

CORONAVIRUS (Covid-19)

GOVERNMENT

Salga wants role of a whip clearly defined

MWANGI GITHAHU
mwangi.githahu@inl.co.za

A PROPOSAL to establish the office of the whip on all councils has been made by the South African Local Government Association (Salga).

Briefing the standing committee on local government on the Municipal Systems Amendment Bill, Salga spokesperson Johan Coetzee said the office would call for a new definition of the term "whip".

The new definition would provide for: election, functions, term, vacation, removal and acting whips, but would bring local government in line with the practice at national and municipal level.

Coetzee said: "This would hap-

pen through the recognition of the appointments of whips at a political party level, and then there would also be a single chief whip elected by municipal councillors for the council."

Salga also proposed the jettisoning of plenary type municipalities, with Coetzee adding: "These are generally small municipalities with a small number of councillors where having an executive mayor with a mayco may not be feasible."

"It is therefore proposed that these type of municipalities should be collective executive systems, combined with a ward participatory system, with a threshold placed based on the number of councillors."

Directing members to question officials of Salga and local govern-

“
There would also be a chief whip elected by municipal councillors

Johan Coetzee
SALGA SPOKESPERSON

ment who were present for the virtual meeting, committee chairperson Derrick America said: "We are not here to convince each other as to which interpretation of the bill's clauses are correct. Today is about issues of clarity

where we have things that we want cleared up."

Romeo Maasdorp, legal adviser to the Western Cape provincial parliament, guided the committee on several clauses in the bill that he said should be deleted or redrafted. The committee also received a number of written submissions from the public.

Among the other issues the amendments to the bill aims to address include that of municipal and senior managers who also hold positions in political parties.

The bill proposes that "a municipal manager or manager directly accountable to a municipal manager may not hold political office in a political party, whether in a permanent, temporary or acting capacity".

CLOSURES

SA's wedding industry reels under lockdown

Survey finds that 22.9% of respondents believe they will be out of business in 6 months

MWANGI GITHAHU
mwangi.githahu@inl.co.za

WEDDING industry professionals fear that the SA wedding industry is facing "mass closures and job losses," a survey by a media consultancy firm has found.

Conducted in June as a follow-up to the South African Wedding Industry Report for 2020, the Crazy Grape survey found that while 44.2% of respondents did not envisage their businesses closing, the remaining respondents projected their businesses would close within one (11.4%), three (21.3%) or six months (22.9%) should the sector remain closed.

The respondents, who are primarily based in the Western Cape and Gauteng, include wedding planners, venue managers, photographers, make-up artists, florists, decor hire specialists, caterers and bridal boutique companies.

Wedding planner and director of Trunk Events Tracy Branford has written a letter to Co-operative Governance Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma pleading for the sector to open by September under regulated safety guidelines.

In the letter Branford said: "The government is denying a substantial portion of our society the right to engage in economic activity and to earn a basic living. It is not difficult to see how this will play out, on a national level, in time."

Queeness Styled Events chief executive Zilungile Mqgibi-Gankama said: "I was forced to cancel several weddings set for the summer due to the fact that nobody can be sure what the situation will be."

Mqgibi-Gankama said: "It is an expensive business cancelling weddings as you have to pay back suppliers



THE nationwide lockdown, now in its fifth month, has had a massive impact on the wedding industry.

and others. Most of the weddings have been postponed indefinitely, as were other events such as baby showers and baby naming ceremonies which are tied to a specific time and can't really be postponed."

Meanwhile, Stats SA released the statistics on liquidations and insolvencies for May and June. The number of liquidations rose from zero in April, during which only essential services were allowed to operate, to 195 in May and 134 in June.

"The estimated number of insolvencies decreased by 79.3% in May 2020 compared with May 2019. A 35.5% decrease was estimated in the first five months of 2020 compared with the first five months of 2019," Stats SA said.

Absa economist Miyelani Maluleke said: "On the surface, this may seem a surprising result, given the extreme pressure on many businesses from the pandemic and lockdown restrictions. However, we believe the subdued

prints reflect simply the length of time it takes to liquidate a company, especially if it is a compulsory liquidation, as opposed to a voluntary one,

"Moreover, these figures are also much lower than usual, which could perhaps be an indication that the government authority that processes liquidations and insolvencies could be working at a reduced capacity."

"Undoubtedly, the unprecedented economic contraction from Covid-19 will push some firms out of business."

COURT

SU won't oppose application in policy case

SISONKE MLAMLA
sisonke.mlamlam@inl.co.za

STELLENBOSCH University (SU) will not oppose the court application in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) relating to the independent investigation by retired Judge Burton Fourie.

The application followed an earlier PAIA request from Leon Schreiber, the DA's constituency head in Stellenbosch, to make available information that Judge Fourie had in his investigation into the allegations that

rector and vice-chancellor Wim de Villiers irregularly interfered in the case between the university and Gelyke Kanse regarding its 2016 language policy.

Spokesperson Martin Viljoen said after considering the application and supporting statements, as well as related circumstances, the university had decided not to oppose it.

"This decision does not imply that SU agrees with the applicant's views and allegations. SU is of the opinion that the independent investigation of Judge Fourie refutes Schreiber and the

DA's allegations," Viljoen said.

He said the record of the Fourie Investigation, namely the transcripts of verbal proceedings, written communication and other documents to which the applicants sought access, would also support the judge's findings regarding De Villiers and Justice Edwin Cameron.

"The SU council accepted the Fourie Report in December 2019 and also made it available to the public," Viljoen said.

He said in his report, Judge Fourie found that there was no merit

in the allegations of irregularities in the conduct of De Villiers, or Justice Cameron in the Constitutional Court case regarding the university's 2016 language policy.

Schreiber said the DA had scored a key victory in its quest for transparency and justice relating to the events that took place during the court case over the abolition of Afrikaans-medium lectures at SU.

He said the party had been told by the university's lawyers on Monday that it would not oppose the DA's court challenge.

Matter of fact

In our story on Tuesday "City Teacher charged with misconduct" we quote Brian Isaacs, interim secretary for the Progressive Organisation Forum as saying the WCED has withdrawn the charges against Arries-Hendricks.

It was however pointed out by Isaacs that he has said that he demanded the withdrawal of charges against Arries-Hendricks.

We regret the error that crept in during the editing process and apologise.

Matter of fact

In our story on Monday "Nursing students set to aid pandemic fight", we stated that about 200 final-year nursing students at UWC are to be part of thousands of front line healthcare workers in the fight against Covid-19 in the province.

It has since been pointed out that students at the UWC School of Nursing won't be placed in Covid-19 wards and that the School doesn't have 200 students in the programme. We apologise for the errors and the inconvenience caused.

M
METRO

PANEL



Robin DiAngelo



Mandisa Haarhoff

Webinar on racism, inequality and justice

SHAKIRAH THEBUS
shakirah.thebus@inl.co.za

UCT's Office for Inclusivity and Change (UCT OIC), in partnership with Stellenbosch University, the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation and the Social Justice Agency (SJA) will host a webinar on structural racism and inequality tomorrow.

The event, titled *White privilege: A critical dialogue on racism and inequality in the time of Covid-19*, will be vigorously discussed by panellists, and moderated by the director of IJR, Stanley Henkeman.

Panellists will include keynote speaker, US-based author of *White Fragility*, Dr Robin DiAngelo; UCT lecturer in the Department of English and Literature, Dr Mandisa Haarhoff; and senior researcher at the Trauma and Transformation Unit at SU, and more notably the grandson of Hendrik Verwoerd, Dr Wilhelm Verwoerd.

With these topics highlighted both globally and in South Africa, the event aims to spur on conversations to bring about racial justice in communities.

OIC director, Dr Sianne Alves, said: "Racism, and particularly structural racism, is important in a context where the current economic and social structures perpetuate inequality and oppression. One way to counter oppression is by providing spaces to engage with one another about the various forms of oppression and what that looks like today in our current society."

"This event aims to do this, by inviting everyone to think deeply about our South African context, and what it means to be white and privileged – thereby providing a platform of critical dialogue, which sparks more conversations for public engagement but also within UCT."

UCT Social Responsiveness acting co-ordinator, associate professor Janice McMillan, said: "As a socially responsive public institution, it is important that we contribute to broader public discourse on critical societal issues."

"We also need to give attention to these issues in our teaching and learning, in research, and in service to society. This webinar is part of our public engagement and provides an opportunity to think intentionally and collectively about how we might move forward in our thinking and understanding of these deeply complex and challenging issues."

SJA director Edwin Cleophas said: "We hope people will show up and this dialogue will serve as a catalyst to initiating uncomfortable conversations that might lead to actions that in turn will foster a change in behaviour towards building a fair, just and more equal society for all, but especially for the poor and oppressed in society."

The webinar will take place tomorrow at 6.30pm. It also serves as a fund-raiser towards UCT's Covid-19 Emergency Fund. To donate visit <http://www.alumni.uct.ac.za/giving/ways-to-give>, or email edwincleophas@gmail.com to link to the event.

Ricetic South Africa Wishing all our Muslim customers a blessed **EID-UL-ADHA**

Enquire at your local supermarket now!
Tel: 021 511 0806 • info@ricetic.co.za