

# Lack of transport, bags hamper city cleaning project

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KEEPING the city clean is being hampered by the unavailability of transport coupled with a lack of basic requirements like petrol, refuse bags and cleaning material.

This is according to a report on the city cleaning programme for the period February 2018 to April 2018.

According to the report, the Sol Plaatje Cleaning Project entails the clearing, cleaning and greening of open spaces using labour-intensive methods with the object of ensuring the cleanliness of the city at all time. “The major focus is on residential areas with high incidents of illegal dumping,” the report states.

The project makes use of EPWP (Extended Public Works Programme) workers. The city is divided into 33 wards and each ward is allocated 10 workers plus one team leader, a back-up team and grass cutters.

It targets the main access roads, like Long Street, Phakamile Mabija, Hulana and Montshiwa Road and the Nyati Highway. The various wards in the city are clustered into groups for the project.

According to the report, however, the clustering, while reasonably effective, had several disadvantages. “In many cases action plans could not be adhered to and fully implemented for various reasons.” This included cleaning in preparation for funerals and at schools and other government departments were requested to do so by councillors.

For the beginning of January it was decided that if a cluster was cleaning a specific area, for example in Hulana Street, four workers would remain in the area in order to ensure continuity.

According to the reports for each cluster, similar problems were

highlighted, including the fact that black bags could not be removed due to a lack of transport in some areas. For example, the cemetery in Kimberley North was cleaned but the bunches of dumps couldn’t be removed due to a lack of transport and trucks.

In the CBD cluster, a night shift was employed which started work at 4.30pm. However, due to the unavailability of trucks and buses to transport the workers, the night shift had to be discontinued.

Despite calls to “beef up” the cleaning around the cemetery in Diamond Park, transport again proved a crisis.

“All the clusters are working in their respective allocated areas, but due to the unavailability of transport, they cannot be utilised as per the criteria. The only available transport is the LDV that we are using for the transportation of the grass cutters and distribution of refuse bags.

“Also, due to budgetary constraints, our requisitions cannot be processed and the project is unable to acquire basic requirements like petrol, refuse bags, transport, cleaning material etc.”

At an ordinary Sol Plaatje City Council meeting in February it was resolved that the project be terminated and all EPWP projects become one in order to establish a unified cleaning project for better co-ordination purposes.

A report back will be given once finality has been reached under which directorate the EPWP cluster will reside.

Illegal dumping and littering continues to be a major problem in the city. The municipality has pointed out that while the eradication of illegal dumping and littering was a municipal responsibility, the cleaning of illegal dumping sites was a very costly exercise and a financial burden on the municipality.



**TAKING THE LEAD:** Officials from the Sol Plaatje Municipality cleaned up an area around a city preschool and church after it became a breeding ground for rats. The area became so bad that the road was almost inaccessible to motorists and pedestrians. An unused mattress, ladies bag, beer bottles and accounts were amongst the rubble. The municipality has again appealed to city residents to assist in preventing the scourge of illegal dumping. They will also be performing regular check-ups around the city. Sol Plaatje executive mayor Mangaliso Matika and municipal manager Goolam Akharwaray were present during the clean-up operation.

Picture: Supplied