

COUNCIL TO APPROVE DRAFT EMERGENCY HOUSING POLICY (DIRECTORATE: COMMUNITY SERVICES)

Purpose of report

To obtain Council's approval for the Draft Emergency Housing Policy, which provides a comprehensive framework for responding to emergency housing needs within the municipal area in accordance with the National Housing Code (2009) and the Disaster Management Act (2002).

Background

The Municipality has a constitutional obligation in terms of Section 26 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, to take reasonable measures to progressively realise the right of access to adequate housing. In recent years, the Langeberg municipal area has experienced increasing incidents of emergency housing needs caused by fires, floods, evictions, and structural collapse.

Currently, the Municipality does not have a consolidated, Council-approved emergency housing policy that provides clear procedures, standards, and institutional responsibilities for addressing such events.

Comments

Comment Director Corporate Services

Seeing that this is a policy, it should be considered for in principle approval and submitted for public comments before final approval is considered.

Comment Director Economic, Social and Integrated Development Services

The report recommended Public Comments, whereafter Comments be submitted to Council.

Comment Director Finance

The report is noted and supported for submission to Council. The policy should be submitted for public comments before final approval by Council.

Comments Director Engineering

The report is noted and supported. The draft emergency housing policy needs to be discussed at a focused workshop to ensure that it is appropriate and complete, before the public participation process. Typical improvements may include basic illustrations (sketches) to understand, relate and evaluate the quantities included in the draft policy for alternative accommodation and emergency kits. Clarification is also needed on whether the material should be kept in stock or procured when needed, as well as quantities of each.

Comments Municipal Manager

Cognisance is taken of the comments of the Director: Engineering Services, and the focused workshop which is proposed, should be regarded as an operational matter, focused on the development of "Standard Operational Procedures SOPS", within the scope of the approved Council Policy.

The recommendation to Council is supported.

Recommendation

1. Notes the contents of this report and the rationale for the policy.
2. Approves the *Draft Langeberg Municipality Emergency Housing Policy* for public consultation as required by Section 21 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000.
3. Approve the publishing of the draft policy for public comment for a period of 30 days.
4. For the Director Community Services to submit the final policy to Council for adoption after considering all comments received.

This item served before a Community Services Portfolio Committee on 05 February 2026

Hierdie verslag het voor die Gemeenskapsdienste Portefeulje Komitee gedien op 05 Februarie 2026

Aanbeveling / Recommendation

1. That Council notes the contents of this report and the rationale for the policy.
2. That Council approves the *Draft Langeberg Municipality Emergency Housing Policy* for public consultation as required by Section 21 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000.
3. That Council approves the publishing of the draft policy for public comment for a period of 30 days.
4. That the Director Community Services submit the final policy to Council for adoption after considering all comments received.

This item served before the Executive Mayoral Committee on 18 February 2026

Hierdie item het voor die Uitvoerende Burgemeesterskomitee gedien op 18 Februarie 2026

Aanbeveling / Recommendation

1. That Council notes the contents of this report and the rationale for the policy.
2. That Council approves the *Draft Langeberg Municipality Emergency Housing Policy* for public consultation as required by Section 21 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000.
3. That Council approves the publishing of the draft policy for public comment for a period of 30 days.
4. That the Director Community Services submit the final policy to Council for adoption after considering all comments received.

This item served before an Ordinary Meeting of Council on 25 February 2026

Hierdie item het gedien voor 'n Gewone Vergadering van die Raad op 25 Februarie 2026

Eenparig Besluit / Unanimously Resolved

1. That Council notes the contents of this report and the rationale for the policy.
2. That Council approves the *Draft Langeberg Municipality Emergency Housing Policy* for public consultation as required by Section 21 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000.
3. That Council approves the publishing of the draft policy for public comment for a period of 30 days.
4. That the Director Community Services submit the final policy to Council for adoption after considering all comments received.

(A5054)



Draft Langeberg Emergency Housing Policy

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1. Preamble

The Langeberg Municipality acknowledges its constitutional obligation under **Section 26** of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, to progressively realise the right of access to adequate housing. The Municipality recognises that emergencies—such as disasters, evictions, fires, floods, or unsafe living conditions—may render individuals or families homeless or vulnerable. This policy provides a unified framework for addressing emergency housing situations in the Langeberg municipal area, incorporating national policy (National Housing Code, 2009: Emergency Housing Programme).

The Municipality is committed to:

- Providing timely and equitable emergency housing responses.
- Ensuring all interventions comply with legal, financial, and governance standards.
- Safeguarding vulnerable persons during emergency events.
- The Policy should not, under any circumstances whatsoever, be interpreted as a tool to encourage influx in and around the Langeberg Municipal area or seen to be promoting the unlawful occupation of land, rather, it is aimed at assisting the Langeberg Municipality in achieving a consistent and balanced response when dealing with emergency housing arising from one or more criteria constituting Emergencies.

This policy shall not be interpreted as promoting unlawful occupation or incentivising migration but as a humanitarian and governance measure to ensure that no one is left without basic shelter in times of crisis.

2. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy operates under the following statutes and guidelines:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Section 26).
- Housing Act, 1997 (Act No. 107 of 1997).
- National Housing Code (Part 3: Emergency Housing Programme, 2009).
- Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002).
- Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000).
- Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003).
- Western Cape Provincial Human Settlements Directives.

3. Objectives

1. Provide temporary and dignified accommodation to persons rendered homeless due to emergencies.
2. Define clear institutional processes for activating, managing, and concluding emergency housing interventions.
3. Promote coordination between the Human Settlements Department, Disaster Management Section, and other municipal directorates and their respective departments.

4. In lawful evictions under the Extension of Security of Tenure Act, 1997 (ESTA) or the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act, 1998 (PIE) and where the court orders Langeberg Municipality to provide alternative emergency accommodation to those affected; and
5. Emergency housing: Where the need for temporary housing assistance is foreseen and can be planned for, for example, evictions or temporary relocation areas where a housing development is hampered by informal structures blocking the project and the informal structures need to be decanted. The emergency accommodation shall not be used as a method of queue jumping.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals and households within the Langeberg municipal area affected by emergencies, including:

- Natural disasters (floods, fires, storms, sinkholes, earthquakes, etc.).
- Evictions resulting in homelessness.
- Dangerous or uninhabitable dwellings.
- Displacement due to public infrastructure projects.

5. Definitions

- **Affected Persons** – Individuals or households unable to access adequate housing due to an emergency.
- **Temporary Emergency Accommodation (TEA)** – Short-term shelter provided under this policy.
- **Emergency Housing Grant** – National or provincial funds allocated for emergency housing projects.
- **Temporary Relocation Area (TRA)** – Designated municipal land for short-term settlement.

6. Policy Principles

- **Pro-Poor Orientation:** Priority is given to indigent and vulnerable households.
- **Transparency:** Processes must be fair, open, and accountable.
- **Uniformity:** Consistent application across all wards and settlements.
- **Temporary Relief:** Emergency housing is short-term and transitional.
- **Integration:** Alignment with municipal housing and spatial planning frameworks.

7. Activation and Process

7.1 Triggering Events:

- Disaster declarations.
- Evictions with court orders under PIE or ESTA.

7.2 Process Steps:

1. Report received by Disaster Management or Housing Department.
2. Rapid needs assessment conducted within 48 hours.
3. Activation approved by the Municipal Manager.
4. Communication with the Provincial Department of Human Settlements for funding support.
5. Temporary accommodation allocated and monitored.

8. Eligibility and Prioritisation

8.1 Eligible households are those who:

- Are residents within Langeberg Municipality.
- Are unable to resolve their housing emergency independently.
- Have no access to other forms of support (insurance, private means, etc.).

8.2 Priority will be given to:

- Annual determined indigent threshold
- Elderly and disabled persons.
- Child-headed households.
- Households previously unassisted by government housing programmes.
- South African Citizens

9. Accommodation Types and Standards

9.1 Emergency Shelter Options:

1. Temporary relocation units (18m² as per technical guidelines).
2. Emergency Kits (9m²)

9.2 Service Standards:

The provision of water and sanitation may be provided at points where easy access for maintenance work can be conducted. Electricity services will only be considered if the immediate surrounding areas are already provided with electricity services.

Table 1: Guidelines on basic engineering services to be provided

No	Types of services	Maximum level of municipal engineering services
1.	Water	The provision of access to a water point, or tap, for every 25 families. The water taps shall be located at the toilet facilities and at selected positions as deemed expedient for the convenient usage by the occupants. Water taps shall be provided as per Engineering Directorate specification in consultation with Department of Human Settlements and may be altered from time to time.
2.	Sanitation	Toilet blocks shall be provided being the consolidation of a number of individual toilets which would reduce the cost of installation services. Random individual toilets may be installed if deemed desirable by the Municipality in order to best suit the community. All toilets shall be waterborne unless the topography and the soil conditions deem this unattainable. In that case chemical and other alternatives would be investigated. Toilets shall be provided as per Engineering Directorate specification in consultation with Department of Human Settlements and may be altered from time to time. The current policy standard is one toilet per five (5) families.
3.	Storm water Management	An approved storm water management plan shall be implemented to ensure that the temporary emergency area is not subjected to flooding and areas of stagnant water. The development shall be graded and sloped so as to ensure that the proper management of storm water ensues. This may include open drains, lined or unlined, and formal storm water pipe culverts.
4.	Roads and parking areas	The emergency accommodation area is not intended to accommodate vehicles at each residential unit. To accommodate the need for vehicle parking designated parking areas should be provided reasonably close to the area of the temporary unit. No parking on the access roads will be permitted as they are narrow and are required for other vehicles and pedestrian traffic. Settlement layouts shall also provide free access to utility vehicles such as ambulances, fire, maintenance and refuse removal services.
5	Electricity	The provision of electrical services shall depend on the availability of self-funding from the Municipality's own budget. This service cannot be guaranteed and if provided it shall be provided in phases as funding can be appropriated.

9.3 Structure (18m)

The following shall be considered only for eviction orders where the court compels alternative accommodation.

- a) The National Building Regulations Norms and Standard in respect of permanent residential structures shall not apply to temporary emergency settlement areas.
- b) Temporary shelters should be basic, simple in form and easy to construct and dismantle. The structural design should provide strength, stability and durability for the anticipated lifespan of the shelter, providing basic protection against the elements. The floor area of a shelter should be approximately 18m² in size in case of eviction as determined by court precedent and case law.
- c) Shelters may be provided through the supply of materials to beneficiaries on site to construct their own shelter or to be constructed from commercially procured materials erected by either the municipality or a service provider depending on the availability of funding and other resources and the circumstances of the individual beneficiary.
- d) The preferred option for the provision of the unit is the supply and erection of panels/sections which can be readily dismantled and stored for re-use and once a family leaves the emergency areas, they will be re-used for another emergency.
- e) No alterations, enlargements and additional structures will be permitted within the emergency accommodation area: and
- f) No encroachments into public areas will be permitted.

No	Requirement	Guideline Specification (18m ²)
1	Roof covering: Trafficable waterproof	12 x Corrugated roof sheets, 3.0m x 610mm x 0.3mm 7 x Purlins 75mm x 50mm x 3.0m
2	Walls	34 x Corrugated roof sheets 3.0m x 610mm x 0.3mm 32 x 6.0m x 75mm x 50mm purlins
3	Foundation concrete base	A15 MPa in situ or precast concrete ring 300 x 300mm reinforced (Optional) or Blocks
4	Doors	1 x SA Pine Batten 2030 x 813 x 44
5	Windows	2 x 900mm x 500 mm with glass
6	Nails	3kg x 75mm wire 6kg x 100mm wire
7	Screws	Drywall: 48 x 32 x 8mm Coarse Safe top roofing: 3 x 75mm 100/pack
8	Hinges, steel	Tee: 2 x 250 mm
9	Plastic DPC 250	1 x 6m x 3m
10	Lockset	1rim lockset

9.4 Emergency Kits

The following shall be considered where fire occurs.

4 X 76mm x 76mm x 2,7m Poles

6 x 76mm x 50 mm x 2,7m Poles

1 x 3m x 15m Plastic (250 microns)

1 x 500grams 75 mm Nails

1 x 500grams 100mm Nails

1 x 500grams 32mm Clout Nails

5 x 610mm x 3,1m Galvanized Roof sheets

10. Implementation

This policy shall come into effect on **1 July 2026**, aligned with the start of the 2026/2027 municipal financial year. All emergency housing cases initiated before the effective date will be finalised under the previous process unless otherwise directed by the Municipal Manager.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Municipality shall implement a structured reporting process to monitor emergency housing interventions. Monthly, quarterly, and annual reports shall be compiled detailing cases supported, expenditure, timeliness, and compliance. All reports must be submitted to the Director Community Services and escalated to the Municipal Manager and Council oversight structures as required.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

- a) **Municipal Council:** Approve policy and allocate budget.
- b) **Municipal Manager:** Activate policy and authorise interventions.
- c) **Human Settlements Department:** Implement projects, manage beneficiary data.
- d) **Disaster Management Centre:** Conduct assessments, coordinate responses
- e) **Engineering Services:** Provide infrastructure and technical input
- f) **Finance Department:** Ensure budget control and compliance with MFMA.
- g) **Community Services:** Oversee engagement, communication, and social support.