

## Sex work decriminalisation consultations begin

Justice and Constitutional Development Deputy Minister John Jeffery says the possible decriminalisation of sex work may be disputed, but it must be fully debated before a decision is taken.



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This as the Deputy Minister is expected to start a series of consultations with interested parties and stakeholders on the decriminalisation of sex work.

“The issue of decriminalisation may be a contested one, but is also one that needs to be debated and a decision taken, as the issue has been one which has been delayed for far too long.

“It is important that we fully engage with stakeholders regarding the proposed policy options, as there are many divergent views. We need to further engage with relevant government departments to ascertain the implications of changing the legislative framework and we also engage the public on their views,” Jeffery said.

Consultations begin on Wednesday, 9 February.

Department spokesperson Chrispin Phiri explained that the consultations will begin today (Wednesday).

“The Deputy Minister will be meeting with representatives of the pro-decriminalisation sex work sector tomorrow in a closed meeting. Thereafter [he] will have a series of similar meetings with other stakeholder who are in favour of the so-called Nordic Model.

“The Deputy Minister will also meet with religious organisations and Traditional Leaders. The dates of these meetings have not yet been confirmed,” department spokesperson Chrispin Phiri said.

In South Africa, prostitution and keeping a brothel are illegal as set out by the Sexual Offences Act of 1957 and the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act of 2007.

Several municipalities also have by-laws, which are aimed at removing or arresting sex workers.

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