

REPORT TO: CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE

1. ITEM NUMBER: CRPSC 13/06/20

2. SUBJECT

QUARTERLY FEEDBACK REPORT ON THE UTILISATION OF CONTRACTED LANGUAGE PRACTITIONERS: JANUARY TO MARCH 2020

ONDERWERP

KWARTAALLIKSE TERUGVOERVERSLAG OOR DIE BENUTTING VAN GEKONTRAKTEERDE TAALPRAKTISYNS: JANUARIE TOT MAART 2020

ISIHLOKO

INGXELO YARHOQO NGEKOTA EMALUNGA NOKUSETYENZISWA KWEENGALI ZEELWIMI EZINGEKHONTRAKTHI: UKUSUSELA KWEYOMQUNGU UKUYA KWEYOKWINDLA 2020

LSU L3367

3. DELEGATED AUTHORITY

In terms of delegation

This report is

- Committee name** : Corporate Services
- The Executive Mayor together with the Mayoral Committee (MAYCO)
- Council

4. DISCUSSION

Tender 177S/2016/17 for the provision of a panel of language practitioners to render interpreting and translation services came into effect in February 2017 for a 36-month period with the Language Services Manager as the project manager

responsible for outsourcing. This report serves to indicate how these service providers are utilised for various assignments.

PART 1: UTILISATION OF CONTRACTED INTERPRETERS

Since subcouncil and portfolio committee meetings are clustered in the same weeks with several meetings on the same day, a shortage of interpreters is sometimes experienced, as the demand exceeds the available number of service providers. Interpreters are also requested for other duties on these days, such as for disciplinary hearings. Trilingual interpreters are in demand and very few interpreters have this ability. Furthermore, these interpreters render services to other government and private institutions as well, therefore availability is extremely limited at times.

A team of interpreters provide simultaneous interpretation at Council meetings for which audio equipment is utilised. Therefore, access to interpretation is available throughout these meetings.

Consecutive interpreting is provided at other meetings. This can be quite time-consuming as the meeting cannot continue while the interpreter is interpreting. This might be a contributing factor to the non-utilisation of the interpreter in attendance.

The table below indicates the number of **committee meetings** for which interpreters were supplied and how the interpreters were utilised at these meetings:

Table 1. Utilisation of interpreters at committee meetings

Duration of interpreting	Number of meetings		
	January	February	March
Throughout the meeting	N/A	1	1
More than 30 minutes	N/A	1	0
30 minutes or less	N/A	1	6
No interpreting	N/A	8	6
TOTAL NO. OF MEETINGS	N/A	11	13

There was one request for an interpreter in January. However, on that day there were subcouncil meetings and a hearing; therefore an interpreter could not be provided for the PC meeting as well. The interpreter assigned to the Finance PC meeting on 3 February could not attend due to a family emergency.

It is clear that mostly the interpreters are not fully utilised at these meetings. As indicated in Clause 5.1 of the Language Policy officials and councillors must give proper thought to requesting and utilising interpreters. Often interpreters are

assigned to PC meetings where they are not utilised, whereas there might have been utilised at other events.

The table below indicates the number of **subcouncil meetings** for which interpreters were supplied and how the interpreters were utilised at these meetings:

Table 2. Utilisation of interpreters at subcouncil meetings

Duration of interpreting	Number of meetings		
	January	February	March
Throughout the meeting	8	7	2
More than 30 minutes	3	1	0
30 minutes or less	1	0	1
No interpreting	0	2	0
TOTAL NO. OF MEETINGS	12	10	3

In January 2020 interpreters were provided for all the subcouncil meetings for which interpreting was requested. In February there was one instance at which an interpreter could not be provided, due to the number of requests on the same date. An agency interpreter did not show up and the agency indicated that they will no longer be making use of his services. In March the rest of the subcouncil meetings were cancelled.

General feedback

January 2020

The last rounds of the meetings with communities about the review of the spatial development frameworks for the City's eight planning districts took place (mostly in the evenings). Interpreters were provided for all of the engagement sessions and they were well utilised.

On two occasions contractors were assigned to interpret at hearings, but clients cancelled their requests on the same day. Since the contractors cannot accept any other jobs for the day, the City has to pay. Several factors lead to a cancellation of a hearing but mostly it comes down to the non-availability of role players at the last moment.

An interpreter could not be provided for a hearing on 29 January as interpreters were either occupied at the Council meeting or not available on that day. Two of the Council interpreters had to help out at evening meetings in Joe Slovo and Nomzamo as well.

February 2020

Though an interpreter was assigned for a ward committee meeting on 6 February, the client cancelled the same day. An interpreter was also cancelled after reporting for duty at a hearing on 17 February. Interpreters have to be paid when assignments are cancelled at such short notice.

An interpreter could not be provided for a hearing on 13 February, since the request was submitted a day before and all the contractors were booked already. The request form clearly states that it should be submitted a week before the event to give the LSU time to procure a contractor.

A misunderstanding between the LSU and the agency resulted in an interpreter not being assigned for an activity day on 18 February.

Due to a variety of subcouncil meetings and an activity day on 19 February an interpreter was not available for a hearing.

There was one request for sign language interpreting and the interpreter was fully utilised.

March 2020

Due to portfolio committee meetings and a workshop on 4 March 2020 an interpreter could not be provided for a vendor workshop on the same day. This workshop then took place on 16 March at which interpreting services was rendered. Seven other assignments were met during the month and simultaneous interpreters were available at the Council meeting.

PART 2: UTILISATION OF CONTRACTED TRANSLATORS

At times the Language Services Unit outsources documents for translation into Xhosa or Afrikaans.

The greatest bulk of the outsourcing is for the advertisements and notices which are placed in Die Burger.

There were twelve of these requests in the reporting period (four in January, four in February, four in March), ranging from 5 000 to about 10 000 words per request. The content is received on Fridays and the client department needs the translated version early on a Monday morning in order to meet the newspaper's deadlines. In-house

quality assessment is performed before the translated version is returned to the client.

Other documents that were outsourced because of their length, the degree of urgency or limited in-house capacity were:

- Amendments to Rules of Order (into Xhosa)
- An advert regarding the Mahama infill (into Xhosa)
- Mayor's response to a question (into Xhosa and Afrikaans)
- Proposed development of a memorial (into Xhosa and Afrikaans)
- Netball audit (into Xhosa and Afrikaans)
- Budget advertisement (into Xhosa and Afrikaans)
- Covid-19 pamphlet (into Xhosa and Afrikaans)

When time allowed, these outsourced documents were checked by in-house staff. Once in-house quality assessment has taken place the contractors are given feedback on an official form. The following criteria are assessed:

- Comprehension, e.g. whether the translator understood the source text or was familiar with the subject matter
- Accuracy, e.g. whether there were typing mistakes or omissions; whether the translated text corresponds with the source text; and whether the translator used the correct terminology and the CCT term list
- Readability, e.g. whether there was a natural flow in the target language; whether the translator maintained consistency in words, phrases and style; and whether the formatting was retained
- Grammar, e.g. whether language use, spelling, capitalisation and punctuation were correct; and whether the CCT style guide was followed

Furthermore, mention is made of whether the contractor met the deadline or perhaps pointed out content and language errors in the source text.

The contractors are regularly informed of preferred style and terminology to be used in City documents. This contributes to consistency throughout and general improvement of the quality of service rendered by the panel of translators.

4.1. Financial Implications None Opex Capex

Capex: New Projects

Capex: Existing projects requiring additional funding

Capex: Existing projects with no additional funding requirements

Policy and Strategy Yes No

Legislative Vetting Yes No

Legal Compliance

Staff Implications Yes No

Risk Implications Yes No

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the report be noted.

AANBEVELING

Daar word aanbeveel dat daar van die verslag kennis geneem word.

ISINDULULO

Kundululwe ukuba makuqwalaselwe ingxelo.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT

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Making progress possible. Together.

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DIRECTORATE	Corporate Services	FILE REF NO	-

Approval Form

Supported for inclusion on the agenda



UTILISATION OF CONTRACTED LANGUAGE PRACTITIONERS Q3

Report Reference: 515012
Meeting: Section 79 Portfolio Committee - Corporate Services
Meeting Date: 03.06.2020
Meeting Venue: Meeting Room 2 6th Floor Podium

Contact Person: Elise Engelbrecht
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Item	Section	Approver	Approval	Approved Date	Approver Comments
01	Author	Elise Engelbrecht	Approved	12.05.2020 15:07:00	
02	Director	GILLIAN KENHARDT	Approved	12.05.2020 16:56:07	There must be a very good reason for the cancellation of the use
03	Executive Director	Keith SMITH	Approved	14.05.2020 07:11:39	
04	Legal Compliance	Joan Mari Holt	Approved with Comments	14.05.2020 14:28:24	For information.

ECS Officer: Cynthia Minnaar