

DA HOLDS ONTO WARD

By Tselane Moiloa



IEC Provincial chairperson Jabulani Mepha

WELKOM – The Democratic Alliance (DA) retained its ward 33 seat in Matjhabeng Local Municipality in a by-election on Wednesday, June 13.

Roquet Beneke was elected the ward's new councillor after polling 1373 votes ahead of the ruling African National Congress's candidate who came second with 379 votes. The Freedom Front Plus (FFP) garnered 21 votes while the United Resident's Front (URF) was fourth with only seven votes, Independent Electoral Commission provincial chairperson Jabulani Mepha said.

This means that DA received 77.14 percent of the votes and the ruling party 21.29 percent. During local government elections last year the DA won the ward with 1774 votes while the ANC got 965 votes.

The seat became vacant after the DA councillor who was elected in the May 2011 local government elections moved to Port Elizabeth. Beneke was running against Anthony Khelemethe Nakedi of the ANC, Thato Esther Phoofole of the URF and Cornel Fourie of FFP.

Mepha said he was satisfied with the way in which everything proceeded. "There was no chaos and political parties behaved so I am happy with how things ran," he said. The leadership of the DA has said the result shows renewed voter confidence in the party. The party also capitalised on the infighting in the ruling party, which have resulted in the delay of the ruling party's provincial elective conference. The conference has been scheduled to take place over the weekend of June 24.

"While the ANC is struggling to maintain internal cohesion and is unable to deliver effective services as a government, the DA is growing at an unprecedented rate," said DA Constituency Head in Matjhabeng Darryl Worth.

"The DA believes in an open opportunity society where all South Africans are able to fulfil their dreams and aspirations. The DA will build on the Matjhabeng results until we have convinced the majority of Free State residents that a DA run government will create a better future for all our people in the Free State and the country," Worth said.

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