

PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

Introduction

The objective of the Provincial Parliament is to provide effective and efficient support services to the Members and enhance public involvement in and awareness of the legislative process. The secretariat has to render support services to Members of the Provincial Parliament in order to enable them to fulfil their constitutional function and thereby to render optimal service to the citizens of the Western Cape.

Expenditure 1997/98 to 2004/05

Table 1 below sets out budget and actual expenditure figures for Vote 2 for the financial years 1997/98 through to 2004/05. The Provincial Parliament Vote consists of three programmes: Administration, Procedural Services and Members' Benefits. The Direct Charges, i.e. remuneration of political office bearers, are also reflected here.

Between 1997/98 and 2004/05 the Provincial Parliament budget will have grown from R25,5 million to R41 million. Real growth in Provincial Parliament expenditure between 1997/98 and 2001/02 averaged 5%. Between 2001/02 and 2004/05 a real growth average of ten percent is projected.

The budget of the Provincial Parliament for the financial year 2002/03 has increased to R23,748 million, with Members' remuneration at R12,568 million. Therefore, the total budget for the Provincial Parliament for the financial year is R36,316 million.

The budget for 2002/03 has increased by 18,85%. This is mainly due to the Provincial Parliament's objective of becoming more accessible to the general public by taking it to the people, i.e. by more committee meetings being held in rural areas.

Table 1: Expenditure 1997//98 to 2004/05

PROGRAMME	Actual					Voted 2002/03 R'000	Medium-term estimate	
	1997/98 R'000	1998/99 R'000	1999/00 R'000	2000/01 R'000	2001/02 R'000		2003/04 R'000	2004/05 R'000
1. Administration	12703	12116	4421	5777	7625	8476	8859	9343
2. Procedural Service	0	0	2741	3125	3997	5919	6342	6272
3. Facilities and Benefits of Members	0	0	6738	8700	8385	9353	9794	10261
Direct Charges	12836	14024	14643	15688	10550	12568	13826	15207
TOTAL	25539	26140	28543	33290	30557	36316	38821	41083

Proportion of Programme to Budget	Actual					Voted	Medium-term estimate	
	1997/98 R'000	1998/99 R'000	1999/00 R'000	2000/01 R'000	2001/02 R'000		2002/03 R'000	2003/04 R'000
1. Administration	49 74	46 35	15 49	17 35	24 95	23 34	22 82	23 60
2. Procedural Service	0 00	0 00	9 60	9 39	13 08	16 30	16 34	14 41
3. Facilities and Benefits of Members	0 00	0 00	23 61	26 13	27 44	25 75	25 23	24 98
Direct Charges	50 26	53 65	51 30	47 13	34 53	34 61	35 61	37 02
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Programme 1: Administration

The aim of the Administration programme is to conduct overall management of, and provide quality corporate support services to, the Provincial Parliament. The programme incorporates the Office of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, the Secretary and the corporate service function.

Service delivery is measured by the effectiveness of the Provincial Parliamentary functions and the skills development of workers in the public sector.

The spending pattern of this programme has not followed any trend. In the 1998/99 and 1999/2000 budget years, expenditure contracted and averaged a real decline of twelve percent between 1997/98 and 2001/02. The decline was reversed in the 2001/02 budget year when real growth measured 22% compared with the previous year.

Programme 2: Procedural Service

The aim of this programme is to provide quality procedural support, reference, research, communication, translation and interpretation services to the Provincial Parliament and other stakeholders. In the 1999/2000 budget year when the programme was established, expenditure of R2,7 million was registered. This amount rose steadily and between 1999/2000 and 2001/02 the average real increase in expenditure was 21%. Between 2001/02 and the outer year 2004/05 real growth in expenditure is projected to be 14%.

The increase in 2002/03 is mainly due to the Provincial Parliament having more committee meetings compared with the previous financial years. More interpreters and translators are required to cater for the diverse languages of the country.

Programme 3: Facilities and Benefits of Members

Expenditure in this programme is attributable to political members of the Provincial Parliament. It includes payments for items such as members' medical, pension and personal accident insurance benefits. Constituency allowances and allowances for services such as catering are also all under this programme.

In the 2002/03 financial year a budget of R9,3 million has been provided for. This is a real growth of four per cent on the previous year's actual expenditure. Budgeted amounts for the outer MTEF years reflect zero real growth. As a proportion of the Provincial Parliament's voted Funds, Members' Benefits accounts for a quarter of the allocated funds. They will vary in reality, however, as members will be able to fulfil their constitutional functions adequately. Members will be able to travel to the rural areas to inform their constituents of happenings in the Provincial Parliament.

Direct Charges

Direct Charges is the remuneration of Members of the Provincial Parliament (excluding Members of Cabinet) and does not form part of the normal budget appropriations in order to ensure their autonomy.

The Independent Commission on Remuneration of Public Office Bearers, headed by Judge Goldstone as Chairperson, makes recommendations about the remuneration of public office bearers to the President. The President determines the upper limits of remuneration by proclamation in the Government Gazette. The Premier of the Province approves the members' remuneration by proclamation in the Provincial Gazette. The Provincial Parliament in turn must approve the Premier's remuneration.

Parliament Outreach

The budget for 2002/03 has increased by 18,85% compared with 2001/02. This is mainly due to making the Provincial Parliament more accessible to the general public – in other words taking Parliament to the people.

The promotion of public participation and public education regarding its roles and responsibility remains a priority for the Provincial Parliament in 2002/03. To this end two documents will soon be available – one for adult visitors and one for primary school learners as part of the educational material given to visitors to the Provincial Parliament. Online submissions and petitions to a central electronic website are to be provided for. Two newspapers and five selected community newspapers will carry monthly advertorials supplying information on parliamentary activities.

In addition, a youth portal on the website is being developed to inform learners of Provincial Parliament processes and procedures as well as the position of the Provincial Parliament in the constitutional dispensation. The European Parliamentary Support Programme (EUPSO) has funded the development and maintenance of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament website (WCPP), the hosting of a Youth and Women's Parliament and the printing of pamphlets and brochures.

Service Delivery

In her budget speech to Parliament on 13 March 2002, the Speaker said “the challenges facing our Parliament are improved public participation, demands for more and improved services, streamlining the legislative process and full compliance with statutory requirements, including transformation”.

In line with this it is apparent that the allocation to Programme 3: Facilities and Benefits to Members, has increased considerably, from R6,738 million in 1999/00 to R9,353 million for the budget period 2002/03, a growth of 38.8%. The increased budget is to be used in a number of ways, each of which will make the Provincial Parliament more accessible to the general public.

Public participation is not limited to encouraging people to visit the Provincial Parliament building. As there are many people in the outlying areas that cannot afford to make the trip to visit the parliamentary building, a decision was taken to take Parliament to the people. For this purpose a number of committee meetings have been held in rural areas, away from the parliamentary building in Wale Street, Cape Town. The committee budget has been increased from R60 000 to R100 000 per committee to enable such decentralisation of meetings. In addition to meetings away from the formal parliamentary building, Provincial Parliament Members are also encouraged to inform their constituents of happenings in the Provincial Parliament and encourage them to become involved in the legislative process.

Five additional posts have been filled to improve Provincial Parliament service delivery. Members' benefits have been improved to enable them to fulfil their constitutional functions adequately. Members' travel allowance has been increased from R11 736 to R14 000 per annum, an increase of 19%, and the allowance of the Premier, Ministers and the Speaker, from R14 604 to R16 000 per annum, an increase of 9,6%. Members' accommodation allowances for members living outside a 50 -km radius of the Provincial Parliament have been increased by 11%. Their telephone allocations have been increased by 11%, and the Secretarial and Constituency allowances by 5,5% and 10% respectively.

Challenge

Another issue of importance to the Provincial Parliament is that of autonomy or independence. For example, it has to promote efficiency, thus it has its own Treasury Function, which is vested in the Speaker, separate from the Provincial Treasury.

Economic Classification of Expenditure

As is generally the case, expenditure predominantly takes the form of current and personnel expenditure. As can be seen in Table 2, less than one percent of the Vote's projected expenditure has been allocated to capital assets. Capital spending regarding infrastructure (buildings) is provided for under the Department of Transport and Public Works.

Table2: EconomicClassification1997/98to2004/05

EconomicClassification	Actual					Voted	Medium-term estimate	
	1997/98 R'000	1998/99 R'000	1999/00 R'000	2000/01 R'000	2001/02 R'000	2002/03 R'000	2003/04 R'000	2004/05 R'000
CurrentExpenditure	24145	25539	28390	33062	29971	36296	38694	41051
Personnelexpenditure	17234	18734	20940	24342	19902	24243	26088	28045
Transferpayments	2140	2056	2723	3543	4497	4822	5229	5665
Othercurrent expenditure	4771	4749	4727	5177	5572	7231	7377	7341
CapitalExpenditure	1394	601	153	228	586	20	127	32
Transferpayments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Othercapital expenditure	1394	601	153	228	586	20	127	32
Total	25539	26140	28543	33290	30557	36316	38776	41083

ProportiontoBudget	Actual					Voted	Medium-term estimate	
	1997/98 R'000	1998/99 R'000	1999/00 R'000	2000/01 R'000	2001/02 R'000	2002/03 R'000	2003/04 R'000	2004/05 R'000
CurrentE xpenditure	94,54	97,70	99,46	99,32	98,08	99,94	99,67	99,92
Personnelexpenditure	67,48	73,35	73,76	73,63	66,40	66,79	67,42	68,32
Transferpayments	8,38	8,05	9,59	10,72	15,00	13,29	13,51	13,80
Othercurrent expenditure	18,68	18,60	16,65	15,66	18,59	19,92	19,08	17,88
CapitalExpenditure	5,33	2,30	0,54	0,68	1,92	0,06	0,33	0,08
Transferpayments	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Othercapital expenditure	231,95	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Personnel expenditure increased every year except between 2000/01 and 2001/02, when it decreased by 18,2%. This is due to a policy change, which requires the remuneration of the Premier and Ministers to be reflected on their own vote. The number of Provincial Parliament staff has grown as has the legislature, and with this expansion, also expenditure on the personnel function. The administration has an Employment Equity Plan and, with the exception of the top structure, the present establishment reflects the demographics of the Province.

Transfer payments refer to payments to political parties on submission of audited financial statements. The record on this function also reflects an upward trend of substantial proportion in respect of expenditure.

Conclusion

The Provincial Parliament's allocations grow at a moderate rate, so that it improves its efficiency as an ongoing process. It has demonstrated that it has the capacity to spend the resources allocated.

However, the Provincial Parliament as the legislative authority in the Province should be adequately funded to enhance the effectiveness of its legislative and oversight processes. Indications are that the staff establishment, improvement of conditions of service of staff, public participation, communication, catering services and employee contributions in relation to members' benefits need to be augmented over the medium term.