

11.6	INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES : (PC : CLLR Z DALLING (MS))
11.6.1	PROGRESS ON THE PROVISION OF A PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICE FOR STELLENBOSCH

Collaborator No: 742663
 IDP KPA Ref No: Good Governance and Compliance
 Meeting Date: 22 March 2023 & 29 March 2023

1. SUBJECT: PROGRESS ON THE PROVISION OF A PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICE FOR STELLENBOSCH

2. PURPOSE

Council to note the Section 78(1) Assessment Report, and to note the proposed approach by the Infrastructure Services Directorate.

3. DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Municipal Council.

4. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Western Cape Government's Department of Transport and Public Works (DTPW) had previously provided assistance to Stellenbosch Municipality and compiled a Section 78 (1) Assessment Report on the provision of a public transport service, for Stellenbosch. See attached **APPENDIX 1**. The report was based on a study that, at the time, proposed a conventional (largely bus-based) public transport system, that would be managed by the Municipality.

The key findings by the DTPW's, Section 78(1) Assessment Report is as follows:

- The municipality is better suited to an incremental upgrade rather than a brand new large scale bus-based system.
- Irrespective of the mechanism selected to deliver a public transport service (internal vs. external) and based on the lessons learned from the public transport implementation of George, Cape Town etc, the Municipality should consider pursuing an alternative approach to a public transport service.
- The municipality does not have the capacity nor potential future capacity to furnish the skills, expertise and resources necessary for the provision of a municipal public transport service.

Taking into account recommendations from the current Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plan (CITP), advice from industry experts, advice from the DTPW, and lessons learned from other Municipalities (where conventional public transport services were rolled out), an alternative approach to a public transport service for Stellenbosch is proposed.

The Directorate therefore proposes that the municipality adopts an incremental approach to bring about improvements to existing systems. This will allow adaptations to existing public transport modes, incremental budgeting to be used for those improvements, as well as existing arrangements with the bus and taxi operators and associations to be tweaked accordingly, rather than a "Big-Bang" new approach to be implemented.

The incremental approach, being more flexible at incorporating and assigning the different modes of public transport is most suitable for a developing area such as Stellenbosch.

The Directorate also proposes that a Public Transport Plan first be developed. The Public Transport Plan will set the framework and context of the public transport service and identify necessary projects to be implemented.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) that Council notes the Section 78(1) Assessment Report on the provision of public transport services. (**APPENDIX 1**);
- (b) that Council accepts that all the requirements of Section 78(1), has been complied with;
- (c) that Council concurs with the finding of the study i.e.
 - The municipality is better suited to an incremental upgrade rather than a brand-new large-scale bus-based system.
 - Based on the lessons learned from the public transport implementation of George, Cape Town etc, the Municipality should consider pursuing an alternative approach to a public transport service.
 - The municipality does not have the internal capacity nor potential future capacity to furnish the skills, expertise and resources necessary for the provision of a municipal public transport service.
- (d) that Council considers an alternative approach, namely the Incremental Approach that progressively moves towards improved public transport services and, over time, establishes the most efficient public transport service; and
- (e) that a Public Transport Plan be compiled to facilitate improvements to existing public transport services, identifying necessary projects to ultimately establish an efficient public transport service.

6. DISCUSSION / CONTENTS

6.1 Background

The Western Cape Government's Department of Transport and Public Works (DTPW) had previously provided assistance to Stellenbosch Municipality and compiled a Section 78 (1) Assessment Report on the provision of a public transport service, for Stellenbosch. See attached **APPENDIX 1**.

Section 78 (1) Assessment Report was based on a Public Transport Services Network Study that the Municipality had undertaken, for the implementation of Public Transport System for Stellenbosch. The study proposed a conventional (largely bus-based) public transport system, that would be managed by the Municipality. The public transport service comprises of a network of 11 local routes within Stellenbosch, and 8 long distance routes linking Stellenbosch to Klapmuts, Paarl, Somerset West, Eerste River, Bellville, Airport Industry etc. The financial cost of implementing such as a service is estimated to exceed R200M over first 4 years of implementation.

Stellenbosch Municipality's Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plan (CITP) for the period 2022-2027, currently being finalized, presents a framework for development of an integrated public transport service network, highlighting the Incremental Approach as being most suitable approach to bring about improvements to the public transport.

The CITP further proposes the compilation of a Public Transport Plan to assist the Municipality to further conceptualize public transport requirements and identify necessary projects.

6.2 Discussion

Section 78 (1) Assessment Report by the Western Cape Government's Department of Transport and Public Works (DTPW) states that the Department does not intend, at this time, to replicate conventional bus-based public transport systems and will support alternative approaches to public transport. The DTPW proposes an Incremental Approach, that focusses on getting the basics right while progressively moving towards an improved public transport service over time. The report also mentioned that cities at the forefront of public transport improvements are exploring alternative hybrid models that are more cost effective and better recognizes the complexities of an industry in transition.

The key findings by the Department of Transport & Public Works (DTPW)'s, Section 78(1) Assessment Report is as follows:

- The municipality does not have the capacity nor potential future capacity to furnish the skills, expertise and resources necessary for the provision of a municipal public transport services.
- That irrespective of the mechanism selected to deliver a public transport service (internal vs. external), based on the experiences of George, Cape Town etc, the Municipality should consider pursuing an alternative approach to public transport improvement.

It should be mentioned that nationally and regionally, the public transport services industry is currently in a state of flux. The majority of rail service is not operational and severely impacted upon by vandalism and theft, regional bus services are operating a limited and reduced service and the taxi industry continues to be plagued by violence.

Given the high cost of implementing a conventional (largely bus-base) public transport service and the need to introduce austerity measures due to current economic conditions, the Directorate supports the Incremental Approach towards an improved public transport service.

Therefore, taking into account, recommendations from the Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plan (CITP), advise from industry experts, advise from the Department of Transport and Public Works (DTPW), and lessons learned from other Municipalities (where conventional public transport services were rolled out), an alternative approach to a public transport service for Stellenbosch is proposed. The Directorate therefore proposes that the Incremental Approach be used to bring about improvements to existing systems. The Incremental Approach, being more flexible at incorporating and assigning the different modes of public transport is most suitable for a developing town such as Stellenbosch.

Transport legislation such as the National Land Transport Act and other existing institutional arrangements can underpin partnerships, define roles and responsibilities and provide for the necessary agreements to be compiled. Existing partnerships with stakeholders such as Department of Transport and Public Works (DTPW), Bus and Taxi Associations, the University of Stellenbosch, Development Agreements with Developers etc., will be utilized to achieve the required improvements to public transport services.

The Directorate also proposes that a Public Transport Plan be developed. The Public Transport Plan should set the framework and context of the public transport service, identify appropriate projects to be implemented. Proposals and recommendations from partnerships with stakeholders should align with the framework and context of the Public Transport Plan.

6.3. **Financial Implications**

The appointment of a service provider to compile a Public Transport Plan is estimated at R3 million.

6.4 **Legal Implications**

The recommendations in this report comply with Council's policies and all applicable legislation as discussed under delegated authority.

6.5 **Staff Implications**

This report has no staff implications to the Municipality.

6.6 **Previous / Relevant Council Resolutions:**

4TH COUNCIL MEETING: 2016-11-23: ITEM 7.6.2

RESOLVED (majority vote)

- (a) that Council approves the proposal that an assessment of the municipality's capacity be done to determine its ability to provide the proposed public transport service through an internal mechanism and that the recommendation of the assessment be submitted to Council for consideration and decision; and
- (b) that, should the above assessment recommend the use of an external mechanism for the provision of the public transport service, a feasibility study be conducted for the provision of the service through an external mechanism.

14TH COUNCIL MEETING: 2017-11-29: ITEM 7.6.4

RESOLVED (majority vote with abstentions)

- (a) that Council takes note of the Operational Business Plan for the proposed Integrated Public Transport Service Network (IPTN) as recommended in the Comprehensive Integrated Transport Program;
- (b) that the recommendations of the Integrated Public Transport Service Network (IPTN) not be adopted at this stage, but that Council wait for the findings of the Provincial Sustainable Transport Program before any public transport system is implemented; and
- (c) that Council takes note of the progress made with the Provincial Sustainable Transport Program (PSTP).

6.7 **Risk Implications**

This report has no risk implications for the Municipality at this point in time, full risks will be identified and reported on, during the Section 78(3) report.

6.8 Comments from Senior Management:**6.8.1 Director: Infrastructure Services**

Agree with the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING TO THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR: 2023-02-02: ITEM 5.1.1

- (a) that Council notes the Section 78(1) Assessment Report on the provision of public transport services. (**APPENDIX 1**);
- (b) that Council accepts that all the requirements of Section 78(1), has been complied with;
- (c) that Council concurs with the finding of the study i.e.
 - The municipality is better suited to an incremental upgrade rather than a brand-new large-scale bus-based system.
 - Based on the lessons learned from the public transport implementation of George, Cape Town etc, the Municipality should consider pursuing an alternative approach to a public transport service.
 - The municipality does not have the internal capacity nor potential future capacity to furnish the skills, expertise and resources necessary for the provision of a municipal public transport service.
- (d) that Council considers an alternative approach, namely the Incremental Approach that progressively moves towards improved public transport services and, over time, establishes the most efficient public transport service; and
- (e) that a Public Transport Plan be compiled to facilitate improvements to existing public transport services, identifying necessary projects to ultimately establish an efficient public transport service.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE EXECUTIVE MAYORAL COMMITTEE, TO COUNCIL: 2023-03-22: ITEM 7.6.1

- (a) that Council notes the Section 78(1) Assessment Report on the provision of public transport services. (**APPENDIX 1**);
- (b) that Council accepts that all the requirements of Section 78(1), has been complied with;
- (c) that Council concurs with the finding of the study i.e.
 - The municipality is better suited to an incremental upgrade rather than a brand-new large-scale bus-based system.
 - Based on the lessons learned from the public transport implementation of George, Cape Town etc, the Municipality should consider pursuing an alternative approach to a public transport service.

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- The municipality does not have the internal capacity nor potential future capacity to furnish the skills, expertise and resources necessary for the provision of a municipal public transport service.
- (d) that Council considers an alternative approach, namely the Incremental Approach that progressively moves towards improved public transport services and, over time, establishes the most efficient public transport service; and
- (e) that a Public Transport Plan be compiled to facilitate improvements to existing public transport services, identifying necessary projects to ultimately establish an efficient public transport service.

APPENDIX 1: Section 78 (1) Assessment**FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:**

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<i>Report Date</i>	6 January 2023

APPENDIX 1

The provision of public transport services in Stellenbosch Municipality

Section 78 (1) Assessment

August 2021