

Gauteng Care Crisis Committee

31 January 2024

BY EMAIL

Attention: Matilda Gasela
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
C/O: Lehlohonolo.Makuzeni@gauteng.gov.za

Dear HoD Gasela

Re: Appointments to Panels Evaluating and Adjudicating NPO Proposals

We write on behalf of the Gauteng Care Crisis Committee with reference to the *City Press* advertisement of 2 December 2023. This called for individuals to apply to be appointed as panellists responsible for evaluating and adjudicating NPO proposals to the Gauteng Department of Social Development (GDSD). This process is unprecedented, as officials within the GDSD have always previously been responsible for assessing and approving or rejecting applications. We thus write to ask for: a) further details about those now tasked with the responsibility for distributing public funds; b) the process to be followed in formalising these panels' recommendations; and c) the time frames for signing service level agreements (SLA).

In terms of a) please could the GDSD provide the following information:

1. The name of the chairperson appointed to panel 1, adjudicating applications for funding in terms programme 2, social welfare services;
 - 1.1. The names of all the other individuals appointed to panel 1, adjudicating applications for funding in terms of programme 2, social welfare services;
2. The name of the chairperson appointed to panel 2, adjudicating applications for funding in terms programme 2, social welfare services;
 - 2.1. The names of all the other individuals appointed to panel 2, adjudicating applications for funding in terms of programme 2, social welfare services;
3. The name of the chairperson appointed to panel 3, adjudicating applications for funding in terms programme 3, children and families;
 - 3.1. The names of all the other individuals appointed to panel 3, adjudicating applications for funding in terms programme 3, children and families;
4. The name of the chairperson appointed to panel 4, adjudicating applications for funding in terms programme 4, restorative services;
 - 4.1. The names of all the other individuals appointed to panel 4, adjudicating applications for funding in terms of programme 4, restorative services;
5. The name of the chairperson appointed to panel 5, adjudicating applications for funding in terms programme 5, development and research;
 - 5.1. The names of all the other individuals appointed to panel 5, adjudicating applications for funding in terms of programme 5, development and research.

In relation to b): the panel reviews by DSD officials of NGOs' business plans have previously taken place in December. The decision-making process followed this year significantly delays this process, due both to the late call for business plans, as well as this new and unprecedented process.

As we understand the *City Press* advertisement, the panels will only complete their work on 28 February. The advertisement is silent on whether these panels will also be responsible for the process of reviewing business plans with NGOs in person. It is thus unclear whether funding decisions will be made solely on the basis of the paper-based evaluations of the business plans by the five panels, or whether they will be supplemented with the in-person reviews undertaken in previous years. The GDSD has yet communicated with NGOs about this step in the decision-making process. It is therefore unclear whether March will be dedicated to these in-person reviews with NGOs, with the GDSD approving recommendations for funding thereafter, or whether GDSD is dispensing entirely with the in-person reviews.

Please could the GDSD:

6. Confirm if the in-person reviews with NGOs will still be going ahead; and, if yes
 - 6.1. When these in-person reviews will be conducted;
 - 6.2. Who will be undertaking these in-person reviews with NGOs.

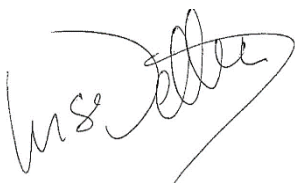
Lastly, we are very concerned about the implications of the GDSD's delayed decision-making process for our beneficiaries, staff and the overall operations of our organizations. In the event of retrenchment, people need to be treated fairly in accordance with their rights, while organisations need to be protected from incurring debts they cannot pay off.

In terms of c) we ask the GDSD to inform us:

7. By what date decisions around the outcomes of the funding applications will be communicated to NGOs;
8. Where funding is denied, or the amount so reduced as to make the continuation of service unfeasible, what the GDSD's plans for taking over beneficiaries' files are.

We look forward to receiving your response to our queries by no later than 12 February 2024.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Vetten', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Lisa Vetten
Chairperson, Gauteng Care Crisis Committee
0828226725