

North West Legislature Portfolio Committee on Local Government Lambasts Department for Failure to Spend R300m for Housing Development

The North West Provincial Legislature's Portfolio Committee on Local Government and Human Settlement has lambasted the department for failure to spend R300m on housing development as well as continued lack of delivery on Military Veterans houses. The money ended up being returned to National Treasury through Provincial Treasury; and ultimately disbursed to other performing Provinces.

The Portfolio Committee Chairperson, Hon. Motlalepula Rosho further indicated that non-performance of the department on housing development for 2 years in succession has deprived the people of North West the right to access of houses.

The department was presenting the quarterly report to the Portfolio Committee. It was also lashed for not 'capacitating and playing Oversight role over municipalities in the province'.

Hon. Rosho, said the department allows municipalities to do as they please. "You are not adhering to the back to basics principles in terms of assessing impact instead you are doing malicious compliance to tick the box of submitting reports. Municipalities like Lekwa Teemane and Ditsobotla are in state of collapse.

"The reality is that the Auditor General's briefieng on Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) audit outcomes, once more confirmed our assertion as the Portfolio Committee that the NW municipalities performance has regressed", she said.

Hon. Rosho also referred to the issue of Kagisano Molopo local municipality that allegedly held a council meetings at Protea Hotel in Mafikeng and other areas outside the Municipal boundries. "The Mayor is law unto herself; she even attacked a councillor physically. How can a council meeting be moved from its own constituency?"

Responding to the issues raised, the Head of Department of Local government, Mr Ephraim Motoko, agreed with the Committee that the department underperformed on the issue of the re-allocation of the R300m.

“We started the process of procuring late in the year and most contractors were poorly performing. Some projects’ planning phase was not complete. “In areas like Marikana and Bokamoso, contractors could not continue because of community protests,” said Mr Motoko.

The MEC for the department, Fenny Gaolaolwe, said the other problem that delayed service delivery in housing is that most people on the system are registered as people that have already received houses. On issues of beneficiary list, the MEC acceded that they definitely have challenges and still grappling to resolve them.

The department has been told to submit a turnaround plan that will ensure that they deliver houses for military veterans; submit a report to translate the R300 million budget lost to other provinces as to how many beneficiaries have been disadvantaged a report on Kagisano Molopo holding meetings in Protea Hotel and the Mayor’s conduct whom was reported to have been convicted while the oversight meeting was in session. The reports are expected to be submitted within 7 working days.

ENDS.

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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.