

**MINISTRY**

**COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN RESPONSE**

**QUESTION NUMBER 409**

**Mr K P Robertson (DA) to ask the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs:**

Whether the (a) Nkomazi Local Municipality, (b) Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality, (c) Mbombela Local Municipality, (d) Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, (e) Nkangala District Municipality, (f) Gert Sibande Municipality or (g) Ehlanzeni District Municipality in Mpumalanga have ever (i) refused requests by members of the opposition to be seated together or (ii) assigned the specified members portfolios to serve on Council; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, on what statutory grounds did the specified municipalities rely in each case? NW462E

**REPLY**

The response to the question was solicited from Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs in the Mpumalanga Province.

| **Name of Municipality**  | **(i) Whether the municipality refused requests by members of the opposition to be seated together.** | **(ii) Whether the municipality assigned the specified members portfolios to serve on Council.** |
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| (a) | Nkomazi Local Municipality | Councillors sit against their name tags which are placed on the table before the sitting begins. Councillors are at liberty to sit as they prefer, except for the members of the Troika. | Councillors from the opposition serve in the Portfolio committees. |
| (b) | Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality | Councillors sit as they wish except for the Mayor, Speaker and Chief Whip who have a sitting arrangement. | Councillors from the opposition serve in the Portfolio committees. |
| (c) | City of Mbombela Local Municipality | The Mayor, Speaker and Chief Whip have their sitting arrangement as per their positions.The MMCs sit together, and the Whips also sit together. The other councillors sit in alphabetical order of their names, and ordinary councillors are allowed to sit as they prefer.  | Councillors from the opposition serve in the Portfolio committees. |
| (d) | Bushbuckridge Local Municipality | Councillors sit as they wish, except for the Mayor, Speaker and Chief Whip who have a sitting arrangement. | Councillors from the opposition serve in the Portfolio committees.There is one councillor from the opposition (Democratic Alliance) who does not want to serve in the committee to which she was deployed. |
| (e) | Nkangala District Municipality | The sitting arrangement is done in alphabetical order. However, councillors are not forced to sit as per the alphabetical arrangement, and they sit as they prefer, except for the Mayor, Speaker and the Chief Whip who have a sitting arrangement. | Councillors from the opposition serve in the Portfolio committees, and the deployment was done in the presence of all party Whips. |
| (f) | Gert Sibande District Municipality | Councillors sit as they prefer, except for the Mayor, Speaker and Chief Whip who have a sitting arrangement. | Councillors from the opposition serve in the Portfolio committees. |
| (g) | Ehlanzeni District Municipality | Councillors sit as they prefer, except for the Mayor, Speaker and Chief Whip who have a sitting arrangement. | Councillors from the opposition serve in the Portfolio committees. |

**(iii)** Section 79 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998 requires that a municipal council may, by appointing members from among its members, establish one or more committees necessary for the effective and efficient performance of any of its functions or the exercise of any of its powers,