

## PREMIER CALMS MAKGOLOKWENG PROTESTORS

March 8, 2013

Free State premier, Ace Magashule, took the bull by the horns when he pacified irate residents of the rural village of Makgolokweng in the QwaQwa, who were about to stage a protest over poor service delivery.

Community members had gathered to voice their complaints to Magashule and the minister in the presidency, Collins Chabane, who were visiting the area to assess the progress of development projects there.

Magashule reassured the protestors that both the provincial and national government were aware of their hardships. He said the provincial government was busy addressing their concerns.

The residents complained of lack of running water, electricity and access roads. Dimakatso Selepe said residents had been waiting for provision of basic services for a very long time. She said the municipality had kept residents in the dark about its efforts to address their concerns.

"We want roads, electricity and running water in the area but we mostly need our government to work with us and involve us in what is going on in our area. For years we have been pleading for running water and we feel that our complaints are just not been taken seriously by people we put in power," said Selepe.

Another resident, Tumelo Mokoena stressed that the crisis was compounded by their ward councillor who is never available to listen to their concerns.

"We know that we have a councillor who is supposed to help and work with us, but it's like he doesn't exist; he does not want to engage us on issues affecting us."

Magashule told the disillusioned residents that there were several projects in the pipeline, aimed at addressing their concerns.

"We heard your grievances and we are now at an advanced stage of intervening. I want to assure you that all matters that are supposed to be handled by the will be referred directly to the Maluti-a-Phofung executive mayor, Sarah Moleleki.

"Our purpose today is to present a synopsis of the progress made to date following the President's visit to this area in 2011. This includes steps taken in response to the challenges identified by the two communities, which were subsequently adopted by the executive committee (EXCO) in a meeting held at Thabo Mafutsanyane district municipality on the evening of October 4, 2011," said Magashule.

Makgolokweng is a traditional village under Chief Paulus Moloi, located about 17 km from Harrismith and about five km from Tshiame.

Magashule explained that a water network is 95 percent complete and the authorities were working continuously to resolve the problem, adding that construction of a four 4 megalitre reservoir at Makgolokweng will be commissioned in December this year.

"Water is available at strategic points for all households at Makgolokweng. However, this is an interrupted supply. The implementation of the Sterkfontein Water Treatment Works for bulk water provision worth R34.5-million for Makgolokweng and other villages in QwaQwa is standing at 95 percent overall completion," said Magashule.