

Budget Speech

Department of the Premier- 2022/23

Delivered: 29 March 2022

Note to editors: Kindly check this speech against the delivery made by Premier Winde within the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.

Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,
Members of the Media,
And to all who call the Western Cape home.

The vision of this 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 a caring, competent, innovative, responsive, and accountable government that acts with integrity.

We are driving innovation and collaboration within this government by leading the response to the Provincial Strategic Plan, the Provincial Recovery Plan, and by driving the Vision-Inspired Priorities (VIP 5) which aims to promote a culture of collaboration and innovation.

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 IT support.

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 that this is a 4.6% increase from the 2021/22 adjusted budget and will assist us in service delivery risk mitigation and the implementation of VIP 5 or creating a culture of innovation and collaboration.

By increasing our allocation towards risk mitigation, we will be able to prevent breaches and targeted cybercrimes. Cyber security breaches pose a significant to the Western Cape Government and residents who are becoming increasingly dependent on 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 that this will increase due to a growing trend in cyber-attacks worldwide and we must ensure that we prevent breaches that would bring our government to a standstill, as seen during the attack on the Port of Cape Town – halting exports.

The allocations for risk mitigation over the medium-term include R40.039 million in 2022/23, R80.980 million in 2023/24 and R71.492 million in 2024/25. A further R2.5 million has been allocated as a contingency, should external expertise be required.

In prioritising IT infrastructure, the Department's Broadband Project will continue driving the delivery of high-speed network connectivity into rural areas. This, along with the free public wi-fi service, will ensure that vulnerable communities can bridge the digital divide.

A feasibility study to the value of approximately R20 million is currently underway to determine how best to provide internet services to people. 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 of deploying new broadband infrastructure across the province. It will also assess potential ownership and operation models for future broadband deployments.

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 this coming May through a grant signing ceremony.

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 the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic not only changed the way we live but the way work too. This has 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 as it intends to shift mindsets and inculcate 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, this will include:

- An allocation of R2 million towards Kromme Rhee to fund innovation projects, especially the reconfiguration of the Provincial Treasury Instructions (PTI) and the establishment of an Innovation Hub.
- 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.

- 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.

Speaker, during my SOPA, I committed this Government to listen more to the people it serves. This is 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 will that site in future. 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 and recommendations for service delivery improvement. This will ensure that 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 this province.

Through this budget, we will further be implementing the commitments made during the SOPA which include the establishment of new Infrastructure and Mobility Departments, a special unit dedicated to Violence Prevention and the renaming of the Provincial Department of Community Safety (DoCS) to the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety. We will now also be renaming the Department of Health to the Department of Health and Wellbeing.

During the SOPA, I further outlined that the Western Cape Government is guided by its 3 north stars of jobs, safety and wellbeing which are critical in our recovery. This Department is playing its part in promoting safety, through the Policy and Strategy Unit by:

- Researching legislative and policy amendments to reduce alcohol-related harms. The Unit will continue to support DoCS throughout the drafting, submission, publication, and public participation legislative processes.

- Partnering with the Department of Social Development (DSD) to develop norms and standards to improve family strengthening programmes and referral pathways in the Western Cape.
- 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 will work in partnership with the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports and DSD.
- Partnering with the Provincial Department of Education, DCAS and the University of Cape Town to pilot the VPI@Schools behavioural programme in schools to give young people the tools to regulate emotions, improve mental wellbeing and reduce violence. The pilot will be rolled out in up to 50 high schools in priority areas, empowering approximately 2000 learners. Up to R2 million has been earmarked in 2022/23 for the Programme.

Speaker, the Children's Commissioner, Christina Nomdo, is further playing a vital role in promoting safety through her office's work child participation strategies, for which she has already started gaining international attention!

This requires children to participate in the work of the office by 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 this Children Commissioner's office. Of which, R6.754 million has been allocated towards the compensation of employees, which includes an additional R1 million to fill posts – empowering this office further.

Thank you and well done, Ms Nomdo, for the important work you do in promoting children's rights.

The second recovery area in which our Department is playing a key part in supporting is wellbeing. 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 toward strategic communications. The communications which result from these allocations empower residents with the necessary information to get vaccinated, practice the necessary behaviour change, and promote personal responsibility.

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

Included in this is an allocation towards strategic communication is the continued roll-out of the Department's Anti-Gender Based Violence (GBV) 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. 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.

In a further commitment to promoting wellbeing, 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.

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 29% to officials in the Provincial Department of Education.

We have seen concerning mental health statistics due to the pandemic, which is why we are continuing to prioritise our employees' wellbeing. 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.

Speaker, a key stakeholder in ensuring that safety, jobs, and wellbeing 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 faced. 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.

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 tool at our disposal.

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 on 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.

The Western Cape Government is closely studying the proposed health regulations that will be introduced under existing public health 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 scientific advice, factoring in all recent

evidence. It cannot be allowed to be a back door to sneak unnecessary disaster regulations back again.

As I close off, I want to acknowledge the resilience shown by those working in the events, hospitality, tourism, and catering industries. You have taken a significant toll because of the hard lockdown and the ensuing regulations which have served only to cripple your industries.

As a Provincial Government, we will continue to play our part in ensuring that you can bounce, stronger than ever. And our approach to supporting you will be guided by a culture of collaboration and innovation.

Finally, I want to thank the DG, everyone in the Department of the Premier and each and every public servant who has gone above and beyond the call of duty over the past two years. Thank you for your service to the people of this province.