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NGANGELIZWE REMAINS MATJHABENG'S MAYOR

By Mathapedi Ramonotsi

WELKOM-Sebenzile Ngangelizwe was re-elected as executive mayor of Matjhabeng for a second term on Tuesday May 31. He became mayor last year after former mayor Mathabo Leeto was redeployed to Lejweleputswa district.

Matjhabeng comprises Odendaalsrus, Allanridge, Bothaville, Wesselsbron, and Welkom, which makes it the second biggest municipality in the Free State after Mangaung metro.

Ngangelizwe won the seat after receiving 52 votes against Congress of the People (Cope) candidate Eddie Thoabala who got 19 votes. Matjhabeng is one of the richest parts of the Free State owing to its vast diamond and gold deposits.

“The people of Matjhabeng elected us, and we therefore deserve a chance to speed up service delivery. All of us elected must make sure that in all municipality programmes, we give the people of Matjhabeng first priority,” said the executive mayor. He also added that community members must be incorporated within programmes in the municipality. The municipality was recently rocked by allegations of corruption and misuse of public funds.

Charles Stofile will be Speaker after beating Piet Botha of the Democratic Alliance (DA). “We must work towards unity and cohesion amongst us as elected members of Matjhabeng local municipality council. All that we do must be for the benefit of Matjhabeng people,” said Stofile.

Motlantwa Sephiri was elected chief whip. All the three men at the helm of the council are African National Congress (ANC) members.

Meanwhile, the ruling ANC has managed to retain 52 seats in the precinct, followed by the DA with 16; Cope grabbed three and the Freedom Front Plus got only one seat.

The inaugural meeting came two weeks after the hotly contested third local government elections that were dominated by service delivery issues. According to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) provincial Chief Executive Chris Mepha there were only a few hiccups in the elections. “The Telkom network system collapsed in the following Municipalities: Ngwathe, Nala, Moqhaka, Matjhabeng and Mangaung which resulted in the non capturing of results. The matter was attended to over night by Telkom and capturing continued.”

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