance.

On Air Quality Management, it is fitting that the third iteration of our Western Cape Air Quality Management Plan (2021 – 2025) released this year, focus on air quality, air pollution and climate change. We cannot continue to think that †“die Kaapse Dokter sal al die besoedeling wegwaai nie.” [“the Cape Doctor will blow away all the pollution.”]

Hon Deputy Speaker, our investment of R10 million over the past two years to upgrade our 12 atmospheric monitoring stations is a good investment as this allows us to support local municipalities throughout the province to know in real time what the status of their air quality is, and to assist them in drafting their Air Quality Plans.

This work also plays a crucial role in our long-term plans for a greener and more sustainable environment, whilst contributing to the implementation of the Western Cape Climate Change Strategy: Vision 2050, which is currently being developed.

Deputy Speaker, examples of work we do in the field include our work in the Berg River and Breede River. These rivers are arteries of life in our province, and they sustain the economies of entire towns and communities. Alien clearing and pollution awareness campaigns are but two manners in which we promote the protection of these ecosystems. In exchange for our work to protect, nature rewards us with a healthy and safe environment to live and work in.

†Organiese afval, Adjunkspeaker, daar is baie geleenthede waar die algemene publiek 'n belangrike rol kan speel om ons omgewing te beskerm. [Organic waste, Deputy Speaker, there are many opportunities where the general public can play an important role to protect our environment.]

In 2017, the Western Cape made a policy decision to restrict 50% of organics being sent to landfills by 2022, and the prohibition of all organics to landfills by 2027. The landfill restriction and prohibition on organics will also ensure that national waste diversion targets are met. In the Western Cape, 40% of all waste delivered to landfills is organic waste, estimated at more than three million tons annually. We want to increase the diversion rates of organic waste from landfills to opportunities that are value adding.

Furthermore, all licences issued by the Department have been amended and municipalities are now obliged to submit Organic Waste Diversion Plans.

Deputy Speaker, I want to thank our Environmental Quality Enforcement Directorate whose officials are our eyes and ears regarding environmental legislation and enforcement. We recently trained nine Green Scorpions to be qualified drone operators, allowing us to work more effectively and with greater safety. Officials can station themselves at a safe distance from dangerous terrain or volatile situations, in effect allowing us to do more with less.

Deputy Speaker, also a word of thanks to our officials, who assisted and supported the multi-stakeholder operation to salvage the NS Qingdao bulk carrier. This ship was at risk of an uncontrolled fire earlier this year just off the coastline, representing a real environmental disaster threat. Since then, the ship has been anchored at the Port of Saldanha Bay, from where all the affected chemical cargo was salvaged and safely disposed of at Vissershok's High Hazardous Waste facility.

Deputy Speaker, the good cooperation between SAMSA, DFFE, SA Ports Authorities, the ships' owners and our Provincial officials shows us what can be achieved through teamwork.

†Dink net wat ons kan vermag as ons hierdie vlak van samewerking van DFFE, SAPS en die Weermag kan kry ten opsigte van perlemoenstropery aan ons kus.

Speaker, CapeNature, ons bewaringsentiteit lewer 'n ongelooflike belangrike en goeie diens aan die Wes-Kaap. CapeNature het onlangs hul nuutste toerisme syfers bekend gemaak, en dit is iets om op trots te wees.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Just think what we can achieve if we get this level of cooperation from DFFE, SAPS and the Defence Force with regard to abalone poaching along our coast.

Speaker, CapeNature, our conservation entity, delivers an unbelievably important service to the Western Cape. CapeNature recently announced their latest tourism figures, and it is something to be proud of.]

CapeNature Eco-Tourism earnings increased by a record 60.5% compared to the previous financial year. What is even more remarkable is that it surpasses the pre-COVID-19 target of 2019/20. This is notwithstanding a two-year price freeze and limited access due to COVID Regulations.

Despite COVID, CapeNature has seen an increase in the number of visitors frequenting its reserves. Visitor numbers have grown by 36% at the end of February 2022, compared to the same period in 2022/21.

Top destinations and attractions remain the Whale Trail at De Hoop Nature Reserve, Algeria in the Cederberg Wilderness, Kogelberg Nature Reserve outside Kleinmond and Grootvadersbosch Nature Reserve near Swellendam. CapeNature has embraced technology. It recently launched its own visitor's app. CapeNature also partnered with a mobile mapping app, Forge, listing most of CapeNature's trails, which can be accessed offline as well. This free app goes a long way to ensuring hiking safety.

CapeNature was also announced as the first runner-up in the Reigniting Africa Tourism Travel Awards. The entity was recognised amongst 16 other entries, which acknowledges the most impactful, story-driven and positive destination campaign.

The Siyaya: Come Wild with Us Series, collaboration between CapeNature, Wesgro and SANParks and produced by Francois Odendaal Productions, was awarded the Best Documentary at the Golden Bee International Children's Film Festival held in New Delhi, India.

The extraordinary series bridges the gap between young children and nature with a deeply resonant conservation message. In 2021 CapeNature's Mbali Collection at Kogelberg Nature Reserve received the Cape Institute for Architects (CIFA) award for Architecture. The nomination and award illustrate CapeNature's efforts to produce architecturally significant, low impact tourism infrastructure that follows the entity's philosophy of 'touching the earth lightly'.

CapeNature conducts protected area management effectiveness assessments of all protected areas they manage every two years, of which the latest one was done in 2021.

The results of the 2020–2022 Assessment reflect that 94% of the area managed by CapeNature is in the sound management category of 67% and above. No protected areas were categorised as having inadequate management. CapeNature's conservation estate has already increased with 33 354 hectares in 2021/2022 through protected areas expansion and stewardship programmes, of which 12 577 hectares were formally declared as protected areas.

Deputy Speaker, but we also have to talk about Driftsands. The Driftsands Nature Reserve situated on the western boundary of Mfuleni has been subjected to continuous unlawful occupation since July 2020. COVID-19 Regulations stipulated in terms of the Disaster Management Act of 2002 prohibited CapeNature to take lawful actions to remove the unlawful structures and occupants.

Deputy Speaker, the major concern is that the unlawful structures have been erected in flood-prone areas such as the Kuils River flood plain and associated wetlands. In light of safety concerns, occupants have been asked to relocate voluntarily before the start of the winter rains. An intergovernmental task team was established to plan for disaster management and mitigate the risks.

CapeNature have also responded to 82 veld fires with a total estimated 25 000 hectares burnt to date. Most of these fires were started due to people's negligence and many of these fires could have been avoided. The combined response and support, including financial support through the Provincial Disaster Management Centre, district and local municipalities, fire protected associations, Working on Fire, wildfire volunteer groups and CapeNature are critical in the response of veld fires in the Western Cape. Thank you to the CapeNature CEO Dr Omar, and the team. In a time where South African news is dominated by weak, corrupt and dysfunctional State-owned Entities, it is a pleasure to be associated with you. Keep up the good work!

Deputy Speaker, our planning, monitoring and protecting the environment are only one half of our work. The other half relates to the people who live and work in the Western Cape. Nothing has a greater impact on the environment than people. Because of the Western Cape's reputation as the best run province in the country, and Cape Town being recognised internationally as a destination to work and visit, we are seeing an inward migration and natural population growth of 100 000 plus people per year to the province.

†Speaker, hierdie groei in populasie beteken dat Kaapstad binne die volgende agt jaar 'n stad so groot soos Bloemfontein gaan moet bou om almal te huisves wat hierna toe kom. Dit beteken water, elektrisiteit, hospitale, skole en al die infrastruktuur wat daarmee gepaard gaan.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Speaker, this growth in population means that Cape Town will have to build a city as large as Bloemfontein within the next eight years to accommodate everyone who comes here. That means water, electricity, hospitals, schools, and all the infrastructure that go along with that.]

Some of these new residents are wealthy businesspeople, bringing money and jobs and opportunities to this province as they relocate their businesses. Some are travelling across borders, through war zones to make a new beginning here. Some people arrive by plane, some arrive with moving

companies, and some with only the clothes on their back.

† Ongelukkig is dit `n feit dat nasionale toelaes nie saam met mense na die Wes-Kaap kom nie. Die geld volg nie die voete nie. `n Sensus elke 10 jaar hou nie tred met die vinnige veranderende omgewing waarbinne ons leef nie. Dankie vir die goeie werk wat die span by Ontwikkelingsbeplanning vir ons in hierdie verband doen. Akkurate en opgedateerde inligting word geskep wat ons in staat stel om waardevolle beplanning te doen.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Unfortunately it is a fact that national grants do not come to the Western Cape along with the people. The money does not follow the feet. A census every ten years does not keep up with the rapidly changing environment in which we live. Thank you for the good work of the team at Development Planning in this regard. Accurate and updated information is created which enables us to do valuable planning.]

Deputy Speaker, Inclusionary Housing, one of my priorities is to promote spatial integration to build social cohesion and connected safer spaces in our towns. We are looking forward to being the first province in South Africa to introduce an inclusionary housing policy framework. Our planning and land use management systems must pursue spatial justice in the Western Cape. Our Policy Framework will support and guide municipalities to develop their own policies and reform and to leverage the planning system to support the

supply of well-located affordable housing in partnership with the private sector.

Our Regional Social Projects (RSEP) Programme is another example where we use planning as a tool to help communities to build infrastructure that improves quality of life, makes for safer spaces and creates employment, all at the same time.

Deputy Speaker, we must thank the private sector for supporting our Property Development Forum initiative, where the space is created for Government and private sector to engage one another on matters relating to development.

Deputy Speaker, in conclusion, allow me to welcome our new HOD to the Department. You will find a strong and capable team to support you. I also want to thank Karen Shippey, for your steady hand as Acting HOD and also thank you to Piet van Zyl, who retired this year after doing a great job over the last 10 years, and with that, hon Deputy Speaker, I table the 2022 Budget for the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning. I thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. [Interjection.]

No questions. Thank you, we will now move on to hon Marran.

Mr P MARRAN: Thanks, Deputy Speaker. Am I audible?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are audible.

Mr P MARRAN: Thanks very much. Deputy Speaker, Premier, the Leader of the Official Opposition, members present. The great Amilcar Cabral once said:

“Tell no lies, claim no easy victories. Expose lies whenever they are told.”

When the MEC of Health earlier spoke about the Health Budget she also mentioned De Doorns and she spoke as if I am not present in this meeting, specifically as I am from De Doorns. [Inaudible.]

The MEC, Deputy Speaker, was here two years back and she promised the people of De Doorns a day hospital. Two years later there is nothing. The MEC has spoken about the ambulance station that has been opened recently but what she does not tell us is the same two ambulances that we have used for the last 10 years are the only ambulances that are currently at that particular ambulance station.

Another issue, Deputy Speaker, before I get to my speech, the hon Peter Marais yesterday spoke about a vote against this particular budget, and specifically refers to the ANC, that a vote against this budget will mean that civil servants will not receive a salary, including MPLs of this particular House. For the last 10 years, Deputy Speaker, the same Freedom Front Plus have voted against the budget at National Parliament and not for once,

Deputy Speaker, has a civil servant or a member of this Provincial Parliament not receive his salary. If the hon Marais is aware of anyone who has not received his salary, can he please provide us with that list, and we as the ANC will deal with that particular matter.

Also, Deputy Speaker, let me welcome the hon Mackenzie back into this House after an absence of almost a month. Deputy Speaker, the hon Mackenzie just arrived in time before the Premier can make an appointment of a new MEC for Safety, but Deputy Speaker, that hope by the hon Mackenzie disappeared like thin air when the hon Reagen Allen basically was allowed to speak after the hon Mackenzie. It is a sign, Deputy Speaker, that the hon Allen is more senior than the hon Mackenzie.

Lastly, Deputy Speaker, on this particular issue, the MEC responded to the hon Cameron Dugmore, and Deputy Speaker, the hon Dugmore was specific. Nowhere in his speech will you find where he refers to the rest of the world. He was specific by speaking about Ukraine and Palestine and the MEC finds it necessary not to respond to the issue of Palestine. Is it because, Deputy Speaker, that the people of Palestine do not have blue eyes and blonde hair like the Premier? I am not sure whether that is the case, but it seems so, Deputy Speaker... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Marran.

Mr P MARRAN: Thanks, Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am just concerned, are you speaking on Environmental Affairs and Development Planning as a Vote, because relevance ... [Interjection.]

Mr P MARRAN: It is my Budget speech, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: ...important in the Rules, and I have not heard you talk about Environmental Affairs yet. You have been speaking about ambulances and Ukraine. So please be... [Interjection.]

Mr P MARRAN: I am ready to, Deputy Speaker, I have 16 minutes. How many minutes do I have left?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may proceed.

Mr P MARRAN: How many minutes do I have left, Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: 12 minutes 44 seconds.

Mr P MARRAN: 12 minutes 44 seconds. Thank you, Deputy Speaker. In the State of the Nation Address, President Ramaphosa said and I quote:

“We will ensure strict accordance with the environmental and other laws of our country, and where there are differences, we work together to resolve them in the interests of our country and its people. We live in

one of the regions of the world that is most affected by climate change. We frequently experience droughts, floods and other extreme weather events associated with global warming.”

Pointing out the importance of protecting our environment, President Ramaphosa was speaking in the context of expanding the agricultural mining and energy sectors. In other words, while we must promote and create decent jobs and small-scale farmers as well exploring a niche energy system, protecting the environment and our natural beauty remain paramount. As policymakers, we have a constitutional duty to uphold the law and, when necessary, make new laws to ensure that not only do our people live decent sustainable lives, but that we also protect the environment.

This Department in particular is tasked with ensuring the implementing of laws and regulations that will protect our environment. Deputy Speaker, let us be clear, the people who suffer the most from climate change, and the disasters that occur are not the ones who can claim from insurance or who have access to savings. The people who suffer the most from floods, from wildfires and other disasters caused by climate change are the poor. They suffer the most. We cannot on the one hand want to tackle the second pandemic that the Premier keeps speaking about without recognition on the other end, that we must also protect the environment because it is our people who suffer the most from these national disasters. This Department is therefore not a junior one in this Provincial Government. It should be central and key. It speaks to the very kind of sustainable livelihoods that we as

policymakers want to bring about for the majority of our people in this province. The question then becomes, if fighting the war of climate change requires many soldiers can one have enough soldiers?

The DA, Deputy Speaker, and we have also now listened to the response to the Premier about Environmental Affairs. The Premier also got the view that there is no need for an Environmental Commissioner. Against the thousands of people who supported the establishment of the Office of the Environmental Commissioner, this MEC and Premier have a personal opinion that we do not need extra hands on deck to fight climate change and to protect our environment. Soon the ANC will be asking this Legislature how much the public participation process, held in respect of Section 71 to 77 of the Provincial Constitution cost and whether this cannot be deemed as wasteful expenditure, when the Premier and his Cabinet already knew that they had no intention of listening to the outcome of this particular public participation process, because the outcome of this public participation process was clear. The people of the Western Cape want the Environmental Commissioner.

Even the former DA Chief Whip, Mark Wiley, made a clear submission in the participation process. The Commissioner is a must. Primarily the ANC cannot support this Vote, precisely because we think that this Vote Budget is not sufficient and that we need more institutions to support the work of this Department, the Environmental Commissioner being one of these supporting institutions. Let us remind what the Provincial Constitution, a Constitution we pledged to obey, respect and uphold as MPLs, says about the role of the

Environmental Commissioner. Section 72 of that specific part of the Constitution says:

“Monitor urban and rural development which may impact on the environment, investigate complaints in respect of environmental administration, recommend the course of conduct to any provincial organ of state or municipality whose activities has been investigated, act in accordance with the principles of cooperative governance and inter-governmental relations referred to in Chapter 2 of the same Constitution, and lastly, the Commissioner may also add additional powers and functions as provided for in the Provincial Legislation.”

Deputy Speaker, the MEC of Environmental Affairs, Development and Planning, does not believe it is necessary for additional instruments or soldiers to fight climate change and protect our environment. The people of Milnerton, who suffered the fact that the lagoon is always polluted, do not agree with him. The small scale – in substance – fisherfolk of False Bay suffering from poisoned snoek, do not agree with him. People living near Kuils River, where the sewerage from the Zandvliet Wastewater Treatment Works spills, do not agree with him. The people of Zeekoevlei who are fearing another sewerage spill will not agree with him and I am not sure after the disaster at Clifton that the people of Clifton will agree with him as well, yet, even more so, I do believe that the officials within his own Department do not agree with him. When presenting his budget in the Standing Committee the Department officials complained about how municipalities,

especially the City of Cape Town, flout environmental laws and regulations, and there are almost no consequences. While the hon Van der Westhuizen as usual try to point the finger to National Government, the officials were clear that they try their utmost to have an inter-governmental approach to ensure that municipalities – municipalities, hon Van der Westhuizen – are environmentally compliant. The officials of the Department also recognised the lack of basic services delivered by the municipality such as the City of Cape Town, which causes pollution and which has a devastating impact on our rivers and environment. They mentioned the lack of adequate services to provide people with adequate living conditions. For this Department and its budget, very little provision is made for contraventions of environmental laws. The Department must rely on mediation as there is no budget for prosecution and for Courts. In other words, culprits such as the City of Cape Town are getting away with environmental murder.

Indeed, as pointed out to us, the APP speaks about 275 criminal charges, 175 administrative notices, but there are almost no repercussions for these criminal acts by the City of Cape Town and even worse, still no funds to follow up. The ANC agrees with Department officials, the first responsibility of private land is the land-owner, because therefore I never understand why the police or law enforcement must be called in to evict people from private property. Be that as it may, we deeply regret what happened to Driftsands and the ANC will welcome an engagement with CapeNature to work with the community now settled in the nature reserve to resolve that issue, but we simply cannot give up on the nature reserve. We hope there is political will

from CapeNature to resolve the Driftsands Reserve challenge and we certainly hope that it is not because of the area that the nature reserve finds itself in, or because it was not cost effective that CapeNature can so easily dispose of a nature reserve.

Deputy Speaker, the reality is that the tragedy of Driftsands Nature Reserve speaks to the lack of service delivery by the DA-led City of Cape Town in this Provincial Government. 8000 families, not only 8000 people but 8000 families, we are told moved onto the Reserve from Mfuleni. CapeNature had this budget, and this budget makes no provision for them to protect the land. Previous backyarders of those who were renting were evicted. Why did these people not have houses? Why could these people not be moved to serviced sites? Is the Provincial Department of Human Settlements getting involved or is the MEC of Human Settlements more interested in its DA leadership ambitions?

What a relief it would have been for the Department of Environmental Affairs, Development and Planning, to work with their counterparts in Human Settlements because their counterparts in Human Settlements were forced by the Environmental Commissioner to tackle the challenges at Driftsands.

The ANC welcomes the compliance promotion attitude of the Department, but the reality is that other provincial departments are letting them down, and hence enforcement becomes necessity.

Deputy Speaker, earlier I mentioned President Ramaphosa's words in the SONA, expressing sentiments of protecting the environment amidst the economic drives, agriculture, mining and energy. The ANC therefore welcomes the Department's engagement on the cases of Renosterveld and Sandveld. We are pleased that the Department is engaging in a strategic partnership to ensure that amidst our economic opportunities the environment is also protected.

We are also pleased that the Department will look into the matter of the farming which local small-scale farmers have been waiting for quite some time to move indigenous vegetation. I will have a meeting with them on Thursday. Yet the reality is that this budget is letting the Department down. Funds are appropriated for consultants, R29 million for impact management while in Programme 4 nearly 60% of the budget is for COO. The ANC, through a public-private partnership, will rather allocate to ensure that a lab is built to ensure water quality service sampling.

It does not make sense to be paying private entities millions upon million of rands per annum when these can and should be insured by the State. We believe the biodiversity budget is too little while the MEC as usual blames National Government. This Department in the face of the fight against climate change does not need the blame game. It needs the MEC and the MEC for Finance to make the right budget choices.

Deputy Speaker, the ANC will encourage the Department, in particular its

HOD, to ensure that it has its own GBV policies. GBV is not simply sexual harassment. It entails more than that. We welcome the Gender Mainstream Forum and the two contact persons provided by the Department, but all I can say, Deputy Speaker, this is not enough. Whilst we welcome the deal at Government Mainstream Gender, we live in the hope that they will mainstream race and disability too. We recognise the Gender Mainstreaming Survey conducted and the zero-tolerance approach in order to tackle the culture within the Department, no doubt, Provincial Government, a sexist culture that runs throughout this Provincial Government, and certain officials were fired because of this culture. We are pleased that officials reported that Sexual Harassment Policies will refresh and relook, in the light of the Fritz saga. However, what we can clearly say is that the Gender Mainstream Forum, the Sexual Harassment Policies, the two representatives are simply not working. This Department and this Provincial Government need a clear GBV Policy.

Deputy Speaker, this budget let this key Department down and therefore the ANC cannot support this Budget Vote. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much hon Marran. I now recognise hon Makamba-Botya. Hon Makamba-Botya, are you online? I see you there. There you go.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Deputy Speaker, greetings, and greetings to the Ministers at large. Can you hear me?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, I can hear you. You may proceed.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Okay, Deputy Speaker, in the Western Cape there is an imbalance when it comes to creating a sustainable environment and better living conditions for our people. The Provincial Government and municipalities often prioritise urban areas whilst neglecting townships and informal settlements.

In this province, Deputy Speaker, and under the DA Government the constitutional right to an adequate water supply does not... [poor connectivity.]

These communities are expected to fend for themselves and see to it they get access to water. Those who are considered lucky received a few litres a day from unreliable mobile water trucks. Instead of addressing issues of water security with actual water supply, this Government would rather blame people for establishing informal settlements, the same Government which is failing dismally when it comes to building people's houses. This Government would ...[Inaudible – audio connection lost.] in townships and backyard dwellers.

Deputy Speaker, solid waste management is also a major issue in townships and informal settlements. The Government is struggling with clearing illegally disposed waste and reducing landfill waste. Such failure on the part

of the Government often results as a health hazard to communities. Health and wellbeing of people staying in informal settlements should be prioritized as well as they should not be treated like sub-humans.

Deputy Speaker, urban planning and inclusivity are at the heart of spatial planning and the Department is not doing much in this regard. This is a sphere where the Department was supposed to work in collaboration with the Provincial Department of Human Settlements and municipalities in giving effect to the provisions of social development.

Deputy Speaker, this is a sphere where the Department is supposed to work in collaboration with the Provincial Department of Human Settlements. It will take years and a new government for urban planning, which is based on inclusivity to take place in the Western Cape. We are often told how the money is spent on spatial planning, but the actual accommodation of our people does not take place.

It is for these reasons Deputy Speaker, that the EFF does not support this particular Vote. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now recognize hon August. Oh, he is not here. Thank you very much for letting me know. We move on to hon Peter Marais, also not here? Thank you, Mr Secretary.

I recognise hon Brinkhuis, is he online? No? No. I take it he is not. We then

move over to hon Van der Westhuizen.

†Mnr A P VAN DER WESTHUIZEN: Geagte Adjunkspeaker...

[Mr A P VAN DER WESTHUIZEN: Honourable Deputy Speaker...]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: One minute, one minute, hon Van der Westhuizen. Hon Brinkhuis has just come into the House. I am going to allow him to speak before you do. If you would just indulge with me, thank you very much. Hon Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will wait for you, thank you. Are you ready? Are you ready?

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Yes, I am ready, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, the time will go on. You may begin.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you very much. †Bismillah hieragman nir rajeem.

[In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious and The Most Merciful.]

It is a fact that the province's most challenging environmental issues are linked to the widespread poverty, lack of basic services and inequitable allocation of environmental costs in communities. Al Jama–Ah therefore once

again appeals to those implementing and making decisions on environmental matters, to be just and transparent. It is normally the poor that bear the brunt of unjust environmental practices, despite our Constitution, stating that everyone has a right to an environment that is not harmful to the health, and that the environment is protected.

Al Jama–Ah calls for the appointment of an Environmental Commissioner. The past 10 years have proven that there is no accountability from officials in the Department. Almost all of Cape Town's popular beaches are amongst the 31 polluted sites along the coastline. The sewage pollution into our water alleys is still occurring, causing harm to people, animals and marine life.

I thank you, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now call on hon Van der Westhuizen. You may begin.

†Mnr A P VAN DER WESTHUIZEN: Agbare Adjunkspeaker, die welstand van die omgewing is ons almal se verantwoordelikheid. Elkeen het 'n rol te speel maar die daarstel van wetgewing is die verantwoordelikheid van hierdie en ander wetgewende liggame. Ons as Provinsiale Parlement, en dit is 'n groot verantwoordelikheid om deur wetgewing en ander maatreëls die omgewing te beskerm.

Agbare Brinkhuis het so pas aangehaal uit die Grondwet en ek wil graag

dieselfde doen. Artikel 24 van die Grondwet is duidelik en ek haal aan:

- “(a) Elkeen het die reg op ’n omgewing wat nie skadelik vir hul gesondheid of welsyn is nie; en
- (b) Op die beskerming van die omgewing wat ter wille van huidige en toekomstige geslagte deur redelike wetgewende en ander maatreëls wat besoedeling en ekologiese agteruitgang voorkom, bewaring bevorder, en die ekologies volhoubare ontwikkeling en aanwending van natuurlike hulpbronne verseker, terwyl dit regverdigbare ekonomiese en maatskaplike ontwikkeling bevorder.”

Besluite en optredes wat ’n invloed op die omgewing het, is meestal langtermyn van aard. Ongelukkig dui wetenskaplikes al die afgelope aantal jare aan dat die eise wat tans aan die omgewing gestel word op die lange duur onthoudbaar is. Dit word ook bevestig in die Departement van Omgewingsake en Ontwikkelingsbeplanning se 2018 Verslag met die Titel “Vooruitsig vir die Omgewing.”

Die Afrikaanse kunstenaar en sanger, Nataniel le Roux, het met digterlike vryheid ’n lied geskryf oor die druk waaronder Moeder Aarde verkeer. Die lied wys ons daarop dat ons maar een Moeder Aarde het. Vergun my om ’n paar strofes uit hierdie lied voor te lees:

“Iewers klink die eggo
 Nog ’n skoot uit ’n geweer
 Iewers vlug daar diere
 En ’n groot boom val neer

Iewers in die verte
 Word nog 'n stad gebou
 Iewers vaar 'n vragskip
 Oor die see se laaste blou
 En iewers onder alles
 Sug moeder aarde swaar..."

En dan die refrein:

"Sy vryf haar moeë bene
 Sy't 'n lang pad geloop
 Sy wonder oor haar kinders
 Dis haar heel laaste hoop
 Sy vou haar hande saam
 Soos 'n eensaam gebed
 O, wanneer gaan ons leer
 Sy's al wat ons het.
 Moeder aarde draai haar om
 Uit die son se ergste brand
 En sy droom van digte woude
 En haar oë waai vol sand
 Sy soek na haar kinders
 Maar hul dans nou met musiek
 Langs duisend vuil riviere
 Langs berge van plastiek."

Agbare Speaker, agbare lede, sien u ook die son se brand al feller? Sien u

ook die gevaar van vuil riviere? Sien u ook die groeiende berge van plastiek?

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Mr A P VAN DER WESTHUIZEN: Hon Deputy Speaker, the wellbeing of the environment is the responsibility of all of us. Everyone has a role to play but the creating of legislation is the responsibility of this and other legislative bodies. We as Provincial Parliament, and it is a big responsibility to protect the environment through legislation and other measures.

Honourable Brinkhuis has just quoted from the Constitution and I would like to do the same. Section 24 of the Constitution is clear and I quote:

“Everyone has the right –

- (a) To an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and
- (b) To have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that –
 - (i) prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
 - (ii) promote conservation; and
 - (iii) secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.”

Decisions and actions that have an impact on the environment, are most of the time long term in nature. Unfortunately scientists have indicated for the past few years that the demands that are currently placed on the environment are unbearable in the long term. It is also confirmed in the Department of

Environmental Affairs and Development Planning's 2018 Report entitled "Environment Outlook Report."

The South African artist and singer, Nataniel le Roux, wrote a poem with poetic freedom about the pressure under which Mother Earth finds itself. The song shows us that we only have one Mother Earth. Allow me to read a few lines from this song:

*"Iewers klink die eggo
 Nog 'n skoot uit 'n geweer
 Iewers vlug daar diere
 En 'n groot boom val neer
 Iewers in die verte
 Word nog 'n stad gebou
 Iewers vaar 'n vragskip
 Oor die see se laaste blou
 En iewers onder alles
 Sug moeder aarde swaar..."*

And then the refrain:

*"Sy vryf haar moeë bene
 Sy't 'n lang pad geloop
 Sy wonder oor haar kinders
 Dis haar heel laaste hoop
 Sy vou haar hande saam
 Soos 'n eensaam gebed
 O, wanneer gaan ons leer*

*Sy's al wat ons het.
Moeder aarde draai haar om
Uit die son se ergste brand
En sy droom van digte woude
En haar oë waai vol sand
Sy soek na haar kinders
Maar hul dans nou met musiek
Langs duisend vuil riviere
Langs berge van plastiek."*

Honourable Speaker, honourable members, do you also see the sun burning more and more intensely? Do you also see the danger of polluted rivers? Do you also see the growing mountains of plastic?]

To preserve and care for the environment is every person's responsibility. We are, however, fortunate that some people and entities dedicate their time, knowledge and resources to concentrate on this. I wish to acknowledge the important watchdog role that environmental activists are playing. Yet, we also need the professional input, the specialised knowledge and dedication as provided by the staff of this Department.

It has repeatedly been said and confirmed by visitors to the Western Cape that the Western Cape is blessed with great natural beauty. This is then also the reason why we are such a popular tourist destination, and why many films and advertisements are shot in the Western Cape. Over the last week, many

road and mountain bike cyclists and their supporters have flocked to the Western Cape to enjoy our great weather and incredible landscapes.

This leads to highly sustainable income sources, but also confirms the importance of conservation and finding the right balance between conservation and sensitive developments. Finding this balance is often difficult. The situation is complicated by the fact that the latest research and generally accepted best practices are often intended for developed countries. We cannot deny that the needs of a developing country such as ours, with high levels of unemployment, with a need to accelerate economic growth differ vastly from countries that have already developed their economies. These short-term needs often seem to be in conflict with the conservation of the environment.

As stated earlier, caring for the environment is the shared responsibility of all, including all three spheres of Government, Local, Provincial and National. By law, certain important responsibilities rest with the central Government. The Standing Committee lastly invited the National Minister of the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Barbara Creecy and her officials to attend a meeting and to assist us as members in our oversight role over the Provincial Department. The central Government provides some funding towards the clearing of alien vegetation and we need to ensure that the Western Cape is spending the funding prudently. It is with regret that I need to inform this House that Minister Creecy made it quite clear in her response, that she is not open to this kind of cooperation with the Western

Cape. In the great interest and importance of the environment, I am formally requesting her again to reconsider her unwillingness to cooperate and assist us in our oversight role over this Provincial Department.

Unfortunately, I have to ask myself, why is she so reluctant to engage at this level, when many other national departments such as National Treasury welcome engagements with provinces. I can only imagine that she fears that such cooperation may expose the many failures of her Department, failures to manage the sustainability of stocks of wild abalone, crayfish, and many marine fish species. Let me remind this House that many of the species of alien vegetation that threaten our natural Fynbos vegetation and that now need to be cleared at great cost were introduced to South Africa by the former National Department of Forestry. Let me again remind the House of the high levels of unemployment amongst the former employees of the National Department of Forestry, communities that still stay in the *bosdorpe*, far from commercial centres, schools, clinics and other services, communities that have been deserted by National Government, its former employer and now turn to local DA governments in the Western Cape to address their plight.

I regret this lack of cooperation between the different spheres of Government. Current legislation regarding exploration and mining is also failing to recognise the benefits that the active cooperation of all three spheres of Government would be able to bring when it comes to the management of the environment.

The Western Cape has never benefited from mining to the extent that many of our northern provinces have. In the process however, we have been saved from some of the dangers and risks associated with mining, particularly the deadly effects of acid mine water. The spill of acid mine water recently wiped out almost all aquatic life along a 60 kilometre stretch of the Wilge and Olifants River, feeding the Loskop Dam. Despite our limited exposure to the benefits of mining, there are currently huge concerns about the possible environmental degradation due to mining activities along the West Coast.

I have personally seen some of the damage caused by past diamond mining along the Northern Cape's coastline. One can only hope that the National departments responsible for mineral resources and the environment have the capacity to ensure that these mining companies operate within the environmental limitations set by current legislation.

Although we do not have the pollution problems associated with mining, or nearly the same volume of untreated sewage being dumped into our rivers as seen in northern provinces, we have our own serious problems with periodic sewerage spills and hon Marran rightly referred to this. This is, however, often caused by malicious damage to sewerage infrastructure.

This damage ranges from cable theft to items such as spent fire and gas cylinders being dumped in sewerage systems. No sewerage pump is designed to withstand this kind of abuse. I believe that these actions are forms of sabotage – sabotage of our environment.

I call on all law enforcement agencies to investigate and act decisively against individuals that abuse public infrastructure built to treat effluent. As stated at the beginning of my speech, we all have responsibility to conserve the environment and this includes the wider public. We all know that many manufacturing processes combined with emissions from internal combustion engines are detrimental to air quality, and I am grateful that Minister Bredell also referred to our atmospheric measuring. This was clearly noticed when the quality of the air in the Western Cape improved vastly during the severe Level 5 Lockdown period. Many countries have taken steps to promote the use of battery powered vehicles. These vehicles are not only better for the environment, but they also have a much lower running cost than vehicles running on petrol or diesel. The running costs are in general about 1/3 of the cost of traditional vehicles. A general switch to electric vehicles at this stage will unfortunately put our already highly constrained electricity supply under further strain. Again, Eskom is not only limiting economic growth, it is also forcing us to rely on petrol and diesel and Eskom itself is a major contributor to the high levels of air pollution in particularly Mpumalanga. I referred last week to the lambasting that Minister Creecy received from the Courts for her Department's ineptness and inability to finalise its policy on air pollution.

However, many forms of pollution are not clearly visible. Air pollution goes a lot further than smoke, which is clearly visible. Water pollution is also not easy to spot and therefore sometimes go unnoticed for long periods. Contrary to this, solid waste pollution is clearly visible. Littering and illegal dumping

remain a serious and international problem and cleanup campaigns have been met with different successes in various communities. I believe the time is right for another national cleanup campaign. Fortunately, great strides have been made in terms of recycling, and we are learning every day of ways to decrease the volumes of solid waste. Waste reduction starts at the packaging stage and more communities are introducing waste separation at source. I want to thank all citizens that co-operate in this regard, contributing to a better future for our children. Many authorities struggle with the annual requirement to do topographical studies regarding the available airspace for waste-disposal facilities. This Department's budget over the medium term includes amounts to assist municipalities in this regard. The Department is also playing an important role in the planning and establishment of regional waste disposal sites. As stated earlier, conservation and environmental issues are often long-term initiatives and our successes or failures will only be fully appraised by future generations.

I am proud of the work that CapeNature is doing in the Western Cape. CapeNature is managing large structures of public land in the province, but it is also the main implementing agent for many initiatives such as the clearing of alien vegetation earlier referred to. Due to budget constraints the emphasis on alien clearing is however contained to water-catchment areas. Teams from CapeNature also assist in the fighting of wildfires as Minister Bredell referred to earlier. CapeNature is also employing large numbers of young people under the Expanded Public Works Programme. Many young South Africans have been given an opportunity to gain work experience and develop

their knowledge and skills through this scheme. My heart bleeds, however, for those young people who have grasped this opportunity with both hands yet failed to find employment once their fixed term employment agreements expired, and for this, unfortunately, the National Government and its economic policies must be held responsible.

Great advances have been made in the management of tourist facilities in the nature reserves under the control of CapeNature. I am particularly pleased by the progress in facilitating online bookings and the fact that potential tourists are now able to see for themselves the availability of facilities and accommodation online. All indications are that the investments in tourism facilities are not only contributing greatly to social wellbeing and the positive appraisal of our natural assets, but that it is also generating a net income for CapeNature. The support of tourism is contributing to the much-needed economic recovery of the Western Cape, following the economic damage caused by COVID-19 regulations. Unfortunately, there are also various threats to our reserves and Minister Bredell referred to the Driftsands Reserve, which was a strategically placed urban reserve protecting one of the last tracks of remaining Cape Flats dune land vegetation and I welcome the promised support by the hon Marran to see what we can still save of this reserve.

Its location allowed the land to be used for educational purposes and as a traditional initiation site. The COVID-19 Regulations prohibiting the removal of shelters have contributed to the illegal occupation and invasion of the

Driftsands Reserve, and as was referred to earlier, some of the areas invaded were unsafe. During the course of last summer hundreds of shacks were erected on an unstable dam wall. This may have seemed to be safe during the summer season. However, we are aware of the annual flooding during winter and the pressures to then find suitable alternative sites for relocation.

Various Court orders and actions claimed at protecting the site reportedly costing as much as R335 million, were unsuccessful in preventing this illegal land invasion.

On the Development Planning side the Department is at an advanced stage to finalise documentation to guide municipalities on policies ensuring that the advancement of integrated housing be done according to best practices. The Department is also actively engaging with municipal planning officials and advancing practices that promotes safety through clever design practices. The work of these officials is also important in order to plan for future mobility and spatial transformation in the Western Cape.

We also need to improve the capacity for urban management at local Government level, one of various risks identified and linked to planning.

One only has to look at the bottom line of this Department's budget for the upcoming year to note just how constrained the overall budget is. Unfortunately, every year brings with it its immediate needs and important but longer-term initiatives are often moved to the outer years. Often the

choice is between the construction of another school to accommodate a fast-growing youth population and the longer term conservation actions. It should therefore not come as a surprise to learn that this Department's budget for the upcoming year sees a 9% cut, when compared with the final amount spent some two years ago in 2019/2020. The total expenditure budget for the upcoming year amounts to just over R568 million rand.

I am grateful to report that the majority of the members on the Standing Committee on Environmental Affairs and Development Planning supported the budget of Vote 9 for the Department, and the ANC voted against this budget, but unfortunately did not at the time indicate whether they find the amount set aside for this budget too big or too small, or where they would have liked the difference in the amount to be allocated to or come from.

I would like to put a friendly request to the Leader of the Opposition that in the future please indicate how the ANC's alternative budget would have looked like. You owe it to the voters to put an alternative and not only to vote against everything.

I therefore ask all members of this House to support this Budget Vote. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. Can I just check someone has got their telephone on with their two devices next to each other; please, there is some feedback. I would now like to recognise hon

Minister Bredell.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Thank you Deputy Speaker, and thank you, I am going to start with the Chairperson of the Standing Committee, hon Andricus van der Westhuizen.

I want to thank you for your leadership, your oversight role. We are colleagues, but that does not prevent you from being strict with us and hold us accountable, so thank you very much for your role in protecting our environment.

Deputy Speaker, the rest is very difficult to answer. I do understand that the ANC has got a Congress this year, and the hon Marran, Deputy Speaker, he touched on ambulances, Ukraine, human settlements, the response of the Premier, agriculture, gender. He was all over the show, so he then realised that he must talk about the environment and no surprise he jumped onto this, †sy kitaar sonder snare, die *Environmental Commissioner* [his guitar without strings, the Environmental Commissioner.]

†Hon Speaker, aan die agbare Marran, ons het 7,1 miljoen mense in die Wes-Kaap. So ek kan ook die argument hê dat 99% van die mense stem saam met my op hierdie stadium, so ons kan maar net so goed kyk, ons kan maar net so goed kyk – maar ek is oop vir enige oortuiging, as daar, agbare Deputy Speaker, enige meriete is, ons is nooit bang vir oorsig nie, maar ons moet teruggaan na die Grondwet toe, oorsig met 'n mag, sodat die *Environmental*

Commissioner kan optree, maar oorsig, vir die rol van oorsig gaan niemand help nie en wat die agbare Marran nalaat om te sê is dat ons kan 10 *Environmental Commissioners* aangestel het as die ANC Nasionale Regering hierdie land nie in bankrotskap bestuur het nie. Ons het nie geld nie. As hierdie Departement R15 miljoen kry moet ons gaan kyk waar kan ons hierdie R15 miljoen tot voordeel van die omgewing en ons nageslag aanwend, en waar ek tans staan gaan dit nie die Omgewingskommissaris wees nie, tensy iemand my anders kan oortuig. So hy kan maar van daardie deuntjie afklim. Daar is 'n proses en ons sal die proses respekteer.

Agbare Speaker, ja, verder is dit moeilik. Hy het gepraat oor energie. Dit is nogal interessant dat hy energie genoem het, die agbare Marran, en dan gooi hy President Ramaphosa se naam hier in, seker ook hom te ondersteun by sy Kongres, maar hy moet net onthou die agbare President was die *Deputy President* onder Zuma wat verantwoordelik was vir Eskom. So kom ons los dit maar daar. Dis 'n totale mislukking en net een groot besoedelstorie wat baie hartseer is.

Die hele Driftsands-aangeleentheid, ons Departement is baie ernstig daaroor en Karen en haar taakspan werk al 18 maande, omdat ons vrees lewensverlies en ek wil regtig 'n beroep doen op alle politieke partye om ons te help. Mense moet vrywillig skuif na areas wat geïdentifiseer is vir veiligheid. Mense moenie nou kom met lang lyste of waglyste te probeer spring nie. Ons gaan kinders en vrouens se lewens in gevaar stel, want daar wag, daar is 'n ramp wat net wag om te gebeur met die eerste vloed wat kom so ons is baie

senuweeagtig as 'n Departement, en ons doen alles moontlik en ons vra rêrig dat mense met ons moet saam wees.

Die oorlog in hierdie land is teen armoede en ek wil die agbare Marran weer herinner dat as sy party nie hierdie land in bankrotskap bestuur het nie, sal ons omgewing veilig gewees het, want armoede eet die omgewing op. So 'n arm mens het ongelukkig ander behoeftes as wat ons vandag dink ons het.

Laastens, agbare Deputy Speaker, ek wonder hoekom beweeg al die mense Kaap toe. Die antwoord is eintlik baie maklik. Hulle vlug van ANC-regering, so, agbare *Deputy Speaker*, ek is baie trots op wat ons bereik in ons Departement en ek wil regtig vir die agbare Marran vra hy moenie subtiel my amptenare in politiek probeer betrek nie.

Die agbare Dugmore het my gevra om eendag by hulle te staan, as hulle 'n komitee het, die ANC, of ons amptenare hulle kan kom inlig en toelig – met die grootste liefde, maar jy verskoon hulle dan en ons trek nie ons amptenary nie.

Ons moet staat en party skei. Ons het die hoogs bekwame amptenare en ek het baie respek vir my amptenare se kwalifikasies, ag, en se opinies. Ons doen ook ons uiterste bes om ons rade tot verantwoording te bring, maar daar is interregeringsverhoudings. Ja, daar is al 'n klomp direkteiewe uitgereik teenoor die Stad. Ja, daar is probleme. Die probleem is nie hofsake nie. Dan mors ons geld op 'n hofsak wat eintlik in die omgewing moes gegaan het, so

ons is heeldag besig met interregeringsverhoudings en ons Groen Skerpioene-span tree op binne die wetgewende raamwerk so streng as wat hulle kan. Ons is besig met 'n redelike skuif van ons denke ook om nie net die munisipale bestuurder op 'n direktef se naam te noem nie, maar ook die burgemeester, want as dit hof toe gaan, gaan altwee tot verantwoording geroep word. So ons skram nie weg daarvan nie en sommer net so terloops die enigste direktef wat ons dit al gedoen het was in 'n DA-beheerde Raad, so ons speel nie politiek met die omgewing nie.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Hon Speaker, to the hon Marran, we have 7,1 million people in die Western Cape. So I can also have the argument that 99% of the people agrees with me at this stage, so we can just look so well, we can just look so well – but I'm open to any conviction, if there is any merit, hon Deputy Speaker, we are never afraid of oversight, but we should go back to the Constitution, oversight with power, so that the Environmental Commissioner can act, but oversight, for the role of oversight no-one is going to help and what hon Marran does not say is that we could have appointed 10 Environmental Commissioners if the ANC National Government had not governed this country into bankruptcy. We do not have money. If this Department gets R15 million, we have to go and look where we can apply this R15 million to the advantage of the environment and our next generations, and where I'm currently standing it is not going to be the Environmental Commissioner, unless someone can convince me otherwise. So he might as well get off that tune. There is a process and we will respect the process.]

Hon Speaker, yes, further it is difficult. He spoke about energy. It is quite interesting that he mentioned energy, the hon Marran, and then he throws in the name of President Ramaphosa, probably to support him at his Congress, but he should remember that the hon President was the Deputy President under Zuma who was responsible for Eskom. So let us rather leave it there. It is a total failure and just one big pollution story which is very sad.

The whole Driftsands issue, our Department is very serious about it and Karen and her task team have been working for 18 months, because we fear loss of life and I really want to appeal to all political parties to help us. People must move voluntarily to areas that are identified as safe. People should not now come with long lists and try to jump the queue. We are going to put women and children's lives at risk, because there is waiting, there is a disaster that is waiting to happen with the first flood that comes so we are very nervous as a Department, and we do everything possible and ask people to work with us.

The war in this country is against poverty and I just want to remind the hon Marran again that if his party had not governed this country into bankruptcy, our environment would have been safe, because poverty devours the environment. So a poor person unfortunately has other needs than what we today think we have.

Finally, hon Deputy Speaker, I wonder why all the people are moving to the

Cape. The answer is actually quite simple. They flee from ANC government, so, hon Deputy Speaker, I am proud of what we have achieved in our Department and I really want to ask hon Marran not to subtly try and draw my officials into politics.

The hon Dugmore asked me to one day stand by them, when they have a committee, the ANC, if our officials can come and inform them – with the greatest pleasure, but you excuse them and we don't draw our officials.

We have to separate state and party. We have highly capable officials and I have a lot of respect for my officials' qualifications, oh, and opinions. We also do our best to bring our councils to account, but there are intergovernmental relations. Yes, a lot of directives had been issued to the City. Yes, there are problems. The problem is not Court cases. Then we waste money on a Court case that should rather have gone towards the environment, so we are busy all day with intergovernmental relations and our Green Scorpions act within the legislative framework as strictly as they can. We are busy with a fair shift in our thinking to not just mention the municipal manager's name on a directive, but also the Mayor, because if it goes to Court, both will be called to account. So we do not shy away from that and just by the way, the only directive we have done was in a DA controlled Council, so we do not play politics with the environment.]

To the hon Makamba-Botya, the water-issue, I struggled to follow but water quality and quantity for us is very important. We need to plan it and we need

to be ready because the environment moves in cycles. The next drought, when will it be? We do not know, but we need to plan, and if you look at and that is why it is so important, hon member, to get the population, the movement, the population growth figures correct to understand that, because in a 12-month period 108,000 people moving to the Western Cape, meaning that we need 21,7 million litres of water a day extra, so in the next eight years, we need to build half of Wemmershoek Dam, and we know we cannot trust the ANC to build any dams because that will be another corruption scandal again like, ask the KZN people, so we need to make plans. So, we work very closely with our municipalities to see how we can work on a variety of concepts, from desalination, to boreholes, etc, to help them. Informal housing and definitely from where I am standing, myself and the Minister of Human Settlements work very closely together with the Inclusionary Housing Policy and we will be the first Province that announced on that and we will then walk the path with our municipalities to support them.

†Agbare Speaker, agbare Brinkhuis is 100% reg, die armste van die armste gaan die *brunt bear* as dit kom by die omgewing, maar weereens armoede is die oorsaak van die omgewing wat swaarkry en die oorsaak van die armoede in hierdie land is ongelukkig die ANC. Dis die waarheid. Dis waar ons staan en ons moet almal nou hande vat en kyk hoe kan ons onself hier uitlig want as ons nie in korrupsieskandale verval het oor die afgelope jare nie, was dit nou die geleentheid. Ons sou een van die beste groeiende ekonomieë in die land in die wêreld gehad het, so namens myself wil ek dan my *Ministry* ook bedank vir hulle harde werk, hulle ondersteuning, en onder die leiding van

Marius du Randt, baie dankie dat ek altyd op julle kan staatmaak. Dankie, agbare Adjunkspeaker.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Hon Speaker, hon Brinkhuis is 100% correct, the poorest of the poor are going to bear the brunt, when it comes to the environment, but again, poverty is the cause of the environment suffering and the cause of poverty in this country is unfortunately the ANC. That is the truth. That is where we stand and we now have to all take hands and see how we can lift ourselves out of this because if we had not become swamped in corruption scandals over the past years, this was now the opportunity. We would have been one of the best growing economies in the world, so on behalf of myself I would like to also thank my Ministry for their hard work, their support, and under the leadership of Marius du Randt, thank you that I can always depend on you. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.]

†Die ADJUNKSPEAKER: Baie dankie, Minister.

[The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister.] Thank you very much. That concludes the debate on Vote 9.

[Debate concluded.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am just going to give you a quick second. I think you may depart, thank you very much to the Minister's guests, while I give

him a few minutes just to – and perhaps his other Department to come in.

All right, are you ready, Minister? Okay, I think everybody is here. I now will ask the Secretary to read the Fourth Order of the Day.

†Die SEKRETARIS: Debat oor Begrotingspos 14 – Plaaslike Regering – Wes-Kaapse Begrotingswetsontwerp [W2–2022]

[The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 14 – Local Government – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2 - 2022]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr Secretary. I recognize the hon Minister Bredell.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: †Agbare [Hon] Deputy Speaker, hon Premier, hon Cabinet colleagues, members of the Legislature, Head of the Department, ladies and gentlemen.

†Dankie vir die geleentheid om vandag die Departement van Plaaslike Regering se begroting voor te lê. *Deputy Speaker*, ons leef in 'n era waar die wêreld so vinnig verander dat regerings regoor die wêreld sukkel om by te bly met hul basiese verantwoordelikhede teenoor die mense wat hulle dien. Ons in Suid Afrika ervaar dit ook, en as Provinsiale Regering is ons nie hiervan uitgesluit nie. Die Departement van Plaaslike Regering is ook nie hierby uitgesluit nie.

Ek wil in die begin ons *HOD* van Plaaslike Regering en sy span dankie sê vir die goeie werk wat hulle onder dikwels baie moeilike omstandighede doen. Dit was nie `n maklike jaar tot dusver nie.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Thank you for the opportunity to table the Department of Local Government's Budget today. Deputy Speaker, we live in an era where the world is changing so quickly that governments all over the world are struggling to keep up with their basic responsibilities to the people they are serving. We in South Africa are also experiencing that, and as Provincial Government we are not excluded from that. The Department of Local Government is also not excluded from it.]

I would like to in the beginning thank the HOD of Local Government for the good work they do, often under trying circumstances. It has not been an easy year thus far.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, this budget presented today by the Department of Local Government reflects this new reality of the fast-changing environment in which we support and guide municipalities in the Western Cape.

The Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders Act is a good example of how times are changing and how we have to adapt. Last year saw the adoption of the

Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders Act. Premier Winde has then assigned the powers and functions relating to the Act to me. This creates new responsibilities for the Department to, amongst others, develop policy and new legislation as stipulated in the Act.

Deputy Speaker, the Local Government elections from last year gave us a new political landscape characterised by coalitions. Coalition governments work in theory, but on the ground, there are, and we are faced with many, many challenges.

†Speaker, ons raadslede gaan volwasse moet raak. Ons gaan moet leer om ons kleinlike politieke geskille eenkant te sit en ons sal moet leer om saam te werk tot voordeel van die publiek wat ons belowe het om te dien.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Speaker, our Councillors will have to become adults. We will have to learn to put aside our petty political differences and we will have to learn to work together to the advantage of the public we promised to serve.]

Eskom is the elephant in the room. Deputy Speaker, we cannot debate local government without addressing the elephant in the room, Eskom. We especially need to talk about municipalities that do not pay Eskom. The amounts owed to Eskom by South Africa's Local Government are truly shocking. The debt owed to Eskom, older than 90 days, the Western Cape Municipalities, R134,7 million; Northern Cape Municipalities, R2,5 billion;

North West Municipalities, R2,7 billion; Mpumalanga Municipalities R12,4 billion; Limpopo Municipalities, R968,1 million; KZN Municipalities, R428,2 million; Gauteng Municipalities, R4,87 million; Free State Municipalities, R15,01 billion; Eastern Cape Municipalities, R1,87 billion. The total debt owed by the Western Cape Municipalities amount to 3% of the total municipal debt owed to Eskom. It should be noted that there are currently only four municipalities in the Western Cape that have high outstanding debt older than 90 days. The total debt over 90 days for these municipalities collectively amounts to R134,7 million for the period ending January 2022.

†Adjunkspeker, al is die Wes-Kaap by verre die provinsie met die minste skuld aan Eskom, het ons daadwerklike planne en prosesse in plek om hierdie situasie te bestuur en te voorkom.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Deputy Speaker, even if the Western Cape is by far the province with the least debt to Eskom, we have real plans and processes in place to manage and prevent this situation.]

The Western Cape Department of Local Government in collaboration with the Provincial Treasury have instituted preventative measures in an aim to reduce debt owed to Eskom by municipalities. These measures include the regular monitoring of debt amounts owed by municipalities, as well as ensuring the

effective implementation of and adherence to signed payment arrangements between municipalities and Eskom, to ensure that these arrangements are honoured.

Deputy Speaker, non-payment to Eskom is a symptom of a larger underlying problem facing local governments throughout the country, a culture of weak or no financial management. My Department of Local Government is currently working on several initiatives to address this, and to provide the support needed to improve, where necessary.

†Adjunkspeaker, ons vind dat verskillende munisipaliteite het wyd uiteenlopende pryse vir dieselfde basiese dienste. Sommige dorpe is op pad om mense uit hul huise uit te belas as gevolg van hul tariefstrukture. Die Departement van Plaaslike Regering is daarom met 'n projek besig waar ons munisipaliteite gaan help om opnuut na hul tariefstrukture te kyk sodat daar meer eenvormigheid kan wees. Dit moet ook realisties en markverwant wees om volhoubaar te kan wees.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Deputy Speaker, we find that different municipalities have widely different prices for the same basic services. Some towns are on their way to tax people out of their homes as a result of their tariff structures. The Department of Local Government is therefore busy with a project where we are going to assist municipalities to look at their tariff structures again so that there can

be more uniformity. It also has to be realistic and market related to be sustainable.]

A municipality's ability to effectively collect rates and services rendered are crucial for long term financial sustainability. We are providing guidance, support and turnaround advice to local governments if they need to improve in this regard.

†Deputy Speaker, munisipaliteite wat nie gesonde finansiële bestuur toepas nie, het ook dikwels geen beheer oor hul personeel komponent nie. Daar waar die plaaslike regering se personeelkoste nie die inkomste van die munisipaliteit reflekteer nie, help die Departement met advies en kundigheid om volhoubare menslike hulpbronne strategieë te ontwikkel en te implementeer.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Deputy Speaker, municipalities that do not apply sound financial management often also do not have control over their staff component. Where the local government's staff costs do not reflect the income of the municipality, the Department assists with advice and expertise to develop and implement sustainable human resources.]

Deputy Speaker, as Government we need to engage with our citizens and we need to do this every day, and not just before an election. In order to improve

citizen engagement, the Department is implementing the very successful Thusong Centre Programme, where we bring a host of Government services to grassroots levels in our communities. We have also rolled out mobile Thusong Centres to cater for small and far-flung municipalities.

†Hon Deputy Speaker, daar is 'n gesegde in Afrikaans dat jy nie die wiel hoef oor te herontwerp nie. “You do not have to reinvent the wheel.”

In die Wes-Kaap het ons die Joint District and Metro Approach (JDMA) ontwikkel. Dit is 'n raamwerk waar ons samewerking tussen rolspelers vanuit alle oorde aanmoedig om saam met mekaar te werk oor departementele mandate en grense heen. Die JDMA werk baie goed waar mense dit implementeer. Ons het die COVID-19 pandemie daarvolgens bestuur. Ons gebruik dit om die Droogte Aksie Plan te bestuur. Die Provinsiale Ekonomiese Herstelplan word volgens die JDMA-beginsels bestuur.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Hon Deputy Speaker, there is a saying in Afrikaans that you do not have to reinvent the wheel. “You do not have to reinvent the wheel.”

In the Western Cape we have developed the Joint District and Metro Approach (JDMA). It is a framework where we encourage cooperation between role players from all over across departmental mandates and boundaries. The JDMA works very well where people implement it. We

managed the COVID-19 pandemic according to that. We use it to manage the Drought Action Plan. The Provincial Economic Recovery Plan is managed according to the JDMA principles.]

Deputy Speaker, the JDMA works well, and more and more districts and local municipalities are seeing the results and are learning to use it in their unique settings.

Now for reinventing the wheel: the National District Development Model (DDM), this approach wants to see the National ANC Minister being delegated to manage and oversee the so-called One Plan in the district municipalities. We have not seen a One Plan, Deputy Speaker. I can only speculate, but it seems the ANC is seeking the Trojan-Horse effect to get access to the Western Cape.

†Laat ek egter u herinner. Die Wes-Kaap word tans deur die DA regeer. Los die DDM en werk eerder saam met ons volgens die bestaande gevestigde suksesvolle JDMA model.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[But let me remind you. The Western Cape is currently governed by the DA. Leave the DDM and rather cooperate with us in accordance with the existing established successful JDMA model.]

Deputy Speaker, if there is one thing we have learnt through all the recent challenges of COVID, drought, and the economic upheavals of recent years, it is this: when you have limited resources, the only way to be successful is if you can collaborate across fences and borders in order to achieve a common goal. This is the same lesson our coalition Councillors must learn if they are to see lasting stability and prosperity in their towns and cities.

†En daar is geleentheid om groot sukses te ontsluit as ons kan saamwerk. Geld gaan net daar waar daar vrede is. My Departement doen werk in hierdie verband om munisipaliteite te help om hulself te posisioneer vir investering.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

And there is opportunity to unlock great success if we cooperate. Money only goes there where there is peace. My Department is doing work in this regard to help municipalities to position themselves for investing.

The potential to derive maximum positive benefits from infrastructure investment is one such initiative to maximise investment. Traditionally the challenges associated with attracting private sector investment includes, amongst others, misalignment of infrastructure planning and coordination between the three spheres of government; ageing infrastructure and lack of maintenance; a weak economic outlook impacting the fiscal environment leading to reduced allocations from National and Provincial Government to support capital infrastructure investment.

To promote infrastructure development, the Department will focus on the following initiatives: the development of the provincial-wide Infrastructure Master Plan: Energy, Water and Roads; the development of a special purpose vehicle to facilitate the infrastructure financing model; drive the Support Infrastructure Grant and the Division of Revenue Act reform; the development of Asset Management and Maintenance Programmes to safeguard infrastructure investments; the development of a 15-year Western Cape Integrated Drought and Water Response Plan to secure water resilience in this province.

Deputy Speaker, our Disaster Management Centre is another example of collaboration leading to success. Our track record with wildfire prevention and control speaks for itself. 90% of the fires are managed within the first hour after reporting. We achieve this through excellent teamwork between the diverse range of national, provincial and local role players.

This includes district municipalities, local municipalities, various fire-fighting units, locally and nationally, as well as CapeNature. These role players can quickly mobilise to use resources closest to the reported fire, and we send aerial support sooner than later to quickly put out small fires before they become runaway fires, and it is not only wildfire coordination. The Disaster Management Centre is currently providing coordination support to the Department of Agriculture to manage the locust outbreak in some of our rural areas.

Deputy Speaker, a word of congratulations to our Disaster Management Centre. It was recognised at the 77th Annual Batho Pele Excellence Awards as the Best Responsive Government Institution of the Year 2021/22. Thank you to Colin Deiner and his entire team for being available 24/7 to jump in whenever there is a looming threat or an active disaster.

†Speaker, ons moet ook oor swak munisipaliteite praat. Die groot gros van ons werk in die Departement word hier gefokus. Dit is waar ons munisipaliteite wat in die intensiewesorg is van die operasietafel probeer kry tot in die waaksaal waar hulle kan herstel, en dan hopelik volkome herstel om ontslaan te word. Maar die pasiënt moet ook sy kant bring. Hy moet die medisyne wat voorgeskryf word drink, Deputy Speaker, anders kan daardie siek munisipaliteit in die lykshuis eindig.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Speaker, we also have to talk about poor municipalities. The largest part of our work in the Department is focused here. That is where we try to get our municipalities finding themselves in intensive care from the operating table to the ward where they can recover, and then hopefully recover to be discharged. But the patient also has to play his part. He must drink the medicine prescribed for him, Deputy Speaker, otherwise that sick municipality may end up in the morgue.]

Speaker, we work very hard to support municipalities, so they do not fail, but

at the same time, we have to respect the fact that South Africa is a democracy, and local government is an independent sphere of government.

I am often approached by concerning residents who say I must place a struggling local government under administration. Administration is not a silver bullet that makes all problems disappear. It is a long process, and it needs to adhere to strict legal prescripts. It is not a guarantee that the process of administration will yield the desired results.

In a democracy, you have the opportunity to address issues at the ballot box. This system of regular free and fair elections is still working in South Africa, and people need to know the importance and impact this has on their experience of the elected local government.

Deputy Speaker, the Western Cape Government will fight to keep municipalities out of the morgue, but then all involved must be mature enough to acknowledge mistakes and to prepare to do the correct things, even when it is difficult.

We are currently walking this path with Beaufort West Municipality, and officials from the Department and the municipal leadership is working in good faith, but Deputy Speaker, there are also good stories. There are also good stories in the municipal domain, and if you look, hon Deputy Speaker, in research that was done by News 24 – it is not my research, News 24 has done this research – they state that out of the best run municipalities in South

Africa there is still hope because 14 of those out of 20 are within the Western Cape. So I want to congratulate all our municipalities.

If you then look at other research of the worst-run municipalities and the best-run municipalities, and to take this list, hon Deputy Speaker, the best-run municipalities, Cape Agulhas, Overstrand, Hessequa, Swartland, Saldanha Bay, Mossel Bay, Cape Town, Witzenberg, Prince Albert, George, Breede Valley, Stellenbosch, Knysna, Bitou, Berg River, Swellendam, Langeberg, Drakenstein, there is a common factor – all run by the DA. There is also a common factor to the worst-run municipalities: Oudtshoorn, Matzikama, Beaufort West, Kannaland, Laingsburg and Cederberg. I will leave it there, hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to conclude to thank my Department for the hard work. Every single day they serve the people of this province to the best of their ability with limited resources. We try our utmost best and if you look at the results of independent studies, I believe that we are on the right track. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I now recognise hon Dugmore. I know you are going to wait for the podium, if we can just. Thank you, Minister, for assisting.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: It is the wrong way around.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You need to turn it around, hon Dugmore.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Okay.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you ready to begin?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. Thank you also to MEC Bredell for his input.

Deputy Speaker, at the outset, I want to raise an issue, which affects the very role and mandate of this Legislature and this Portfolio Committee in particular, especially in regard to how it affects our role in the budget. Deputy Speaker, if we are unable to play our oversight role, without fear or favour, then we face a real threat to our constitutional democracy. We have a situation where the City of Cape Town has indicated that they are unwilling to answer questions that we as members of this Legislature, direct to the MEC for Local Government.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Dugmore, if you can just take your seat. There is a point of order. Hon Bosman, what is your point of order?

Mr G BOSMAN: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Through you, Deputy Speaker, I would like the hon Dugmore to tell the House why he is speaking on Local Government and not the shadow MEC, Danville Smith, who is online.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Deputy Speaker, just on a point of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Sayed, I recognise you.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Chair, thank you very much. I think just to respond on behalf of the ANC, the hon Smith is still on the step-aside as per the ANC resolutions, thank you. [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is fine. I will accept what the Chief Whip of the Opposition Party is going to say. You may continue, hon Dugmore. [Interjection.]

Mr P MARRAN: Deputy Speaker, Deputy Speaker...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, one minute.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Deputy Speaker, that is very much unlike the DA councillor Nora Grose, who is facing actual charges for money laundering, but remains a Councillor.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Dugmore, my apologies. Hon Marran, what is your point of order?

Mr P MARRAN: Deputy Speaker, just in addition to what the hon Khalid raised, the hon Dugmore is the main member for Local Government. Thanks.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I heard your Chief Whip. Thank you very much. Hon Dugmore, you may begin.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you, so Deputy Speaker, the issue that I am raising is that the City of Cape Town has indicated that they are unwilling to answer questions that we as members of this Legislature propose for written reply to the MEC who then conveys those questions to the City.

Now for example, the City of Cape Town receives many grants from this Provincial Government and various departments in the province and some of these are conditional. So if we as members wish to direct questions to the MEC regarding information about how such funds have been spent, the City argues that they have no obligation to answer these questions and that is the situation that we are dealing with right now. So, Deputy Speaker, I want to put it on record that we as the ANC are very unhappy about the manner in which MEC Bredell is handling this matter. The MEC should in fact be supporting the oversight role of this Legislature and our right to ask questions. There is no province run by the ANC where those MECs are refusing to take questions and refer them to Local Government, not a single one, so what is it about that the DA in the City of Cape Town has to hide...
[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...that they have simply decided that they are not going to answer questions coming from this Legislature. So, it appears that the Provincial Government, this MEC and Premier Winde are not prepared to take on the City of Cape Town, actually as if they are scared of the City of Cape Town. If the City is allowed to refuse to be held accountable by us as members of this Legislature especially in a Budget Vote like this, this Committee would then be in an untenable situation.

I give notice that I will as Leader of the Opposition bring this matter to the attention of the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs to request her to investigate declaring in intergovernmental dispute in this regard and further... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ... that I will write to both South African Local Government Association nationally and in the Western Cape... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...to investigate this matter.
[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: I have, for example, Deputy Speaker, reported wide-scale corruption within the City of Cape Town Housing Maintenance Department where officials have received bribes in the form of vehicles and cash from favoured service providers and I have requested, Deputy Speaker, that the SIU approaches our President to issue a proclamation to investigate the City. It is clear that the City of Cape Town has a lot they want to hide, but, Deputy Speaker, it must be pointed out that the above stance was communicated at the time when hon Plato, who is now in this House, having lost out the factional battle to those forces that were supporting Geordin Hill-Lewis. It was under Mayor Plato that they indicated they refuse to answer these questions. [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: So the issue would be and please... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: I will ask through you that the MEC Bredell can respond... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Dugmore...

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Does Geordin Hill–Lewis, the new Mayor of Cape Town, does he have the same position that he will not answer questions coming from us?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Dugmore, take your seat please, your Chief Whip is... Hon Sayed, well, he is the Chief Whip of the Opposition. He is the Whip of the Opposition, yes.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): I know I am being handed positions, Deputy Chief Whip.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No-no-no, no intention, hon... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Deputy Speaker, just on a point of order, I do not know if it is – but it is just that we cannot necessarily hear the hon Dugmore because of the heckling that is happening on the side of the ruling party, Deputy Speaker. Could they maybe just tone down?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thanks very much, hon Sayed. Yes, a little bit on the loud side. Heckling is allowed, but not continuous. If we can allow hon Dugmore to continue with his speech.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you, Deputy Speaker, so I would like the MEC to indicate to us whether Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis has the same attitude as his predecessor in actually refusing to

answer questions from this House and I really would appeal. I really would appeal, Deputy Speaker, hon Botha indicated and I am not sure what she was referring to that there is a pact between us. I am not aware of any pact. But if there is any pact I would like her to support us on this that hon Botha should be vocal in insisting that the City of Cape Town must respond to these...
[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order members!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...must respond to these questions.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members! Please, you may proceed.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Can I continue, thank you.

The Department in the budget book acknowledges its mandate as drawn from Chapter 7 of the Constitution, that what MEC Bredell's Department is supposed to do, is firstly to establish municipalities.

I also want to indicate that MEC Bredell did not properly introduce... Oh, no, that was from the previous Department, his new HOD – we still have HOD Paulsen, greetings to you – that your mandate is to establish municipalities consistent with national legislation. Secondly, to support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities without fear or favour, take off your DA hat, to regulate the performance of municipalities in terms of their functions, and

finally, to intervene where there is a non-fulfilment of legislative executive or financial obligations to promote. Now I would argue, Deputy Speaker, that the failure of the City of Cape Town to in any way see themselves accountable to this Legislature is unconstitutional, and I wish that this MEC would have the guts to stand up... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...and protect the rights of this House to hold Local Governments accountable in the context of cooperative governance. But then secondly, I want to get on to a subject that the MEC is very familiar with. It is called DA cadre deployment to Local Government.

Deputy Speaker, it was this hon MEC who was found to have contravened the executive ethics code for members of the Executive, to remind hon members in case they have forgotten, it was MEC Bredell, who was also the DA Provincial Chair at the time who wrote a letter to the DA caucus in George trying to influence them not to support an equity candidate, who in fact was recommended by his own Department. This was done on a DA letterhead. This was a public service post. How does this conduct align with mandate number four, which I read out earlier?

The DA has made much, Deputy Speaker, of ANC cadre deployment yet, when I wrote to the then Acting Provincial Chair of the DA in the Province,

Albert Fritz, for copies of all minutes and correspondence about the DA cadre deployment from 2009 to date, I did not even get a response. Maybe that is understandable, given the issues surrounding former MEC Fritz at the time, but then I was informed that MEC Simmers is now the Acting Provincial Leader of the DA. Once again, no response to our request to provide minutes and all correspondence related to DA cadre deployment, and then I had shared in the National Assembly, a second letter, which actually proves once again beyond reasonable doubt how the DA National Leadership – not MEC Bredell in this instance, but the National Leadership actually got involved not only in cadre deployment, but actually re-advertising a post to especially cater for a DA loyalist, irrespective of his qualifications. The letter is written by the former FedEx Chair, James Selfe, and is dated 17 March 2017 and writing to the then George Mayor, Selfe says: “Councillor Van Wyk had a legitimate expectation that he would be appointed to the administration.”

The contents reveal a manipulative process to re-advertise a public service position to specifically cater for a DA Councillor, Leon van Wyk, irrespective of who had applied... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Dugmore, take your seat please. We have the hon Chief Whip of the House. Hon Chief Whip, what is your point of order?

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I rise on Rule 44, relevance.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Deputy Speaker, if this is a point of relevance, are you going to make a ruling or would you like me to address this?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not going to make a ruling. I am just – Rule 44 is really... [Interjection.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Are you ignoring it?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not ignoring it. It is normally 44 is just a caution which I have used before, so a caution. Thank you.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Okay, thank you. Yes, well the Chief Whip herself, you know, can hardly stand up as someone who was relevant in her speech. You would remember what she said about Health.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): You have had the chance to raise a point of order and you did not.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Dugmore [Interjection.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Deputy Speaker, but what I am trying to say, Deputy Speaker, that this is the tip of the iceberg. We are

talking about a Local Government Department, its budget, it is supposed to have oversight over municipalities.

†Maar hoe sê hulle, die jakkals hier is eintlik saam met die hoenders! Die jakkals speel saam met die hoenders. Dis wat gebeur. Die eintlike persoon wat veronderstel is om die hoenders veilig te hou is besig om daai hoenders op te vreet! Dis eintlik wat gebeur hierso.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[But how do they say, the fox is amongst the chickens. The fox is playing with the chickens. That's what is happening. The actual person who is supposed to keep the chickens safe is eating those chickens! That's what is actually happening here.]

And this is what we must correct. I think as the MEC matures, Deputy Speaker, we hope that he will begin to understand this mandate better, like he is trying to do with the Treasury in Beaufort West... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...where there is a real process to try and turn that municipality around. I think the MEC must realise he is too old for this party politics. He might just do – †wat hy weet hy moet doen. Hy moet die Grondwet volg en hy moet die regte ding doen [that he

knows that he must do. He must follow the Constitution and he must do the right thing.] If he will do that, then this Province has a better chance, so, Deputy Speaker, the DA has not responded... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...to our request to make available all these minutes and we initially set a deadline of 1 February to get this information and that is why, as I indicated in the debate on Vote 1, that we will now, Deputy Speaker, be launching in the month of April a PAIA application to get all of this information. I want to appeal to the MEC. He is going to respond later.

†Kan hy net vir ons sê hoeveel mense was hy opdrag gegee om *jobs* te gee? Hy moet net vir ons nou vandag sê. Vertel maar die waarheid. Hoeveel DA lede was jy gevra om te akkommodeer?

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Can he just tell us how many people he was instructed to give jobs? He must just tell us today. Just tell the truth. How many DA members were you asked to accommodate?]

Just tell us now; then we do not have to go to the PAIA application. Come true, come to this House and tell us what you actually did. Because we would

like you, for instance, to explain the deployment to Theewaterskloof of a DA former Councillor without qualifications or experience compared to the others who had applied, who was then appointed to this particular municipality.

The third issue that I want to talk about is Credit Control Policy. We agree that part of sustaining our municipalities is to do what our Government had talked about in the past, which was the Masakhane Campaign, pay for the services that you use, but given the economic climate at the moment, what has crept in, is an unacceptable policy where a poor person possibly in a certain month uses more than the free allocation of water, and because they have other people staying at their house, possibly in a backyard, they use more than the water now. That indigent person wants to go and buy electricity, so they have R50 to buy electricity for the weekend. They go and buy that electricity from mainly DA-run municipalities and instead of getting the full R50 worth of electricity, that R50 suddenly becomes a R10 of electricity, with the other money having to go to settle an account.

Now this is biting the poor and I and you have referred, and this Committee has been promised a legal opinion, I believe, before I was asked to, to be the main member on this Committee, and the Committee discussed that. The MEC would recall, and hopefully the Department is going to give us that legal opinion. But how do we without undermining the culture of paying for what you use to actually penalise the poor in this way and we as the ANC are saying, we have to find a better way because we cannot penalise someone

who literally has a R50 for the weekend for electricity, but they are being penalised, so the credit control policy is critical. Number 4, I would like to ask this MEC if he agrees with the fact that it is wrong that the DA both in the Swartland Municipality, as well as the Berg River Municipality have appointed one of their own members as the Chairperson of MPAC. If we are actually serious about a new start on financial accountability, if we are actually serious about this, an Opposition member, whether they are ANC or whether DA, it does not govern... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, please!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: It is the DA or it is Freedom Front or it is the PA, whoever, let us agree with the principle that MPAC must be chaired by an Opposition member. That is what we need to do, and I would like to ask the MEC not to come here and talk, because the reality is, in the National Assembly an Opposition member chairs the Public Accounts Committee. In this Province the ANC chairs the Public Accounts Committee. Why is it then that in places like Berg River and Swartland the DA chairs the ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: That is wrong. Can I continue?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may continue.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you. I hope I am getting... So MPAC positions is the other one. The fifth point I want to raise relates to the role of Local Government in land audits. The MEC, Deputy Speaker, would be aware that we raised this matter and unfortunately, we have a situation in our country where the original sin of land dispossession, remains with us and we are trying land restitution, security of tenure and the redistribution of land to deal with this and all of our municipalities are sitting with municipal land, they are sitting with trust land, Provincial Government land, SOE land, National land as well, so we need audits, which are clear and transparent and we do not need an excuse, which says that if you publish an audit that is accessible, it is going to open the way to land invasion. It is the DA's coalition partner, the EFF, who wants to cause chaos by simply invading any piece of land, and what the DA is doing by not...
[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Ja, your coalition partner, yes!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order members.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Your coalition partner, and

what the DA is doing by not releasing land they are creating chaos as well. We need, as the President says, a social compact to get these audits and your Department, through you, Deputy Speaker, of Local Government has a role to play in guiding municipalities with appropriate information technology to develop these land audits so we can incorporate those in the IDPs before the budgets are adopted, and actually release land starting in this year. The tension that is caused is because there is no transparency. There are all sorts of deals like in Swartland, where the ACVV suddenly got hold of a piece of land. [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members!

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...and where the Mayor's wife was on the ACVV, all of this kind of thing, so let us be open. Let us release the land, and also, well located private land, we take Paradise Park in Hermanus. They are historically so-called white poor people living and here you have a developer who wants to simply come in and remove their properties and what we are saying that is a perfect case for expropriation so that that land in the middle and close to Hermanus can be used for integrated human settlements, for all those who need it, whether they are White, African or Coloured. That is why we need this legislation and the longer we undermine the land, the dispossession of land in this country... [Interjection.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: You are almost at your end.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...the more we are actually going to find that we do not achieve equality, and these are the important things that Local Government can actually get involved in.

Then we talk about the traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act. I want to remind this House, Deputy Speaker, that the Democratic Alliance voted against this legislation in Parliament. Let me remind you, the DA stood against the Khoi and the San people in the National Assembly, they voted against this legislation. Now it has been signed into law by our President, and we have to implement it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Dugmore, your time is up.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: And we must do that. Thank you. [Time expired.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much. There was a bit of a mishmash there about different departments, but I will accept that. Thank you very much, hon Dugmore. [Interjections.] We now move to hon Makamba-Botya.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. To hon Dugmore, I just want to say that the ANC is actually doing the very same thing that the EFF is doing, invading land, so I do not know why he is coming here and making accusations to the EFF.

Deputy Speaker, the Department of Local Government with its oversight role, has a duty to make sure that the province has well governed municipalities. However, in the Western Cape, whilst other municipalities are prioritised by the DA-led Provincial Government, others are neglected.

Towards the end of 2021 Beaufort West, Cederberg, Kannaland and Matzikama Municipalities were all indebted to Eskom to the tune of close to R80 million. Instead of the Local Government Minister intervening in these municipalities with the aim to assist them to comply with the good financial governance his response was to the effect that all those municipalities are not under the DA governance and therefore they should be neglected. But it is strange that the Minister could say that as if they are not a constituency of DA in those specific municipalities. So under the leadership of MEC Anton Bredell, society must know that municipalities are not going to be treated the same by his DA-led Provincial Government. The problem with this level of short-sightedness... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, one minute, if you can just take your seat. Hon Bosman, is that a new hand?

Mr G BOSMAN: Yes, it is, hon Deputy Speaker. I am not sure if my sound failed me but I just want a point of clarity. Did the hon Makamba-Botya say that the EFF and the ANC are both invading land?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would have to check the Hansard, hon Bosman. Unfortunately, I would not be able to clarify that as yet until I have checked the Hansard. Thank you very much. That is not a point of order. Hon Makamba-Botya, you may continue.

Ms N MAKAMBA-BOTYA: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. Society trusts the Department with taxpayers' money in order to make sure that all municipalities are well governed irrespective of which party governs which municipality. Providing resources and assistance to municipalities along skewed lines based on party political patronage equals to abdication of duty, and what should then follow is the Minister resigning as they are no longer capable of executing their duties in a fair, trustworthy and professional manner. Communities must not suffer due to the incapability and negligence of a Minister who cannot run his Department. The Minister of Local Government cannot be trusted with the proper utilisation of taxpayers' money, and therefore the EFF, Deputy Speaker, will not be in support of this Vote. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. I see you, hon Brinkhuis, are you next on the list? You are speaking in this Vote?

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you, Deputy Speaker, I will not speak on this Vote.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, thank you very much. I now recognise hon

Botha.

†n AGBARE LID: Gooi kole!

[An HON MEMBER: Throw coals!]

Ms L J BOTHA: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I shall do my own point of order. [Laughter.] Deputy Speaker, the hon Leader of the Opposition has a short memory. Cederberg still owes a presentation to this House Standing Committee. Where was he? Cederberg still owes a report to a Standing Committee of this Parliament. Where was he? And then in regard to the MPAC Chair, Cederberg, when the ANC was in Government, that MPAC chair was an ANC member. Where was he? So, and then I do not even talk about Cederberg that has been managed by the Secretary General in the West Coast. Where was the hon Leader of the Opposition?

Deputy Speaker, the President recently said during that very, very significant week that we endured in this country, and I quote:

“The fact that they, fire-fighters and emergency services, were here in a short space of time, is something that we should be grateful for, that we do have one City that works and we do have a Province that works and we do have a Government that works when the chips are down.”

Hon Deputy Speaker, that is the President of our country who said that, who is also the President of the ANC. Viva President! You saw what the DA can

do in this country. [Interjection.]

I rise to speak on Vote 14, Local Government, the allocated funds towards the Department of Local Government's budget are valued at R309 301 000. I see it better than the previous President, hon Leader of the Opposition, which is a slight decrease from the previous financial year. The reason for this decrease is due to the decreased funds the Province has received from the National Government. But despite this reduction, I have full confidence in this Western Cape Provincial Government, Local Government Department that it will continue to deliver on its mandates and serve the people of our province in a significant way.

The budget for the upcoming financial year will focus on monitoring performances in our local municipalities. A key driver of strengthening service delivery is strong checks and balances to ensure that municipalities are held accountable, this should include Cederberg and Beaufort West.

It is crucial that the Department continues to monitor, cooperate and provide support to municipalities as they transition following the Local Government Elections and in many cases in tense coalition processes. The R15 million allocation towards assisting our municipalities for successful transition is welcome, Deputy Speaker. This will help us build strong and well-run municipalities as we have done in the past. Deputy Speaker, this previous election season has introduced to the province, a number of new Councillors who are young and with magnificent potential. The Department will also be

providing them with the necessary guidance and support to ensure they succeed in their new roles and responsibilities.

R20,6 million has been allocated to reinforce municipal support interventions. The Department will be present to provide hands-on support to local governments in this province. These interventions are necessary for pushing forward local governments that can produce reliable and efficient services to our people.

To assist new councillors' transition into the Local Government sphere, the Department will provide capacity building for them to be able to address critical areas of governance and to strengthen oversight. The Department will also engage councillors on provincial legislation to enhance the ideals of good governance in the Western Cape. The Department's commitment to strengthening oversight and public participation must be commended. To this end R17,5 million has been allocated to further enhance public participation. Municipalities over the medium term will have more funds to initiate programmes that enhance activity citizenry. Strong governments are built where citizens are at the core and are actively engaged. I am proud to see the Department planning and funding more of these programmes.

Deputy Speaker, it is no secret that municipalities have played a critical role in supporting the Province's Recovery Plan from the effects of the global pandemic. The Municipal Infrastructure Grant has specifically driven the lead role in this regard, by creating many job opportunities. The Department will

once again continue with these projects in the new financial year. The Community Work Programmes, in particular, have assisted in driving economic recovery and development. Approximately 17,700 jobs have been created through the CWPs and this has brought significant relief to many families, as well as young people who have benefited from this initiative. Many have gained work experience through CWPs and have turned out more employable in the outside world where they will seek permanent employment.

South Africa has been straddled with a record high unemployment rate, especially among our young people. While the job opportunities created by the CWP are not permanent, we recognise the role this initiative plays towards bringing relief to those who are in need and upskilling the unemployed within our Western Cape province. Strengthening governance in municipalities is important for building towns and cities that attract investment. This upcoming financial year, we trust that the work of the Western Cape Provincial Government and the Department will create cities and municipalities that will attract businesses and investment.

Deputy Speaker, I want to encourage our local municipalities to support local business to the best of their ability and with available resources; also for municipalities to strengthen the platform of local economic development. There are many ways in which local governments can create an environment for businesses to thrive, for example... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order member, I know your colleague is being

distracted.

Ms L J BOTHA: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. For example, the City of Cape Town has recently announced that it opened the first round for independent power producers in order to procure 300 megawatts of renewable energy. This is not only a move towards energy independence, but also highlights how a capable government can build environments to attract investors.

Deputy Speaker, I am encouraged by the Western Cape Government's plans to attract more investors through upgrading existing infrastructure and embarking on further infrastructure development projects, which will ultimately contribute to addressing the scourge of unemployment and create an environment for businesses to operate efficiently.

Deputy Speaker, we must acknowledge the role Thusong Centres continue to play in bringing Government services to our communities. These centres ensure that Government works for all its citizens by ensuring that people have access to services that may have been difficult for them to access under normal circumstances. The centres also host various outreach and training workshops, as well as clinic services in some instances. These have proven to be effective as the number of people attending the centres continue to increase. I therefore welcome the initiative shown by the Provincial Government to utilise the centres to assist in combating the scourge of GBV in our province. The Department has indicated that it will further strengthen its working relationship with the Department of Social Development to

implement GBV programmes at all our Thusong Centres. With cases of GBV in the country on the rise, initiatives like these are important for building awareness and ultimately saving lives. The budget allocation increasing under Programme 2 by 57% from the 2121/2022 financial year is welcomed. This increase is due to the additional funds that have been allocated for project management support to be given to the Sustainable Infrastructure Development and Finance Facility Programmes (SIDAFF).

The Department has allocated R3 million towards our SIDAFF Programmes. This will play an important role in shoring up infrastructure development in the province's secondary cities as well as boosting economic development.

The Department last month approved the path towards recovery for the Beaufort West Municipality. I am pleased to see the cooperation from both the municipality and the Department to get Beaufort West finances back on track. This cooperation will hopefully pave the way towards bringing financial stability and sustainable service delivery to Beaufort West. Speaker, I would like to pause and also ask the Minister to give, if he can, a status update on the Cederberg Matzikama finances within that Municipality.

Deputy Speaker, the 20% increase for Disaster Management is welcomed as well as the R5,3 million towards upgrading the Disaster Management Centre.

I would also like to thank our fire-fighting teams in the province for their hard work and dedication during the recent fire season on the West Coast. Without their never-ending commitment on the ground we would have seen

more harm, the additional R2 million for the Fire Strategy this year to increase and strengthen capacity for fire services is therefore very welcome.

As noted by the President following the fire at the National Parliament, Western Cape Fire officials conduct their work speedily professionally and with great commitment and as the Minister alluded in his speech, also the accolade for receiving an award. Deputy Speaker, the Western Cape has consistently ranked at the top when it comes to the performance of local governments. Ratings Africa last year revealed that top performing local municipalities in South Africa are from the Western Cape and maybe Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition did not hear me. Ratings Africa last year revealed that the top performing local municipalities in South Africa are from the Western Cape Province.

Local government is at the coalface of service delivery and while we have seen numerous changes in this arena as a result of the newly formed coalition governments, I have full confidence that the Department will closely monitor and strengthen these governments. The Department or this Department plays an important role in ensuring that Local Government remain consistent in providing quality service delivery to residents, continue to foster an environment for economic growth and job creation and strengthens good practices.

Deputy Speaker, I thank the HOD of this Department, I am new to this role as the Standing Committee Chair, but I trust that we will foster as the Standing

Committee a relationship with this Department.

Deputy Speaker, it is due to commitments by this Department that municipalities in this province continue to outperform municipalities across the country. I believe that this budget will further strengthen Local Government in the upcoming financial year. I also want to pay homage to all Mayors, some of them who are in the gallery, to all Mayors responsible and councillors who are the first in line for coalface service delivery on the ground, and they are often, very often last to get the accolade they deserve, but when things go wrong then it is their fault.

Deputy Speaker, therefore the DA supports this Budget Vote 14. I thank you.

[Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now recognise hon Minister Bredell.

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Baie dankie, agbare *Deputy Speaker*. Hierdie een is nogal moeilik om te antwoord. Deputy Speaker, laat ek begin deur vir die agbare Botha te bedank. Sy is wel nuut in die portefeulje maar sy is 'n ou hand, so ja, ek sien uit om saam te werk. Ek weet ook sy is 'n ou juffrou, so sy gaan streng wees met ons, so ons is reg. Ons is altyd reg vir oorsig en goeie interaksie, soos ek altyd sê. Ek weet ons harte is op die regte plek. Ons dien ons mense van ons gemeenskap, so ek sien rêrig uit daarna om

saam te werk en ek wil ook haar voorganger, die agbare Derrick America bedank vir sy samewerking in die portefeulje.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. This one is actually difficult to answer. Deputy Speaker, let me begin by thanking the hon Botha. She is indeed new in the portfolio but she is an old hand so yes, I'm looking forward to work together. I also know she is an old teacher so she is going to be strict with us, so we are ready. We are always ready for oversight and good interaction, as I always say. I know our hearts are in the right place. We serve our people of our community, so I really look forward to cooperate and I also want to thank her predecessor, Derrick America, for his cooperation in the portfolio.]

To the hon Makamba-Botya, on Eskom, I think there is a communication problem there. We do support all the municipalities. It is just a trend, if you look at the trend, and I can prove that we treat all the municipalities the same, because currently the Matzikama Municipality is run by the DA and their Eskom account moves in the wrong direction, but we are busy with them.

The Cederberg Municipality – but that is an interesting story, you know. When the DA took over Cederberg, they managed the Eskom account down,

then the ANC took over for a short period. Then it jumped to R40 million. Now the current Mayor is again moving into the right direction, they are moving down with that, so they are adhering to their agreement. We support them et cetera, et cetera. On the ANC-run municipalities I can only pray for them.

†Hon Deputy Speaker, aan die agbare Dugmore, ek sou so skaam gewees het om vandag in die Huis te praat as ek in die ANC was want ek sou *decline* het, rêrigwaar. Ek sou *decline* het want die gemors waarin hierdie land se ekonomie is, lê op een party se skouers, en dis die ANC, en ek weet nie, ek hoor ek is oud vandag, dan is hy hardhorend, want daai boodskap kry hy tog net nie. Nege jaar lank het hulle die Zuma faksie ondersteun wat hierdie land in die afgrond in bestuur het, mense tot 'n skamele R300... [Tussenwerpsel.]

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Hon Deputy Speaker, to the hon Dugmore, I would have been ashamed to speak in the House today if I had been in the ANC because I would have declined, really. I would have declined because the mess in which this country's economy is, lies on one party's shoulders, and that is the ANC, and I don't know, I hear I'm old today, then he is deaf, because that message he just doesn't get. For nine years they supported the Zuma faction that governed this country into the abyss, people to a mere R300... [Interjections.]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Agbare Speaker, mense is tot 'n skamele R300 genoop loop staan in 'n *queue* in 'n plek soos Oudtshoorn, 2000 mense. Hulle het al mekaar met 'n mes doodgesteek in die *queue*. Dis wat die ANC aan mense doen, agbare Speaker. Agbare Speaker, so ja, ek weet nie die obsessie wat die agbare Dugmore het met die Stad Kaapstad nie en ek het hom al geantwoord so hopelik kan hy - sukkel hy om die antwoord te hoor, so ons gee maar weer die antwoord. Die Stad het 'n regsopinie gekry. Ons het nie saamgestem met die regsopinie nie. Ek was ook ongelukkig met die regsopinie. Ons het 'n senior advokaat se opinie gekry en die opinie is baie duidelik. Ek mors nie geld agter die ANC aan nie. Julle het nie stemme gekry nie. Die ANC het nie stemme gekry nie. Hoeveel stemme het julle in die stad gekry? 12?

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Speaker, people have been obliged to go and stand in a queue for a mere R300 in a place like Oudtshoorn, 2000 people. They have already stabbed each other to death in the queue. That is what the ANC does to people, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, so yes, I don't know about the obsession that the hon Dugmore has with the City of Cape Town and I have already answered him, so hopefully he can – he struggles to

hear the answer, so we give the answer again. The City got a legal opinion. We did not agree with the legal opinion. I was also not satisfied with the legal opinion. We got a senior advocate's opinion and the opinion is very clear. I do not waste money on the ANC. You did not get votes. The ANC did not get votes. How many votes did you get in the city? 12?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members!

†n AGB LID: Jy is bang vir die Stad Kaapstad.

[An HON MEMBER: You are afraid of the City of Cape Town.]

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Agbare Deputy Speaker.

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Deputy Speaker.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! One minute, hon Minister. If you can just wait, please. Hon members online, please, if I note that you are shouting over the microphone you will be muted. Please can we have some order. Thank you. Thank you, hon Minister, you may proceed.

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Agbare mnr die Adjunkspeaker, daar is 'n regsopinie wat baie duidelik is, waar ek nie oorsig het nie hoof die Munisipaliteit nie die vraag te antwoord nie, en dit maak sin. Jy kan dit

debatteer maar dit maak sin, want die ANC het tog seker 'n raadslid of twee in die Stad wat 'n vraag kan formuleer. Nou vra die vraag dan daar. Dis wat die regsopinie sê: vra jou vraag daar waar jy verteenwoordiging het. So as hulle nie verteenwoordiging daar het nie, dan sal ons 'n ander plan maak dan sal ons maar vra of daar 'n ander party is wat namens hulle die vrae kan vra. [Tussenwerpsels.]

So, agbare Deputy Speaker, ek verstaan nie lekker *wide-scale corruption*, die agbare Dugmore het darem toe gesê hy het dit vir die SIU gegee. Dis presies as jy, as enige een van hierdie lede weet van korrupsie moet hulle 'n saak gaan maak. Anders is ons deel daarvan, so laat ons kyk wat daar gaan gebeur.

Hy noem dan die burgemeester en die ANC Raadslede, ek weet nie lekker waarnatoe hy stuur nie, hy probeer nou 'n wig indryf tussen die vorige en die nuwe Burgemeester maar hulle kan enige tyd vir die Burgemeester in die Stad se Raad vrae vra, daar is 'n sessie vir vrae vra, so hulle kan dit net gebruik op... U sien die Agbare Dugmore fokus vreeslik op die DA. Ek weet nie hoekom nie. Of hy 'n nuwe tuiste gaan soek na die Kongres nie, maar hy gaan nie welkom wees nie, so hy hoef nie - nee, ons worry glad nie, ons sê net nee. Nee is 'n baie mooi antwoord. [Tussenwerpsels.]

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Deputy Speaker, there is legal

opinion that is very clear, where I do not have oversight the Municipality does not have to answer the question, and that makes sense. You can debate it, but it makes sense, because the ANC surely has a councillor or two in the City who can formulate a question. Now ask the question then there. That is what the legal opinion says, ask your question there where you have representation. So if they do not have representation there, then we will have to make another plan, then we will have to ask if there is another party that can ask questions on their behalf. [Interjections.]

So, hon Deputy Speaker, I do not understand so well the wide-scale corruption, the hon Dugmore then did say he gave it to the SIU. That is precisely if you, if any one of these members knows of corruption they must go and make a case. Otherwise we are part thereof, so let us see what is going to happen there.

He mentions then the Mayor and the ANC councillors, I'm not sure where he is heading, he is now trying to drive a wedge between the previous and the new Mayor but they can at any time ask the Mayor in the City Council questions, there is a session for questions, so they can use it on...you see the hon Dugmore focuses seriously on the DA. I don't know why. If he is going to seek a new home after the Congress, but he won't be welcome, so he does not have to – no, we don't worry at all, we just say no. No is a very good answer. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Order members.

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: So dit is een van daardie dinge, maar ja, miskien moet hy maar fokus op sy party. Fokus maar daarop maar daai party is nie redbaar nie. Hy noem dan 'n klomp name en dis lekker, dis hartseer dat ons vryheid van spraak gebruik om op mense se lewens te probeer trap. Die huidige persoon wie se naam hy genoem het is nie aangestel nie, want die DA het gesê dit werk nie so nie. Ek verstaan ook, ek wil ook nie hê dat die agbare Dugmore of die ANC moet probeer verstaan nie, want hulle verstaan nie dissipline nie. Hulle verstaan nie die woord integriteit nie. So wanneer ek skryf vir 'n DA en al my DA, hier is 'n paar DA burgemeesters, en ek weet, ons sê dit altyd wanneer ons oplei ook, ons gaan baie strenger met 'n DA burgemeester wees want ons meet julle aan 'n hoër standaard want dit skuld ons die publiek, as die ANC burgemeester. Hoekom moet ek my bekommer daaroor? So wanneer 'n DA-raad 'n komitee wat onderhoude doen se verslag bespreek, 'n DA-koukus, is daar 'n probleem. Ek het 'n probleem daarmee, en ja, skuldig bevind daarvoor, en ek hou by my standpunt, dit hoort nie in 'n politieke koukus, 'n aanstelling nie.

Agbare Dugmore sal dit nooit verstaan nie. Hy sal altyd probeer draai en probeer aangaan want hy is hardhorend so, agbare Speaker...
[Tussenwerpsel.]

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: So it is one of those things, but yes, perhaps he should focus on his party. Focus on that but that party cannot be saved. He mentions then a lot of names and that's good, it is sad that we use freedom of speech to try and step on people's lives. The present person whose name he mentioned was not appointed, because the DA said that is not how it works. I also understand, I also do not want the hon Dugmore or the ANC should try to understand, because they don't understand discipline. They do not understand the word integrity. So when I write a DA, and all my DAs, there are a few DA Mayors here, and we know, we always say it when we train as well, we are going to be much stricter on a DA Mayor because we measure you at a higher standard because we owe it to the public, than an ANC Mayor. Why should I worry about it? So when a DA Council discusses the report of a committee conducting interviews, a DA caucus, there is a problem. I have a problem with that, and yes, found guilty for that, and I keep to my standpoint, it does not belong in a political caucus, an appointment.

Hon Dugmore will never understand that. He will always try and turn and go on because he is deaf so, hon Speaker... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: So agbare Speaker, so dit is waar dit is en ons gaan aan. [Tussenwerpsel.]

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: So hon Speaker, so that is where it is and we are carrying on. [Interjection.]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Sy vraag wat hy – sy direkte vraag wat die agbare Dugmore my gevra het, hoeveel mense het ek opdrag gekry om aan te stel, niks. Die antwoord is baie eenvoudig so hy kan skryf en hy kan PAIA tot hy blou is. Dan agbare Speaker, die ekonomiese klimaat, ek sal glad nie daaroor praat as ek hy is nie. Dit is eintlik so hartseer dat na COVID, kyk wat het iets soos CapeNature reggekry. 60% groei en en en... Hierdie land se ekonomie kon ontplof het, maar daar is ongelukkig niks oor nie, want die ANC het hom gestuur tot daar net klip en sand oor is. Daar is rêrig nie een plantjie oor nie so die hele kwessie van MPAC het ek geantwoord en weereens hy het seker kollegas op Nasionaal wat weet hoe om Wetgewing te skryf. Maak dit dan 'n verpligting. Ek het nie 'n probleem dat Opposisie - ek dink dit is reg as Opposisie dit moet wees, maar as jy sulke swak kwaliteit raadslede dan stuur na rade toe en hulle het die vrymoedigheid om te sê: “Luister hier, ons gaan nou iemand sit wat 'n balansstaat kan lees wat in die stoel sit.” Dan is dit nou maar ook so, en gelukkig die rade wat hy noem moet hy maar gaan kyk na... [Tussenwerpsels.]

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: his question that he – his direct question that hon Dugmore asked me, how many people did I get instruction for to appoint, nothing. The answer is very simple so he can write and he can PAIA until he is blue. Then hon Speaker, the economic climate, I will not talk about that at all if I were he. It is actually so sad after COVID, look what had something like CapeNature achieved. 60% growth and and and... this country's economy could have exploded, but unfortunately there is nothing left, because the ANC drove it until there were just stone and sand left. There is really no little plant left so the whole issue of MPAC I have replied to and again, he probably has colleagues at National who knows how to write legislation. Then make it obligatory. I do not have a problem that Opposition - I think it is right that Opposition has to be that, but if you then send such poor quality councillors to councils and they have the courage to say, "Listen here, we are now going to put someone in the chair who can read a balance sheet." Then it is like that, and we, the councils he mentions he must go and look at... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

†Die MINISTER VAN PLAASLIKE REGERING, OMGEWINGSAKE EN ONTWIKKELINGSBEPLANNING: Al waarna hy moet gaan kyk is na hulle bestuursrekord. Nee, nie wat ek sê nie, gaan kyk wat onafhanklike studies sê. Die rade wat hy noem is van die besbestuurde rade in die land. Maar die ANC sal dit nooit verstaan nie.

Agbare Deputy Speaker, ek sal die geld daarop wed, wat ek nie het nie, dat hier kom 'n kongres by die ANC. Na daai kongres gaan die ANC weer nog 'n taakspan hê. Hulle gaan nie hulle verkiesings hê nie. Hulle gaan nog 'n taakspan in die lewe roep. So ek wil tog vra vir die mense wat persele verhuur in die Kaap, sorg net dat julle julle geld voor die tyd kry want as jy SARS nie kan betaal nie, as jy mense se pensioengeld en se UIF geld, ek wil – agbare, dis 'n skande. Dis 'n skande, en dan wil jy 'n land bestuur. Dis geen wonder ons mense verval in armoede nie. Dis geen wonder die werkloosheidsyfer is oor 50% nie.

Agbare Speaker, weereens met die span amptenare in die Wes-Kaap sal ek oorlog toe gaan. Die span amptenare in die Wes-Kaap speel nie politiek nie. Hulle doen hulle uiterste bes. Hulle sal foute maak want ons is almal mense. [Tussenwerpsel.] Al wanneer daar politiek is, is wanneer die ANC sal kom politiek maak daarvan. My amptenare ken my. Hulle weet ek speel nie politiek nie. Ek onderskei tussen staat en party, want aan die einde van die dag dien ek die mense van my gemeenskap. Ons dien nie die party nie. Dankie. [Applous.]

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: All he has to go and look at is their management record. No, not what I say, go and look at what independent studies say. The councils he mentions are some of the best governed councils

in the country. But the ANC will never understand it.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I will put money on that, there is a congress coming at the ANC. After that congress the ANC is going to have another task team. They are not going to have their elections. They are going to establish another task team. So I just want to ask the people leasing sites in the Cape, see to it that you get your money in advance because if you cannot pay SARS, if you cannot pay people's pension money and their UIF money, I want to – hon, it is a disgrace. It is a disgrace, and then you want to govern a country. It is no wonder that our people are plunging into poverty. It is no wonder the unemployment figure is over 50%.

Hon Speaker, again with the team of officials in the Western Cape I will go to war. The team of officials in the Western Cape does not play politics. They do their very best. They will make mistakes because we are all just people.

[Interjection.] the only time when there is politics is when the ANC will make and play politics. My officials know me. They know I don't play politics. I make a distinction between State and party, because at the end of the day I serve the people of my community. We don't serve the party. Thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. That concludes the Debate Vote, Vote 14.

[Debate concluded.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before we continue, I am just going to allow the officials to leave the Chamber, thank you very much.

The Secretary will now read the Fifth Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Debate on Vote 10 – Transport and Public Works – Western Cape Appropriation Bill [B2 – 2022]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Secretary. I now recognise Minister Mitchell.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Thank you hon Deputy Speaker; hon Premier; Cabinet colleagues; Chairperson and other members of the Standing Committee; honourable members; the Head of the Department and senior officials; members of the media; citizens of the Western Cape:

Given the fact that the Second Adjustment Budget for the Vote 10 is limited to one item, I am sure that the members will understand, Deputy Speaker, if I table and deal with this matter right up front before I move onto Vote 10 of the Budget because I think it is important that I just table and speak to that.

The Second Adjustment Budget consists of an amount of R43 396 000 from the Provincial Road Maintenance Grant reallocated to the Western Cape by National Treasury for the original allocation to various under-performing provinces.

This amount has been redirected to the following project: the reseal of the Ashton – Swellendam road in the Cape Winelands; the reseal of the N2 near Villiersdorp in the Overberg; the reseal of Holgaten in the Garden Route and therefore hon Deputy Speaker, I table it for consideration.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I now turn to the 2022/23 Budget for Vote 10. I do so against the backdrop of what my Cabinet Colleague, the Minister of Finance, in tabling the Provincial Budget on 14 March, referred on more than one occasion to as *A Budget to Push Forward*. He tabled a budget which reflected the courage shown by this Western Cape Government in tackling a string of challenges which we have all, as Government and as citizens of this Province, faced down in recent years from the Covid Pandemic, through poor economic growth and job losses, to the inability of the National Government to provide essential services for which it and its poorly run State-owned enterprises are responsible.

Deputy Speaker, Minister Maynier's budget to Push Forward is not a backward, looking, feeling sorry for ourselves budget. It is a budget which looks ahead with a positive vision of what the Western Cape can be and what it can do for its people.

And so, Deputy Speaker, this *Budget to Push Forward* as a Government, allocates over the MTEF, amongst others, the following:

R19,6 billion for jobs

R4,4 billion for safety

R111,3 billion for well-being, and

R30,3 billion for infrastructure

Hon Deputy Speaker, I highlight these specific aspects of the *Budget to Push Forward* because the Department of Transport and Public Works is directly and materially involved in each one of these critical areas of the Western Cape Government's vision. I am proud of the extensive range of vital activities covered by my Department.

As a result, as I have visited the various districts in the Western Cape, I have been able to see evidence of the contributions made by my Department to improving the lives of people in the Western Cape, whether in the form of a new or improved school, more accessible health facilities, upgrading of Youth Care Centres and shared services buildings, Deputy Speaker, which brings the Western Cape Government closer to people.

However, Deputy Speaker, it would be a mistake to think that Department of Transport and Public Work's contribution is only limited to the provision of physical infrastructure and amenities.

†Ek het byvoorbeeld *Deputy Speaker*, nou saam met ons Provinsiale Verkeersdienste gewerk en het talle padblokkades en ander verkeersveiligheid en wetstoepassingsbedrywighede bygewoon. Ek is die meeste beïndruk *Deputy Speaker*, deur die toewyding en professionaliteit van

ons verkeersbeamptes onder allerlei omstandighede – laataand in gure weer, onder druk by ongelukstonele, waar hulle gedreig word met fisieke geweld ens., ensovoorts. En hierdie diens word in die belang van ons veiligheid gelewer op 'n 24/7 basis deur die enigste provinsie waarin verkeerswetstoepassing 24 uur per dag werksaam is. *Deputy Speaker*, hierdie vroue en mans verdien ons dank en lof.

Terselfdertyd, agb Adjunkspeaker, het ons vervoerbeamptes die weg gebaan met die ontwikkeling van geskikte tegnologie om die reikwydte van ons verkeersbeamptes uit te brei en om ons kapasiteit om padverkeer en openbare vervoerstelsels te monitor en te bestuur en te verbeter. Agb Adjunkspeaker, baie van ons het die geleentheid gehad om demonstrasies van die Vervoernode in werking by te woon en het self die potensiaal wat in-huis bestaan vir beter en doeltreffender openbare vervoerbedrywighede gesien.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[I have for instance, Deputy Speaker, worked closely with our Provincial Traffic Department and attended numerous road blocks and other traffic safety and law enforcement activities. I was impressed the most by the dedication and professionalism of our traffic officials under all circumstances – late night, Deputy Speaker, in atrocious weather, under pressure at accident scenes, where they are threatened with physical violence, etc., etc. And this service is delivered in the interest of our safety on a 24/7 basis by the only province, where traffic law enforcement is applied 24 hours per day. Deputy

Speaker, these women and men deserve our thanks and praise.

At the same time, hon Deputy Speaker, our transport officials paved the way with the development of appropriate technology to expand the reach of our traffic officials and to monitor, manage and improve our capacity of road traffic and public transport systems. Hon Deputy Speaker, many of us had the opportunity to attend the demonstrations and the Transport Node in practice and saw the potential existing in-house for better and more effective public transport activities.]

Deputy Speaker, the Integrated Transport Intelligence Hub was established in 2018. The Department of Transport and Public Works aimed to develop a centralised data management system, known as the Transportation Data Hub, to bring together Departmental data streams in a standardised way to support effective land transport decision-making.

It was proposed that the Branch establish the capacity to perform “Platform Functions” across the Western Cape, which would provide the technological systems required to support public transport improvement, including Intelligent Transport, ticketing, passenger information and data platforms. There was also a focus on addressing data, regulatory and enforcement issues in partner municipalities. The Data Hub, Deputy Speaker, created an opportunity through technology interventions to support the core needs of the Branch in addressing the following challenges experienced at the time of drafting the original business case:

Insufficient capacity and funding for the delivery of improved local transport systems; a lack of comprehensive and good quality data on land transport in municipalities, including poor quality public transport data; the ineffective public transport service; driver and public operator behaviour; unsafe and overloaded vehicles and pedestrian fatalities, Deputy Speaker.

The development of the Data Hub aimed to draw together data resources and create a facility through which land transport planning, licensing, monitoring, operations, regulations and enforcement can be transformed. Branch users can be empowered through timeous access to integrated, high quality, reliable real-time and historic data. Deputy Speaker, this is a core facility in the extension of our traffic management capacity and the development of integrated, technology-rich public transport.

But Deputy Speaker, let me now turn to the budget itself. What are the nuts and the bolts of the overall Vote 10 budget for 2022/2023 and beyond which we are here to address this afternoon? The budget for the Department for 2022/2023 amounts to R9,106 billion. This constitutes a downward adjustment of R63,112 million from the Adjustments Estimates for 2021/22. In the two later years of the MTEF, Deputy Speaker, this amounts an increase to R9,3 billion for 2023/2024 and to R9,6 billion for 2024/2025.

Deputy Speaker, the increases referred to are largely the result of an additional road infrastructure allocation to stabilise and better align the budget and projects over the medium term. In my relatively short time in

office, I have come to understand how important our road network is to the economy of the Western Cape and to the well-being of our citizens. The availability of additional funds over the MTEF will enable the Department and the Roads Branch, in particular, to address even more of the challenges facing particularly rural communities and communities dependent on the extensive gravel road network – a network which is vulnerable Deputy Speaker, to increasingly severe weather conditions and these details of the entire road network are set out in the Road Asset Management.

Deputy Speaker, I am delighted to report to this House that since assuming office I have had the pleasure of visiting and opening a number of important road projects across this Province. Amongst these are the Aberdeen Road or the R61, linking the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape; the Haaskraal Road in the Cape Winelands; the Ashton Arch Bridge, Deputy Speaker, a first in South Africa; Oosbosch Street in Paarl, in partnership with the Drakenstein Municipality.

In addition to this, Deputy Speaker, there are currently over 50 large roads projects in construction under the control and management of my Department.

The following key projects will commence implementation during this coming financial year: The upgrade of MR281 which is Rooihoogte and Draaiberg; periodic maintenance between Klaarstroom to Beaufort West; the upgrade of the Louis Fourie road in Mossel Bay; the rehabilitation and periodic maintenance of the road between Paarl to Franschhoek; the upgrade

and rehabilitation of the road of Protea and Waarburgh road, and the improvement of MR533 between St Helena to Stompneusbaai.

Deputy Speaker, all these projects are of economic importance and contribute significantly to the integration of communities and to the general mobility needed for a healthy society.

In addition, there are numerous projects in the planning and the design phase. But Deputy Speaker, to complete the budget overview it is necessary to highlight that Department of Transport and Public Works functions on the basis of six programmes, each with specific responsibilities.

The budget allocations for each of these is as follows:

For Administration – R252 697 million

Public Works Infrastructure – R2 194 billion

Transport Infrastructure – R3 953 billion

Transport Operations – R1 700 billion

Transport Regulation – R937 952 million, and

Community Based Programmes - R67 904 million

Deputy Speaker, members may also notice that in this budget specific programmes and budget allocations have been set aside as priority allocations. Programmes 2, 3, 4 and 5 have been identified as being likely to be impacted by the announcements made by the Premier in regard to changes

in the departmental structure of the Western Cape Government. Provincial Treasury has instituted specific limitations concerning virements to and from programmes 2 and 3 and such virements will require prior approval from Provincial Treasury. Deputy Speaker, even virements between these two programmes requires the accounting officer to notify the Treasury.

Deputy Speaker, at present, the Department of Public Transport and Public Works is the infrastructure implementing agent for both education and for health and the Department is therefore scheduled in this financial year under discussion to spend an additional amount of R1 364 billion on behalf of the Western Cape Education Department and an additional amount of R560 267 million on behalf of the Department of Health. The strategic decisions Deputy Speaker, about these health and education projects are planned and taken by these two various departments and implemented by Department of Transport and Public Works.

I specifically mention this existing arrangement as in tabling the Provincial Budget on the 14 March, Minister Maynier made the following announcement, and I quote:

“We are preparing to withdraw Provincial Treasury Instruction 16B, which will bring much needed competition to the infrastructure space, by ensuring that the Department of Transport and Public Works will be the preferred but not the exclusive implementer of infrastructure projects for the Education Department and Health Department in the

Western Cape”. Close quote.

This announcement, Deputy Speaker, has received some media coverage and was last Friday, the subject of a media release by my colleague, the Minister of Finance, which stressed that the purpose of the intention of withdrawal of Provincial Treasury Regulation 16B was to introduce an element of choice and greater competition in the use of implementing agents.

As the Minister Deputy Speaker, currently responsible for supplying the implementing agency function to Health and Education, I have provided the relevant Ministers with an indication of what services are currently being provided by the Department in delivering the implementing agency function to their departments. This will enable them to make an informed decision about service choices in the future.

As an illustration, Deputy Speaker, the Department that delivered the following on behalf of the Western Cape Education Department during the 2021/2022 financial year:

601 Capital projects, which includes new facilities, expansions, upgrades and additions as well as mobile classrooms;

226 Maintenance projects, which includes preventative maintenance, corrective maintenance, scheduled maintenance as well as ablutions and fencing.

Deputy Speaker, allow me now to move on or turn over to Commuter transport initiatives. Vote 10 as tabled in this House, provides an amount of R70 million for the undertaking of a collaborative and orderly winding down and evaluation of the Blue Dot Taxi Pilot.

Over the last year, Deputy Speaker, we have worked tirelessly with the minibus taxi industry on the Blue Dot Taxi Pilot project, to drive behaviour change, service quality improvements and formalisation. This is why the violence perpetrated by certain elements within the industry on March 24th must not be completely misread.

The vast majority of Blue Dot Taxis, played no part whatsoever in the events of March 24th and only two of the eight regions currently participating in Blue Dot, namely CATA and CODETA, were involved in the alleged violence and unrest which occurred on that day. Blue Dot Taxis also found themselves victims of the day's events, with at least 18 vehicles damaged or destroyed.

Deputy Speaker, it is my firm belief, that it is unacceptable actions of these bad elements, which should not be used to undermine the hard work and the many successes which have been achieved through Blue Dot over the last year.

As the Premier has noted, Blue Dot is a new tool for responding to incidents of violence. After the unacceptable events of 24 March, my Department immediately placed the regions involved in red status, meaning they were

unable to benefit from Blue Dot. This action ensured that there were real consequences for unlawful behaviour, hitting those involved where it counts, in their pockets. In addition to this, Deputy Speaker, I have implanted a range of regulatory sanctions which I have at my disposal.

Deputy Speaker, I think at this time it is pertinent to remind ourselves that the Blue Dot Pilot is not the only successful motorised public transport initiative launched by Department of Transport and Public Works in recent years.

I want to move on to the George Integrated Public Transport Network. The George Integrated Public Transport Network and the GO GEORGE bus service was spearheaded by the Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works, in partnership with the Municipality of George through the transformation of the George Mini-Bus Taxi Industry, Deputy Speaker.

The George Integrated Public Transport Network was the first non-metro nationally to be awarded PTNG funding by the National Department of Transport, and to date is one of a handful of non-metros in which a system is operational.

The first phase of the GIPTN went live in December 2014 with phase 1, where after phase 2 in March 2015, phase 3 in May 2015 and phase 4B in March 2020 were rolled out, with the department targeting the planned roll-out of the next phase to Thembaletu which is phase 4A in the 3rd financial

quarter of this year.

Deputy Speaker, the current operation services approximately, 14000 average weekday passengers monitored from September 2021 to February 2022. Following the impact of COVID-19, in February 2022, the service had 16 096 weekday passengers recorded, their highest yet with a 56% of households within 500 metres Deputy Speaker, of a GO GEORGE service. With the roll-out of phase 4A, this service will cater for approximately 26 000 average weekday passengers, with 78% of households estimated to be within s500 metre of a GO GEORGE service.

Deputy Speaker, recently, the George Municipality obtained an interdict against attempts by certain elements of the Minibus Taxi industry to disrupt this service. My Department will support the legal actions initiated by the Municipality, to protect this valuable public transport asset which serves the people of George. Deputy Speaker, I think it is important to highlight that.

Municipalities: the planning authorities, are responsible, for determining the supply and the demand and I believe that this must be done in a more proactive manner by all municipalities. Deputy Speaker, this is something that must be addressed as a result of the current B97 route conflict. In addition, I will initiate a re-assessment of the overall regulatory regime for public transport, where it is within my competence to do so, in order to ensure that it is in line with changing circumstances.

Deputy Speaker, in the same manner, I recently approved changes to criteria for the certification of Vehicle Testing Stations, to accommodate shifting economic and population realities. This can open further business opportunities. Not all commuter transport arrangements have to be large scale in order to make a difference to the lives of the people that we serve.

I want to turn to the Provincial Sustainable Transport Programme, which was initiated by the Department of Transport and Public Works, to support the development and implementation of sustainable transport systems in the Western Cape. The programme aims to develop transport systems through forming partnerships with key stakeholders, including with local municipalities, communities and businesses.

Deputy Speaker, the first such partnership was established between the Department and Stellenbosch Municipality as far back as 2016. We currently have similar partnerships with the Overstrand and Swartland Municipalities. The focus, Deputy Speaker, is on improving the conditions for walking and cycling. Within the Western Cape non-metro areas, 35% of people walk to work as their primary mode of transport, and 46% of learners walk to school. Our bicycle distribution programme, of which I had the privilege of being a part of, has been an instant success and the benefits to the communities involved have been immediate.

Deputy Speaker, finally, I want to commend my Department, through its Government Motor Transport Trading Entity, for the far-thinking

development of an Electric Vehicle Strategy. This strategy will enable the Western Cape Government to play a leading role in developments in this critical area – an area which will become of even greater importance in the light of climate change challenges.

Deputy Speaker, projects which have been identified and in some cases already implemented include: the procurement and testing of 13 electric vehicles; the planning of a provincial electric vehicle charging network; research into the conversion of existing vehicles to electric vehicles; battery recycling and repurposing opportunities; the development of a technology management platforms, and a 3-phase five year implementation plan, Deputy Speaker. These visionary developments can only be to the benefit of the economy and the well-being of the people of this Province and beyond.

Deputy Speaker, in closing I would like to thank my Cabinet colleagues, the members of the Standing Committee with which we work, the members of this House and the excellent, hard-working HOD of my Department, as well as her staff, some of whom are in attendance online today.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the contribution and to say thanks to my Ministry staff, under the leadership of Mr Clive Roos. Thank you very much to every single member of my staff and team, thank you very much for being there and assisting with putting together my first budget speech. Thank you, Deputy Speaker. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I now

recognise hon Mvimbi.

Mr L L MVIMBI: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Good afternoon to you, the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and all the hon members. The ANC declines support for this budget, hon Deputy Speaker. However, before I spell out the reasons why we declined the support, allow me to thank hon America, who is the Chairperson of the Standing Committee, for the manner in which he has chaired the Committee so far, but also for his generosity for allowing the hon Mackenzie, who was the previous Chairperson, to participate in this Budget speech, otherwise he would not have had another opportunity to participate.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is customary for us to commence a speech by quoting either President Ramaphosa, a National Minister in respect of the subject, but today I want to commence my intervention in this Budget Vote by reiterating the point made by Ms Buyelwa Myende, a member of the public and a leader of Sanco in Dunoon, who attended and participated in the Standing Committee's deliberation on the Budget Vote. Ms Myende expressed her deep dissatisfaction by the way the poor in this province and in her community are treated. She conveyed how she believes this Provincial Government and the City of Cape Town undermine and trample on the rights of people living in communities such as Dunoon.

“This budget does not speak to the reality of the lives of our people living in such places as Dunoon.”

insisted Ms Myende.

“Taxis, a form of transport used exclusively by poor people, are being impounded.”

said Ms Myende. She had to come and hear that in the Committee that there are no PRA or permits backlogs, yet she knows of at least 57 instances where operators are awaiting for their permits due to so-called backlogs.

Deputy Speaker, unfortunately the hon Chairperson who was chairing the meeting, hon America, who I have just paid tribute to, made a very unfortunate remark in response to Ms Myende. He said to Ms Myende and the representative from the Dunoon Taxi Association, that their comments were not in relation to the budget. If anything, as Ms Myende herself said, this budget that the Committee was discussing does not speak to the reality of our people’s lives. The sentiment expressed by Ms Myende and experienced by hundreds of thousands, if not millions of our people across our province, speaks to a complete disconnection between the DA Provincial Government administration and the poor.

In fact, the sentiments speak to the very disconnection between this budget and our communities. Yet even more so, it speaks to the DA’s inability to govern this province. Take for example, the fact that according to the HOD of the Department, the IRT or BRT models in this province have all but collapsed. For a Provincial Government who continuously demands

competencies over rail and ports, this Government cannot even govern and manage the number one public transport industry in our province at the moment, which is the taxis. The IRT or BRT model has collapsed because the DA treat taxis like children and does not see them as equal partners, contributing a considerable amount to the Provincial GDP.

Whenever there is a crisis in the province, the National Transport Minister must run and come to the rescue of the Department and the MEC. For months, if not years, MyCiti could not run between Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain and the CBD because the DA has an inability to govern, that is to bring parties around the table and negotiate. And I hope with these recent protests that the taxi industry has had, we are not going to have the National Minister again having to come and intervene in this crisis.

No, for the DA it is either their way or the highway. They still have the *baas* mentality. So, what does the DA prefer, what is their model of public transport? Firstly, they want the race system so that they can privatise it. Secondly, they wish to continue heavily subsidising Golden Arrow which is a private company. Finally, they want to develop their own companies such as MyCiti and GoGeorge, all because they want to ignore the taxis which are their number one public transport industry in the country.

In fact, they want to do away with the taxis. They call the taxi operators all kinds of names, that they are instigating violence when they are protesting for their rights, they even call them hooligans, they are instigators; they

describe them as destructive and chaotic. Instead of respecting these operators who contribute to the provincial economy, being disappointed in them when it is the failure of this Provincial Government to issue permits and treating them like children with carrot and stick operations. Golden Arrow and MyCiti do not operate on an incentive scheme. Why must the taxis then operate on an incentive scheme like the Blue Dot?

Hon Deputy Speaker, it would seem that we have had an ally in the Transport Standing Committee, myself and hon Nkondlo, in the person of hon Maseko because sometimes hon Maseko asks the right and pointed questions. The hon Maseko has been right in asking the Department about the engagement between the Department and the taxis. Hopefully when it comes from one of their own, they will start listening to the cries of the taxis and the taxi industry. Hon Maseko is further correct in demanding that our communities must have a public transport system that works for them. She is also right about the lack of capacity in the City of Cape Town, but we will get to that in a moment.

To make matters worse, this Department itself does not know whether the Blue Dot, which is the carrot and stick operation, is going to continue or not as the Minister has just pronounced that they are busy with the process of winding it down. In other words, we will be back to square one in so far as working with the Taxi Association is concerned if we lose Blue Dot, despite our reservations about this programme. Blue Dot is considered more sustainable by the Department, but the Department does not know if Blue Dot

will continue to exist, or if it will be expanded.

Despite the Public Transport Operation grants being firmly in place, taxis which are the largest providers of public transport to the workers of this province and the only source of public transport to our poor communities, are not being taken seriously by the Department. We are still nowhere near the subsidisation of taxis required to boost our public transport system, but the DA-led Provincial Government worries about trains and ports. The DA is still nowhere near caring about public transport on our roads.

A question was asked about the Department's ability to map and plan where the increase in population will take place, where the human settlements viz-a-viz the economic hubs will be and where the increase in routes will be. This often-interpreted plan for transport and sketching scenarios for the future is kicked to municipalities by the Provincial Department. The Department throws its hands up in the air and says that because of the increased population, new human settlements, the new routes are the duty of municipalities. Instead, the Department says they act according to the municipal plan and this plan explains the public transport crisis in this DA-led Provincial Government.

It means that our people will continue to suffer because they have a Provincial Government who just simply cannot govern and work with the City of Cape Town. They do not want to work with the taxis and work with all the stakeholders in ensuring an effective public transport system. But of course,

herein lies the challenge, Deputy Speaker, there is no political will from the DA-led Province or the DA-led City of Cape Town or the DA-led Drakenstein Municipality to strengthen the public transport system.

For the DA, the taxi market must sort out the taxi problems. For the DA it is better to shift concentration to rail and ports and not to resolve the issues of the taxi industry because if they could have their way, they would do away with the taxis altogether.

It is this market-based ideology that also governed this Department's co-source model. R56 million has been appropriated for consultants in Programme 1 which is Administration, a non-core function of this Department. When further asked about consultants, we were told that this Department has always had a co-source model, in other words outsource, make the State smaller, do not upskill the State and do not retain skills, especially skills in infrastructure.

Talking about infrastructure, my colleagues in the ANC were very excited when the Premier announced the new Infrastructure Department because Gauteng also has an Infrastructure Department, and it seems the Premier is learning a thing or two from Gauteng. But now our hopes were dashed when we heard that we must still wait a whole year before this announcement is implemented. But it is also in infrastructure that we seem to be again agreeing with hon Maseko when she joined the discussion. Maybe we know why she might not have been made part of the debate and another member has

been put in instead.

You see, hon Deputy Speaker, if the hon was going to speak here, she was going to point out, like she did in the Standing Committee, how the APP indicates that 61% of this Department's budget goes to infrastructure. It is also worth repeating what the hon member said in the Standing Committee, it is worth also repeating it here today, how she raised a serious lack of capacity in the City of Cape Town when it comes to infrastructure.

The City of Cape Town delays projects, especially in regard to the Better Living Model and funds from the USDG are continuously returned and returned all the time. But the bit of infrastructure that the ANC would be particularly interested in, is the planning and eventually, to use the words of the HOD which were, and I quote,

“Generate broad benefit from Leeuwenhof.”

This is an interesting development, hon Deputy Speaker, because we have seen private fund-raising events being advertised and this event taking place at Leeuwenhof and so while we may support charities, we must remember the clear line between the private use or private gain of the public resource which is Leeuwenhof. If Leeuwenhof is open for fund-raising, then we must certainly ask that it be open to all organisations who wish to raise funds there.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the ANC welcomes the Department's engagement with Minister Patel and the National Department of Trade and Industry and competition, especially in respect of local content and the specifics of local content and procurement. The ANC will always encourage a cooperative model of governance and trusts that the new MEC for Community Safety, if the Department still exists next year, will work more cooperatively with his National counterpart. It is in that regard that the ANC cannot distance itself from the sentiments of Ms Myende and therefore it is for that reason that we decline support for this budget, hon Deputy Speaker. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. I now recognise hon Mackenzie.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you Minister Mitchell for your budget, indeed a great budget speech and congratulations on your almost first year in service.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I am going to try and be as diplomatic as possible and because I do not attack people personally and I am rather going to quote former President Thabo Mbeki who said two weeks ago, the ANC must improve the quality of their thinking. He further went on to say the problem with the ANC ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: One minute, member ... [Interjection.]

Mr R D MACKENZIE: ... in the Western Cape, is they do not have the capacity to think ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you can just take your seat.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Yes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayed?

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): I rise on two points of order, Deputy Speaker. The first one is that I have noticed that hon Mackenzie spoke directly to the MEC, that is number one. Number two, just not a point of order but caution, in terms of relevance Deputy Speaker ... [Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: It is a maiden speech.

[Inaudible.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, hon Dugmore this relevance thing has been very fluid across the House today, but I shall watch hon Mackenzie carefully.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Like I said I am quoting – in response to hon member Mvimbi, I would rather quote their own leaders.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will watch carefully and please ... [Interjections.]

Mr R D MACKENZIE: I will be diplomatic; I will be diplomatic.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: ... address me. Thank you.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: So just manage my time, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: One minute, just please address me, thank you very much hon Mackenzie.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: Hon Deputy Speaker ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There we go.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: I will be diplomatic. So it was former President Thabo Mbeki who said two weeks ago the ANC Western Cape must improve the quality of their thinking. His exact words actually said, “there should be a capacity to think of the ANC Western Cape”. And he further said, “he does not see the members who think in this room”. He was addressing the ANC Forum two weeks ago. The members who think are not in this room today.

There is actually a video clip available on TikTok bizarrely. I do not know who posted it on TikTok. But anyway, and he said, “comrades should be asking themselves if they are fit for the job”. This is former President Thabo Mbeki.

Now the members in the House are the highest members of the ANC in the Western Cape and this is the former President addressing their forum. This is a damning indictment of the poor quality of leadership, and hon Mvimbi, who is a member of Public Works and Transport for many years, would have raised a matter as simple as the DA want the taxi industry to fail. Yet he has been a member ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

Mr R D MACKENZIE: ... here in this House when we invited the taxi industry to the meeting, he was present with Minister Mitchell and the taxi leadership, SANTACO in this Parliament. He spoke for nearly 20 minutes. He spoke for 30 seconds on the rail that has collapsed in the province because of the ANC. That is the quality of leadership former President Thabo Mbeki [Inaudible.]. So let me repeat what he said, “the ANC in the Western Cape must improve the quality of their thinking, they are not fit for the job”.

Hon [Inaudible.] will not be taking advice from the ANC on anything, hon Deputy Speaker. We welcome the R9,1 billion allocated to this Department and Public Works as part of the budget to push forward. The budget is set against the background of declining revenue, due to the ANC that left this Government fiscus in tatters.

We should thank Minister Mitchell for steering the ship and dealing with a difficult period during the taxi violence. It is almost a year since he has been

in office and his hard work has been appreciated. I also want to express hon Deputy Speaker, our thoughts and prayers for the victims of taxi violence. We have witnessed again recently how taxi violence has flared up and we all know that more than 88 people were killed during the height of taxi violence last year with limited conditions.

Hon members, that is the sad part because not once did member Mvimbi, via you, who is a member of the Committee or any member of the ANC, raise the issue about the poor conviction rate of the taxi murders in this country. 88 people were murdered, 3% conviction rate. Not once did the ANC say let us march to the office of our National Director of Western Cape Public Prosecutions, let us march to the National Director of Public Prosecutions in Parliament, no justice for the victims. The ANC must improve the quality of their thinking.

Hon members, it is appalling that the NPA continues to fail to prosecute people for these heinous crimes, a young child was shot. Not once did the ANC raise an issue about it. Minister Mitchell was on the ground. Minister Mitchell, consistently throughout the province, travelled to engage with the taxi industry. We appreciate the other people who came on board, the late comers, †laat kommers het ingekom, [late comers came in], to take over, to come and take pictures for the media but I know for a fact, because I met with Minister Mitchell with the taxi industry in Mitchells Plain. He was on the ground meeting with the people at the height of the pandemic.

We saw last week, hon Deputy Speaker, the violence caused by the rogue elements of the taxi industry. R4 million worth of damage and I sincerely hope my colleague, J P Smith of which the members of this Parliament have sleepless nights about, will go and lay charges so that the R4 million in damages can be recouped by the City of Cape Town and we hope that the National Prosecution Authority will actually prosecute those individuals responsible.

Hon Deputy Speaker, there is a sustainable solution. The sustainable solution, hon Dugmore, via you Deputy Speaker, is the criminals in the taxi industry must be prosecuted. The taxi industry is a great industry, which provides an incredible service for hundreds of thousands of commuters, not only in Cape Town in the Western Cape but in the country. But if you do not criminalise, prosecute the criminals in the taxi industry, nothing will happen. The same way that you do not prosecute criminals in the State Capture, nothing will happen. They will continue to steal and steal and steal. That is the solution, via you Deputy Speaker, hon Dugmore.

It is bizarre that hon Mvimbi, who has been a member of the Committee for many years can indicate, and I know him as a member who enjoys reading, that he did not read it in the Report. It says there they have allocated R17 million in funding for the Blue Dot system. How can he manage to say there is no money available? It is bizarre because I know he is a member who loves reading. The ANC must improve the quality of their thinking.

Hon Deputy Speaker, via you, I was there when Minister Mitchell and the Premier opened the beautiful Ashton Bridge. This concrete bridge was the first transversal launch in the country, and it is the quality of infrastructure that the Western Cape Government continues to build. We want to thank all the contractors, the sub-contractors, the community of Ashton and the suppliers who built this great bridge and we will continue to ask Minister Mitchell and his team, to continue with investing in infrastructure because this is what this Western Cape Government is famous for and that is why we will continue to support our colleague Daylin Mitchell.

Hon Deputy Speaker, via you, last week I took a businessman around Mitchells Plain to show him the rail infrastructure or the lack of rail infrastructure. He was shocked to see the devastating impact on rail because he wants to build a call centre in Mitchells Plain. He was asking how people are going to get to work? And I explained to him that the rail system is being destroyed by the ANC. Hon Mvimbi again mentioned earlier on, via you Deputy Speaker, that we have too much attention on rail. Of course, we pay a lot of attention in rail because rail is one of the backbones of infrastructure in the Western Cape, so we need to fix rail in the Western Cape.

The Lenteguer Station, Mitchells Plain like many other stations across the country, Kapteinsklip, completely destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of people cannot get to work because of the rail infrastructure under the leadership of the ANC. And what do the ANC Ministers do during the global pandemic level 5? They spent R19 million on buying new cars, R19 million

during level 5. Where were they driving to? Only goodness knows, but R19 million to buy brand new cars while we were in hard lockdown, while the poor, the middle-class and the poor which the ANC always stands up and say they are fighting for, are paying the high cost of lack of rail, the high cost of taxis. The taxi fares went up by another 9% two weeks ago. The fuel price is going up by R2,30 next month in April. That is the reality of bad management, bad governance.

Somebody said earlier you cannot eat clean audits. Well, you can eat clean audits because clean audits allow you not to steal money, not to buy R19 million worth of cars during a global pandemic while the poor are suffering. Fix the rail system, which is what a clean audit will enable you to do. In fact, hon Deputy Speaker, my colleague Dr Leon Schriber and to quote him, he said,

“There is one elite class of South Africans who are exempt from the cost of living; the very ANC Cabinet that caused the poverty crisis in the first place.”

That is the reality of the mismanagement of rail transport and the terrible non-prosecution of criminals in the taxi industry. Not the taxi industry, the criminals in the taxi industry, 88 murders hon Deputy Speaker, three convictions. Not one of the ANC members has raised the issue out there.

So while the ANC continues to enrich themselves and taking a backseat on

these important matters, we must welcome the continued engagements by my colleagues, Minister Mitchell and the City of Cape Town, to get rail back on track. If it was not for the pressure applied by Minister Mitchell and we had meetings with PRASA Chairperson and the PRASA CEO. If he and the Premier did not apply the pressure, the rail system, the Southern and Northern lines, would not have come back on track. A year in the duty and he managed to get some of the rail lines back on track. That is the quality of people on this side of the bench and in the words of President Thabo Mbeki, the ANC in the Western Cape must improve the quality of their thinking.

We therefore fully support the Budget Vote and all the work done by Transport and Public Works to get the Western Cape Government working. We thank the Minister, his Department and all his officials in ensuring that this Western Cape Government continues to work. The DA fully supports this Budget Vote. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Mackenzie. I now recognise hon Xego. He is not there. Okay. Hon Brinkhuis, are you speaking to this Vote?

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Yes. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. Yes, you may begin.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Deputy Speaker, Al Jama-

Ah wants to express our concern for the ongoing taxi violence on the Cape Flats, especially, and the taxi killings. Just this morning, another taxi driver was shot dead in the Delft area opposite Council Camp, near Eindhoven in Delft. We call on the Western Cape Government to play a better oversight role, so that we can have an end to these taxi killings on the Cape Flats. Thank you very much, Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much hon Brinkhuis. I now recognise hon America.

Mr D AMERICA: Thank you, Deputy Speaker, and good afternoon, colleagues and hon Minister. Deputy Speaker, the DA welcomes the allocated funds towards the Department of Transport and Public Works, which exceed R9 billion for the 2023 financial year. All things being equal, and touch wood that Russia will cease its aggression towards Ukraine, this is the year of economic growth through various infrastructure projects and development. And this is also the year of jobs through our infrastructure, rollout projects, and the year of fighting harder for reliable and effective public transport systems in the Western Cape, Deputy Chair.

The ANC has conveniently forgotten that Ukraine was part of the USSR, and they often say that Russia was there in the darkest hour of the liberation struggle, but Ukraine was part of the USSR at the time. So, Deputy Speaker, I want to thank the Minister of Finance, hon Maynier, for putting an emphasis in this budget, in his budget speech, that in this financial period the building

and upgrading of roads will be vital in our efforts in driving economic growth in our province. Not only will this bring better and quality roads to the province, but thousands of jobs will be created, and thousands of families will benefit and experience economic relief. Whilst the province is on the road to economic recovery from COVID-19, a focus on developing infrastructure will play a significant role in building a growing economy in the Western Cape for the Western Cape and its people.

So, Deputy Speaker, the Department will place a special focus on transport development through improving, as the Minister was saying, mobility infrastructure. The George Integrated Public Transport Network is a success story in this regard. Thousands of George residents each day rely on GoGeorge buses, because of their reliability and effectiveness. The Department will be expanding this project to further communities in George, which will see almost double its capacity. The rollout of Phase 4A to Thembaletu will be accelerated this year. We welcome the Department's continued support for services like this, to ensure that people have access to good and reliable public transport for work, to go to school, and for leisure purposes. Therefore, it goes without saying, that this Department recognises its role in preventing and creating awareness regarding the many road accidents that occur in the province, especially during the festive season and on the other holidays.

I support the promotion of road safety initiatives that helps build a network of drivers and commuters who internalise an awareness and respect for the

rules of the road, and participate in an all-hands-on-deck approach that will ultimately save lives. Deputy Speaker, all lives matter. And so, once the pandemic impacted infrastructure planning and delivery, I am pleased that the Department had managed to achieve the completion of several projects. These include the additional 40 bed dormitory at the Outeniqua Child and Youth Care Centre facility in George, the completion of the roof replacement of the Saartjie Baartman Centre, destroyed by fire, as well as the Conradie Park mixed income housing project that was finalised, and the first housing units handed over to its tenants. This, amongst many other completed projects, are significant milestones, given the pandemic and the limitations brought on by the national State of Disaster. And there are many in the province, but, similarly, there are not many provinces in this country that can tell the success story such as this.

In this financial year Provincial Department of Public Works is again expected to create 550 jobs. The Western Cape Government does not seem to only speak of economic recovery but continues to act on it. Over R60,5 million has been allocated to the construction for the child and youth care centres, while 27, almost R28 million has been allocated towards the maintenance of these facilities. This will create further jobs for vulnerable people, while creating safe spaces for children and youth.

Deputy Speaker, last year the Department made public the Road Asset Management Plan report. Through this report, the need for road infrastructure development was highlighted. I therefore welcome the commitment towards

road investments. An additional amount of R337 million had been earmarked as an additional funding for road infrastructure and maintenance in the province to address the backlogs that were highlighted by the Road Asset Management Plan report. While these funds are going to play a significant role in addressing maintenance issues with our roads in the province, we really require more from the National Government. According to the Road Asset Management Plan report, as I was saying previously, 73% of all our surface roads in the province has surpassed life span of 25 years. This is the result of cumulative budget cuts from National Government, which puts further strain on the daily commuting in the Western Cape. Even though this does not pose an immediate threat to general safety, it does mean the costs to replace our road infrastructure will increase exponentially if left unattended.

Despite these challenges, Deputy Speaker, the province's commitment to bettering road infrastructure will ensure our roads remain in good condition. Throughout this budget, the Department has shown the importance of road infrastructure, and the significant role it plays in linking communities, and enhancing the economy. Further to enhancing the economy through transport systems, the Blue Dot taxis, that have been vilified by hon Mvimbi, the pilot project has been a great success. Whilst incentivising better taxi services, and improving driver behaviour in the taxi industry, R17 million had been allocated for the extension of this programme in this coming financial year.

I want to ask hon Mvimbi, name me another province where this is taking place, and I guess it will be very difficult for him, because this is the only

province where an incentivised programme with the taxi industry is being, sort of, established. This programme is the first in South Africa and had eight new companies established as a result thereof, with over 519 operators and 924 drivers trained. There is no doubt, Deputy Chair, that more will be seen of this initiative in the future as we move into the outer financial years.

Our traffic law enforcement has continued to play a critical role in providing critical traffic services, the Minister alluded to it, across the province, as well as in conjunction with the South African Police Services, to oversee the enforcement of the State of Disaster regulations. This will be done even better in this coming financial year, as more training officers will be trained, and they will ensure that effective traffic services and safer roads for our drivers and commuters are being delivered.

Although the management of rail services is not under the Provincial Government, the Department has played a critical role in helping PRASA to fund rail services and its infrastructure assets. I am pleased to see the Department showing more interest and enthusiasm to helping the national entity of PRASA to improve the services for our commuters in the Western Cape.

Deputy Speaker, an economically just society is one in which economic opportunities are available to all, and people who have the capabilities to make use of those opportunities. We are not there yet. South Africa is still an economically unjust society, due to a history of apartheid, as well as

governance failures and corruption. In a democratic era, there are skewed and shrinking opportunities for all. South Africa desperately needs a radically different approach to address the exclusion of our people. Over two decades of political freedom have not resulted in adequate improvement in the socio economic prospects of the majority of South Africans. If we wish to create an economically inclusive and non-racial society, we must address inequalities of opportunity to complement our hard-won political freedoms. Most importantly, we must get rid of the current ANC National Government. So, as the Democratic Alliance and the Western Cape Government, in particular, we are committed to beat the past and build a better future for all South Africans.

It is evidently clear in the performance and prioritisation of the works of the Department of Transport and Public Works, this Department is acutely aware of the pivotal role it plays in the realisation of that ideal, in beating the past and building a better future. Spatial inequalities caused by apartheid, spatial design, and perpetuated by failed land reform, a history of legislated discrimination, this Government and Department seek to address these challenges head-on, and recognises that in its work, a whole society approach is required. It requires Government, business, communities, families and individuals to work hand-in-hand to overcome them. One of the most powerful ways Government can amplify its impact is to leverage private sector involvement and procurement, in a way it selects the companies and chooses to do business with. Where competing companies can provide goods and services at the same level of functionality and price, this policy should

give preference to the company which makes the most positive socio-economic impact, as measured by the sustainable development goals, and not narrow criteria that benefit an already well connected political elite, and Gucci entrepreneurs.

Therefore, competency should be a priority in procurement, because unfulfilled or poorly delivered contracts hurt those most reliant on Government services. So, Deputy Speaker, in Government we would also need to set our own priorities. Our priority interventions in Government must be geared to address the key drivers of inequality of opportunity. Infrastructure development is a key driver for progress and a critical enabler for productivity and sustainable economic growth. It contributes significantly to human development, poverty reduction, and attainment of the millennium development goals.

So, Deputy Speaker, as we move towards the full implementation of the Provincial Recovery Plan, we must be mindful of the restrictive financial environment we find ourselves in. As a Department, the Department of Transport and Public Works will co-lead the jobs priority. Therefore, infrastructure development and maintenance play a critical role in creating economic growth, which, amongst many other benefits, will create much needed jobs.

Together, Deputy Speaker, we can beat the past and build a better future for all. The DA, therefore, fully supports this budget. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Member. I now recognise Hon Minister Mitchell.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Alright. Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker, and thank you very much for all the contributions by all the members. Hon Deputy Speaker, I think it is important that I start from the top, because the amount of times that we are re-giving the information to hon Mvimbi, in particular, I actually wanted to get up and say please refer to all my previous features, please refer to all my previous questions that you posed to me, and read it. But I think in the interests of the citizens of this province, let me respond.

Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Mvimbi raises Du Noon Taxi Association, in particular, and SANCO, which attended the Standing Committee, we have answered the Du Noon Taxi Association and SANCO in that Standing Committee, but I went further, Deputy Speaker, we have engaged them. I have had a meeting with the Du Noon Taxi Association and the SANCO representative in last week, I think, or last week, and there are certain resolutions that were taken, and we are in the process. So, if the hon Mvimbi wants to come to Parliament, use a budget speech to play politics with the lives of the people of Du Noon, I am not going to entertain him. But, for the record, Du Noon Taxi Association has been engaged. The 57 permits, in fact, are being, it is not being issued by the Provincial Registrar's Office, because the municipalities, Deputy Speaker, are the planning authorities when it comes to route planning, we are merely the regulatory framework.

I completely agree that Du Noon, there is a need, and I have engaged the City of Cape Town, in particular, as the local municipality, but I went further, and I asked that the Department obtains a legal opinion on whether I am able to override certain municipalities if I do not agree, and there is a need. And if the hon Mvimbi listened to my speech, I spoke about it, so I am not going to repeat myself.

Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Mvimbi goes on about Golden Arrow, and Golden Arrow, and Golden Arrow. Golden Arrow is being funded through a national grant given by the National Department of Transport. Golden Arrow is merely a service provider, like many other service providers across the country. All provinces have received this grant, and they have service providers, so I think it is disingenuous for hon Mvimbi to come here and lambaste a service provider that is not able to defend, and stand up and defend him, or defend them, and for the incredible service that Golden Arrow is providing to the citizens of this province, and, in particular, with a failed rail system.

If you look at B97, when we closed it, the implementation of B97 on providing that service to the citizens or the residents of that municipality between, on that particular route, it was Golden Arrow who stepped in and is provided that service. So, I think it is disingenuous for hon Mvimbi to come here and to try and create an impression that there is monopoly for certain service providers.

I want to take it further, hon Deputy Speaker, the George, the GoGeorge, I do not know, and I will provide it again, on the day of my announcement as the MEC for Transport and Public Works in this province, on the 24th, I think it was on the 24th of March, we were in George at GoGeorge, where we were provided, as a Standing Committee, with the information that 100% of GoGeorge, hon Deputy Speaker, is owned by the minibus taxi industry. So, I do not know, again, why the perception has been created in this House, that it is the Department, and that it is this Government. It is the minibus taxi industry who owns GoGeorge. If the hon Mvimbi was not aware, now he is aware, and I am not going to repeat myself in this House again.

With regard to the subsidisation, hon Deputy Speaker, so when we speak about the minibus taxi industry, which I have a very, very good relationship with, through SANTACO and the various associations, the Western Cape Government is the only province in this country that is providing that engagement, that constant engagement with the minibus taxi industry. We are the only department that is prepared to assist with the formalisation of the industry. The formalisation does not come from Government. It is the industry that wants to be formalised. With formalisation go regulatory aspects. And with that kind of engagement with the industry, it is happening on a daily basis.

If you look at the amount of money being invested through the Blue Dot into the minibus taxi industry, versus the R5 000, the measly R5 000,00 that the National Department is now trying to provide to operators across the country,

after months and months of engagement, and begging the National Minister to step in, to actually adhere to the promise that he was making.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I think I must go a little bit further. And I want to bring hon Brinkhuis' point in. The reality is that taxi violence is a concern to all of us. And if it is not a concern, then there is a fundamental problem, because the minibus taxi industry, in particular, provides 70% of commuters with transport to and from economic opportunities across this province. 70% of people rely on a safe and reliable public transport, and when, with me being responsible for public transport in this province, when it affects a commuter, I will step in. So, hon Mvimbi's comment about us treating the industry like children, I will take every available mechanism at my disposal to protect the commuters and passengers of this province, as well as those operators who are being caught in the crossfire, because not all minibus taxi operators are in between this.

If hon Mvimbi can just see all the letters after the 24th of March, of that thuggery that happened, that was called a march of minibus taxi associations and we said, please, please, we are not part of this, please do not link us with this. Hon Mvimbi does not know that, or does not see that, and does not want to know that. A march, we all support that if you have concerns you can march, but then stick to the rules and do not infringe on the rights of other people. That particular march caused R4 million of damage and infrastructure. Hon Deputy Speaker, the buses that were burned, the people that got injured, the personal vehicles that have been damaged in that

process, that, to me, is not a march. It is thuggery, and I have called on SAPS to deal with those responsible in the harshest possible form. And I will never stand back for thugs that are trying to operate the industry. Because not all operators, and not all taxi service providers, and association are part of this. And I have a duty to also protect those law-abiding operators.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the hon Mvimbi also says that the National Minister needed to step in. Let me tell the hon Mvimbi, Section 91 of the National Land Transport Act, it provides me, as the MEC responsible for public transport, with the powers to either close, or close routes and ranks. The National Minister was here as support, and we have indicated that from the beginning, he did not run here to save it, because he did not have the power to do so. It was this Government that took the decision, in the interests of the people of this province, and commuters of this province, to invoke Section 91, as the powers vested in me, as the provincial MEC, and I am going to do the same, I have published the intention to close Nyanga, that will be published in the *Government Gazette*, because if the violence continues and the unrest continues, I will do everything in my power, and the powers that I have to protect the commuters and the citizens of this province.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to then just lastly say I think it would be remiss of me not to say that there was a lot of comments made about, the HOD said this in the Standing Committee, and the HOD, I do not know in what Standing Committee hon Mvimbi was, and where I was, but there was definitely things that were being taken completely out of context, and I will

make a commitment to the House today that I will ask the HOD, that we will revert back to the Standing Committee and re-explain the budget as it was tabled. Because some people just do not want to read it, and do not want to accept the facts.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I think, lastly, I want to thank the Chair of the Standing Committee, hon America and hon Mackenzie for their contributions, and for the contributions [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: He is the Deputy Chair.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: And for their [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Contributions, and for hon Mackenzie for [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: The time that he did Chair, for all the support and assistance.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Hon Deputy Speaker, can you [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, hon members, let the Minister finish.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Thank you very much for your contributions, and thank you for the support and leadership, but also for holding us accountable. I think accountable Government, or accountable governance is very important, so we have always, and I have always, made myself available for interrogation at the Standing Committees, so I trust that as we go forward, we will forget about the politics, especially when it comes to public transport and the lives of the people and commuters, that we will, in fact, debate it on facts. And if you have different suggestions, or better suggestion, put it on the table. I want to use the Leader of the Opposition, somebody approached him for the vehicle testing centres, and we listened to the recommendations or comments, the proposal, and we have engaged, and subsequently, we have amended those things. And that is what you do as, when you are an opposition, you do not come here and make a whole lot of comments, and then people are not allowed to respond to that.

Deputy Speaker, before I close, I just want to remind all motorists that the end of the renewal of your motor vehicle licences is on the 31st of March. So, if you have not renewed your motor vehicle licences, please do so. And then please drive safely as you approach the Easter holiday period. Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker.

[Debate concluded.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Minister. Yes, I had to stand in a long queue to get my licence sorted out, which I am very happy about. Thank you, Minister. That concludes the debate on this Vote. The Secretary will read the Sixth Order of the Day.

The SECRETARY: Consideration of report of the Standing Committee on Finance, Economic Opportunities and Tourism, and the COVID-19 Temporary Employer/Employee Relief Scheme (TERS), funding process undertaken by the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and the response/views of the public in the Western Cape on this process.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr Secretary. I have been informed by the Chief Whip that the Programming Authority resolved that there will be no list of speakers, and the parties who wish to do so, will be now afforded an opportunity to make a declaration on the report for a maximum of three minutes. I will now afford parties an opportunity to make that declaration if they so wish. I recognise the ANC. Anybody making a declaration?

Mr L L MVIMBI: Hon Deputy Speaker.

An HON MEMBER: Hon Mvimbi is going to take the floor.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. There we go. Who am I addressing?

Mr L L MVIMBI: Yes, yes, it is me, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may [Interjection.]

Mr L L MVIMBI: Hon Mvimbi.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, hon Mvimbi, you may proceed.

Mr L L MVIMBI: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Deputy Speaker, the ANC welcomes and supports the report. The ANC raises serious concerns about the high number of private companies that we identify as having defrauded the system, and that the majority of them, unfortunately, are in the Western Cape. We call for those companies to be named, shamed, and that they are prosecuted by the criminal justice system for abusing State resources. This, once again, prove to us that white collar crime is underestimated, and under-reported in this country. Private sector corruption must be exposed and culprits prosecuted.

We further call on workers to demand from their employers proof of having registered them for UIF, as many during this period, missed the benefit, as employers had not registered them, or others were not paying their contribution, but in many instances this deduction was still made. It is scandalous that employers will still steal from their workers. Often workers

worked many years for them. We demand more capacity in the Department of Employment and Labour, particularly non-metro regions, to have access to information, and improve their monitoring to ensure early warning of those companies that are delinquents to their labour relations obligations. The Western Cape Government must, in their engagement within that, encourage employers to adhere to their responsibility to their employees, as its human right to do so. I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Mvimbi. I now recognise the EFF. No. GOOD is not here. ACDP not here. The Freedom Front Plus not here. Al Jama-Ah. I now recognise Al Jama-Ah.

Mr G BRINKHUIS: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. No declaration. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much. And I now recognise the DA.

Mr G BOSMAN: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Deputy Speaker, the DA welcomes this report. It is a shining example of the Western Cape Parliament holding a national entity to account, even though we do not always get responses from National Ministers. The Standing Committee wanted to get a clear understanding of the multiple challenges facing the Unemployment Insurance Fund. To give effect to this, the Committee resolved to invite the Unemployment Insurance Fund to brief the Committee on the payment of TERS funding to applicants in the Western Cape. After the briefing, it

became very clear that the Committee needed to gauge the experience of residents of the Western Cape on their experiences applying and receiving TERS funding. A public participation process was conducted and responses were received via e-mail, WhatsApp, and in response to a questionnaire that the Standing Committee put out for public comment.

Core to the feedback received from members of the public during this public engagement process, was the fact that the UIF had serious challenges, and that this national entity was in deep trouble. It could not process TERS and unemployment benefits during the hard lockdown. This was partly due to the closure of all Government services, as resulting in long queues at closed offices, and an online system, and a call centre that crashed multiple times. Deputy Speaker, this public participation process highlighted that the people of the Western Cape were desperately trying to access Government funds that they were entitled to. This report shows that the Committee was able to use the mechanisms at its disposal to assist the residents of the Western Cape. The Committee is keeping track of all outstanding UIF payments, and we will be using our NCOP colleagues to engage the UIF to make sure that this is done.

Deputy Speaker, we should also be mindful that there is a political party in this House that have not paid UIF for their staff, and we did also receive some requests during this public participation process from staff members of the African National Congress, who found out that their political party never paid their UIF. With that Deputy Speaker, the Democratic Alliance urges the

House to support this report.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, just take your seat, there is a point of order. What is your point of order? [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): No, no [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Sayed.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Just a question. Is the hon Bosman willing to share the info with us, so we can assist, because I am interested as to how he gets info directly from SARS. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, would you want to take a question?

Mr G BOSMAN: I have completed my declaration [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay.

Mr G BOSMAN: Hon, Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, hon members, order please. We are finishing off. Hon Bosman, if you can proceed.

Mr G BOSMAN: I have proceeded, hon Deputy Speaker. The Democratic

Alliance urges all members of this House to support this report, and we do hope that the hon Deputy Chief Whip of the Opposition will perhaps join our Committee once he becomes the Leader of the Opposition at the end of this year.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Bosman. I am not going to open this conversation up. We have been in the House a very long time, hon Mackenzie. So, I now note, hon members, that I have to announce that there are currently 25 hon members present, and entitled to vote, and the House is therefore quorate. The question put before the House, the WCPP, is that the Report of the Standing Committee on Finance, Economic Opportunities and Tourism be adopted. Are there any objections to the report being adopted?

HON MEMBERS: No.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, there are not. Thank you very much. No objections. Agreed to.

I therefore conclude the business for the day. The Secretary will end the meeting, and all members will be exited. Hon members, before you leave, please note that tomorrow's session will begin at ten a.m. The House is adjourned.

The House adjourned at 18:07.