

Payment row over library

SANDI KWON HOO

CHIEF REPORTER

LOCAL sub-contractors employed in the construction of the new Warrenton public library intend taking legal action for non-payment after the project reached practical completion last year.

Sub-contractors and general workers from Kimberley, Pampierstad and Warrenton indicated that they received part payment in August and September last year.

“No further payment was received after that date. All of us, including those who laid the foundation, completed the electrical work, paving as well as the community liaison officer, were not paid and we are owed in excess of R100 000. The certificate of practical completion was issued and staff are already moving into the library.”

The spokesperson for the provincial Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, Conrad Fortune, indicated that the practical completion of the library was finalised on September 20 2018. “Final completion is expected in due course.”

He stated that the department oversaw the project “Together with the implementing agent and the professional team, the department has been trying to intervene whenever there were challenges, especially between the contractor and sub-contractors.”

Fortune said the department was aware of the current challenges faced by sub-contractors.

“The main contractor appointed sub-contractors through the implementing agent – the Department of Roads and Public Works. As a department we do not have any legal agree-

ments with the sub-contractors utilised by the contractor but are planning another intervention meeting with the contractor.”

He added that all sub-contractors had been requested to submit copies of the invoices and the amounts owed to them, to the department.

“These amounts will then have to be confirmed with the main contractor and the professional team. To our knowledge, the services of eight sub-contractors were employed on the project of the Warrenton library.”

Fortune stated that there was an outstanding amount payable to the main contractor in respect of outstanding work.

“The balance will only be paid out once the project is totally completed and the Department of Public Works has signed off the project as complete.”

He said that they were still in the process of naming the library.

“The name of the library will be confirmed after we receive proposals from the Magareng Municipality and all the procedures and necessary consultations have been done with the relevant stakeholders and local communities.”

Fortune added that the library measured 269 square metres and would house over 8 000 books.

“The Warrenton library and all other community libraries will have internet connectivity and technology resources to and for the less privileged communities.

“In terms of our consultation with Magareng Municipality, the old public library will relocate to the new site and current staff will be utilised at the new library.”