

PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

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THIRD REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS ON THE CITY OF HARARE

Presented to Parliament on 15TH JUNE 2006

[S.C. 20. 2006]

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Committees' Terms of reference

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

Ordered in terms of Standing
Order No. 153

(1) At the commencement of every session, there shall be as many select committees to be designed according to government portfolios to examine expenditure, administration and policy of government departments and other matters falling under their jurisdictions as the House may by resolution determine and whose members shall be nominated by the Standing Rules and Orders Committee.

Order No. 153

Such nominations shall take into account the expressed interests, experience or expertise of the members and the political and gender composition of the House.

(2) Each select committee shall be known by the portfolio determined for it by the House.

Terms of Reference of portfolio Committees

154. Subject to these Standing Orders, a portfolio committee shall-

- a) Consider and deal with all bills and statutory instruments or other matters which are referred to it by or under a resolution of the House or the Speaker;
- b) Consider or deal with an appropriation or money bill or any aspect of an appropriation or money bill referred to it by these Standing Order or by or under a resolution of this House; and
- c) Monitor, investigate, enquire into and make recommendation relating to any aspect of the legislative programme, budget, rationalization, policy formulation or any other matter it may consider relevant of the government department falling within the category of affairs assigned to it, and may for that purpose consult and liaise with such department;

Tuesday, 19 July 2005

ANNOUNCED: That the Committee consists of the following members:

Mr. L. Mugabe, Mr. L. Chikomba, Mr. G. Chimbaira, Mrs. S. Machirori,
Mr. E. Mdlongwa, Mr. T. Mubhawu, Prof. J. Moyo, Mr. D. .M. Ncube, Mrs. C. Pote, Mr. E.
Porusingazi, Mr. J. Sikhala, Mr. Z. Ziyambi and Mr. M. Zwizwai.

Mr. L. Mugabe to be Chairman

ANNOUNCED:

23 February 2006

Senators:

Senator E. Jacob, Senator F. R. E. Magadu, Senator J. Moyo, Senator R. Ndlovu
and Senator S. Sai

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Committee had according to its workplan for the remainder of the session, planned to enquire on the turn around strategies being implemented in the transport and communications sectors. The Committee, therefore, enquired into the activities of the City of Harare as a local government authority that was mandated to undertake the development and maintenance of road infrastructure. The Committee was appraised on street lighting, traffic lights, commuter pick up points, the plans for Mbare Musika bus terminus, accident black spots, parking discs and road safety.

The Committee was informed that the City of Harare had short-term projects in the form of pothole patching, bus parking bay markings, repairing of bus shelters and erection of candlesticks. In the medium term the City of Harare intended to float tenders for electronic booms. In the long term the City officials plan to implement the redevelopment of Mbare Musika terminus on a Built Operate Transfer system (BOT). The BOT would then assess the feasibility of destroying any structures or identifying new sites and would also be responsible for the relocation of the families living in the Joburg lines. The Committee was not agreeable to the idea of relocating people due to the costs involved and therefore recommended alternative sites.

The Committee was informed that the congestion being experienced at pick up points was due to a lack of adequate ablution facilities. The officials from the City of Harare stated that there were projects that had already been undertaken to build toilets at pick up points that have been identified e.g. a new toilet was being constructed at Mbare Musika terminus. The Committee was also appraised on the plans for parking disks that are being distributed at times being by street kids. The Committee was furnished with a schedule of public works that are in progress with deadlines that have been appended to this report. The targets that have been set are achievable with the resources that have been availed to the authority. The Committee was on the overall impressed by the speed of implementation of Committee observations and recommendations that have been made to the authority.

The Committee also noted with concern the relationship between Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) and the City of Harare and recommends that the two parastatals should find a

way of addressing issues that emerge that could pose a threat to people's lives. Traffic signalling has been heavily compromised and alternative methods should be implemented to avert danger.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Committee had according to its workplan for the remainder of the session, planned to enquire on the turn around strategies being implemented in the transport and communications sectors. The Committee, therefore, enquired into the activities of the City of Harare as a local government authority that was mandated to undertake the development and maintenance of road infrastructure. The Committee was appraised on street lighting, traffic lights, commuter pick up points, the plans for Mbare Musika bus terminus, accident black spots, parking discs and road safety

2. OBJECTIVES

- a. To assess the works in progress in addressing the development and maintenance of road infrastructure
- b. To assess public transportation, traffic management, public lighting and road maintenance programmes

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. The Committee received considerable written and oral evidence from the City of Harare and the Ministry of Local Government and Urban Development.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. The officials from the City of Harare presented their schedule for public works on traffic, transport, public lighting and road maintenance.

4.2. Bus Termini – [Mbare Musika]

4.2.1 Mr. Chideya informed the Committee that the City of Harare wanted to expand the Mbare-Musika bus terminus to match the International standards. The only way to purchase a wide area was by relocating the 300 families in the Joburg Lines by building flats at George Stark.

4.2.2. The Committee was informed that the City of Harare had gone to tender in 1990 with the intension of upgrading the Mbare Musika bus terminus. The Machipisa Brothers, and the Golden Wills were short-listed but the deal could not go ahead as the companies started accusing each other of foul play.

4.2.3. The Committee was informed that the City of Harare had short-term projects in the form of pothole patching, bus parking bay markings, repairing of bus shelters and erection of candlesticks. In the medium term the City of Harare intended to float tenders for electronic booms. In the long term the City officials planned to implement the redevelopment of Mbare Musika terminus on a Built Operate Transfer system (BOT). The BOT would then assess the feasibility of destroying any structures or identifying new cites and would also be responsible for the relocation of the families living in the Joburg lines.

4.3. The Committee was informed that the commuter omnibuses introduced in 1995 were difficult to regulate and required the municipal police to network with the Zimbabwe Republic Police, as there were no vehicles for patrolling the streets. The Officials recommended that bigger commuter omnibus were required, as they would not be terminating journeys at undesignated points like Rothmans forcing commuters to pay double the amount.

4.4. Commuter pick up points

The Committee was informed that the congestion being experienced at pick up points was due to a lack of adequate ablution facilities. The officials from the City of Harare stated that there were

projects that had already been undertaken to build toilets at pick up points that have been identified e.g. a new toilet was being constructed at Mbare Musika terminus. The Committee noted that the City of Harare could involve private players in the construction and provision of ablution facilities.

4.4.1. The officials from the City of Harare stated they would consult with other stakeholders and look at the possibility of creating freedom of movement within the city to allow for a ticketing system, which is uniform. However, the main problem was that there were two licensing authorities, the Ministry of Transport and Communications that issued operating licenses to commuters, and the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and Urban Development licensed the Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO). The problem was that two different planners were issuing the licenses without a clue about the routes that they were licensing.

4.5. **Traffic signalling**

The Committee was informed that the computer system that used to run the City of Harare had crashed and was being replaced by LED signal heads similar to the ones on Prince Edward road. The officials were expecting a consignment of 60 LED signal heads in July sufficient for five intersections, which have a minimum lifetime of 5 years and consume one sixth of normal energy. In the medium term \$140 billion was required to transform the incandescent heads to LED signal heads. In the long term the City of Harare was looking forward to revamping the whole system by turning it into a solar powered system by 2010 through a capital development programme. Officials from the City of Harare observed that drivers were flouting road regulations and that municipal police had powers to effectively regulate traffic.

4.6. **Accident black spots**

The Committee was informed that City of Harare officials were planning to resuscitate flashing lights at corner Acturus road/ Harare drive, and identify new black spots through liaising with the Zimbabwe Republic Police. In the long term there would be painting of pedestrian crossings.

4.7. **Parking Discs**

The Committee was informed that there were plans to construct parking disk kiosk around the city. The Committee noted that no resources were allocated for such an exercise and advised the City of Harare officials to take advantage of already existing structures such as Vehicle

Inspection Department and Central Vehicle Registry. The Committee also advised the City of Harare to come up with disks that work on an annual or quarterly basis and could be differentiated by colour codes.

4.8. **Finance**

The Committee was informed that the City of Harare was charging sub-economic tariffs to engage in any meaningful road maintenance project. In the budget they were allocated \$8 billion instead of \$80 billion, which was not sufficient and had already been consumed by inflation.

4.9. **Road Safety**

The Committee was informed that there were works in progress. However, patching of roads was not the best option as all roads were due for overlay and are supposed to be resealed every 5 years. The main challenge was that local government authorities had problems with the approval of budgets by government in the past. This year local government authorities had been allowed to charge rates that are economical, hence the repainting of carriageway markings, the maintenance of streetlights and the patching of potholes in Glen View, Glen Norah, Budiro, Dzivaresekwa, Central Business District, Waterfalls and Hatfield.

4.9.1. **Clamping of Vehicles**

The Committee was informed that the Amendment to the Criminal Penalties Act provided two schedules for local government bylaws. The First one listed the fees for penalties, clamping, towing and storage and the grace period (3 hours) for acquiring the fees for flouting the Harare Municipal Criminal Penalties Act. The fee that was gazetted (333 000) was only the penalty, which was a third of the threshold allowed for Local Authorities from the fee charge of \$1 000 000, on top of this there will be other charges that would add up to \$2 500 000 or more.

4.9.2. The Committee noted that there were different teams for towing and clamping. Mr. Chideya noted the problem and stated that he would sort it out.

4.10. **The relationship between the City of Harare and Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA).**

4.10.1. The Committee was informed that the City of Harare was at times blamed for problems that emanated from ZESA. There were serious problems with co-ordination, for instance there was no street lighting at Enterprise road due to an electrical component that was stolen and

ZESA was failing to repair and the latter also was taking too long to react to situations. Power outages affected the restoration of normal traffic light signals as the network was not computerised and the Traffic Signal team only started work at three in the morning.

4.10.2. The Committee was informed that the solar traffic signals at Prince Edward were only a pilot project and the full project would be undertaken as soon as the responsible company had acquired the necessary resources.

5. CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES TO COMBAT THE WEAKNESS

5.1. The Committee was informed that the City of Harare had a huge maintenance backlog. New suburbs had sprouted that required to be serviced and the City had to obtain funding from their own resources. To curb the maintenance demand the City officials have produced an annual round robin master plan that was continually being reviewed. Emphasis in the first half had been on the main roads such as Cripps, Seke, Simon Mazorodze, Enterprise, Second Street, Robert Mugabe and Rhodesville.

5.1.1. The Committee also noted that allocations set in the budget are often hit by inflation before they could be utilised, which meant that materials procured in the course of the year are always less than the maintenance demand. The City had to rely on a supplementary budget during the course of the year.

5.2. The City of Harare had challenges in the form of obsolete infrastructure that had to be replaced. The authority had to replace 75 000 old Mazowe type of lanterns with 70 watts HPS lanterns. A total of 5000 units had been replaced in Southerton, Lavernham-Bluffhill, and Churchill road - Mount Pleasant.

5.3. The Committee learnt that a significant portion of the infrastructure had been rendered useless through the acts of theft and vandalism in Glen Norah, Mabvuku, Kambuzuma, and Highfields. The City of Harare had been installing anti theft tower lights on a number of new suburbs such as New Crane borne and Crowborough North and also in Mbare, Remembrance, and Budiriro 5 to curb theft and vandalism.

5.4. The Committee also noted with concern the problem of ZESA power black outs. Another major challenge was that a number of installations had been without electricity for a long time

for example, on Enterprise road and along Samora Machel Avenue- in the Central Business District (CBD).

5.5. Mr. Chideya stated that municipal police required to be accorded authority to enforce compliance with Traffic regulations because currently they could only effect a citizen's arrest.

6. COMMITTEE'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. The Committee observed that relocating people was an expensive exercise and was not the best option. The City of Harare and all the other local government authorities should consider developing other alternative bus termini in all the major cities.

6.2. The Committee observed that the City of Harare was attributing some of the electrical faults to Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA), when the problem might have been due to the inefficiency of the former's engineers. Conversely, ZESA should respond timeously to electrical faults.

6.3. The Committee noted with concern the continued absence of the Commission running the affairs of the City of Harare from Committee proceedings. Their impersonal approach to policy issues could be detrimental to the development of the City as they hinder the Committee in its oversight role; hence it failed to hold the authority accountable for some of its actions.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1. The Committee observed the essential role and contributions that the City of Harare as a local government authority plays in the Transport sector of Zimbabwe. The issues of traffic lights, road maintenance, street lighting and carriageway markings are of the essence to every road user and if not handled with care, a lot of lives could be endangered.

7.2. The Committee probed the City of Harare and tried as far as possible to seek redress to problems, which has culminated in most of the public works that are currently underway all over the city. Due regard must be given to the time slots that the City officials have set for themselves and co-operation from the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and Urban Development and the Ministry of transport and Communications could ensure the development and the maintenance of the road infrastructure of the city and national road network as a whole.