

# New Scopa chair to do the job 'without fear or favour'

**Many new faces to take over reins in legislature committees**

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Experienced lawmaker Veliswa Mvenya has been tasked with ensuring that Eastern Cape government departments are held to account, after having been appointed as the new standing committee on public accounts (Scopa) chair.

The African Transformation Movement MPL is one of 19 changes that have been made at the Bhisho legislature when it comes to portfolio committees political bosses.

Mvenya's appointment into the crucial portfolio comes as the ANC caucus announced that one politician had retained their position as a portfolio committee chair from the previous term.

Only ANC MPL Mxolisi Dimaza has been retained as the oversight head of the same committee he led during the fifth administration – the health portfolio committee.

Mvenya, a former DA provincial heavyweight, on Wednesday said she was honoured to be trusted with ensuring government departments were held accountable.

"I really appreciate the confidence they [ANC caucus] have

in me by making me someone who will oversight the provincial purse," said Mvenya.

"This means a lot to me and I am very grateful for the opportunity to oversight finances in all provincial departments."

Mvenya said she would "execute without any fear or favour" the "huge responsibility" bestowed upon her.

Mvenya's appointment was confirmed by legislature chief whip Loyiso Magqashela on Wednesday.

Magqashela said the ANC wanted a female from the opposition benches in the position, "and because of her experience and expertise in the legislature, Mvenya was our obvious choice".

Many new faces will now take over the reins in all other legislature committees, with former Cosatu provincial chair Mpumelelo Saziwa, who chaired the legislature's finance and provincial expenditure portfolio committee in the past administration, now set to lead the education portfolio committee.

The 20-member list of all the new committee chairs was confirmed by Magqashela.

He told the Dispatch that they had looked into issues such as expertise, experience, commitment and "dedication to pushing the mandate of the ruling ANC" when deciding on who to appoint as committee chairs.



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Magqashela said the institution's rules committee, now chaired by the new legislature speaker, Helen Sauls-August, will sit on Thursday morning "to formalise these appointments".

Former education portfolio committee chair, Mzoleli Mrara, has been moved to chair the office of the premier portfolio committee.

Some of the new faces at the legislature such as ANC PEC members Thabo Matiwane, Zinzi Rabe, Mziwonke Ndabeni, Bukiwe Fanta and Xolani Malamlela, have also been afforded the big responsibility to chair some of the legislature committees.

Matiwane will chair the Cogta portfolio committee, with Magqashela saying they chose him for the task based on his experience in matters of local government and for his work in committees of the ANC.

Former ANC Youth League firebrand, Ndabeni, will chair the institution's public participation and petitions committee.

Rabe will take over at the special programmes unit committee, while Cosatu provincial secretary Malamlela, will take over as the chair of the roads portfolio committee.

ANC Women's League provincial leader, Fanta, will take over as the chair of the women's caucus committee, while fellow PEC member Nonceba Kontsi-

we, will take over at the committee that oversees the social development department.

Nelson Mandela Bay Metro ANC regional task team coordinator, Babalwa Lobishe, former district director of agriculture in Chris Hani district, Fundisile Bese, and former Mbizana municipality mayor Makhaya Twabu, will take over as chairs of safety, agriculture and human settlements, respectively.

Experienced legislators, who are entering another term in the legislature, were not spared from taking the reins in some of the committees.

The institution's deputy chief whip, Kholiswa Fihlani, will head the legislature oversight committee, while the institution's former administration head, Phumelele Ndamase, will chair the economic development portfolio committee.

Ndamase replaced Tony Duba, who now heads the standing committee on law review.

Former Makana municipality mayor, Vumile Lwana, will chair the finance portfolio committee, while Nomvula Ponco and Ntombizodwa Xhanti will take over at the public works and sport, recreation, arts and culture committees, respectively.

Dimaza said he was kept in the same portfolio because the ANC wanted continuity as Sindsiswa Gomba had been appointed as the health MEC.