**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON COGTA CALLS FOR A DETAILED COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN FROM THE CITY OF CAPE TOWN**

**Parliament, Friday, 12 June 2020 –**The Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) wanted answers from the Deputy Mayor of the City of Cape Town, Mr Ian Neilson, and his delegation on the enforcement of social distancing and lockdown regulations in communities experiencing high Covid-19 infection rates.

The committee also wanted details of the City’s plan to enforce the regulations and social distancing recommendations. The committee also wanted details about the number of City police officers deployed per area, along with the other material resources deployed to curb the spread of Covid-19.

The Chairperson of the committee, Ms Faith Muthambi, asked Mr Neilson to list the Covid-19 hotspots in the City and in response heard that these included Khayelitsha, Imizamo Yethu, Guguletu and Klipfontein. Ms Muthambi also wanted confirmation about any privately-owned quarantine facilities.

The delegation was unable to provide an answer on the number of the privately-owned sites. Ms Muthambi asked the delegation to answer the question in writing, along with other questions that included one about the City’s implementation of the District Development Model, and another about the City’s contingency plans for the winter weather.

The City of Cape Town delegation told the committee in its presentation that its Covid-19 response strategy is anchored on three pillars: maintenance of the existing infrastructure; emergency provisions; and additional health measures to mitigate the spread of the virus, especially in the most vulnerable communities such as informal settlements.

On the provision of water to vulnerable communities and with the assistance of the National Department of Water and Sanitation, the City has successfully rolled out its phased water installation tanker programme in informal settlements. The programme has encountered problems in informal settlements on private land, however.

The delegation was also asked to account for the eviction of people in Hout Bay this week. In response, the delegation claimed those evicted had been attempting a politically motivated land-grab, but the committee rejected this explanation in the strongest terms, saying that no one should be evicted at this time of Covid-19.

The committee also asked the City for its plan to provide housing for back-yarders, who have been staying in informal settlements such as Marikana, Samora and Europe for a long time.

The committee expressed its unhappiness about the absence of the Mayor for the second time and the failure of the delegation to present the costed Covid-19 response plan, as it was asked to do in a previous meeting.

Ms Muthambi thanked the Deputy Mayor for prioritising his attendance in the meeting. “The City of Cape Town is the epicentre of Covid-19 and we take that very seriously. We will continue to do so until the frontiers of this pandemic are pushed back in this City and elsewhere in the country,” emphasised Ms Muthambi.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COGTA, MS FAITH MUTHAMBI.**