



## **MEDIA & COMMUNICATION**

### **MEDIA STATEMENT**

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#### **Department intensifies housing and bulk infrastructure implementation**

**Haartebeespoort** – The Department of Local Government and Human Settlements has once more demonstrated its commitment to maximise the impact by finding housing planning and development solutions to provide integrated human settlements to communities. This follows the robust two-day Housing Planning Indaba which was held in an effort to unblock hindrances and lay housing plans to speedup provision of housing other much needed infrastructure throughout the Bokone Bophirima province in the next financial year. The session which was held in Haartebeespoort was also attended by National Department of Human Settlements, Housing Development Agency (HDA) and Social Housing Regulator Authority (SHRA) and other relevant stakeholders.

The Acting Head of Department Israel Kunene appealed for realistic integrated multi sector planning with recent restructuring that has been made. “There has been a financial restructuring and budget reduction at national and provincial level and therefore the 2016/17 business plan must be revisited as target may be reduced. Interaction with key stakeholders during planning and prior to implementation of the project in order determine the state of readiness of the project and we also need to streamline planning and inclusion of the provincial planning forum” charged Kunene.

The gathering emphasised that Housing Planning Needs must respond to targets in the distressed mining towns, informal settlements development, military veterans housing provision and social housing delivery as per national commitments and requirements.

Major challenges identified in planning, implementation and monitoring phase amongst others included: insufficient feasibility analysis, unavailability of land especially in the mining areas, delays in land transfers, tribal or remote rural areas challenges, flood and dolomite areas, expensive and time consuming dolomite investigations, illegal sale of BNG houses, growth in informal settlements, blocked projects and illegal occupation of facility stands.

Mr Tumisi Kgomo from Housing Development Agency said the situation does not look all doom and gloom. "We managed to acquire thousand of hectars of land from private hands and are ready for development planning to address housing needs in different areas. In Rustenburg and Madibeng alone 419hectars of land has been acquired for future projects. We also have land requisition matters which amounts to over 4000hectars that are still pending which will be finalised in due course. As the agency we are working tirelessly to ensure there's land for development of housing in the entire province" remarked Kgomo.

The Department is also to rollout other important bulk services infrastructure through Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) and Provincial Infrastructure Grant (PIG). R114 million will be channelled to different municipalities across the province to develop water and sanitation infrastructure.

Acting Chief Director Disaster Tshepo Phetlhu emphasised the need uplift monitoring mechanism on project implementation and the need for integrated planning. The implementation of plans by municipalities needs to be monitored intensively and support must be provided where necessary to ensure hundred percent expenditure of MIG. Also the Housing Needs, Research, Planning and Technical Services officials must become full time participants in Municipal Infrastructure Planning Forums such as District Wide Planning Session and District Appraisal Session to align our departmental plans to the Intergrated Development Plans IDP's of the municipalities.

Key resolution of the indaba amongst others included that the departments needs to consider inviting the planning commission to inform planning processes; needs to revisit targets within the shrinking fiscal; need to ensure that all projects are correctly captured in the Housing Subsidy System - HSS, projects operating outside quantum impacts on achievement of set targets; the need to strive towards adherence to national subsidy quantum; the need to rethink the cost per unit; the need to implement projects as per the approved business plan; the need

to plan within the budget allocation as well as budgets cuts; the need to provide constant feedback to municipalities on monthly basis on all projects managed by HDA; the strategic planning need to ensure correct data and figures are used in the plans, reports and to ensure that the business plan does not include projects without bulk services.

The report of the Housing Planning Indaba will guide the Housing development and Infrastructure Planning for the next financial year. The province is expected to make its submission to National for consolidation.

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