



IDP SUBMISSION · 2027-2032

# Safety and Security in Cape Town

Eight programmes to cut murders and shootings where Cape Town's violence is concentrated, grounded in Sections 152 and 153 of the Constitution

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**To:** The Executive Mayor and the IDP Office, City of Cape Town

**Submitted by:** Farouk Cassim, Service Delivery Party, Cape Town

**Date:** 5 October 2026



INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUBMISSION

# Safety and Security in Cape Town

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|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Date</b>         | 5 October 2026                                                                                                                            |
| <b>To</b>           | The Executive Mayor and the IDP Office, City of Cape Town                                                                                 |
| <b>From</b>         | Service Delivery Party (SDP), Cape Town                                                                                                   |
| <b>Submitted by</b> | Farouk Cassim, SDP, Cape Town (mfcassim001@gmail.com)                                                                                     |
| <b>Subject</b>      | Safety and security proposal for the 2027–2032 Integrated Development Plan                                                                |
| <b>Legal basis</b>  | Sections 152 and 153 of the Constitution; sections 16 and 29 of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 (community participation in the IDP) |

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## SUMMARY

## Safety as a binding constitutional delivery obligation

The Service Delivery Party (SDP) proposes that the 2027–2032 Integrated Development Plan treat safety as a binding constitutional delivery obligation under Sections 152 and 153, measured by far fewer murders and shootings in the precincts where Cape Town's violence is concentrated. The council elected on 4 November 2026 is requested to incorporate this plan into the IDP.

The current IDP leans heavily on enforcement. Its two safety objectives are carried mainly by LEAP officers, Metro Police, cameras and drones, backed by a record R6.8 billion Safety and Security operating budget for 2026/27.

The evidence supports keeping focused, data-led enforcement. It also shows that enforcement alone has not broken the cycle, for three reasons:

- a. By the City's own account, only about 5% of the illegal firearm cases its officers make end in a conviction.
- b. The City's most promising prevention pilots, urban upgrading and violence interruption, were never scaled, never properly evaluated or were simply stopped.
- c. In the most violent wards, daily order is increasingly set by gangs, extortion networks and, at times, mobs.

On the question of culture, the SDP's answer is clear. Cohesive communities and long-established cultural practices are a genuine strength in a city as diverse as Cape Town, provided the City binds them to the Bill of Rights, connects them to police who actually respond and funds them as a service rather than leaving them to exhausted volunteers. Without those conditions, South African research shows cohesion can produce vigilante killings rather than safety.

The SDP therefore proposes eight programmes, each tied to a power the City already holds and each carrying a public, ward-level measure of success. They include a verified, ward-based WhatsApp network linked to a City Safety Analysis Unit (Section 7). The submission also sets out a regulated partnership with private security (Section 8) and a package of amendments to national legislation for submission to Parliament (Section 9), and closes with outcome targets, a budget approach, a phasing plan and accountability measures (Section 10).

## SECTION 01

## Constitutional foundation: Sections 152 and 153

Sections 152 and 153 are not aspirations. They are justiciable obligations, and safety sits squarely inside them.

| Provision                                                      | What it means for safety                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>s152(1)(a): Democratic and accountable local government</b> | Safety spending must be reported against outcomes residents can check, ward by ward. |



| Provision                                                                                  | What it means for safety                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>s152(1)(b): Sustainable provision of services</b>                                       | Lighting, policing support and prevention programmes cannot be pilots that end when funding or politics change. |
| <b>s152(1)(c): Social and economic development</b>                                         | Violence is the largest single barrier to township economies and must be treated as a development problem.      |
| <b>s152(1)(d): A safe and healthy environment</b>                                          | This is the object that names safety directly.                                                                  |
| <b>s152(1)(e): Involvement of communities and community organisations</b>                  | Cultural, faith and neighbourhood structures are constitutional partners, not optional extras.                  |
| <b>s152(2): Strive to achieve the objects within financial and administrative capacity</b> | With R6.8 billion allocated, the test is how money is allocated, not whether capacity exists.                   |
| <b>s153(a): Structure administration, budgeting and planning to prioritise basic needs</b> | Budgets must follow harm; the wards with the highest murder rates come first.                                   |
| <b>s153(b): Participate in national and provincial development programmes</b>              | The City must work inside the Western Cape Safety Plan and press SAPS to deliver.                               |

### Further provisions that frame the City's role

Section 12(1)(c) of the Bill of Rights guarantees freedom from all forms of violence, whether from public or private sources, and section 7(2) obliges every organ of state, including the City, to respect, protect, promote and fulfil that right.

Section 205 establishes SAPS as the national police service, and section 206(7) requires national legislation to provide a framework for municipal police services. That framework sits in the SAPS Act, and it is the basis of the City's current dispute over investigative powers for Metro Police.

Schedule 5B gives the City direct control over street lighting, public places and the control of undertakings that sell liquor to the public. Schedule 4B gives it municipal planning, the source of its land-use powers.

The current IDP files public safety under the City's "area of influence" rather than its "area of control". The SDP accepts that SAPS holds the core mandate. It does not accept that this lowers the standard for what the City does control. Lighting, liquor control, land use, youth facilities, Metro Police deployment and safety data are all City functions, and section 152 applies to them in full.



## SECTION 02

## What the current IDP contains

The 2022–2027 IDP, as amended for 2026/27, makes safety one of three top-tier priorities, alongside economic growth and basic services. Residents asked for this: safety was the top priority in the 2021/22 IDP survey, chosen by 20.3% of nearly 32 000 respondents.

The IDP's safety objectives and programmes are:

| Objective                                                               | Programmes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Objective 5: Effective law enforcement to make communities safer</b> | <b>5.1 Enhanced policing:</b> LEAP officers (jointly funded with the Western Cape Government), Metro Police and ward-level Neighbourhood Safety Officers.<br><b>5.2 Safety technology:</b> CCTV, drones, gunshot detection and the EPIC command system. |
| <b>Objective 6: Strengthen partnerships for safer communities</b>       | <b>6.1 Partnerships for community safety:</b> neighbourhood watch support and community policing structures.<br><b>6.2 Holistic crime prevention:</b> social crime prevention and school resource officers.                                             |

The IDP's own diagnosis is sound. It finds that gang and criminal activity is concentrated in areas of poverty, that gun violence causes mass trauma, that national police deployment per 100 000 people has fallen and that the Western Cape has fewer police officers than the national average. It reports that only 57.7% of residents felt safe walking during the day in 2022/23, and just 20.4% at night. It also admits that sexual crimes are badly underreported and that comprehensive gender-based violence data for Cape Town is lacking.

### The investment since then has been substantial

- LEAP passed 1 100 officers in 2022 and is deployed in six precincts: Delft, Nyanga, Philippi East, Gugulethu, Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain.
- 700 new Metro Police officers were deployed in 2025 to work at ward level, alongside more than 900 LEAP officers in 23 high-crime wards.
- The 2026/27 Safety and Security operating budget is a record R6.8 billion, although it also funds fire, traffic, disaster management and emergency communications.
- The City has lodged an intergovernmental dispute with the Minister of Police to obtain investigative powers for Metro Police. The SDP strongly supports this.

### Where the current IDP falls short

#### 1. It measures inputs, not harm.

In the measurable performance objectives published with the 2026/27 budget, the indicator listed under the Safety priority is the number of drone flights (3 653 in 2024/25). There is no City target for a substantial reduction in murders or shootings, for convictions or for residents' sense of safety.



## 2. Prevention is named but thin.

Programme 6.2 carries the IDP's "root causes" commitment, yet the City's two serious prevention models, Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) and the Ceasefire violence interruption pilot, were never scaled city-wide. Ceasefire was withdrawn from Hanover Park in 2018 because it was "not currently budgeted for".

## 3. Communities appear as helpers, not partners.

Objective 6 treats neighbourhood watches and forums as force multipliers for enforcement. It does not engage the cultural, faith and civic structures that already shape daily order in townships.

## 4. Gender-based violence has no programme.

The IDP names the data gap and stops there.

### CONSTITUTIONAL ANCHOR

Measuring inputs rather than outcomes falls short of the accountability required by s152(1)(a). Leaving prevention unfunded and unscaled falls short of the sustainable provision required by s152(1)(b) and the prioritisation of basic needs required by s153(a).

## SECTION 03

# What police research and crime data reveal

Police data and research point to five findings that any credible plan must answer.

## 1. Violence is concentrated, and Cape Town carries a national share of it

- a. In the first quarter of 2026/27 (April to June 2026), 11 Cape Town precincts ranked among South Africa's 30 worst for murder.
- b. Mfuleni and Nyanga were first and second nationally, followed in the top ten by Philippi East, Delft, Harare and Khayelitsha. Nyanga recorded 56 murders in that single quarter, Philippi East 53 and Khayelitsha 44.
- c. Gang murders are almost uniquely a Western Cape problem: in January to March 2026 the province recorded 225 of the country's 242 gang-related murders.
- d. Researchers at the University of the Western Cape estimate that Khayelitsha's three precincts alone record between 500 and 600 murders a year.

## 2. Focused deployment helps when it is sustained

The City reports that murder fell in all six LEAP precincts in the first quarter of 2026/27, with the largest drops in Gugulethu (34%), Mitchells Plain (33%) and Delft (24%). The City attributes part of this to concentrating resources in late 2024 and to a new hotspot policing project.

Earlier results were uneven: in January to March 2025, murder rose 63.9% in Philippi East even with LEAP present. No independent evaluation of LEAP has been published, which makes it impossible to separate its effect from wider trends.



International evidence supports the approach in principle. The Campbell Collaboration's systematic review of hot spots policing (Braga and colleagues, 2019) found robust crime reductions, with benefits spreading to surrounding streets rather than crime simply moving. Problem-oriented work at hot spots produced larger effects than simply adding more patrols.

### 3. Arrests are not convictions

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This is the weakest link. City officers remove about 400 illegal guns a year, yet the Mayor reports a conviction rate of just 5%, so the same offenders are policed again and again. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) concludes that firearm crime should be the first focus of any serious murder-reduction strategy, built on mapping gun crime, dedicated firearm units and a modernised firearm registry.

### 4. Under-policing of poor areas is documented, not assumed

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The 2014 Khayelitsha Commission found serious, overlapping inefficiencies in policing, seriously deficient detective work and a breakdown in relations between residents and police. In 2018 the Equality Court found that SAPS resource allocation in the Western Cape unfairly discriminated on the basis of race and poverty.

The Commission itself was set up after a spike in vigilante killings, and residents still link mob justice to their distrust of police; four people died in suspected vigilante attacks in Harare, Khayelitsha, in a single night in September 2025.

### 5. Fairness matters, and so do results

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A study of police legitimacy in South Africa (Bradford, Huq, Jackson and Roberts, 2014) found that fair and respectful treatment shapes whether people see police as legitimate, as it does elsewhere. South Africans, however, place more weight on whether police are effective, and their trust in police is tied to their trust in the state as a whole.

The lesson for the City is direct: respectful conduct and visible results must come together, and a municipality that delivers poorly in other services will struggle to win cooperation on safety.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL ANCHOR

Where harm is this concentrated, s153(a) requires the City's administration, budgeting and planning to put the 11 worst-affected precincts first. The documented under-policing of poor areas is the reason s153(b) participation must be used to press SAPS for fair resource allocation.

## SECTION 04

### What academics and specialists recommend

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The strongest evidence favours a small number of focused interventions, sustained for years and tied to policing as well as development, over broad programmes that try to address everything at once.



| Intervention                                       | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                   | Cape Town experience                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Firearm-focused policing</b>                    | ISS (2024) finds firearms drive the murder rate, and recommends mapping gun crime, creating dedicated firearm units and modernising the registry.                          | The City recovers about 400 illegal guns a year; the conviction rate is about 5%. This has to be given full attention.                                                                           |
| <b>Hot spots and problem-oriented policing</b>     | The Campbell review (2019) found robust reductions, with benefits spreading to nearby streets.                                                                             | LEAP and the City's hotspot project; no independent evaluation.                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Urban upgrading (VPUU)</b>                      | An SAMRC study found that living near upgraded infrastructure in Khayelitsha was linked to 34% less exposure to interpersonal violence.                                    | KfW's 2021 evaluation rated it "moderately successful": strong on administrative reform, while the safety situation did not fundamentally improve.                                               |
| <b>Violence interruption (Cure Violence model)</b> | Credible former gang members mediate conflicts before they become shootings; international results are mixed but promising.                                                | Ceasefire in Hanover Park (2013 to 2018); project leaders reported a 31% drop in murders; local forums disputed its effect; the City withdrew funding.                                           |
| <b>Alcohol controls</b>                            | The WHO's most effective measures include limits on outlet density and trading hours.                                                                                      | Provincial health data show the 2020 sales ban cut trauma presentations at five hospitals by 40% to 50%; a 2017 count found 1 045 outlets in one Cape Town study area, only 11% trading legally. |
| <b>Street lighting</b>                             | A randomised trial in New York (Chalfin and colleagues) found at least 36% fewer outdoor night-time serious crimes.                                                        | Lighting is a City competence; the IDP reports rising vandalism of public lighting.                                                                                                              |
| <b>Youth summer jobs</b>                           | A Chicago randomised trial (Heller, 2014) found 43% fewer violent-crime arrests over 16 months, mostly after the jobs ended.                                               | The City runs EPWP and work-readiness initiatives, not designed around youth at highest risk of violence.                                                                                        |
| <b>Community peace committees</b>                  | The Zwelethemba model (Shearing, UWC Community Peace Programme) trains residents to resolve disputes under a written code; 15 committees held some 6 000 peace gatherings. | The model began in Zwelethemba in the late 1990s; national support later ended; it was never adopted by the City.                                                                                |

## Four lessons run through this evidence

### 1. Prevention without investigation fails.

KfW's evaluators concluded that broad local measures have only a limited effect on violence unless police investigation and prosecution work. VPUU's main weakness, they found, was that it had no systematic link to the security forces.



## 2. Depth beats breadth.

VPUU spread itself across too many themes and partners, which diluted quality and fuelled competition between local organisations.

## 3. Pilots need protected funding and independent evaluation.

Ceasefire's results were contested precisely because no independent evaluation was done, and it was cut when politics changed. UCT's Guy Lamb warned at the outset that it should never be treated as a silver bullet.

## 4. Facilities must be maintained.

Several VPUU facilities stood under-used, with unclear responsibility for maintenance and repairs, which wastes the investment and erodes trust.

### CONSTITUTIONAL ANCHOR

Lessons 3 and 4 are the s152(1)(b) test in practice: a service that stops when funding or politics change, or a facility left to decay, is not sustainable provision.

## SECTION 05

# Culture and cohesion: strength, risk and the conditions that decide

An approach built on cultural practice and cohesive communities is a strong point for Cape Town, though only under specific conditions. The research is unusually clear that cohesion is a force multiplier in both directions: it multiplies safety when it is connected to a fair and responsive state, and it multiplies violence when it is not.

The SDP framework places every ward on two dimensions: community cohesion (low to high) and connection to a fair, responsive state (low to high). This gives four situations:

### HIGH COHESION · WEAK STATE CONNECTION

#### Parallel order

Cohesion without state response turns into vigilante and gang rule.

### HIGH COHESION · STRONG STATE CONNECTION

#### Collective efficacy

Communities and police act together. This is the SDP target for every ward.

### LOW COHESION · WEAK STATE CONNECTION

#### Abandonment

Fear and withdrawal leave space for predators.

### LOW COHESION · STRONG STATE CONNECTION

#### Enforcement dependence

Patrols contain violence, while few cases are solved or prevented.

The SDP's programme aims to move every ward into collective efficacy, where cohesion and a responsive state reinforce each other.



## Why it is a real strength

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Cape Town is a city of many communities. The IDP's figures show a population that is roughly 42% Black African, 40% Coloured, 17% White and 1% Asian, speaking isiXhosa, Afrikaans, English and many other languages, and organised through churches, mosques, street committees, burial societies, stokvels, sports clubs and initiation practices. These institutions already carry trust, settle disputes and move information faster than any City channel.

Criminology's concept of collective efficacy, residents' shared willingness to act for the common good, is consistently linked to lower violence. The Zwelethemba peace committees showed that township residents, using their own norms within a written code, can resolve thousands of disputes without police or courts. That matters because a large share of murders begin as quarrels: one SAPS analysis cited by the provincial government attributed a quarter of Western Cape murders to arguments and provocation.

## Why it is also a real risk

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The same South African research finds the dark side:

- a. Cohesion can produce vigilantism.** A ward-level study in Gauteng found that neighbourhoods with higher cohesion and collective efficacy experienced more vigilante violence, not less, where residents had no working institutional channel for their anger.
- b. Communitarian order can violate as well as protect.** Vanessa Barolsky's ethnography in Khayelitsha found informal forms of order that offer extraordinary support and also the possibility of spectacular violation, often displacing the Constitution's idea of the common good.
- c. Gangs are cohesive institutions too.** Irvin Kinnes's research on the Cape Flats found gangs running their own welfare, church and sports structures and "buying" sections of the community, so that they function as an alternative form of governance. He estimated about 100 000 gang members across 29 communities.
- d. Cohesion erodes where liquor and drugs concentrate.** Mercy Brown-Luthango's work in Freedom Park found that a proliferation of illegal liquor and drug outlets broke down cohesion and raised violence, and that collective efficacy cannot be separated from poverty and unemployment.
- e. Politics fractures it.** KfW's evaluators found that mistrust between ANC-aligned community forums and the DA-run City undermined information sharing in Khayelitsha.

## What the evidence implies about diversity

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Violence in Cape Town is concentrated in precincts with very different cultural profiles, from the gang-affected Cape Flats to largely isiXhosa-speaking townships such as Nyanga, Khayelitsha and Mfuleni. The common factors are concentrated poverty, guns, alcohol, gang economies and weak state presence. The SDP therefore treats diversity as an asset to work through, not a cause to manage.



## The SDP's six conditions

Cultural and community structures will be funded and partnered under the IDP only where they meet six conditions:

- 1. Rights-bound.** The Bill of Rights is the floor. No structure may impose punishment, and gender-based violence, sexual offences and child abuse are never "settled" informally; they go to SAPS and the Thuthuzela Care Centres.
- 2. Bridging, not only bonding.** Structures must reach across language, faith and neighbourhood lines at ward level, rather than reinforce closed groups.
- 3. Connected to a response.** Every recognised structure has a named Metro Police or SAPS contact and a guaranteed response time. Vigilantism grows where calls go unanswered.
- 4. Paid and trained.** Facilitators, mediators and patrollers receive stipends, training and accreditation, as the peace committee model did, instead of burning out as volunteers.
- 5. Non-partisan and transparent.** Funding follows published criteria, not political loyalty, and every structure reports publicly.
- 6. Independently evaluated.** Each funded model is evaluated against violence outcomes, so that what works is scaled and what does not is stopped.

### CONSTITUTIONAL ANCHOR

Section 152(1)(e) makes community organisations partners in local government, and s152(1)(d) sets the safe environment they must help deliver. The six conditions bind that partnership to the Bill of Rights, including the s12(1)(c) right to be free from violence.

*Culture should be the City's delivery channel for safety,  
never its substitute.*

## SECTION 06

### The SDP proposal: eight programmes for the 2027-2032 IDP

The SDP proposes that the next IDP keep its two safety objectives and rebuild them around eight programmes. Each uses a power the City already holds, and each starts in the 11 Cape Town precincts in the national top 30 for murder before scaling to other wards. Programme 8, coordinated communication and intelligence, is set out in full in Section 7 because it serves all the others.



## 01

### Precision violence reduction

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*Headline measure: murders and shootings per 100 000, by precinct*

**What the City must do:** run problem-oriented hot spots policing jointly with SAPS in the 11 precincts; create a Metro Police firearms unit that maps every shooting from gunshot detection, CCTV and SAPS data; train officers to build court-ready evidence on every firearm arrest.

**City role:** Deliver, Partner. **Constitutional anchor:** s152(1)(d), s153(a).

## 02

### Catch to conviction

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*Headline measure: share of City firearm arrests that end in conviction*

**What the City must do:** fund court-preparation and witness support for victims of gun and gang crime; publish what happens to every City firearm arrest; continue the dispute for Metro Police investigative powers.

**City role:** Deliver, Advocate. **Constitutional anchor:** s152(1)(a), s153(b).

## 03

### Safe places

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*Headline measure: share of lights working in each ward; night-time robbery and assault*

**What the City must do:** audit and repair street and high-mast lighting to a published standard in every informal settlement, transport route and route to communal toilets; design safety into all upgrading; fund maintenance for every facility built.

**City role:** Deliver, Plan. **Constitutional anchor:** s152(1)(b), s152(1)(d), Schedule 5B.

## 04

### Liquor harm reduction

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*Headline measure: violence-related trauma presentations (provincial health data)*

**What the City must do:** use land-use and liquor trading powers to cap outlet density near schools, clinics and transport interchanges; enforce trading hours; close unlicensed outlets with SAPS.

**City role:** Regulate. **Constitutional anchor:** s152(1)(d), Schedules 4B and 5B.

## 05

### Violence interruption and youth pathways

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*Headline measure: retaliatory shootings; violent-crime arrests among participants*

**What the City must do:** restore violence interruption in gang hotspots on five-year funding with independent evaluation; offer paid holiday jobs with a mentor to young people aged 14 to 21 in the 11 precincts, through EPWP and the work-readiness initiative.

**City role:** Deliver, Partner. **Constitutional anchor:** s152(1)(b), s152(1)(c).



## 06

**Community peace and cohesion**

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*Headline measure: vigilante incidents; disputes resolved; residents who feel safe at night*

**What the City must do:** establish ward peace committees on the Zwelethemba model under the six conditions in Section 5; sign a safety compact with faith, cultural and civic leaders; give accredited neighbourhood watches stipends, training and a direct link to dispatch; deploy a rapid-response team of Metro Police and mediators whenever a mob gathers.

**City role:** Partner, Enable. **Constitutional anchor:** s152(1)(e), s152(1)(d).

## 07

**Safety for women and children**

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*Headline measure: reported sexual offences reaching court; safety audits completed*

**What the City must do:** close the gender-based violence data gap the IDP admits; make safe night-time access to toilets, taps and transport a service standard; apply the SDP's Cape Town Child Safeguarding Standard to every City safety partner.

**City role:** Deliver, Monitor. **Constitutional anchor:** s152(1)(d), s153(a), s12(1)(c).

## 08

**Coordinated communication and intelligence**

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*Headline measure: reports acknowledged within 15 minutes; false alerts corrected within 30 minutes*

**What the City must do:** open a verified WhatsApp channel and trained moderator in every ward; extend the two-way reporting line to faith, cultural and civic structures; create a Safety Analysis Unit; share anonymised trauma data with the Western Cape Department of Health (the Cardiff Model); open an anonymous extortion and gun tip line, all under strict safeguards. Set out in full in Section 7.

**City role:** Deliver, Partner, Monitor. **Constitutional anchor:** s152(1)(a), s152(1)(e).

**What the City must press other spheres to deliver**

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Section 153(b) requires the City to participate in national and provincial programmes. It must use that role to push for:

- a. SAPS:** detective capacity and resource allocation based on population and crime, as the Khayelitsha Commission and the Equality Court required.
- b. Parliament and the Minister of Police:** amendment of the SAPS Act to give Metro Police defined investigative powers for gun, gang and drug crime.
- c. The Western Cape Government:** alignment of LEAP, the Community Resilience Programme and provincial liquor licensing with the City's ward priorities, and independent evaluation of LEAP.
- d. The National Prosecuting Authority:** dedicated prosecutors for firearm cases from the 11 precincts.



## How safety links to the rest of the SDP programme

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Safety cannot be separated from the SDP's other IDP submissions. Reliable electricity keeps the lights on that Programme 3 depends on. Water and sanitation points that are close and well lit remove the night-time walks that expose women and children to attack. Well-located housing and the Spine Road economic corridor reduce the long, unsafe commutes that expose workers to robbery. A polycentric city brings jobs, clinics and courts closer to the communities that most need them.

### SECTION 07

## Programme 8: coordinated communication and intelligence-led safety

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WhatsApp and better intelligence should both be used far more, though only as a disciplined, verified system linked to a response. Left informal, both can do harm: unverified WhatsApp alerts spread fear and prejudice, and poorly governed intelligence work invites abuse.

### What already exists

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The City has made a start. It runs a WhatsApp line that links two representatives from each neighbourhood watch to its Joint Operations Centre, and a neighbourhood watch app on which nearly 1 400 members from 270 groups have been trained. Since April 2026, residents can report 17 categories of crime and by-law offence through the City's own app, with reports geolocated and routed to the right department. Its Safety and Security Information Management Services already tracks attacks on staff, hijackings and extortion attempts daily.

The gap is reach and discipline. These channels serve accredited neighbourhood watches and residents with smartphones and data. Township residents organise through faith groups, street committees, taxi ranks and family networks, largely on unofficial WhatsApp groups that no one verifies. Security specialists warn that such groups turn ordinary behaviour into "crime alerts", target strangers by appearance rather than conduct and send patrols chasing false alarms. Research in India by the London School of Economics linked WhatsApp rumours directly to lynchings, a risk Cape Town cannot ignore given its record of vigilante killings.

### WhatsApp: one verified network per ward

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The City must:

- a. Open a verified ward channel in every ward.** A one-way City WhatsApp Channel carries only confirmed alerts, missing-child notices and service disruptions, in isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English.
- b. Extend the two-way reporting line beyond neighbourhood watches.** Peace committees, faith leaders, school safety committees, taxi rank marshals, ward committees and recognised cultural structures each nominate two trained representatives with a direct line to the Joint Operations Centre.



- c. Set a reporting protocol.** Alerts use a fixed template (what, where, when, direction of travel), describe behaviour rather than appearance and never circulate photographs or names of suspects. The rule protects the innocent, complies with POPIA and removes the trigger for mob action.
- d. Fund ward moderators.** Each ward has a trained, stipended moderator who verifies reports with the Joint Operations Centre and issues a correction within 30 minutes when a false or inflammatory message spreads, especially when a crowd begins to gather.
- e. Close the loop.** Every report receives an acknowledgement and an outcome. Residents stop reporting when nothing visibly changes.
- f. Keep it accessible.** Voice notes in home languages and low-data formats are accepted, so that residents without airtime or literacy in English are not shut out.

### Intelligence: gather more, govern it tightly

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The City's lawful role is community information and data analysis. Criminal intelligence remains with SAPS Crime Intelligence, and interception of communications is governed by RICA, which the Constitutional Court found in 2021 lacked adequate safeguards. Within those limits the City must:

- a. Create a Safety Analysis Unit.** It fuses gunshot detection, CCTV, app and WhatsApp reports, liquor outlet data and extortion reports into weekly problem profiles for each of the 11 precincts, shared with SAPS, LEAP and violence interrupters.
- b. Adopt the Cardiff Model with the Western Cape Department of Health.** Anonymised data on where, when and with what weapon people were injured is shared from trauma units, because much violence is never reported to police. In Cardiff, this approach was associated with a 42% fall in violence-related hospital admissions relative to comparable cities.
- c. Build early warning on gang feuds.** Violence interrupters and peace committees feed conflict information, without names, into the unit, so that resources move before retaliation rather than after it.
- d. Open an anonymous extortion and gun tip line.** It is operated in all three main languages, with rewards for information that leads to recovered firearms or convictions and protection for informants.

### Safeguards

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Intelligence without oversight erodes the trust it depends on. The IDP must therefore require:

- a.** No interception of private communications by the City, and no monitoring of residents' private WhatsApp groups.
- b.** A ban on profiling by race, nationality, language or religion.
- c.** Fixed data-retention periods and POPIA-compliant data agreements with every partner.
- d.** A Council oversight committee that receives a classified briefing each quarter and publishes an annual transparency report.



## Measures

| Measure                                                       | Standard                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Wards with a verified channel and trained moderator</b>    | All wards by 2028/29, starting with the 11 precincts |
| <b>Reports acknowledged by the Joint Operations Centre</b>    | Within 15 minutes, at least 90% of the time          |
| <b>False alerts corrected</b>                                 | Within 30 minutes of detection                       |
| <b>Intelligence-led firearm arrests that reach conviction</b> | Reported quarterly, rising each year                 |

### CONSTITUTIONAL ANCHOR

A verified, two-way channel gives effect to s152(1)(e) by involving community organisations directly, and to s152(1)(a) by closing the loop on every report. The safeguards keep the system within the Bill of Rights, including the s14 right to privacy.

## SECTION 08

### Private security: a regulated partnership

**Should private security be brought in?** Yes, as a regulated partner and never as a substitute for public policing. The industry is already larger than SAPS: in February 2026 the Minister of Police reported 641 875 employed security officers in 17 186 active companies, against 151 492 SAPS members.

Cape Town already relies on it. The Central City Improvement District alone deploys more than 300 public safety officers, and the City governs such patrols through its Policy for Private Security Operating in Public Space.

#### The risks are equally real

- Two-tier safety.** Improvement districts are funded by additional property rates, so private patrols follow property values, not murder rates. The communities with the highest murder rates are the least able to pay for it.
- No public powers.** Security officers are not peace officers. They hold only the powers of ordinary citizens, and the City's own policy recognises the risk of harm to the public.
- Firearm leakage.** Security companies held 126 529 licensed firearms in 2024 and reported 847 lost or stolen in the first half of 2024/25. The ISS has found that criminal figures register security companies to obtain legal firearms, some linked to taxi bosses holding automatic weapons. In January 2025, rival guard companies exchanged fire in a deadly Cape Town shootout.
- Weak regulation.** PSIRA has about one inspector for every 200 security companies, against its own target of one for every 110.
- Extortion fronts.** In parts of the metro, "security" is a cover for protection rackets that tax builders, traders and residents.



## A Private Security Partnership Framework

The SDP therefore proposes a Private Security Partnership Framework in the IDP, under which the City will:

- 1. Share information, not force.** Link accredited companies' cameras, alarms and patrol reports to the City's command centre under data agreements that comply with POPIA, so that crimes in progress reach Metro Police and SAPS faster.
- 2. Partner only with accredited firms.** City contracts and improvement district approvals go only to companies in good standing with PSIRA, with clean firearm audits and directors who pass a fit-and-proper check.
- 3. Close the coverage gap.** Use City funds to bring patrol coverage in the 11 precincts up to the standard improvement districts enjoy, through accredited local providers that employ local residents, so that safety does not depend on property values.
- 4. Keep community patrols unarmed.** City-funded patrollers under Programme 6 carry radios and body cameras, not firearms, and any armed partner reports a quarterly firearm reconciliation to the City.
- 5. Refuse to pay extortion.** No City project or contractor may pay a so-called local security forum. Every demand is reported to the City's staff safety unit and SAPS.

### CONSTITUTIONAL ANCHOR

Safety that follows property values rather than harm is the opposite of what s153(a) requires. Closing the coverage gap in the 11 precincts is how the City prioritises the basic needs of the communities most at risk.

## SECTION 09

## Legislative reform

The City must seek to amend legislation already before Parliament. Section 206(7) of the Constitution leaves the framework for municipal policing to national legislation, and the Acting Minister of Police has accepted that the SAPS Act must be amended before Metro Police can receive investigative powers. A municipality cannot legislate on policing or on PSIRA; it can only make by-laws on matters such as street lighting, public places and liquor outlets.

The opening is real. The SAPS Amendment Bill is before the Portfolio Committee on Police, which on 5 August 2026 said it would consider clearly defined investigative functions for municipal police, subject to training and oversight, and promised public hearings. Section 154(2) of the Constitution also requires draft national legislation affecting local government's powers to be published so that municipalities and the public can make representations. The SDP proposes the following package.

### Amendments to the SAPS Amendment Bill

- a.** Defined investigative powers for accredited metro police services, limited to illegal firearm possession, gang crime and drug dealing, with national training standards, accreditation by the National Commissioner, docket controls, IPID oversight and a power to revoke accreditation.



- b.** A duty on SAPS to publish its resource allocation formula and station-level staffing each year, and to explain any departure from population and crime levels, as the Khayelitsha Commission recommended and the Equality Court's 2018 ruling demands.
- c.** A Community Policing Commitment at every police station, agreed with residents and reported on publicly.
- d.** A duty on SAPS to share precinct-level crime data with municipalities within a fixed period, so that City deployment and IDP planning rest on current evidence.

### Amendments to the Private Security Industry Regulation Act

- a.** Quarterly firearm reconciliation for every armed security business, with a firearm audit as a condition of renewal and tighter limits on automatic and high-calibre weapons.
- b.** A fit-and-proper test extended to beneficial owners, to stop criminal networks using security companies as fronts.
- c.** Investigative powers for PSIRA inspectors and funding to reach PSIRA's own inspection target.
- d.** A statutory framework for cooperation agreements between accredited companies, SAPS and municipal police, covering information sharing, response to crimes in progress and the handover of arrested suspects.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL ANCHOR

These amendments give effect to s153(b): the City participates in national programmes, and the SDP believes the City should use that participation, together with its s154(2) right to make representations, to change the laws that limit what Cape Town can deliver.

## SECTION 10

### Measurement, budget and accountability

The SDP proposes that the 2027–2032 corporate scorecard carry outcome targets for safety, so that compliance with Sections 152 and 153 can be measured rather than asserted.

| Indicator                                                           | Baseline                                      | Proposed 2032 target                                                                                | Anchor            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Murders in the 11 Cape Town precincts in the national top 30</b> | SAPS 2025/26 annual figures                   | Reduced by three quarters, going further than the Western Cape Safety Plan's goal of halving murder | <b>s152(1)(d)</b> |
| <b>City firearm arrests that end in conviction</b>                  | About 5% (City estimate)                      | At least 50%                                                                                        | <b>s152(1)(a)</b> |
| <b>Residents who feel safe walking alone at night</b>               | 20.4% (2022/23)                               | At least 60%                                                                                        | <b>s152(1)(d)</b> |
| <b>Street and high-mast lights working in informal settlements</b>  | Not published; the City to publish in 2027/28 | At least 95% at every quarterly audit                                                               | <b>s152(1)(b)</b> |



| Indicator                                                                 | Baseline                                                 | Proposed 2032 target                                      | Anchor            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Vigilante incidents</b>                                                | Not tracked; the City and SAPS to establish in 2027/28   | Year-on-year decline in every precinct                    | <b>s152(1)(e)</b> |
| <b>Violence-related trauma presentations in the 11 precincts</b>          | Provincial health data, 2026/27                          | Reduced by one third                                      | <b>s152(1)(d)</b> |
| <b>Reported sexual offences reaching court (Programme 7)</b>              | Not published; the City and SAPS to establish in 2027/28 | Published annually and rising each year                   | <b>s153(a)</b>    |
| <b>Retaliatory shootings at violence interruption sites (Programme 5)</b> | Set by the independent evaluator in 2027/28              | Year-on-year decline, confirmed by independent evaluation | <b>s152(1)(b)</b> |

Police precincts and municipal wards do not share boundaries. The City must therefore publish a precinct-to-ward concordance in 2027/28, so that precinct-level SAPS data and ward-level City reporting can be read together.

## Phasing

| Phase                     | What is delivered                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2027/28</b>            | Baselines published for every indicator; precinct-to-ward concordance; independent evaluation designed for Programmes 1, 5 and 6; ward WhatsApp channels, moderators and the Safety Analysis Unit launched in the 11 precincts. |
| <b>2028/29</b>            | Verified channels in all wards; peace committees and the lighting standard in all 11 precincts; first annual independent safety audit tabled in Council.                                                                        |
| <b>2029/30 to 2031/32</b> | Programmes that meet their evaluation scaled to further high-harm wards; those that do not are redesigned or stopped; final 2032 targets reported.                                                                              |

## Budget

The SDP does not propose new taxes. It proposes better allocation of existing money:

- a.** The City must publish what share of the R6.8 billion Safety and Security budget funds crime prevention, as distinct from fire, traffic and disaster services.
- b.** At least one rand in every ten of that crime-prevention spend should be ring-fenced for Programmes 3, 5, 6 and 7, which today have little or no dedicated funding.
- c.** Every new safety programme must set aside 2% of its budget for independent evaluation.
- d.** Deployment of LEAP, Metro Police and technology must follow harm, with the highest-murder wards served first, as section 153(a) requires.

## Accountability

- a.** Quarterly ward safety reports to every subcouncil, covering the indicators above.



- b. An annual independent safety audit tabled in Council and published on the City's website.
- c. A standing residents' safety survey, run in isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English, so that residents' own experience counts alongside police statistics.

*The Service Delivery Party submits this proposal for inclusion in the 2027-2032 IDP. In terms of sections 16 and 29 of the Municipal Systems Act, it requests a written response from the City setting out which elements it will adopt, and its reasons for any it rejects, so that the matter may be contested if not accepted.*

### Farouk Cassim

Service Delivery Party, Cape Town  
mfcassim001@gmail.com

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