



Publication: Chatsworth Rising Sun - Main

Title: MP Brandon Pillay addresses issues at Chatsworth Home Affairs and SASSA offices

Publish date: 14 Nov 2023

Page: 4

Reach: 53050

AVE:R 33960.25

Author: Staff Reporter

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In light of the severe disruptions in service from both the Chatsworth offices of the Department of Home Affairs and the South African Social Security Agency, members of the community have aired their concerns. According to a member of parliament in the National Assembly and a member of the portfolio committee for Home Affairs, the honourable Brandon Pillay (pictured), both offices in question have been the victim of the extreme weather on the weekend of October 14 and 15. As such, on Monday, October 16, Pillay conducted an oversight visit to these offices with his inspection revealing that the rain and flood damage had a significant and ongoing impact on the offices- the conditions were no longer safe for the staff or the public. "I previously visited these offices and observed how they suffer during heavy rains, often leading to flooding. Such conditions disrupt service provision and impact citizens for days. It is not feasible for the staff and the public to continue operating in this environment," he said. Promptly, Pillay engaged the ministers of Home Affairs and Social Development, along with Public Works, as they are the custodians of the premises. In response to



this high-level intervention, the relevant departments acted swiftly. "On Tuesday, October 17, a technical team from the Department of Public Works, comprising civil and mechanical engineers, assessed the damage and outlined a plan for the future. A crucial meeting involving stakeholders from DHA, DSD, and DPW was held to discuss the findings.

The consensus was that the current state of the offices made it impossible to operate with alternative arrangements being deemed necessary to minimise service interruptions," he said. DPW committed to urgently upgrading and rehabilitating the offices. Pillay confirmed, "Discussions between the DPW, DHA, and DSD regarding temporary accommodation are progressing well and are at an advanced stage. We are committed to restoring public services as soon as possible." He further assured the public that as an MP, he is deeply concerned about the well-being of both the staff and the public. "Our top priority is ensuring their safety, therefore, we cannot allow them to continue using an unsafe building. Rest assured, services offered by both departments are deemed crucial and clients cannot be further inconvenienced, the services must continue with speed and service delivery should not be stalled," he continued. The situation of the office space has received the highest intervention and will be resolved accordingly. While awaiting the process of relocation, the DHA is operating from a mobile office, which is outside the WOCASA building at Joyhurst Centre, in Croftdene.