

**CITIZENS' REPORT PRESENTED BY THE
EXECUTIVE MAYOR CLLR TLOTLANANG
MOGOTLANE DURING THE DISTRICT
BATHOPELE EVENT HELD ON 24TH
OCTOBER 2011 AT 11:00 IN MOOKGOPHONG
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

Programme Director,

*Mayor of Mookgophong Municipality Cde
Monyamane,*

Mayors present,

Speakers and Chief Whips,

Councillors,

Traditional Leaders,

Traditional Healers Practitioners,

Senior Municipal and Government Officials,

Representatives of Community Based Organisations,

Business associations,

Community members,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen.

Good Morning, Goeie more, Thobela, Avuxeni, Selochile, Aaa!

We are meeting here today after we held the fourth successful Local Government elections on the 18th May 2011. In its 2011 Local Government Manifesto, the African National Congress (ANC) re-affirmed its commitment to bring democracy into, and build better communities. The Manifesto further states that more women should be represented in local government. Thanks to the ANC`s Gender Equality Policy for bringing in women leadership in the District and country wide.

Ladies and gentlemen, your presence here today re-affirms the view that the transformation of service delivery in the public service is a matter dear to our glorious Movement, the ANC. Your presence here today is a testimony to your willingness to tackle the challenge facing all of us. And together we can build better communities.

Programme Director, Batho Pele is a Sesotho/Sepedi phrase which simply means “People First”. It has been chosen as a slogan for service delivery initiative because it reminds us that the sole purpose of the public service is to serve the people of South Africa who voted us into power.

Everything that public servants do is after all done for and on behalf of the people South Africa. That is why some of you present here are called public servants, and according to me public servants include both municipal and government employees.

Ladies and gentlemen the purpose of this event today is mainly to bring our community and public servants on board about the principles of Batho Pele as contained in the Batho Pele White Paper and to report on the service delivery issues within our district.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa which is rated as one of the best in the world also calls for the following with regard to service delivery:

- For the public service to be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
- For resources to be utilised effectively, economically and efficiently.
- For public service to be responsive to people's needs.
- For the public to participate in the public service policies and ,
- For public service to be accountable, transparent and oriented towards development.

Programme Director, despite the provision of the Constitution, we know that the public service needs do not measure up well to this requirements. The present reality is that there are huge discrepancies in the distribution and level of services provided (hence we chose to host this event here).

The Batho Pele concept is primarily about how public services are provided and specifically about improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the way in which these services are delivered. In improving service delivery, we need to introduce a fresh approach which puts pressure on systems procedures, attitudes and behaviour within the public service and re-orientate them in a customer`s favour, an approach which puts the people first.

This does not mean introducing more rules and centralised processes or micro-managing service delivery activities. Rather it involves creating a framework for the delivery of public services which treats citizens more like customers and enables the citizens to hold public servants accountable for the services they provide.

About the Waterberg District

The Waterberg District Municipality is one of the five districts in the Limpopo Province and located on the western part of the province. It is constituted by six local municipalities.

Like all district municipalities in the province, Waterberg District Municipality is still faced with developmental challenges as well as inadequate capacity to provide municipal goods and services to the communities. The developmental challenges that are faced by the district range from inadequate provision of basic infrastructure i.e.(water, sanitation, electricity and housing), skewed settlements patterns and delayed land claim processes. All this have an adverse impact on the development of communities and unlocking the economic development potential in mining, tourism and agriculture.

Programme Director, despite the developmental challenges that are found within the district, there is hope as investment in infrastructure for the past 17 years of democracy has brought development to the local economy of mining, tourism and agriculture.

With the limited resources at our disposal, as the district we strives to continue harnessing the cooperative governance with other spheres of government and private sectors to provide services to the people and unlock the economic development potential of our area. The role of community participation and good governance must be over-emphasised as communities play an important role in influencing the decision making processes in local government.

To address the developmental challenges and provision of services to the community of Waterberg, the district with the powers and functions vested on it, is striving to embark on the following:

➤ **Water services**

Waterberg District Municipality unlike other districts within the province and or country, is not a water services authority, hence the provision of water and sanitation is undertaken by our local municipalities. We are happy to state that the municipalities have made the budget available for this purpose.

For the past fifteen (16) years local municipalities within the district have been providing water and sanitation and managed to meet the milestones as compared to the set standards of provision of basic water and sanitation to our communities. However, we are in agreement that there are still backlogs that together with our partners in cooperative governance must address.

Ladies and gentlemen, in order to jointly address the backlogs confronting us, we need to encourage our communities to avoid illegal connections and vandalising of erected water infrastructures which are existing in our villages.

To give support to local municipalities, Waterberg District Municipality had meetings with the Department of Water Affairs to discuss plans for the provision of water in the district. The Department of Water Affairs has completed two studies that would bring water to Waterberg through the Crocodile Water Reticulation System. As we all know that developments in Lephalale are of National and International importance, the District undertook a trip to Bojanala Platinum District Municipality in 2010 for the same purpose. The purpose of the visit was to enter into a strategic relationship and partnership which will cater for the construction of the water pipe which will be vying through Bojanala as we share the border between North-West and Limpopo.

➤ **Electricity**

The electricity backlog of the Waterberg District Municipality is minimal as compared to those of other district municipalities. Provision of electricity in the district is bestowed with Eskom as provider in rural areas of the municipality.

However, the electrification process is the function of local municipalities in conjunction with the provider which is Eskom. We also encourage residents to pay for the services provided by the municipalities.

There are complaints lodged by our communities regarding the supply of electricity in our extension areas in our villages. I am glad to report that our local municipalities are attending to the problems and almost all of them have budgeted for these in the present financial year. Some of those villages are already in the IDP`s of their local municipalities.

➤ **Housing**

Programme Director, as the District we are not rendering this service, however, local municipalities in conjunction with COGHSTA are involved in the housing chapter. I am glad to announce that progress has been made in this regard. There are also attempts by the department to get those houses finished and handed over to the beneficiaries. The other challenge that the MEC highlighted is lack of land to built additional houses in particular around towns and townships. We hope this will be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Therefore, our Spatial Development Frameworks should encourage social inclusion and nation building.

Economic Development

The economic development of the Waterberg revolves around agriculture, commerce, manufacturing, mining and tourism. The traces of unequal distribution of wealth is still realised in that the historically disadvantaged groups

are not benefiting from the available local economic opportunities. The role of private Sectors in economic development cannot be ignored despite the high levels of unemployment.

The Local Economic Development Strategy of the district depict that Waterberg has both the comparative and competitive advantages in tourism, agriculture and mining. These comparative advantages are almost evenly distributed in all the six local municipalities:

➤ **Mining**

The potential growth of the mining industry is found in Thabazimbi, Lepahalale and Mogalakwena municipalities. Ladies and gentlemen, the expansion of mining processes brings development challenges especially housing development as communities have to be relocated. The processes of relocating communities to new areas have to be considered as there is immense outcry from the communities about the impact of the process.

It is therefore important to involve communities through the intergovernmental relation processes that will also involve the private sector to improve the process.

Programme Director, we need to ensure that our communities are involved in mining and its development

of social labour plans should ensure active participation of the communities and empower them through procurement and educational skills development. The global economic meltdown has also immensely affected communities employed in the mines as there are number of retrenchments registered in the sector.

➤ **Tourism**

The area of Waterberg is also blessed with rich history and cultural resources that have potential for economic growth.

The Waterberg tourism sites include:

- ✓ Waterberg Biosphere Reserve – which received its international status in 2001 and now forms part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The District is the custodian of the Reserve and provides funding annually for operational requirements of the Biosphere.
- ✓ The Makapan Valley World Heritage Site, where Chief Mokopane of the Ndebele tribe bravely fought and defended his people against Herman Potgieter. It is at Makapan Valley

caves where you find fossils which include some of the oldest ancestral remains in South Africa and indicate that early humans lived there some 2.8 million years ago.

- ✓ Nylsvley wetlands – More than 400 bird species have been recorded on the 16 000 ha wetland extending some 70 km between Modimolle and Mokopane Town.
- ✓ Hot Spring Water – the strong mineral spring which gave rise to Bela Bela Local Municipality.
- ✓ The development of Waterberg Meander which covers a distance of 350 kilometres, has more than sixteen attraction sites that are able to attract tourists and some of them have benefited our disadvantaged communities like in Telekishi and the Pedi potters projects.
- ✓ The feasibility study on the development of Vaalwater as the tourism and wildlife hub of the District has been completed. The bankable business plans have been completed.

- ✓ For the past two years Waterberg District Municipality has been supporting the Annual Waterberg Game Festival which is held here in Vaalwater/Mabatlane.
- ✓ These tourism sites are of significance for the development of the local economy. However, our biggest challenge is that some of the land claims processes have not been finalised and those which have been completed need funding to benefit our communities.

Programme Director, it is therefore important that our local municipalities engage and forge partnerships with private sectors to ensure that the local environment is conducive to the business environment and participation of our communities.

➤ **Agriculture**

Waterberg District contributes almost 30% of the Limpopo Province `s agricultural activity whereas it employs around 21% of the labour force of the district. The biggest challenge faced by the district is the shift by farmers from crop to game farming which resulted in most our people losing their jobs.

The District municipality has completed the policy on the use of farm lands in order to monitor the protection of

potential land for agriculture development and it is for the local municipalities to develop and implement effective buy-laws for this purpose.

The Food Security Programme in the district is successful in types of farming in the community projects like broilers chicken, vegetable production and small scale livestock farming.

The flagship projects in the district which are Nkidikitlana Abattoir, Lemagararo Agricultural Cooperative(Lepahalale), and Goat Cooperatives in Modimolle, Madisha goat project in Mookgophong and Mogalakwena Local municipalities.

Ladies and gentlemen, the broad challenge in agriculture is to make sure that emerging farmers graduate to commercial farming in the District. The expansion of agricultural activities also poses a challenge as the district is mostly rural with agricultural potential.

It is therefore important that other potential agriculture clusters be packaged and developed. It is also imperative to develop a database of existing agricultural projects to determine their sustainability.

➤ **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Waterberg District Municipality has adopted the children`s playing ward at Mokopane Hospital in Mogalakwena municipality. On the 7th September 2011 toys worth R 15.000.00 were donated to the Hospital for the children.

➤ **HIV/AIDS**

Programme Director, the pandemic of HIV/AIDS is still a challenge in the district.

The Waterberg District has been categorised as the number one Antenatal Zero HIV prevalence as compared to other four districts in our province. I was advised before this gathering that currently we are at 26.6% with HIV zero prevalence. I believe we can improve.

The abuse of alcohol and drugs by youth contribute to the high transmission of this epidemic. We therefore appeal to our youth in particular, to stay away from the abuse of these substances and commit themselves to the ABC concept.

➤ **Crime**

The levels of crime in general are low in the district. There are sporadic incidents of theft, robbery, rape, domestic violence and fraud.

We want to take this opportunity to appreciate the sterling work done by the SAPS in the District. During the District Safety and Security Summit held on 7th July 2011, **Operation Pimpa** was one of the resolutions adopted to spread the fight against crime. The District municipality has also entered into a strategic partnership with the Chamber of Business in Modimolle where cameras have been installed to combat crime. Plans are in place to install same in Bela-Bela and other remaining local municipalities.

Some of the challenges which are identified as the causes of crime include amongst others:

- ✓ Alcohol and drug abuse
- ✓ Lack of sporting and recreational facilities
- ✓ The escalating of the number of illegal operation of shebeens and unlicensed liquor outlets.
- ✓ Poor lightning and certain areas.

➤ Disaster Management

The District has completed the construction of the disaster centre in Lephhalale and has distributed fire-fighting vehicles to all the local Municipalities. We are in the process of procuring other modern of the arts fire-fighting vehicles to be able to combat any form of disaster in the District.

Programme Director, in line with the constitutional principle of cooperative government, particularly as regards to promoting a coherent government, it is expected that all sectors of public administration will agree to follow the principles as set out in the Batho Pele White Paper to successfully overcome the challenges that I already alluded to.

Programme Director, putting Batho Pele in practice calls for completely different approach from the way in which government policies are traditionally implemented. It is not only about issuing rules and transcripts. It is also a dynamic process which aims to refocus the public service on the needs of their customers.

Programme Director, I was informed that all sector departments will be here for the whole week showcasing their projects and programmes in their stalls and I therefore encourage you to make a turn at each stall and get clarity on some of the issues not covered during my address.

I therefore take this opportunity to formally launch the District Batho Pele as a built up activity towards the provincial event to be held in November. Hope that you will enjoy the rest of the activities to follow. And working together we can do more.

KE A LEBOGA, I THANK YOU!!