

NORTH WEST Legislature Local Government Committee Blames Department's Failure to Monitor Municipalities for Poor Service Delivery Issues In Tswaing Local Municipality

North West Provincial Legislature, Thursday, 23 August 2018, the Portfolio Committee on Local Government and Human Settlements chaired by Hon. Motlalepula Rosho has strongly condemned the weak oversight role the Department of Local Government and Human Settlement played in the Tswaing Local Municipality's poor of service delivery issues.

The municipality which appeared before the Committee on its current state of affairs conceded that it has not tabled its Annual Reports from 2008/09 financial year to date and that it was struggling to provide basic services such as water and sanitation, electricity and road maintenances and payment of statutory payments.

Hon. Rosho said the municipality's collapse is due to lack of commitment by the department to ensure that there are proper mechanisms to provide basic services to the communities. "This municipality has had multiple Provincial Interventions in the past but there has never been a handover report as we can see that its annual reports were never tabled in the past 9 years. How do we approve budget as government but there is no accountability from the same municipality for many years? This municipality is still in crisis mode as there is no relationship between management and employees and it will be difficult for them to account on monies appropriated. Councillors also fail to play oversight on the municipal officials," said Hon. Rosho.

The Municipal Manager, Mr. Isaac Moruti admitted before the Committee that the municipality is in financial distress. “We are even struggling to honour statutory deductions for employees such as UIF; medical aid; pension funds, South African Revenue Services and others due to lack of revenue. We only pay as and when we have enough revenue. Our challenges with provision of electricity is due to non-availability of qualified electricians. The current electricity bill with Eskom is at R59 million and we agreed to pay R2,9 million per month when there are funds available,” said Moruti.

He said water challenges and backlogs are due to lack of repairs and maintenance of water pumps. “Shortage of vehicles which include honey sucker trucks has affected sanitation and this can be seen on instances where the sewer was spilling into the Sout Pan recently and some households still use septic tanks in Ottosdal and Letsopa,” said Mr. Moruti.

On the current Biodiversity Stewardship programme in partnership with Parks Board to manage Henk Joubert Game Reserve of the municipality, Hon. Rosho said although the project is a good local economic development project, it needs proper management. “It is our concern that the municipality launched this project without proper infrastructure and specialised personnel. We have also observed that the hectares for the wildlife is not sufficient hence some animals were disposed or translocated to other areas,” said Hon. Rosho.

Hon. Rosho said the municipality must submit a comprehensive report on the functionality of ward committees; revenue enhancement mechanisms; plans to fill critical posts and addressing local labour problems as well as how it will improve service delivery.

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Issued by: North West Provincial Legislature: Media & Communications Unit on behalf of the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Local Government and Human Settlements – Hon. Motlalepula Rosho.