



The launch of a multimillion-Rand upgrade to the Grahamstown Police Station on 30 June 2021. Photo: Sue MacLennan

City police station set for a makeover

By ANELE MJEKULA

Makana Local Municipality joined the local SAPS leadership in celebrating the start of the multi-million rand renovation of the older of Makhanda's two police stations last week.

Speaking at the event on Wednesday, 30 June, Station Commander Colonel Mbulelo Pika welcomed various stakeholders to the "auspicious occasion as we celebrate the renovation of a police building which has served our communities faithfully for the past of the 30 years".

The renovation of the Grahamstown Police Station has been in the pipeline for a number of years. However, the renovations were delayed by internal processes of the Department of Public Works, which is the custodian of all government departments' buildings.

Director of Construction and Project Management at the Department of Public Works Mr Siyabonga Jikeka said they had planned to undertake renovations on the building several years back but due to processes within the department it took longer. "We went on tender I think two years back but couldn't find a compliant contractor. We then had to go out on retender and we were successful."

The contract duration is 24 months but the department hopes that the contractor will finish before the deadline. This is because of the fact that the building will continue to serve the public while the renovations carry on.

Departmental Project Manager, Ms Zinzi Ntanjana said some of the work would include a complete revamp of the water and sewer reticulation system. Like changing the existing pipes from asbestos and steel to PVC and increase the size of the pipes. "We are aware of water challenges in Makhanda so we will install storage tanks."

The makeover will also include the following:

- Painting of all offices, changing floor coverings, doors, and windows.
- A complete change of electrical installations to comply with current regulations.
- Undertake alterations, which will include breaking down some of the offices to make the space bigger for operations.
- The barracks at the back of the police station will be refurbished as well as the kitchen, parking area, fence and roof.
- To make the building more accessible ramps will be built as well as a lift.
- Revamp the ablution facilities
- Increase the capacity of the generator
- Reconfigure the entrance for better access

control

- Remote controlled security gates at the main entrances
- CCTV - This will ensure that the members feel safe and secure within the daily working environment.

The contract amount for the project is R52.7million. Ms Ntanjana said the 30 percent subcontracting was complied with in the project, which means the contractor must make sure that local SMMEs and local labourers benefit.

"Also we have a programme from the EPWP National Youth Services which will include about 40 young people who will be involved in the project. They will learn all the skills both from the classroom and on site."

Giving a brief history about the Grahamstown Police Station Colonel Phika said prior to the existence of the current building, the SAPS was based in a small house in New Street, which has now become the parking area of the Magistrates Court.

The station was built in 1990 and was occupied by the SAPS in 1992. Its first Station Commander was Captain Jonker.

Colonel Phika said it has been a privilege to be the Station Commander at the station since 2019. Since 1992 the building has