

PUBLIC GIVEN INPUT OVER BUDGET PLANS

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THE Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality has kicked off a public participation programme which is aimed at encouraging residents to comment over the draft Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and draft Budget for the financial years 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15. The programme started last Wednesday and was launched by Mayor Dr Balekile Mzangwa. "Public participation is a consultative process through which the municipality encourages the involvement of communities.

"It also ensures that political leaders remain accountable," said the mayor. The IDP is also a guiding tool in the drafting of a municipal budget. Presenting the draft IDP, the mayor explained how the municipality intends to contribute immensely towards the development of communities within Thabo Mofutsanyana District.

There are projects that range from the upgrading of roads and expansion of sewer treatment works to development of SMMEs and management of disasters.

Dr Mzangwa said: "Our role will be also to offer support to the local municipalities within our district and to ensure that we deliver on our mandate of service delivery.

"Some of the issues raised here today, such as malfunctioning street lights and bad internal roads, fall within the jurisdiction of a local municipality.

"It is however important for us as the district municipality to assist, where possible," he added. Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality, which was formed by combining five local municipalities, has now had one more formerly-independent municipality added to it.

This came about through the break-up of Bloemfontein's Motheo District Municipality and the formation of the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality. It now consists of Phumelela, Dihlabeng, Nketoana, Setsoto, Maluti-a-Phofung and Mantsopa local municipalities.

Traditional leaders were pleased to have been invited to give their input regarding the draft IDP and budget. Among other issues raised by these leaders was the management of disasters in the villages, which are particularly prone to veld fires during winter and the upgrading of roads and installation of street lights.

Morena Dirahadibonwe Sekonyela pleaded with the municipality to bring traditional leaders into capacity-building programmes. "This will help to provide us with much-needed skills in leadership and also in role clarification between councillors and traditional leaders," he said.

Mzangwa assured the traditional leaders that the municipality intends to consult them in local government matters which require the involvement of stakeholders, particularly because traditional leaders play a prominent leadership role in their constituencies.

[Source: [www. http://152.111.1.87/argief/berigte/dailysun/2012/04/25/DV/4/rfsbudget_1555.html](http://152.111.1.87/argief/berigte/dailysun/2012/04/25/DV/4/rfsbudget_1555.html)]