

VICTOR KHANYE



Newsletter

JUNE 2013 EDITION

Local Municipality • Masepala wa Magae • Umas'pala Wemakhaya



“Towards sustainable, cost-effective service delivery for ALL through participative, transparent and clean local government”



**Ass. Man. Communication,
S Masemola... driving force
behind the Newsletter**

Editor's Note

**VKLM - News, platform
for interaction between
politicians, community
and administration**

This, the first newsletter of Victor Khanye Local Municipality rings in a new and exciting communication era for politicians, the community and administration- the newsletter gives all three local government spheres the opportunity to communicate matters of importance. This new venture will sustain the municipality's drive on an ongoing basis to further bridge the information divide.

Said Sentebaleng, in the Communication Unit of VKLM and editor: "I would like to see the newsletter being used as a platform to show case service delivery achievements of the municipality. I also believe that it could serve as a tool to reach out not only to the community at large, but also accommodating the staff members in a positive manner.

She called on the entire administration to make this newsletter their own by supporting it through providing information of their respective directorates which could be disseminated to the community. "As far as the community is concerned, I believe it is their newsletter and I call on them to whole hearted support it and participate through inputs.

"It is important for the community to be well informed at all times regarding

municipal services because local government consists of three tiers namely, the community, politicians and the administration. One cannot do without the other. Everyone has a very important and responsive role to play," she said.

Welcome to the first edition. VKLM is proud to bring you this exciting new publication. Enjoy the first edition and

let me have your comments, thoughts and ideas how we can improve the contents and serve you as a community best. Direct your inputs via e-mail sentebaleng@victorkhanyelm.gov.za, or alternatively hand it in at the Communications Unit of the municipality.

Thank you,

-Editor

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Executive Mayor,
Cllr. EN Makhabane...
warning to those who
refuse to pay for services!

BUDGET 2013 / 14

"Switching off programme, targeting stakeholders who CAN pay..."

The Victor Khanye Local Municipality (VKLM) is out to improve its revenue collection through a "switching off" programme, Stakeholders who can afford to pay for municipal services, but who refuse to do so, could soon find themselves without basic municipal services!

This stern warning came from the Executive Mayor, Cllr. Eva Makhabane when she delivered her 2013/14 - budget speech recently.

"Everyone present here will agree that the municipality is not a profit making organization. However, for every organization to meet its objectives, financial resources are essential.

"Currently some of our stakeholders are not paying for services rendered and this has a dire effect on our budget. The municipality is going to implement a programme of 'switching off.' Those stakeholders who are able to pay must do so, failure of which will have dire consequences," The Executive Mayor warned.

She went on to say that it would be necessary to review the municipality's revenue enhancement strategy, internal controls, as well as ongoing engagement with the community through the Speaker's Community Participation Programme to ensure buy-in from the community to sustain services the municipality provides

The estimated budget for 2013/14 financial years amounts to R394, 6m- an increase of 18, 5 percent on the previous year. The operating budget is R292m, while the capital budget, amounts to R102, 6m. The employee cost is below the accepted National Treasury norm

It required a special effort and creativity for us to balance this budget. The downturn in the economy and in particular unemployment, all impacted negatively on the budget.

VKLM's budget is aligned with its Integrated Development Plan (IDP) which addressed the six Local Government Key Performance areas including the needs of the indigent population through the provision of free basic services and affordable tariffs, it was said.

'VKLM now provides quality water to MOST of its citizens'

Referring to the problem around the quality of water, the Executive Mayor

Makhabane said, "Our misery in terms of the quality of water is now something of the past thanks to the water purification plant which is now fully operational.

She did however say the challenge remains on the quantity side as citizens in Botleng Ext. 3, 4, 5 and 6 still experience a shortage in supply. "This shortage should be something of the past comes June this year, when the construction of the R16m Rand Water pipeline connection, is completed."

Restoring people's dignity

The municipality's drive to eradicate the bucket system in especially Mawaag and Mandela informal settlements is in full swing. Cllr. Makhabane announced that VKLM and the Nkangala District Municipality in a joint venture are restoring people's dignity by eradicating the bucket system. This

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SERVICE DELIVERY

**98% households now have water,
83% toilet facilities & 85% electricity**

**What phenomenal
service delivery...**

What an administration !

Strong political leadership and administration excellence in Victor Khanye Local Municipality (VKLM) lead to phenomenal service delivery since June 2011, whereby 98 percent of all households have access to piped water, 83 percent have toilet facilities and 85 percent have access to electricity lighting services

The communities' mandate includes inter alia, affordable services such as water, sanitation, waste removal and electricity – in this the municipality, in more than one way, delivered on the mandate.

The Executive Mayor, Cllr. Eva

Makhabane, although satisfied with the progress thus far, is the first to admit that much more still needs to be done to improve the lives of everyone living in this municipality!

In this exclusive interview Cllr. Makhabane outlines the municipality's achievements since 2011.

“The 2009 Manifesto provides guidelines for service delivery to communities. Through this policy document, the ruling party received its mandate to govern.

“We made sure that the Manifesto also compliments the municipality's Integrated Development Plan, the

Budget and Vision 2030,” she said.

“Vision 2030 was conceived during the 2012 Strategic Lekgotla when it was said that by 2030 Council wants to see the town as a city. It was also decided to hold either quarterly or yearly Lekgotlas to assess progress made towards meeting council's objectives.

The Executive Mayor warned that unless all role players wholeheartedly commit themselves, the municipality's 2030 vision will not materialize.

VKLM at all times interact with its community thus enhancing

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Switching off programme, continued...

project is due to kick-off very soon.

She also announced the construction of 170 VIP toilets (2013/14 financial year) in all rural wards, as well as the purchase of a 1200 liters sewer septic tanker at a cost of R1, 2m to serve these rural wards.

In her closing remarks Cllr. Makhabane said that the Council will never lose sight of the mandate given to it. Indeed we want to see the lives of our people changing for the better. However, for as long as some of our people live in squatter camps, we will not rest.

“The African National Congress remains the only party that can and will change the lives of the people in this town. We have come too far to forget the mandate given to us by the people, the Executive Mayor said.

Phenomenal service delivery, continued...

democracy and accountability. "Gone are the days whereby government would plan community needs in isolation. Through the IDP, Budget processes and Mayoral Imbizo, we were able to capture the needs of the community. Thus making sure that government resources are channeled at services which would be fully utilized by communities thus eliminating situations where resources are turned into white elephants," she said.

Makhabane emphasized that the municipality is operating on a very tight budget and therefore community needs had to be prioritized. "We will not be able to do everything at once, but we will address those needs which are either essential or critical to communities."

Achievements galore (2011-2013)

The municipality's service delivery achievements from July 1, 2011 to date were directed at the priorities identified in the Manifesto namely:

- Build local economies to create more employment, decent work and sustainable livelihoods
- Improve local public services and broaden access to them
- Build a united, non-racial, integrated and safe community
- Promote active community participation in local government
- Ensure more effective, accountable and clean local government that works together with national and provincial government

Creating more jobs

Creating more work opportunities is not only confined to VKLM but the country as a whole. More than 500 local people were employed through the Expanded Public Works



Programme, Municipal Infrastructure Grant and other programmers.

- Through the municipality's Local Economic Development Strategy, 10 mines started operations in the area. These mines are employing around 14 percent of the local population. The municipality is also consulting with the mines to train people so that they can be employed in senior, critical and scarce skills positions as opposed to being mere general workers

- Two mines, Exxaro and Continental agreed to establish an FET College in Delmas ext.14 for 120 students

- The municipality is continuing to engage the private sector and other spheres of government in terms of bringing flagship projects to the town namely the Nkangala Airport, Sephaku Cement and a casino

Both the airport and casino projects

are awaiting licensing before implementation. It is envisaged that these projects will commence next year. When fully operational they will create an estimated 20 000 job opportunities

Improving basic services

Water

"The provision of sustainable services to our people remains at the core of our mandate. As a municipality we are tasked with the provision of basic services to our communities," the Executive Mayor said.

- VKLM's provision of piped water to households is higher than the overall district percentage, as well as the provincial average - 98 percent of households have access to piped water compared to the overall district percentage of 92,7 percent and the

Continues on page 6

Phenomenal service delivery, continued...



provincial average of 82,2 percent

The now completed Delmas Water Purification Plant has improved the quality of water up to an 80,7 percent Blue Drop Status. Currently the main source of water is from 22 boreholes of which 16 are operational and eight to be repaired. The water supply will be further augmented once the Rand Water Pipeline is commissioned in the second quarter of 2013

In the rural areas, wards 7,8 and 9, two water tankers are used to deliver water which are stored in Jojo tanks. The Agricultural holdings are supplied by Rand Water pipeline.

Sanitation

Major inroads have been made regarding sanitation and the restoring of peoples dignity. 83 Percent of the households have access to toilet facilities, a further 700 VIP toilets were constructed in rural wards 7 and 9 at a cost of R2m. A vacuum tanker service is operating in rural wards 7, 8



and 9

The municipality is seeking government's assistance to eradicate the bucket system in Mandela and Mawaag informal settlements (1200 households use the bucket system). It is envisaged that this projects would kick-off later this year.

The Delmas Waste Water Treatment Plant will be refurbished to up the workload also eliminating odour coming from the plant

Electricity

"Electricity brings light and where there is light, there is definitely hope", said Cllr. Makhanbane. To this end, the municipality's electrification programme has provided 85 percent households with electricity.

She pointed out that in Botleng, Sundra and Elof, where Eskom is the service provider challenges are being experienced. In farming areas solar energy is used. High mast light in all 9 wards have been erected to prevent criminal activities

Integrated human settlement

Housing is not a municipal competency but a provincial one. However the municipality's housing unit compiled a database of all people needing houses. The Executive Mayor called on needy people to complete the necessarily forms which will then be forwarded to the provincial department of Human Settlement. Up to now 78 beneficiaries were given houses.

The Exxaro mine is also building 25 houses for elderly people who have been on the waiting list for some time. The current situation reflects that 750 households are in informal dwellings. The municipality has undertaken an assessment on this issue and registered 1 800 households in informal dwellings in Mandela, eMawaag, Enkanini, as well as back yard dwellers.

Land has also been identified to re-settle these households in and around Botleng, Ext. 5, 6, and 7. A task team of representatives from the informal area, ward councillors and

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SPEAKER OVERVIEW

Towards a Service Charter and Batho Pele Principles



Speaker, RK Segone... driven by Batho Pele Principles

"It is imperative that we maintain stability. To achieve this, Council is developing a soon to be implemented Service Charter. Second to this strong emphasis on the implementation of the Batho Pele Principles throughout the administration

"The adoption of a Local Economic Development Strategy will not only enhance community stability, but also address unemployment and the

development of Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises.

"These mentioned strategies will lead to the economical beneficiation which in turn would enhance political stability and job creation. We all know that a hungry stomach causes violence."

So said the Speaker of the Victor Khanye Local Municipality, Cllr. Robert Khaye Segone, during an

interview

Challenges his office had to deal with were amongst others, to ensure that the newly elected Councilors fully understand and implement the Municipal Systems Act and other Municipal Acts.

The adoption of the revised vision

Continues on page 8

Phenomenal service delivery, continued...

administration are established to coordinate the process.

Access roads

Municipal roads total 245km surfaced and 106km graveled roads

Waste and refuse management

More than 72 percent of all households have access to waste collection. The service in most areas in Botleng and Delmas now has their

waste removed twice a week.

Non-racial, integrated, safer communities

The municipality now has nine wards which led to an increase in the number of Ward Committees thereby making it easier for the municipality to communicate with communities.

The draft Communication and Public Participation Strategy is about to be finalized and the website is up and running, it was said.

Land owners are being asked to sell some of their land to VKLM for the establishment of integrated residential areas.

Effective, clean and accountable

To ensure more effective, accountable and clean local government, a Risk Management Unit has been established with staff, as well as the Internal Audit unit. To this end the municipality has achieved in 2010/11 a clean audit and in 2011/12 unqualified outcome.

Towards a Service Charter, continued...



and mission of the municipality Cllr. Segone cited as an important achievement. "Working together with the Executive Mayor, Cllr. Eva Makhabane, to attract more investors and creating a good relation between the municipality and local business, I rate highly," he said.

Through partnership with the Department of Health, the municipality has assisted two learners to study medicine in Cuba

Segone is satisfied that Ward Committees are functioning well, although he sees capacity development as a high priority. To this end, committee members have just completed a nine day training course in Public Participation and Local Governance, Meeting Procedures and Reporting, Core Municipal Processes and Service Delivery.

He is satisfied over the good working

relation that exists between the Council and Administration, especially after the appointment of the Municipal Manager, RM Marede. "The municipality also has a good relation with and enjoys support from the Provincial government and the Nkangala District Municipality. I'm satisfied, the municipality is doing well," Segone concluded

Functions of the Speaker

As the Chairperson of the Council, the Speaker is the promoter and protector of democracy, facilitating debate and arrival of consensus of Council and also ensuring ethical conduct by councilors.

In order to fulfill democracy the Speaker manages community participation in local government through ward committees by ensuring that they function effectively.

Furthermore, he has to ensure public consultation, involvement and participation in the affairs of the municipality.

The Speaker is also guided by several overarching objectives, including good governance, service delivery excellence and Batho Pele (People First). Delegated roles are carried out through three departments in the Office of the Speaker, namely Community Participation, Councillor Affairs, Council and Committees.

The municipality has nine wards and the Office of The Speaker manages all support functions relating to Ward Councilors and Ward Committees

The Speaker is also responsible for coordinating the Integrated Development Plan and Budget Community Outreach Programme, ensuring inclusive resident input into the formulation of these documents.

MUNICIPAL MANAGER OVERVIEW

Dynamic Maredi setting pace and achieving administrative excellence!



VKLM's Municipal Manager
par excellence...
RM maredi

She has been at the helm of Victor Khanye Local Municipality's (VKLM) administration for just over a year. In a very short space of time (April 2012) Me RM Maredi, Municipal Manager, has taken this municipality to unsurpassed administration and financial heights.

She is one of those rare administrators that know exactly where she wants to go and how to get there! With Maredi at the helm the municipality's Vision 2013 strategy has every chance of being extremely successful.

In this interview the Municipal Manager deals with wide ranging questions in a professional and honest manner.

Asked about challenges Maredi said, "the municipality has the potential of becoming a high capacity type however, the impeding factors in the main are inadequate capacity in respect of personnel both in numbers and skills.

"The lack of skills is the reflection of the impact of the socio-economic challenges faced by the entire community, in particular the low literacy levels. Furthermore due to the high unemployment rate (28 percent, Census 2011) payment of service and the maximization of the revenue base is the biggest

challenge," she explained

Negative impact

The easy access to Gauteng and the rest of Mpumalanga is seeing to have a negative impact on population growth of the municipality, as well as the capacity for water, sanitation and road services.

"Other pressing service delivery challenges are the informal settlements and associated undesirable social ills including but not excluding drug abuse, lack of proper sanitation, backlog on human settlement services and unemployment.

The municipality can not readily attract qualified persons for scarce skills such as finance management and technicians due to the uncompetitive conditions of employment

VKLM is addressing the mentioned challenges through its Vision 2030 strategy which was adopted in 2012,

and inter alia, addresses the following:

- Revision of the service delivery plans
- Renewed and refocused resources for high impacts service delivery
- Involved all stakeholders (politicians and administration) to enhance teamwork
- Strategic partners support to build capacity through mentoring of the personnel and the exposure to various training programmes
- Compulsory site visits to compliment the skills developing process
- Empowering of youth involvement by streamlined local government initiatives
- Infrastructure projects being implemented through the Municipal Infrastructure Grants and the Expanded Public Works Programme. To date an amount of R58 m has been spend on road projects

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VICTOR KHANYE

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Portrait of Councillors



Speaker
Cllr. RK Segone



Executive Mayor
Cllr. EN Makhabane



Council Chief Whip
Cllr. H Ngoma



MMC - Health, Social Services
& Development
Cllr. SH Mahlangu



MMC - Planning, Infrastructure,
Transport & Safety
Cllr. KV Buda



MMC - Finance
& Corporate
Cllr. ZJM Zulu





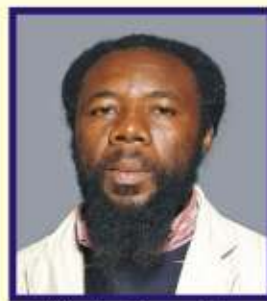
Ward 2 Councillor
Cllr. D Yeko



Ward 1 Councillor
Cllr. M Nhlapo



Ward 6 Councillor
Cllr. ET Shabangu



Ward 9 Councillor
Cllr. S Nkabinde



Ward 8 Councillor
Cllr. D Bath



Ward 3 Councillor
Cllr. L Mlambo



PR Councillor
Cllr. M Rautenbach



PR Councillor
Cllr. M Mahuleka



PR Councillor
Cllr. B Shabalala



PR Councillor
Cllr. B Rolisizu



She is extremely proud, since she took office, of achieving Clean Audit Status for the 2009/ 10 financial year and the Unqualified Audit Outcome in the following financial year. This she said, the municipality plans to maintain in preparing for the 2014 clean audit outcome.

"The municipality also prides itself in managing its financial resources well and being able to serve its service provision liabilities and not being in deficit. This instill trust in the municipality, as well as encouraging potential investors."

Other achievements include:

- Achieving Blue Drop Water Quality Status (87 percent)
- Awarded the most Improved Status Trophy

Maredi also mentioned the stable political environment. The municipality at the end of December 2012, filled all senior management positions.

With reference to the skills development, she said the municipality is on course in terms of compliance submission of the Workplace Skills Development Plan. However the effect of the programme is slow to manifest, due to the low skills base in general. An area of concern however is in Technical Services and Finance.

"The contribution and partnership with sector departments, inter alia, Water Affairs, Institute of Municipal Financial Officers, Treasury, Cooperative Governance and Tribal Affairs as well as LGSETA are valuable to improve the skills of our staff. However, due to the low staff compliment it is impractical to release a large number of staff at once to attend training programmes and this in itself derail the improvement results.

"It is worth noting" the Municipal Manager said "that skills development only becomes effective

if the staff has a solid educational and qualification background, which is often the challenge in this municipality,"

Skills development programmes

The following courses are currently in progress. (LGSETA is responsible for the main skills development programmes:

- Plumbing, 25 external and 18 internal employees
- Technical artisans 87 candidates mainly unemployed youth
- Through programmes provided by IMFO and Finance Management Systems, the internship is in its final year. Three of these interns have since been absorbed
- Continuous development of SCM officials is on course
- The municipality supports the self development programmes for distant and block residence training programmes which are attended by employees at various institutions
- Management officials and councilors participate in CMDP programmes

She said that the municipality is experiencing a reasonable acceptable payment rate for services even though unemployment is reasonably high. The major challenges according to Maredi are in Botleng Ext 3, Sundra and Eloff where Eskom is the electricity provider. Due to the 50/50 basis nature of our billing system, the municipality is experiencing a very low level of payment for services. Hence the plan to install water meters whilst talks with Eskom are progressing for them to take over the area."

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Asked what she would still like to add to her list of achievements, she commented:

“It is important to win the confidence of major investors to discern to our municipality and jerk up the economy. Whilst we are known to be the locus for mining, the impact of these mines in terms of beneficiation is yet to be seen.

“Through our Local Economic Development unit we keep track of the projects the mines are implementing as part of their Social Labour Plans. We are very anticipative of the envisaged anchor projects – international cargo airport, integrated private housing development and the Casino – to be implemented by the private sector.

“Our preparation for these projects is the empowerment of Small, Medium and Macro enterprises and Cooperatives to be ready to participate in the markets when the projects take off,” she explained.

The MM cited the following contributions resulting in political stability saying the municipality appreciates the stability which is paramount for an effective service programme:

- High levels of communication at the highest political leadership level (Troika comprising of the Executive Mayor, Speaker, Council Whip and Municipal Manager who meets regularly)
- Totally open transparency, trust relationship
- Municipal Manager has an “open door policy” for all stakeholders (politicians, administration and community)
- The Community



Participation Programme
· Sound working relationship

VKLM AFRICA DAY





YOUTH DAY CELEBRATIONS

**“Government must
take care of the youth-
if not, it is DOOMED”**

- Executive Mayor, Cllr. EN Makhabane



VKLM EVENTS

Woman meet to fight for economic freedom

- Editor, Sentebaleng Masemola



Under the theme “Women empowerment through economic development”, women from various sectors gathered at the Red Star Raceway to celebrate the fourth Women Summit of the Victor Khanye Local Municipality on 22 and 23 November 2012.

The place was abuzz with ululations, song and dance at the start of the two day annual event. It was however, this song “Leli lizwe elamakhosikasi asoze sa phela amandla” (a Zulu song meaning; this world is owned by women and they will not give up) that prompted the Executive Mayor Cllr Eva Makhabane to take off her high

heels and go barefoot, to join in the celebration.

The summit, aimed at addressing some of the many challenges affecting women was attended by women in business, community development workers, old age home, NGOs and NPOs, women in cooperatives, disability forum and representatives of government sector departments such as; Department of Social Development, Health, Agriculture and Education. Though the message was one; “women economic liberation”, the first day saw multiple streams of motivation from different speakers.

In her speech, Executive Mayor Makhabane urged women to arm themselves with knowledge and education in order to win the fight against the social ills they face daily.

She also encouraged women to make use of the opportunities offered by the municipality through Local Economic Development and other government programmes. “I strongly encourage you to consider forming corporate as it is one of the easy ways to grow your business and get financial aid,” said Makhabane.

Echoing the Mayor's words Executive Director of Social

VKLM Events, continued...

Services, Mrs. Thembi Mdluli said knowledge and education are the best ammunition and that women must learn to communicate wisely to produce positive results.

She said: "I believe women are good marketing agents capable of getting the message across but only if we showed the same enthusiasm when we discuss the enriching information we receive in occasions such as these, as the one we express while spreading gossip through the fence in our neighbourhoods, the world would be a better place".

The day ended with commissions which were divided into four groups, with the first group discussing the emancipation of women through local economic development; the second group looked at the contribution of women in local government; the third was tackling the impact of drug abuse and

HIV/Aids in households and the last one dealt with rural development.

The resolutions unpacked on the last day of the seminar include recommendations for the municipality to introduce a gender unit to address the issues affecting women, as well as escalating the accessibility of information to rural areas. In addition a suggestion was made for the municipality to direct at least 50% of municipal procurement to local women in business.

With the gathering held just three days before the 16 Days of Activism against Women and Child Abuse and only a few days to the International Aids Day, participants agreed that more attention needs to be focused on these two subjects throughout the year and not only during this time as they have become an everyday social issue.

Executive Director Mdluli further

added that more emphasis should be put on awareness campaigns and education around HIV/Aids to eliminate the stigma that still lies in many families. *"Although it has not reduced, the rate of HIV/Aids in the Delmas community has been static, however, we must now strive for an HIV free generation,"* she said.

In conclusion Executive Mayor Makhabane, who was commended for her hands-on leadership conduct said through these initiatives women have the capability to improve the recent census report that reflects the high rate of unemployment.

In an effort to answer to the plight of women economic empowerment the municipality has developed a strategic plan to achieve Vision 2030 which amongst other things talks to the economy development including women empowerment.

A March against social ills

- Editor, Sentebaleng Masemola

Victor Khanye Local Municipality in partnership with the South African National Council on Alcoholism & Drug dependency (SANCA), Love life and other stakeholders in a bid to raise awareness recently held a march against drug abuse and HIV/Aids.

The jovial walk was attendant by members of the public of all ages ranging from teens to youth and adults. The two-hour march divided into three groups had three starting points; one was in Botleng Extension 3 with the other in Delpark and the most popular with a large group led by the Victor Khanye Local



Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr Eva Makhabane commenced at Sinethemba Community Hall.

Participants then proceeded to the

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Simon Gondwe Sport Centre where a formal session was held.

During her address Makhabane emphasized the importance of educating the community about the effects of using drugs. "The main objective of the march is to educate our community, especially young people about the undesirable consequences of using drugs" said Makhabane. "We see this march as

an appropriate medium for educating our young people about the dangers of using drugs which does not only destroy lives but it fuels poverty, increases HIV and AIDS, accelerates crime, women and child abuse".

The event saw a series of presentations from various organizations and sector departments such as The National Youth Development Agency

(NYDA), the Department of Social Development, the Department of Education, Health Department and.

The audience was later treated to a moving poem from a drug and alcohol abuse survivor Sfiso who pledged to never look back and also pleaded with young people to take control of their lives and not let drugs ruin their lives.

Dignity restored through housing

- Editor, Sentebaleng Masemola



Victor Khanye Local Municipality, Executive Mayor Cllr Eva Makhabane handed over houses in extension 5 near N12.

Addressing the community on the day, she said: "Today's development is as a result of many people working together. Its only when we work better together with communities

that we can deliver sustainable human settlements."

"It is true that the province and the country are grappling with an increasing demand for houses. It's not possible for the government to provide all the housing needs as quickly as we would like. This is why we need to work better together to

find solutions for the housing demand."

She further urged the beneficiaries to take care of the houses; "We as the government are doing our best to provide homes, yet once we hand this home over to you, you must make sure you maintain your home. If something like a door handle is broken, you must take responsibility and fix it. Those people getting homes today are the fortunate few, as there are so many people waiting for houses and will still wait for a long time."

Upon receiving the keys to their first houses 107-year-old Sarah Msiza and 94-year-old Lizzie Sibiya were both overwhelmed and could not hold back tears. Echoing each other's words, the gogo's said that it is only in owning a house that dignity can be restored.

Working together for a developed community

- Editor, Sentebaleng Masemola

Victor Khanye Local Municipality recently held a workshop for Ward Committee Members in which more than 80 representatives from the municipality's 9 wards were present. The workshop was meant to reflect on the work done by the ward committee members for the period 2012/13.

The Facilitator Ms Sbongile Nkosi from the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), began the two-day seminar by speaking about the structures and processes of local government.

"The main thrust of this gathering is to equip members to fully understand their roles and responsibilities as far as local government matters are concerned," she said.

Members needed to know how to derive mandates in order for them to represent their respective communities and account for the progress and programmes of the municipality, and the challenges municipalities faced. "Members must make a point that the needs and aspirations of people in their respective wards are taken into account."

Addressing the Ward Committee Members, the Municipal Manager Minah Maredi covered topics such as ward-based planning, the municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP), budgeting and key performance areas such as basic services, infrastructure services, local economic development, financial viability and the special development framework.

Mrs Maredi stressed that members should leave the conference knowing their roles and responsibilities and having a clear understanding of



reporting procedures.

However, the Executive Mayor Cllr Eva Makhabane was delighted that the attendees were grasping the information. "The way they raised questions and interacted is an indication of their understanding of the information they received."

She further said that Ward committees are not only established to provide a channel of communication between Local Government Structures and

residents, they also act as a mouthpiece in respect of peoples' aspirations when it comes to quality of life and service delivery.

According to the attendees the workshop has been valuable in that they are learning what is expected of them. They said that they needed to know what role they are supposed to play and how to channel information from communities to councillors.

Learners urged to work hard

The Victor Khanye Local Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr Eva Makhabane accompanied by the Council Speaker Cllr Khaya Segone and the then Member of Parliament Mr Simon Skhosana and now MEC for Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) visited Sundra High School during the school opening in January.

The message conveyed by the MEC to the learners was for them to work and to stay dedicated to reach greater height he said this while addressing them in the school assembly.

The delegates ended the visit after a brief meeting with the school principal and teachers in which the educators raised the challenges that impact on the progression of the school.

Vision:

“A prosperous Mpumalanga Western Gateway city for a cohesive developed community...”



Mission:

“To provide quality and sustainable services to the diverse community in a responsive and effective way for optimum economic growth in order to enhance prosperity...”

“Inspired by desire to be positioned on the global map of attractive cities resulting in a positive impact on investment, jobs, inhabitants, visitors and events through quality service provision...”

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