

Cape Argus (AM Edition) - 12 Dec 2017

Cape government's endofyear results

Premier Helen Zille addresses members of the Provincial Legislature. PICTURE LEON LESTRADEAFRICAN NEWS AGENCYANA Cape government's endofyear results THE Western Cape's worst drought since 1901 coupled with a multitude of social and crime challenges have placed Helen Zille's government under immense pressure. Jason Felix takes a look at the Western Cape government's 13 departments — four of which are divided among two MECs — and rates their performances over the past year. Department of the Premier Despite her colourful and somewhat offensive tweets, Zille's department did fairly well in handling her personal and party matters.

Challenges stemming from the water crisis will plague her department in the last year of her term before she steps down in 2019. She still has challenges with demographics in her office, but the department has constantly performed and achieved clean audits. Its R1 billion broadband rollout has also given thousands access to the internet. She gets 610. Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism Alan Winde is one of the most techsawvy members of the provincial cabinet. Winde, who manages both these departments, always encourages new apps and is constantly seeking ways to be innovative. The current drought and the recent avian flu outbreak placed his department under pressure. The agriculture sector also faces estimated job losses of around 50 000.

Winde department's has, however, continued to invest more money in drought relief that provides some assistance to the agriculture sector. He gets 810. Community Safety Dan Plato has become somewhat unfavoured in some police circles mainly for his outspokenness and open book policy with journalists. Although he has very little control over the police in the province, he continually places pressure on them. When it comes to community policing forums, Plato remains very active by visiting gangravaged areas. He gets 710. Local Government, Environmental Affairs & Development Planning The Kannaland and Beaufort West municipalities was arguably Anton Bredell's biggest headaches. Despite the fights and at times political volatilities, the two municipalities are at risk of running out of water. Its income base is also very low.

The Oudtshoorn municipality which was in a dire state a few years back, was miraculously turned around by Bredell and the national government's intervention. He regularly goes to municipalities and ensures that there is enough capacity to fight fires and to manage disasters. Bredell, who oversees these Alber two departments, is also one of the few MECs who speaks Afrikaans in the provincial legislature. Bredell scored 710. Health The Western Cape Department of Health operates under dangerous conditions and the demand for quality health care in a weak economy is mounting. Health MEC NomaFrench Mbombo and head of department Dr Beth Engelbrecht have had to deal with attacks on paramedics working in townships and bodies piling up in morgues. Despite challenges, Mbombo opened several new clinics in rural towns and has continued to invest in health care with a budget of just more than R20 billion.

She gets an 810. Human Settlements Bonginkosi Madikizela's department suffered a blow to its financial reputation when the auditor general raised several red flags. Work done by subcontractors at government housing sites was blamed when the department did not receive a clean audit. nkosi The AG raised red flags about kizela targets not being supported by valid records and documents. Madikizela is also under a cloud after the Western Cape Provincial Legislature's conduct committee instituted a probe on his birthday party held at the upmarket One&Only earlier this year. The conduct committee is also investigating allegations that he failed to declare a R3 000 cake which was a gift from a contractor doing business with his department. He gets 510. Social Development Albert Fritz was the only MEC to be kicked out of a sitting of the Western Cape Legislature earlier this year for unparliamentary remarks. He has however opened new youth centres and ensured that his department's finances were solid.

The challenges with the payout of grants caused some t Fritz stir but being elected as the deputy leader of the DA, he gained stature in his party. He gets 610. Transport and Public Works Donald Grant's biggest project was the upgrades to the N1 and N2 which are near completion. Some of his department's challenges included taxi strikes in Cape Town. Go George buses in Knysna were also damaged during a service delivery protest. Grant also received stiff opposition from taxi associations to the increase in vehicle licence tariffs. Grant gets 610. Provincial Treasury Dr Ivan Meyer has had to juggle the needs of socie ty and cutbacks on departmental budgets. With slow economic growth and political instability in the country, Meyer had to make tough decisions.

Despite the challenges, the provincial treasury has collected maximum revenue from gambling and betting. He gets 610. Education Debbie Schafer's department has had a few challenges with her proposal to amend the provincial school bill to allow public schools to sell alcohol on school premises or at school activities, subject to approval by the provincial head of the Education Department. Her proposal was met with stiff opposition and the national government also got involved trying to convince Schafer not to go ahead with the bill. She gets 610. Cultural Affairs and Sport Anroux Marais' department is relatively under the radar with the smallest budget. Apart from signing cheques, Bongi donating money and opening Madi libraries, Marais keeps her department's finances and affairs above board. Marais gets 610.