

## WEEKEND ARGUS NEWS



HOMELESS people shelter as best they can under the Culemborg bridge. Tracey Adams African News Agency (ANA)

### **City plans to find accommodation for Strandfontein's homeless community**

By BULELWA PAYI      Jun 6, 2020

PLANS are afoot to find alternative accommodation for homeless people who were removed by the City from the Strandfontein camp and left on a pavement under the Culemborg bridge in town.

NGO Community Chest said talks with an unidentified party were at an advanced stage to find a shelter for the 178 street people.

Spokesperson Lorenzo Davids said in light of the “appalling” conditions under the bridge, the organisation accommodated the homeless as a temporary measure until the City’s Culemborg site was ready.

But now, with no indication from the City authorities of when the Culemborg site would be ready, Davids said it was imperative to find an alternative shelter.

“When the court order was granted, it was with the understanding that the Culemborg site would be ready by May31. The City still has an obligation to give the street-based group of 178 accommodation. It’s actually in breach of the court order,” he said.

Despite the court order, there’s still no indication from the City authorities of when the Culemborg site will be ready.

Mayco member for community services and health, Zahid Badroodien, said work was continuing, although there had been “a delay with the connection of utilities”.

“While the prefabricated structures have already started being assembled, the City won’t be able to move people on to the site without the correct occupation certificates and we require utilities like water and electricity to be available in order to secure the certificates,” said Badroodien.

He denied that the City was in breach of the court order and said it told the court the anticipated date when the site would be ready was May 31.

The 178 street people were allegedly dumped on a pavement under the bridge on May 21, without any food, water or other support material.

A small number are still there, although some have found shelter elsewhere, organised by the Community Chest.

Meanwhile, on June 9, the Western Cape High Court will hear an interdict lodged by the City against the SA Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), eight human rights monitors appointed by the organisation and one independent professional assisting the SAHRC.

The interdict was from monitoring the Strandfontein shelter.

The high court granted an interim order allowing the SAHRC to monitor the camp.

The Women's Legal Centre and the Centre for Applied Legal Studies have been admitted as friends of the court in the matter.

In terms of the Constitution and the SAHRC Act, the SAHRC is mandated to, among other things, monitor and assess the observance of human rights in the country.

COVID-19 LOCKDOWN