



**water & sanitation**

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND  
SANITATION**

**HON. PAMELA TSHWETE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE LUSUSHWANA BULK WATER  
SUPPLY HANDOVER**

**BETTYSGOED**

**25 APRIL 2019**

Programme Director

Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande District Municipality

Executive Mayor of Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality

Councillors

House of Traditional Leaders

Municipal Managers

Regional Head and Department Officials

Members of the Media

Community of Bettysgoed

Ladies and Gentlemen

### **Good morning**

It is my pleasure to be at the place where the sun rises as we celebrate the handing over of the Lusushwana Bulk Water Supply to the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality. The objective of this project was to provide adequate and sustainable water supply to the existing and future demand within Lusushwana over the 20 year horizon estimated to increase to 5,014 households (21,934 people), through refurbishment, upgrading and construction of new infrastructure.

This project will benefit a total number of 3 723 households, with a population of 16 285 people.

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) in consultation with the Gert Sibande District Municipality and the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality identified and agreed to prioritise the Lusushwana Bulk Water Supply under the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG). This project was approved by DWS at a total cost of R 153.29 million and to be implemented in three phases.

Phase 1 of the project was completed during 2017/18 financial year while phase 2 and 3 were meant to be completed by the 22 November 2019, however these were completed by 31 March 2019. This all done but with the exception of phase 3b, the electrification of the project, which is expected to be completed by 30 April 2019. I would like to thank the Gert Sibande District Municipality, which was appointed as the implementing agent for this project, on behalf of the department for the speedy completion of the project – eight months in advance.

A total of 68 jobs were created during constructions phase: 35 during phase 1; 14 during phase 2; and 19 during phase 3.

The department has identified the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality as the beneficiary under the Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG). Once completed, the ownership of the infrastructure will be vested with this municipality and will therefore be responsible for the Operation and Maintenance.

In this instance I like to simplify the concept of Operation and Maintenance by making the example of a new car. A car owner always ensures that the car is kept in a good condition by having a maintenance plan and operating the vehicle in the desired way.

That will result in the car serving the owner well especially in the times of need. I would like to urge the municipality to apply this concept towards this project.

To take a step further, cars are fitted with security systems such as alarms and trackers. The project should be well protected and there are all sorts of security equipment and devices that can assist the municipality in that regard.

There has to be a joint effort between the municipality and the community to take ownership and safeguard this project against misuse and vandalism. The on-going vandalising of the same infrastructure that benefits the community remains undesirable and is a criminal offence. Let us take pride in looking after our infrastructure, as this is a legacy for generations to come.

There also has to be a further joint effort between the department and the municipality to educate and raise awareness on the dangers, and consequences, of vandalising the water and sanitation infrastructure.

Through proper security, operation and maintenance this project can serve the community for a very long time to come, especially through the times of climate change.

Climate change is a slow, natural cycle that causes the earth's temperature to rise and fall periodically over centuries. Climate change has a profound impact on human life, and among many changes it also influences temperature shifts, food security, and water resources.

Drought is brought by climate change, and the only way we can survive the effects of drought is by conserving the little water that is available to us. Let us save water and use it sparingly, and the municipality has to amplify the campaigns by DWS to save water. Every rainfall should be seen as an opportunity to harvest the water so that we do not only rely on tap water.

This past Tuesday I was in the North West to handover a groundwater source project. There is a need to optimise groundwater use as an important alternative for basic use of water. Of course this all depends on water availability under the ground, according to the water table, but I hope the engineers of the department and of the municipality are present, and are listening. The department is currently running the groundwater campaign as the theme of this month as we raising the awareness to explore groundwater use to assist the surface water that is drying up.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019, you have a democratic opportunity to vote and participate in building South Africa together.

Vote for a government that support all municipalities and communities regardless of their political affiliations.

Once again, thank you for allowing us to be part of this occasion, thank you to the District Municipality, the Local Municipality and to the Department of Water Sanitation in the Mpumalanga province. Thank you for all the support and good work done.

Let us work together to build a better country and better South Africa.

**Thuma Mina**

**Enkosi**

**I thank you**