

Correction of false allegations around food relief

3 May 2021

Over the past year, the City of Cape Town has allocated close to R39 million to an emergency food relief programme, going above and beyond our municipal mandate to assist those who've fallen on hard times due to the global pandemic and national lockdowns. Over 260 soup kitchens have benefitted from this programme, and more than 200 000 residents now receive a daily warm meal from these soup kitchens.

The City dismisses continued misinformation by a member of the provincial legislature around food relief support to registered organisations. All funds spent on humanitarian relief are fully audited, allocated 100% in line with the City's supply chain process, and not subject to political interference in any way.

Conditions for the City's Grant-in-Aid (GIA) funding encourage recipient organisations to partner with smaller community-based groups to deliver food relief. This enables support for smaller community groups to keep doing their good work even if they are not able to meet the stringent requirements to access grant-in-aid funding.

The terms of the funding do not allow for transfer of funds from GIA recipient organisations to third parties, which is what occurred in one instance of an Atlantis-based NGO transferring money to a church to conduct direct food relief work. While reports show that all funds went towards the intended purpose of food relief, the City is nevertheless in the process of recovering the unspent portion of the R170 000 total funding as this should not have been transferred to the church in terms of the grant-in-aid conditions. The City is working with the authorities in this regard including providing all relevant information to the Hawks.

Allegations that these funds were used for purposes other than food relief are false and blatant political opportunism. Grant-in-Aid funding is fully audited and strictly administered by an open and transparent process by the City's Urban Management Directorate. The City will not hesitate to act where these funds are not correctly administered by recipient organisations and encourages anybody who is aware of potential mismanagement of relief funding to report the matter to the police.

To date, the City's food relief programme has included:

- Approximately R14 million from the Mayor's Relief Fund has been spent to support a major food relief drive, which included equipping soup kitchens and direct food relief. To date, 262 soup kitchens have received equipment and ingredients across the City, bolstering their capacity to feed over 200 000 residents in need, every single day, during lockdown.
- R10 million grant-in-aid funding was approved in January by Council and is being rolled out to 14 qualifying registered non-governmental organisations (NGO), public benefit organisations (PBO) or non-profit organisations (NPO) that applied to issue relief within the municipal boundaries of the City of Cape Town to prepare and distribute cooked meals directly to vulnerable communities. These successful organisations which met the relevant requirements, were also appointed to supervise community-based organisations in their preparation and distribution of cooked meals.
- Most recently, R15 million was approved by Council in March as part of the Budget Adjustment process. Applications from registered NGOs, PBOs or NPOs are currently being assessed.

Alderman Dan Plato
Executive Mayor, City of Cape Town