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Dikgale delivers final SOMA, declares Thembisile Hani investor-ready

● EMMANUEL N MTHIMUNYE

EMPUMELELWENI – Executive Mayor Cllr Lesetja Dikgale delivered his final State of the Municipality Address (SOMA) at Khulisile Palace on Friday, 28 August, declaring Thembisile Hani stronger and ready for investment after five years of the sixth administration. Addressing the council, Dikgale said the address was an opportunity to account to residents for the mandate they had entrusted to the administration five years ago.

On water and sanitation, Dikgale announced that three new 18,000-litre municipal water trucks would arrive in September, increasing the fleet from six to nine.

“Thembisile Hani does not subscribe to, nor will it tolerate, the vandalism of water infrastructure for the benefit of water tankering,” said Dikgale. He reported that access to waterborne sanitation had increased from 8% to 28%. The KwaMhlanga Sewer Oxidation Ponds have been refurbished, while the Larry Mamabolo Wastewater Treatment Works in Tweefontein K is being upgraded from 1.5 to 3 megalitres per day, with completion expected in November. Hotnot Masemula, leader of the AIPO opposition party, welcomed the plans but said water remained the municipality's biggest challenge.

“The main challenge facing our municipality is water. If they can fix that challenge, our issues would be solved,” said Masemula.

On roads and infrastructure, Dikgale said more than 50 kilometres of roads had been regravelled, 15,000 square metres of potholes had been patched and 40 kilometres of stormwater channels had been built.

He described the R3.7 billion upgrade of

Moloto Road (R573) as a catalytic project.

TS Galaxy FC chairman Tim Sukazi welcomed the municipality's infrastructure progress and said the team's use of Solomon Mahlangu Stadium had contributed to economic activity in the municipality.

“That brings economic development and economic stability in our municipality,” said Sukazi.

On electricity, Dikgale said 97% of households now had access to electricity. He said delayed high-mast lights in Wards 2, 13, 15, 29, 30 and 32 would be switched on by 30 October in partnership with Eskom.

On investment, Dikgale cited the Khazamula Sasol fuel station, launched on 26 June, and the R323 million Spring Life Private Hospital as examples of investor confidence in the municipality.

Local entrepreneur Lebo Lebugang Mashego, founder of Eggsellent by Lebo, credited the municipality with helping her access funding from the NYDA, NEF and the agriculture sector.

She said her egg-producing farm had created 60 jobs, including 20 permanent positions.

“That is the way of dealing with unemployment. It is painful to know that this is their last term. We just hope that they can come back,” said Mashego.

Dikgale concluded: “These achievements did not happen by chance, but are a product of careful planning and a community that never lost faith.”



Thembisile Hani Local Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr Lesetja Dikgale delivers his final State of the Municipality Address (SOMA) at Khulisile Palace in Empumelelweni.

200 Mpumalanga young people selected for real estate programme

● LUCAS SHONGWE

MIDDELBURG – Two hundred young people from across Mpumalanga have been selected for a 12-month training and placement programme aimed at preparing them for careers in the real estate sector.

The Real Estate Training and Placement Programme was launched on Wednesday, 2 September 2026, at the Sydney Choma Banquet Hall in Middelburg by Human Settlements Minister Thembi Simelane and Public Works, Roads and Transport MEC Thulasizwe Thomo, on behalf of Premier Mandla Ndlovu.

The participants were drawn from the Nkangala, Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni districts.

Premier Ndlovu announced the initiative during the State of the Province Address (SOPA) in March. It is a partnership between the Office of the Premier, Services SETA and the Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority (PPRA).

The programme aims to promote participation in the real estate sector through skills development and employment creation.

Learners will be placed with established property companies for practical workplace experience while working towards an NQF Level 4 qualification. The programme will be supported by the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, Services SETA and

the PPRA.

In her keynote address, Simelane said the programme forms part of the broader transformation agenda of the property sector.

“We are trying to create an African face in the property industry, to ensure the entire sector is representative of the transformation agenda our country seeks,” she said.

MEC Thomo said the programme was more than another learnership initiative.

“It is a strategic intervention that seeks to reposition young people of this province as active participants in one of the country's most significant economic sectors,” he said.

Thomo told the selected learners that their selection reflected the government's confidence in their potential.

“Your selection represents not only confidence in your potential, but also government's confidence that you possess the determination to become ambassadors of professionalism, integrity and excellence within the property industry,” he said.

Finance MEC Bonakele Majuba announced in the provincial budget speech on 11 March 2026 that R15 million would be allocated through the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport for industry-related training and practical experience in the property sector.

The first cohort is expected to create 200 job opportunities during the 2026/27 financial year.



“the path of the righteous winds upwards to flee from hell beneath us” Prov 15:24



Some Mysteries Defy Explanations

By Pastor Chuck Swindoll

And this is not all that is meaningless in our world. In this life, good people are often treated as though they were wicked, and wicked people are often treated as though they were good. This is so meaningless! (Ecclesiastes 8:14)

In the latter half of Ecclesiastes 8, Solomon declares the mystery of unfair consequences. The wicked don't receive the judgment they deserve, and the righteous are treated unfairly. Who hasn't wrestled with this mystery?

But there's another mystery which Solomon also mentions, although it seems to be out of place.

“So I commended pleasure, for there is nothing good for a man under the sun except to eat and to drink and to be merry” (Ecclesiastes 8:15 NASB 1995). One could say, “Sounds hedonistic to me. Live it up! Go for all the gusto you can get!” But wait—don't miss the rest of what he writes: “and this will stand by him in his toils throughout the days of his life which God has given him under the sun” (8:15 NASB 1995).

In a world of unjust triumph and unfair consequences, I see someone who personifies the mystery of untimely pleasure. Well, why not? The alternative is becoming bitter, cynical, questioning,

never at peace, neurotic in one's pursuit of answers to why, why, why. Instead of attempting to solve all the mysteries of heaven and earth, which cannot be done, the writer suggests a simple plan: “Eat, drink, and happily trust God!” God gives us this alternative in order to endure life's circumstances. Throughout the days of our lives God will give us the ability to accept and cope with reality even though we're at a loss to explain it.

Solomon offers us good balance with these words: “Although a sinner does evil a hundred times and may lengthen his life, still I know that it will be well for those who fear God, who fear Him openly” (8:12 NASB). There is no way to find any genuine relief apart from the truth of those words. Even though sin goes on a hundred times over, even though a life may be lengthened in spite of a sinful lifestyle, and even “though He slay me, I will hope in Him” (Job 13:15 NASB). Though I am without answers, yet will I believe in Him.

Let's be painfully realistic. Neither you nor I can grasp God's plan. We don't know when it will reach its goal. It's like we are looking through a thick fog and can't see the sun, so we don't know how or when God's going to deal with wrong, but we do know this—we know God will keep His word. So until then we eat, we drink, we find happiness and contentment in this simple lifestyle. Though there are unfair consequences happening all around us, we trust our God to see us through. He is working it out. That explains how the Christian can have joy in the midst of wild and crazy, mysterious and strained circumstances.

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Mpumalanga Legislature concludes successful TLP in Steve Tshwete

'We want timelines, not reports' – residents speak

LUCAS SHONGWE
MIDDELBURG – It was a mix of relief and deep frustration on Tuesday, 1 September 2026, as residents from all 29 wards of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality came face-to-face with MECs at Themba Senamela Stadium in Mhluzi during the week-long Taking Legislature to the People (TLP) programme. For many, it was the first time speaking directly to an MEC. But the message from Vaalbank, Rockdale, Newtown and other areas was clear: they had raised the same issues for years and were tired of reports without action. “We have raised the same issues of water, dumping, clinics and housing before, and we now want to see concrete timelines, not just another report,” residents said during the TLP Public Hearing session. The Public Hearing formed part of the week-long TLP, which officially closed on Friday, 4 September. It followed the Pre-TLP held on 25 and 26 June at Adelaide Tambo Hall, where portfolio committees visited projects across Steve Tshwete.

Deputy Speaker Sam Masango said the hearing was meant to give residents an additional platform to receive immediate feedback from the Executive. Residents did not hold back, raising persistent water and electricity interruptions, high rates and taxes, poor living conditions in Vaalbank, illegal dumping sites in Rockdale and Extension 24, a long RDP housing waiting list, mobile clinics that only visit once a month, inadequate hygiene and sanitation, bad roads and dysfunctional streetlights. They also raised the need for a community hall and clinic in Ward 8, unemployment, escalating crime and a lack of support for SMMEs.

Government responds, promises 18-month return
MECs responded directly to the issues raised by residents. Social Development addressed drug rehabilitation and support services, while Public Works,

Roads and Transport responded to concerns about bad roads and scholar transport. The Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA) outlined grants and funding available to emerging and small-scale farmers. On economic development, residents were encouraged to establish businesses and make use of government entrepreneurship programmes. Education said the construction of new schools depends on learner numbers, proximity and the availability of land, but confirmed that Rockdale had qualified for a new secondary school. Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (COGHSTA) said priority would be given to housing for the elderly and provided timeframes for some of the housing challenges raised. Legislature member Jackson Malatjie assured residents that the process would not end with the

hearing, indicating that the Legislature would return to Steve Tshwete after 18 months for a feedback session.

Oversight and accountability
On Wednesday and Thursday, portfolio committees fanned out across the municipality to conduct oversight visits at government service delivery projects and government-supported initiatives to assess progress and enforce accountability. The visits covered clinics, roads, housing projects and other service delivery sites where residents had raised concerns.

Premier acknowledges failures, points to successes
Closing the TLP on Friday, Premier Mandla Ndlovu acknowledged government failures while also pointing to areas where progress had been made. He said government had come to hear residents' priorities and understand how people live, noting that residents had spoken about both service delivery failures and successes.

Ndlovu highlighted some of the socio-economic challenges facing the municipality, while noting that its figures were among the lowest in the province. “Unemployment in Steve Tshwete is 18.1%, youth unemployment is 27.6% and 39.3% of people are poor,” he said. He said water remained a challenge in farm areas and Wards 4, 5, 7, 9, 28 and 29, where 27.7% of households still struggle. He pointed to boreholes drilled with mining companies, water tankers and new reservoirs at Vaalbank Water Treatment Plant, Graspan and Vliegsveld as interventions. He said 93% of households have electricity, with work under way to reach the remaining 7%, while the sewer network has been upgraded to stop river pollution.

For now, residents say they will wait to see whether the promised 18-month return brings progress on the issues they raised.

Youth demand land for farming, Malatjie backs expropriation

LUCAS SHONGWE
MIDDELBURG – The demand for land ownership dominated a Youth Stakeholder Engagement session in Rockdale on Thursday, 3 September, as young people called for government assistance to access land for farming and other businesses. The session formed part of the week-long Taking Legislature to the People (TLP) programme in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, giving young people an opportunity to engage government departments, raise challenges and learn about development and economic opportunities. During the engagement, young people said that while they appreciated the opportunities presented by various departments, the lack of access to land remained a major barrier to their economic participation. “We hear about the opportunities that are available within different departments, but we as young people are interested in owning land so that we can do business and participate meaningfully in the economy of Steve Tshwete,” said Buti Masombuka. Another young person, Sarel Mtsweni, said he wanted to become a property developer but could not pursue the business without access to land. “I want land. There is no way I can pursue this business without land,”

said Mtsweni. In response, the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA) highlighted support available to emerging farmers, including starter packs, seeds, tools and assistance with small-scale food production and backyard gardens. Speaking to *Highveld Chronicle*, Jackson Malatjie, chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities, said government should revisit Section 25 of the Constitution to address access to land. “It is important for government to revisit the issue of Section 25, where land must be expropriated

so that young people can own land and create employment and job opportunities in Steve Tshwete,” Malatjie said. “Steve Tshwete is an urban area, not like other rural municipalities. As an urban area, we have municipal land that can be made available and given to the youth so that they can create jobs for themselves and for others.” Malatjie said making land available to young people would enable them to participate in agriculture, create jobs and contribute to economic growth in the municipality.



Portfolio Committee on Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities chairperson Jackson Malatjie addresses young people during the TLP Youth Stakeholder Engagement in Rockdale.



Mpumalanga Premier Mandla Ndlovu during the Taking Legislature to the People (TLP) programme in Steve Tshwete.



Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature Speaker Makhosazane Masilela leads the sitting during the Taking Legislature to the People (TLP) programme.



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TOURISM MONTH IN FULL SWING: IT'S TIME TO EXPLORE MPUMALANGA

Media tour showcases Mpumalanga's tourism potential

NODICAH FUNDAMA

MPUMALANGA – From ancient geological landscapes and heritage sites to dam cruises, community attractions and conservation areas, Mpumalanga's diverse tourism offering was placed in the spotlight during a three-day media and familiarisation tour ahead of Tourism Month 2026. The tour, which began on 29 August, was organised by the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) to give local, national and regional media first-hand experience of tourism products across the province while highlighting opportunities for tourism-led economic development. Journalists from Mpumalanga, eSwatini and other provinces participated in the programme, which covered attractions in the Gert Sibande and Nkangala districts.

From Barberton to eMalahleni

One of the highlights was the Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains World Heritage Site, where the media experienced the area's ancient geological landscape and its potential for nature, heritage, cultural and adventure tourism. The tour continued on 30 August to eMalahleni, where journalists explored attractions beyond the city's traditional mining identity. The programme included a boat cruise, township tourism experiences, a picnic and a visit to the Loskop Dam area. At Steve's Place along the eMalahleni Dam, the group experienced activities including fishing, swimming and boating, while the Witbank Boat Cruise provided another perspective of the dam and its potential for leisure, family outings and celebrations. The media also visited Lynnville Park, which provides space for events, markets, food and entertainment, before ending the eMalahleni leg at Emrabulweni in Ackerville, a local social and food destination. The experiences demonstrated the potential for eMalahleni to strengthen its position in leisure, water-based tourism, food, entertainment and community tourism.

Tourism Month officially launched at Loskop

The media tour culminated on 31 August with the official launch of Tourism Month 2026 at Loskop Dam, where MEC for Economic Development and Tourism Jesta Sidell launched the provincial programme. Hosted by the MTPA in partnership with the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, the launch was held under the theme, “Growing South Africa's Tourism Sector in the Digital Era.” The 2026 programme places strong emphasis on domestic tourism, digital innovation, artificial intelligence, sustainable tourism, tourism safety, community participation and opportunities for small businesses.

September packed with tourism activities

Tourism Month activities will run throughout September, beginning with the Sho't Left Travel Week from 1 to 30 September, encouraging South Africans to explore destinations within Mpumalanga and take advantage of travel deals and packages. Among the activities is a Digital Marketing Training Programme for Tourism MSMEs on 2 and 3 September, aimed at strengthening the digital skills of local tourism businesses. The province will also host a Provincial Tourism Careers Expo on 3 September at Schoemansdal Community Hall, targeting Grade 10 and 11 learners and exposing them to tourism careers, training and business opportunities. This will be followed by the Teachers' Development Programme from 4 to 6 September at Forever Resort Swadini. Sport tourism activations will also form part of the programme, including the Kruger United versus Orlando Pirates match on 5 September at



MEC for Economic Development and Tourism Jesta Sidell unpacks the province's Tourism Month activities alongside Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency Acting CEO Lemmy Mdluli (left) and DEDT HOD Immy Serakalala.

Mbombela Stadium. Tourism and small-business development will remain a key focus, with an MSME Training Workshop for Women in Business taking place on 8 and 9 September in Delmas. Sustainable tourism workshops will also be held across the province, including in Ehlanzeni on 8 September, Gert Sibande on 17 September and Nkangala on 29 September. Other September highlights include the Sanganani/Hlanganani Tourism Expo in Zimbabwe from 9 to 12 September, the Tourism Safety Campaign on 10 and 11 September, the eMalahleni Soulful Experience and Barberton Makhonjwa Mountain Marathon on 12 September, and the TS Galaxy versus Kruger United sport tourism activation on 13 September. From 14 to 20 September, Mpumalanga Parks Week will provide South African citizens with an opportunity to access selected provincial nature reserves for free on the designated access day, while the Southern Geographers Conference will take place during the same period at the University of Mpumalanga. The programme will continue with the Mpumalanga Finance Expo in Middelburg on 22 and 23 September, providing tourism MSMEs with information on funding. The Mpumalanga Tourism Expo, scheduled for 25 to 27

September at Riverside Mall in Mbombela, will bring together tourism products and markets from across the region. One of the province's major calendar events will be Provincial Tourism Day on 26 September in Dullstroom, eMakhazeni Local Municipality, focusing on responsible tourism, heritage, culture and community participation. On the same day, the Zikhakhazise Ngesikhenu Cultural Fair will take place at Solomon Mahlangu Stadium in KwaMhlanga, providing another platform for cultural tourism and community participation. The month will culminate around World Tourism Day on 27 September, with the national celebration taking place at Mapungubwe National Park in Limpopo. Mpumalanga will also host the Activate Film and Theatre Conference in Secunda from 26 to 28 September, bringing creative industries and tourism together. For tourism businesses, the month will extend beyond events, with an MSME Quality Assurance Programme scheduled for 30 September to support selected tourism businesses with grading and quality assurance. Addressing the Tourism Month launch, Sidell described tourism as an important contributor to the provincial economy and highlighted the need to use digital platforms and technology to connect tourism products with travellers.

Opening opportunities for local businesses

The province is also seeking to strengthen township and rural tourism while creating opportunities for small businesses, crafters, artists, cultural performers, food producers, tour guides, accommodation establishments and transport operators. The focus is not only on attracting visitors, but also on ensuring that tourism expenditure translates into employment, local procurement, SMME growth, investment and benefits for surrounding communities. Hosting the launch in the Loskop area also highlighted the province's ambition to strengthen lesser-explored destinations and diversify the tourism economy beyond its established attractions. For the journalists who travelled across the province, the tour provided a glimpse into the breadth of Mpumalanga's tourism offering – from the ancient landscapes of Barberton to the leisure attractions of eMalahleni and the conservation potential of Loskop. The challenge now is to convert that potential into sustained visitor numbers, longer stays, increased local spending and meaningful economic opportunities for communities throughout the province.

SEPTEMBER TOURISM MONTH EVENTS

DATE	EVENT
1–31 Sep	Sho't Left Travel Week Campaign
1–30 Sep	Media Advertising Platforms
2–3 Sep	Digital Marketing Training for Tourism MSMEs
3 Sep	Nokuthula Simelane Public Lecture
3 Sep	Provincial Tourism Careers Expo
4–6 Sep	Teachers' Development Programme
5 Sep	Sport Tourism – Kruger United vs Orlando Pirates
8–9 Sep	SALGA MSME Training Workshop for Women in Business
8 Sep	Sustainable Tourism Workshop – Ehlanzeni
9–12 Sep	Sanganani/Hlanganani Tourism Expo
10–11 Sep	Tourism Safety Campaign
12 Sep	eMalahleni Soulful Experience
12 Sep	Barberton Makhonjwa Mountain Marathon
13 Sep	Sport Tourism – TS Galaxy vs Kruger United
14–20 Sep	Mpumalanga Parks Week
14–18 Sep	Southern Geographers Conference
17 Sep	Sustainable Tourism Workshop – Gert Sibande
19 Sep	Sport Tourism – Kruger United vs Stellenbosch
22–23 Sep	Mpumalanga Finance Expo
22–23 Sep	Illegal Tourist Guiding Inspections
24 Sep	League of Pros – Hall of Fame & Gala Dinner
24–26 Sep	Tubane Stride Festival
25–27 Sep	Mpumalanga Tourism Expo
26 Sep	Provincial Tourism Day Celebrations
26 Sep	Zikhakhazise Ngesikhenu Cultural Fair
26–27 Sep	Tourism Domestic Activation in Limpopo
26–28 Sep	Activate Film and Theatre Conference
27 Sep	World Tourism Day – National Celebrations
29 Sep	Sustainable Tourism Workshop – Nkangala
30 Sep	MSME Quality Assurance Programme



Media crew at the Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains World Heritage Site during the Mpumalanga Tourism Month media tour.



Media crew enjoy a fun boat cruise at Witbank Dam

Destiny Exclusive Hotel opens in Middelburg with municipal workers' pension fund as majority owner

LUCAS SHONGWE

MIDDELBURG – The 150-room Destiny Exclusive Hotel and Conference Centre was officially opened in Middelburg on Friday, 4 September, with the Municipal Employees Pension Fund (MEPF) holding an 80% majority stake in the facility.

Akani Properties holds the remaining 20%.

The hotel features 150 rooms, an International Convention Centre (ICC) and a wellness spa, positioning Middelburg to attract conferencing, leisure and business tourism.

The opening was attended by Mpumalanga Premier Mandla Ndlovu, Akani Properties Group chairman Zamani Letjane, MEC for Economic Development and Tourism Jesta Sidell, Nkangala District Executive Mayor Thomas Ngwenya, Steve Tshwete Executive Mayor Mhlonishwa Masilela, members of the Mpumalanga Legislature and local councillors.

Speaking at the opening, Letjane said the hotel was a strategic investment built using workers' funds.

“This hotel is built using the funds that belong to the municipal employees. It is owned by them. It is not a building, but an investment that one will never go wrong with,” said Letjane.

Letjane is also the founder and group chairman of Akani Retirement Fund Administrators, which administers the MEPF. The fund manages R43 billion for municipal workers across the country.

He said the construction process had been challenging, citing community protests over employment and the disappearance of the company initially appointed to undertake the project.

“It wasn't easy when putting up the structure. We had a lot of strikes, with community members looking for employment but we could not employ everyone. The company that was appointed initially vanished,” he said.

The hotel is expected to generate economic opportunities through job creation, tourism and business

opportunities for local SMMEs.

MEPF chairperson Peter Modike said the project demonstrated how the fund could invest members' savings while contributing to the communities they serve.

“As trustees of a R43 billion fund, our mandate is simple, yet heavy: to protect savings and ensure that when a municipal employee retires, their pension is secured. Today, we demonstrate that patient capital can fulfil this fiduciary mandate while actively building the very communities our members serve,” said Modike.

Premier Ndlovu welcomed the investment, saying it would support business and leisure tourism in the province.

He said the nearby Loskop Nature Reserve could benefit from the hotel as the province works to revive and reposition the reserve as a tourism attraction.

“As we restore and enhance this magnificent destination, visitors will be able to use this hotel as a convenient base and halfway stop when exploring the reserve and other attractions in the region,” said Ndlovu.

He said this presented an opportunity to link business tourism with leisure tourism by encouraging conference and event visitors to explore other attractions in the province.

Ndlovu also said the hotel was strategically positioned within the province's mining and energy economic hub, with Steve Tshwete being the third-largest contributor to Mpumalanga's GDP.

“To us, this hotel is a powerful reflection of the confidence that the private sector continues to place in Mpumalanga, in our people and the immense opportunities that our province presents,” he said.



Mpumalanga Premier Mandla Ndlovu and Akani Properties Group chairman Zamani Letjane celebrate after cutting the ribbon to officially open the 150-room Destiny Exclusive Hotel and Conference Centre in Middelburg on Friday, 4 September.



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1+9	R450	R500
1+13	R520	R570
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PLAN B

No service: R7 500

	18–64	18–74
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1+9	R410	R450
1+13	R450	R550

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PLAN C – EXECUTIVE

No service: R8 000

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1+9	R440	R470
1+13	R480	R540
1+17	R570	R640

WHAT WE OFFER

Grocery provision included.

On notification R1,000; goat R1,800; cow R5,000; bus R1,000; tent/chairs R500; airtime R200; hearse + family car; programmes, décor and teak quarter view.

PLAN C

No service: R7 500

	18–64	18–74
FAMILY		
1+5	R300	R330
1+9	R400	R430
1+13	R440	R500
1+17	R530	R600
SINGLE	18–64	65–74
Single	R80	R90

WHAT WE OFFER

Grocery provision included.

On notification R1,000; cow R5,000; bus R1,000; tent/chairs R500; airtime R200; hearse + family car; programmes, décor and teak quarter view.

PLAN D

No service: R5 000

	18–64	18–74
FAMILY		
1+5	R210	R260
1+9	R280	R310
1+13	R310	R380
1+17	R460	R500

WHAT WE OFFER

Grocery provision included.

Goat R1,800; Cow R5,000; bus R1,000; tent/chairs R500; airtime R200; hearse + 2 family cars; programmes, décor, Standard Dome and tea R1,000.

PLAN E

No service: R2 500

	18–64	18–74
FAMILY		
1+5	R180	R200
1+9	R220	R270
1+13	R270	R300

WHAT WE OFFER

Grocery provision included.

Removal within 100 km; airtime R200; hearse + family car; programmes and décor; standard coffin; On death notification R500 and tent/chairs R500.

PLAN G

No service: R5 000

	18–74 ONLY
FAMILY	
1+5	R250
1+9	R300
1+13	R350

WHAT WE OFFER

On notification R1,000; removal within 100 km; casket; delivery; hearse and family car.

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Soshanguve — NAFCOC Complex, Office U31

Mamelodi East — Hector Peterson Main Road, Ext 8, Phase 5

Hammanskraal — Katlego Crossing, Shop No. 12, Harry Gwala Street

Rustenburg — La Chesa Mall, Shop No. 4

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Umanenjara ka Masipala iThembisile Hani, uDumisani Mahlangu uyelelisa abantu ngabo galajani abagalaja abantu babathembisa imisebenzi kwamasipala

EMMANNUEL N MTHIMUNYE

Umanenjara ka Masipala iThembisile Hani, u Dumisani Mahlangu ukukhiphe isiyeliso sokobana abantu kufunele balemuke bona kunabo galajana abagalaja abantu iimali, ngokuba thembisa imisebenzi kwa masipala bathi basebenza khona.

Yeke uMahlangu uyelelisa abantu bona imisebenzi yakwamasipala ayithengiswa bengodu ineenkundla

zakhona la imenyezelwa khona namkha ifakwa khona nayiphumako yeke, leyokuthi abantu bazokuthola imisebenzi ngokuthi bayithengiswele akusiyo ikambiso yakwa masipala.

Umahlangu uthi umbiko lo uwukhiphiswa kukuthi sele kube nabanye abo gala jana abadosele abantu umrhala bathi, basebenza kwamasipala namkha bathi bangu

manenjara kamasipala lo yeke barherhe abantu bathi kunemisebenzi evuliweko kodwana ukuze umuntu awufumane kufuzeke akhiphe imali engalinganiselwa enanini elingaba yi R750 ukuya ku R1000. Yeke uMahlangu uyelelisa abantu bona batjheje ngaso soke isikhathi. Kusenjal ikhansela lange Vezubuhle ku Ward 20 uNomvula Mtshweni uveza ukuthi naye emvekeni ezidlulileko ukhewa galajwa ngibo abo galajanaba, bamdosela umrhala bathi unomboro yomrhala yakhe isebenziswa babantu ababili ngaphandle kwakhe yeke lokho kungamfaka engozini kungakho kufuzeke bamurhelebbe bayilungise kungakonakali. Ngoku ngaka tjheji wabalalela bamthumele umlayezo bathi kune nomboro ekufuzeke ayibethe beseke inomborwakhe ikwazi ukubuyela ngakuye yedwa kghani kunanyana bamugalaja. Yeke uthi kukunje abantwaba basebenzisa inomborwakhe

ukugalaja abathu kodwanake sele ayibikile indaba le kamasipala kanye nakwa Vodacom.

Ngokuya kuka Nomvula uthi lokhu sele kumakhele amanaba amanengi ngombana abantu abasebenzi yeke kuba buhlungu naba galajwa ngokuthi bazokuthola umsebenzi kanti bazokuthathelwa iimali etjhiriweni engaka, Nasi inomboro yomrhala esebenziswa bo galajanaba uku galaja abantu 063 889 15 68,

Yeke uManenjara kwamasipala umahlangu thi le akusiyo yabo inomboro yabo yakwa masipala ngengi nasi 013 986 9100 begodu ayikho enye ngaphandle kwale Umahlangu uthi bangu masipala basebenzisa ihlelo le e-recruitment lokha naba khangisa imisebenzi ngaphandle kwalokho abanawo amanye amahlelo woku khangisa.

Ngalokho ke abantu kufuze batjheje bayelele ngasosoke isikhathi



Umanenjara ka Masipala iThembisile Hani uDumisani Mahlangu

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Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality

PUBLIC NOTICE: APPROVED IDP/BUDGET/PMS PROCESS PLAN FOR THE REVIEW OF 2027/2032 IDP/BUDGET/PMS

Notice is hereby given in terms of Sections 28, 29 and 30 of the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000, that Dr. JS Moroka Local Municipality has approved its **IDP/Budget/PMS Process Plan** for the review of the **2027/2032 IDP, Budget/PMS** at a Special Council meeting (**Council resolution number R498.08.2026ND**) held on **28th of August 2026**.

The approved Process Plan will guide the planning, drafting, adoption, and review of the 2027/2032 IDP, Budget, and PMS. These activities will culminate in the adoption of the reviewed IDP and Budget for the 2027/2028 financial year.

Copies of the approved 2027/2032 IDP/Budget/PMS Process Plan are available on the municipal website: www.moroka.gov.za, at the municipal offices (**2601/3 Bongimfundo Street, Siyabuswa**), Technical Services in Siyabuswa Industrial area, Unit offices in **Nokaneng and Libangeni** and libraries; Siyabuswa, Maphotla, Libangeni, Marapyane and Masobe.

Enquiries may be directed to Mr MR Maepa (Divisional Manager: IDP) maepar@moroka.gov.za and Ms SJ Masanabo (Divisional Manager: Budget) MasanaboS@moroka.gov.za on 013 973 1101. Those who are unable not read and write will be able to do so, during working hours, Monday -Thursday 08: 00- 16:15 and Fridays 08:00-13:00.

Ms MM MATHEBELA
MUNICIPAL MANAGER

VICTOR KHANYE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

TOGETHER FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DRAFT STRATEGY

We invite all community members, local organizations, and stakeholders to submit inputs and proposals for impactful Local Economic Development (LED) Strategy.

Victor Khanye Local Municipality invites all community members, businesses, local organisations, sector stakeholders and interested parties to submit comments, inputs, proposals and recommendations on the **Draft Local Economic Development (LED) Strategy**.

The Municipality is committed to developing an inclusive and impactful Local Economic Development Strategy that promotes economic growth, job creation, investment opportunities, entrepreneurship and sustainable development within our communities.

Members of the public are encouraged to review the draft strategy and provide valuable inputs that will help shape the future economic development direction of the Municipality.

SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS AND PROPOSALS

All comments, proposals, and inputs may be submitted via email to:

LED@vkml.gov.za

ENQUIRIES

For further information, please contact:

DenisM@vkml.gov.za
ThembaM@vkml.gov.za

CLOSING DATE

18 SEPTEMBER 2026

Your participation is important in building a stronger and more prosperous Local economy. We encourage all stakeholders to **make their voices heard and contribute to the development of this important strategy.**

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Victor Khanye Local Municipality
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A REPOSITIONED MUNICIPALITY OR A BETTER AND SUSTAINABLE SERVICE DELIVERY FOR ALL

A moment for young Nkangala talent to shine

Doornkop tenor Londiwe set for NkAMA stage

LUCAS SHONGWE

MIDDELBURG – From the township of Doornkop in Middelburg to the stage of the Nkangala Arts and Music Awards (NkAMA), Londiwe Sibanyoni is building a name for himself through opera.

The Grade 12 learner from Mkhulu Combined School in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality has been nominated for Best Male Artist at the 2026 NkAMA.

Sibanyoni will showcase his God-given talent at the NkAMA finale on 12 September 2026, sharing the stage with award-winning and popular artists such as Sjava – something the young singer never imagined would happen.

When he sings, his voice draws comparisons to renowned opera singers such as Luciano Pavarotti, Andrea Bocelli, Juan Diego Flórez and South Africa's Innocent Masuku from Secunda.

For Sibanyoni, however, singing is not simply about having a powerful voice. It is something he grew up with.

The second-born of five children, he comes from a family of singers and says his love for opera began at a young age.

“My dad, mom and brother are all opera singers,” he says.

His journey into performing began in Grade 6, when he started singing for

entertainment. By Grade 8, in 2023, he was entering school competitions and beginning to take his talent more seriously.

His first attempt did not go as planned. He lost the competition in 2023, again in 2024 and for a third time in 2025. Three consecutive losses could have discouraged him, but Sibanyoni continued pursuing his passion.

Behind that persistence is a support system that he says has helped him keep going. He credits his school music conductor, Elias Kgupe, with encouraging him to continue and take opera seriously.

“The real person who identified the talent in me is Mrs Masilela,” he says.

Sibanyoni's talent was also on display when he performed at the launch of NkAMA on 7 July 2026, where his performance drew a strong response from those in attendance.

NkAMA, an initiative born from a partnership between Highveld Chronicle and Nkangala District Municipality, aims to recognise, promote and support artists from all six local municipalities in the district.

Now in Grade 12, Sibanyoni has

had to balance his growing music ambitions with his schoolwork. This year, he chose to focus on his matric studies rather than enter competitions.

“I could not get the chance to enter those competitions this year because I am focusing more on my Grade 12 studies,” he says.

Although matric comes first, he already has plans for what comes next. “I want to pursue music as my career after finishing Grade 12 by enrolling at higher institutions,” he says.

His NkAMA nomination has given him another opportunity to be recognised for a talent he has continued to develop despite earlier setbacks.

From Doornkop to the NkAMA stage, Sibanyoni's journey reflects the determination of a young artist who refused to allow setbacks to silence his passion for opera.

Members of the public are encouraged to get their tickets and come out in numbers to support Sibanyoni and other talented artists from across Nkangala.

Supporting NkAMA is more than attending an event – it is an investment in developing, recognising and building Nkangala talent for the future.



Londiwe Sibanyoni, a Grade 12 learner at Mkhulu Combined School in Doornkop, performs during the NkAMA official launch on 7 July 2026. Sibanyoni has been nominated for Best Male Artist at the 2026 Nkangala Arts and Music Awards.

Vukuzenzele learners protest over scholar transport crisis

RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

DELMAS – Learners and community members in Vukuzenzele, Delmas, protested on Thursday, 3 September, over alleged failures in the scholar transport service serving the area and surrounding rural communities.

The protest centred on learners travelling to Swartklip Combined School, with protesters alleging that some learners had been left behind, buses were not serving parts of their designated routes and additional transport was needed.

Scholar transport falls under the Mpumalanga Department of Education.

An SGB member, who spoke to Highveld Chronicle on condition of anonymity because he feared possible repercussions involving his matric child, said parents had been paying R100 per child for transport since 2021.

“Since 2021, we have been paying R100 for the buses, but we still have a problem getting the children from Ematshotshobheni onto them,” he said.

The SGB member said the community had previously asked the principal to approach the department for an additional bus for learners from Ematshotshobheni, but alleged that no extra transport had been provided.

He further alleged that some learners waiting along the roadside had not been collected since Monday.

“There are buses that pass them without picking them up. You can find a bus with about 80 robots and it still doesn't stop,” he said.

He said drivers had told learners that Ematshotshobheni was not part of their designated routes.

The SGB member also alleged that the principal told learners that if they could not walk to school, their parents should obtain transfer forms and move them to another school.

Highveld Chronicle could not independently verify these allegations.

Parents also raised concerns about transport serving Big Mgqalano, Small Mgqalano, Bhodli, Nyawana, Mavedasini, Mazanganeni and Rocks. A parent from Rocks said the bus had arrived late the previous day and failed to enter the area the following morning.

“We have a serious problem with this bus. It did not come into the rocks at all this morning,” the parent said.

“As parents, we need to stand up and speak for ourselves,” the parent added.

Separately, Vukuzenzele youth and students are demanding a safe, permanent bridge to improve access to the school.

Community members say learners face long walks, muddy or flooded areas and an unsafe crossing, which they argue contribute to poor attendance and learner dropouts.

The transport situation appeared to improve on Friday, 4 September, when Highveld Chronicle was informed that all learners had travelled to school using scholar transport buses. However, it was not clear whether this marked a permanent resolution.

Highveld Chronicle sent questions to the Mpumalanga Department of Education about the scholar transport arrangements and allegations raised by the community. The department had not responded by the time of publication.



From a notebook in Siyathuthuka to the NkAMA stage

RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

MIDDELBURG – In Siyathuthuka, Emakhazeni, a school notebook became the first place where Mike Kosabo Makua began shaping the artist he would later become.

Better known as MK AKA MIKE, Makua grew up surrounded by isiNdebele, family stories, church and radio. Without access to a recording studio, he translated English rap lyrics into isiNdebele because he wanted to hear his own language on hip-hop beats.

Makua completed Grade 12 in 2007 in the Science stream, but a serious cornea injury affected his vision and disrupted his final examinations.

In 2008, he enrolled for Information Technology at Nkangala TVET College's Witbank Campus, but his recovery made it difficult to concentrate on a computer screen.

“That was the hardest time,” he says. “I was young, I was injured, I could not finish school the way I wanted, and I could not even focus on college. Most people thought that was the end for me.”

Makua turned to music, performing at schools and community halls in Emakhazeni. His decision to make isiNdebele central to his music eventually developed into what he calls “Hip-Hop of Parliament”, addressing poverty, land, identity,

governance, African unity and community struggles.

“My mic is my seat in parliament, my verse is my policy, my song is my vote for the people,” he says.

His journey has since expanded beyond music. Makua is managing director of MK AKA MIKE Enterprise Pty Ltd and Records, established in 2024, and co-founder and chairperson of Highveld Mixed Farming Primary Co-operative Ltd.

He has participated in enterprise-development programmes involving the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency and the Department of Small Business Development.

Makua is also developing the Hydro/Aqua Accelerator Injector, an agricultural technology project aimed at improving irrigation and water-resource use. The project remains in the prototype and testing phase, with Makua seeking funding and partnerships to develop it further.

Through his farming cooperative, he aims to cultivate 20 hectares of crops, including soybeans, install 50 injector units and create 50 jobs. The project requires R1.5 million in seed funding.

He also plans to combine agriculture and music through a proposed “Farm and Mic” youth programme.



His music has earned him two 2026 Nkangala Arts and Music Awards (NkAMA) nominations – Best Hip-Hop and Best Ndebele Music.

His latest project, Africah More – Pandemic Additional, includes tracks such as Africah, Flying a Flag and Umengameli (President).

“From Grade 12 because of a cornea injury to college because I couldn't see the screen, to Managing Director trained by DSD and SEDFA I am still that boy from Siyathuthuka with a notebook.”

Makua will now take his talent to the NkAMA stage alongside artists from across the district.

“My journey is from Siyathuthuka to the world, but I must carry Siyathuthuka with me.”

Sibanyoni extortion case postponed as defence challenges delays

RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

DELMAS – Taxi boss Joe “Ferrari” Sibanyoni and three co-accused appeared in the Delmas Magistrates' Court on Tuesday as their R2.2 million extortion and money-laundering case was postponed to 20 October 2026.

Sibanyoni appeared alongside Bafana Sindane, Mvimbi Masilela and Philemon Msiza. The four handed themselves over to police in May and were later granted bail of R70,000 each.

The State alleges that the accused demanded more than R2 million in

protection fees from a businessman and threatened to shut down his operations if he did not pay.

The State prosecutor told the court that the defence is expected to submit an application or request on 4 September. The State will then have until 5 October to respond, with the matter returning to court on 20 October.

The defence confirmed the postponement but raised concerns about delays in preparing for the case.

Defence counsel Advocate Shaun

Abrahams told the court that the accused had complied with a bail condition requiring them to report to police stations every second week.

He said police had allegedly been unable to confirm the reports despite proof being supplied to the State, and that discussions were under way to have the condition amended.

The defence also raised concerns about the final charge sheet, further particulars and the disclosure of the police docket.

Abrahams said the defence had still not received the final charge sheet despite the case having been under investigation for a considerable

period.

He also told the court that the State had been directed to disclose the docket by 12 June, but it was only handed over on 13 July.

The defence argued that the delays were prejudicing the accused's constitutional rights, including their ability to understand the charges, prepare their defence, challenge the State's case and have the trial concluded within a reasonable time.

The State did not respond to the defence's submissions during the court appearance.

The court extended bail for all four accused and ordered them to return on 20 October at 08:30.

They were warned that failure to



appear could result in warrants of arrest, provisional cancellation of bail and forfeiture of their bail money. The accused remain on bail and have not been convicted. The case is ongoing.



Nkangala TVET staff compete for provincial spot at wellness day

● NODICAH FUNDAMA

MIDDELBURG – The sporting rivalry between Nkangala TVET College campuses took centre stage at Kees Taljaard Stadium on Friday, 4 September, as staff competed during the college's 2026 Staff Wellness Day. The event brought together staff from the Middelburg, Witbank, Mpondozankomo, CN Mahlangu and Waterval Boven campuses for a day of sport, fitness, teamwork and camaraderie. Held under the theme, "Promoting a Healthy, Active and United College Community", the wellness day provided an opportunity for employees from different campuses to interact, build relationships and promote an active and healthy lifestyle. Staff participated in soccer, netball, volleyball, chess, pool and aerobics.

The competition also had a sporting prize at stake, with the best-performing teams and participants earning an opportunity to represent Nkangala TVET College at provincial level against staff from other TVET colleges in Mpumalanga. Beyond the competition, the wellness day focused on promoting employee wellbeing, teamwork and unity among staff from the college's different campuses. The event's message was captured in its slogan: "Be Active, Be Healthy, Be You." The winners will now have an opportunity to test their skills against staff from other TVET colleges while representing Nkangala TVET College at provincial level.



Kwathando athletes return with medals from Special Olympics

● EMMANUEL N MTHIMUNYE

KWAMHLANGA – Kwathando Care Centre in Sun City A, KwaMhlanga, welcomed back its athletes who represented Mpumalanga at the Special Olympics in Rustenburg. The team competed in table tennis and bocce after departing on Sunday, 27 August, and returned on Monday, 31 August. Staff, parents and fellow beneficiaries welcomed the athletes with singing and ululation as they returned with medals from the competition. Although the team did not progress to the National Championships, the competition gave many of the athletes an opportunity to travel beyond their home area, compete at a major event and gain valuable sporting experience. The athletes also developed their skills and confidence in table tennis and bocce while learning about teamwork and discipline. They also interacted with other children with intellectual disabilities, giving them an opportunity to

socialise and share experiences. Kwathando Care Centre thanked Special Olympics Mpumalanga, the coaches, parents, the Department of Social Development and other stakeholders who supported the team. Centre manager Lucas Nkuna said more work was needed to educate communities about intellectual disabilities and create greater inclusion in sport, arts and culture. "There is still a big challenge for people to understand intellectual disability. There is still a lack of understanding, especially in sports, arts and culture. We plead with the Department of Social Development, Sports, Arts and Culture and other stakeholders to join our outreach programmes to educate communities. Our children feel sidelined as if they are nobody, yet they do exist," Nkuna said. The centre called on stakeholders to invest in inclusive sports programmes and provide children with intellectual disabilities with equal opportunities to participate.

