



Sol Plaatje Local Municipality

# The RESIDENT

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ISSUE 04  
JANUARY 2026

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# The RESIDENT

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## Message from the Executive Mayor, Cllr Martha Bartlett



### From New Year's Day, We Delivered Services, We Rounded January Off Having Held Up Governance

We at Sol Plaatje Municipality kept the service delivery wheels rolling despite the month of January being perceived as a slow month. The morning of New Year's Day was one for the soul, welcoming new bundles of joy into the world at the Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe Memorial Hospital and the Galeshewe Day Hospital.

The reopening of the popular Langleg Pleasure Resort with multitudes flocking in on New Year's Day was a thrilling experience. With aplomb, we kept our noses to the service delivery grindstone with the reopening of two public swimming pools, Brian Hermanus in Florianville and Roodepan.

I am eternally grateful for the work undertaken, the commitment displayed by the employees who worked into the festive season, bringing joy to holidaymakers and the youth who are regulars at our swimming pools.

In an appreciable feat, we were able to share these glorious moments with the rest of the country. We locked national TV coverage on our Fire Department New Year's Day preparations, birth of New Year babies, reopening of Langleg Pleasure Resort, and the reopening of Brian Hermanus Public Swimming Pool.

The above service delivery yardsticks crystallised our stability despite the highly publicised court proceedings into the suspension of the substantive Municipal Manager, Mr Serapelo "Thapelo" Matlala.

### Governance Responsiveness

The Municipality held a highly successful Special Council meeting under the stewardship of the Speaker, Councillor Dipuo Peters, on Friday, 23rd January 2026.

We once again wish to assure ratepayers and residents at large that the delivery of services is continuing unabated.

We have demonstrated our compliance with the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) calendar through the current ward-based public participation in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) Review 2025-2026.

It was with appreciation that we had witnessed the change of heart in the opposition ranks amid the collapse of the previous Special Council meeting, throwing an all-important business of the council into disarray.

The deliberations were of utmost importance in upholding our responsiveness and accountability, and we can proudly declare that the following were tabled;

1. A report from the office of the Auditor General on the Audit Outcomes, aiming to guide Council and the municipality at large on how best to attain a clean audit. Further, it is from this report that fiscal transgressions would be acted upon.
2. Audit Action Plan - test our ability and readiness and implement remedial action towards the attainment of a clean audit.
3. Mid-year Budget and Performance Assessment Report, tabled by the Executive Mayor, Cllr Martha Bartlett. The report is critical in pinpointing shortcomings and our ability to accelerate service delivery and prudent expenditure.
4. Approval of reallocation of underperforming Integrated Urban Development Grant (IUDG) funded projects, which, if not utilised, we forfeit, with allocations returning to the National Treasury.
5. Reporting of deviations from procurement processes, critical in monitoring the necessity thereof, and amongst other critical matters.
6. Re-establishment of the Disciplinary Board aimed at fostering consequence management in the ranks of senior management.

The financial cycle goes beyond compliance, as it is overly important for the acceleration of service delivery.

### **The Matter of the Municipal Manager Mr Serapelo "Thapelo" Matlala**

I appeal to all parties, stakeholders, and many a person with an interest in this matter to refrain from disruptive conduct, especially with an intention to paralyse the municipality. Employees of the municipality must be assured of a stable workplace, and visitors to all municipal buildings must be safe at all times. We are all duty-bound and obligated to uphold institutional stability. Hence, no one, directly or indirectly affected by the suspension of Mr Matlala and the legal issues at hand, should act in a manner that undermines the delivery of services, the integrity of the municipality and public confidence.

## **Message from the Acting Municipal Manager, Ms. Busisiwe Mgaguli**



It's 2026 and it's off with a bang, boots on the ground, and ready to improve on the momentum for twenty, twenty Success.

Sol Plaatje, though some of its partnerships were pleased to form part of the school re-openings, celebration of the increased matric pass rate for the province, as well as getting to welcome the little ones who started their schooling career this year.

A huge congratulations to the Premier, MEC for Education and all officials who worked tirelessly to obtain an increased pass rate with the class of 2025 and earned sixth (6th) position overall.

As the administration, we looked forward to the Public Participation Programme that started without any setbacks on the 12th of January and culminates on the 05 February 2026. Although public participation is a programme mandated under the office of the Speaker, it presents itself as an opportunity to get some very critical feedback from our communities.

The IDP, Communications and Political officials are all to be commended for their ability to ensure that this programme was widely prepared for, publicised and well attended.

All these and other teams had to work in harmonious sync to pull off the preparation of the documents that speak to each ward's five (5) year priorities, the project progress, beneficiation and the earned value towards our communities.

These may be legislative undertakings; however, they signify so much more for us as the organisation that needs to not only be responsive toward our communities but equally so accountable. These are the big undertakings that help us strategise towards ensuring we deliver much-needed services to our communities.

We substantiated our small wins by ensuring we are responsive to matters of governance by Governance Responsiveness when Council approved the appointment of a Financial Disciplinary Board that comprises intergovernmental and internal officials that will undertake the very cumbersome task of criticising the institution's financial decision making. This appointment will run for three years and its composition will come at no cost to the ratepayer.

These key milestones happen under the stewardship of the Speaker Councillor Dipuo Peters and are notable in the efforts of our political leadership to steer the institution in the right direction.

When Council sat in the Council meeting of January 23rd 2026, amongst some of its key business was to also inform Council of the oversight visit of the Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation, which took place on January 29th 2026.

The deliberations were of utmost importance and the institution, in its endeavour to always ensure transparency, took the parliamentary delegation on a thorough site visit with the National and Provincial Department of Water and Sanitation. Engagements with the Parliamentary Committee were very fruitful and the Chairperson, Honourable Basson and his Committee were most satisfied with the progress made on the Bulk Infrastructure project.

Both the administration and the political offices will continue to do all they can to ensure the municipality fulfils on its Constitutional mandate this year, and always ensure that we continue to be of service to our residents.

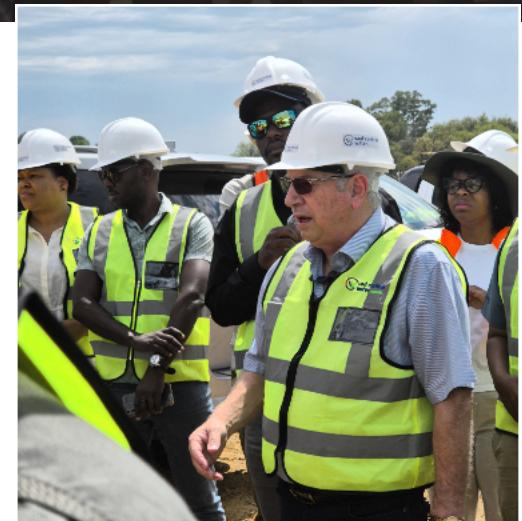


## Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation Endorses Progress

on Sol Plaatje Municipality's Bulk Water Infrastructure Upgrades

Sol Plaatje Municipality's large-scale project - the maintenance and upgrade of the bulk water supply infrastructure - continues to make steady progress, with work at the Riverton Water Treatment Works forming a key part of attempts to secure a reliable and consistent water supply for residents.

Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation conducted an oversight visit on 29 January 2026, headed by Chairperson Hon. Leonard Basson, who voiced satisfaction with the progress of the project.



**Photo (in front):** Parliament Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation Chairperson, Hon. Leonard Basson.

## OVERSIGHT VISIT TO RIVERTON WATER TREATMENT WORKS

The Parliamentary delegation visited both the Old and New Riverton water treatment plants, where water is treated before being pumped to the Newton Reservoirs in Kimberley. Committee members were briefed on ongoing refurbishment work, operational improvements and the challenges of upgrading critical infrastructure while continuing water supply to communities.

### MAJOR REFURBISHMENT AT THE NEW RIVERTON PLANT

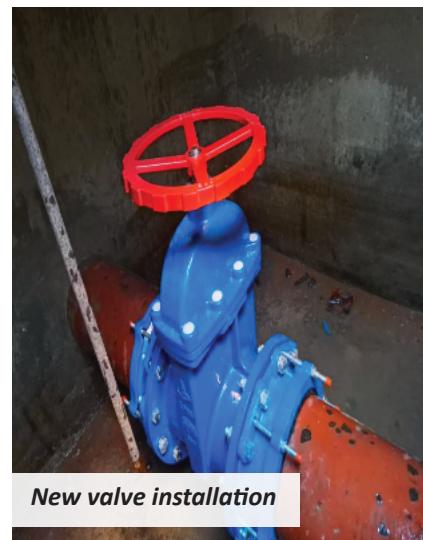
At the New Riverton plant, major refurbishment is underway to refurbish ageing infrastructure, improve treatment efficiency and reinstate the plant to its original state with the addition of the latest technology and full automation of the plant.

#### Key upgrades include:

- Manual non-functional valves are being replaced with electrically operated valves, alongside extensive pipework upgrades and replacements.
- One of the clarifiers is currently offline while undergoing a full structural upgrade. The floor is being changed from flat to a sloped bottom to increase functionality once the work is completed. A second clarifier's full structural upgrade will follow during the upcoming winter period so as not to impact water delivery during the peak summer period.
- Installation of the first of two 10 MVA transformers (duty and standby), replacing two old 5 MVA transformers to improve the bulk electrical supply and redundancy.
- A washwater recovery system is introduced to return backwash water to the inlet of the plant (after being treated to acceptable standards) and this will reduce the raw water quantity extracted from the Vaal River and will result in significant raw water cost savings.
- Installation of new chemical dosing flocculation systems and upgrades of the existing chlorine dosing facility to ensure a fully functional disinfection system and improved water quality



*Clarifier Floor being changed from flat to sloping bottom*



*New valve installation*



*Washwater recovery excavations*



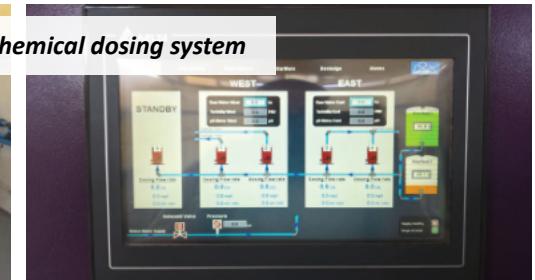
*Washwater recovery roof slab*



*First of two 10 MVA transformers (duty and standby), replacing older 5 MVA transformers*



*Fully functional chemical dosing system*



*Sol Plaatje Municipality*



- Construction of an MCC and dosing room and installation of a flash mixer, improving treatment consistency and enhanced water quality.
- Sand filter systems are also being refurbished, including the replacement of internal pipework and filtration components.

## EXTENSIVE OVERHAUL OF THE OLD RIVERTON PLANT

### Work underway at the Old Plant includes:

- The Old Plant consists of 12 filter bays, of which Filters No 7 to 12 have been fully upgraded and commissioned with new automated valves, filter floors, nozzles, filter sand and full pipework replacement. The remaining Filters No 1 to 6 is currently being upgraded.
- Old valves — some dating back several decades — are being replaced with electric valves with fully automated controls and the latest HMI and SCADA technology to allow fully automated local and remote operation.
- Replacement of all backwash pumps, as well as settled water pumps used to lift water from the clarifiers to the filters, as this equipment is essential for maintaining filter performance.
- Inspection and refurbishment or replacement of gantry structures for ease of maintenance.
- Cleaning and upgrading of sludge dams, clarifiers and other associated treatment components.

Sections of the Old Plant have already been recommissioned (Filters No 7 to 12) to supplement the supply while refurbishment at the New Plant continues. These upgrades are being carried out while water production continues, requiring careful coordination to balance construction activities with the need to supply water to Kimberley.



The frequency of planned water supply interruptions has been significantly reduced, with the last major shutdown at the end of May and the beginning of June 2025. Water supply interruptions that occurred in certain areas were due to burst pipes, caused by the large number of asbestos pipes in the distribution network. A recent Eskom power-related failure affecting the Riverton Plant impacted operations. Pumping of water from Riverton to Kimberley's Newton Reservoirs was halted and from the latter facility, to residents to avoid depleting the reservoirs. The municipality implemented a nightly water supply interruption in an effort to replenish the reservoirs. Three (23 MI, 45 MI and 102 MI) of the four reservoirs at Newton have been emptied, cleaned out and disinfected and the last 91 MI reservoir will be cleaned out during the month of February 2026.

## R2.5 BILLION INVESTMENT IN WATER SECURITY

The work forms part of the Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI) programme, a R2.5 billion investment secured from National Treasury and implemented over a seven-year period. The programme includes emergency, medium-term and long-term interventions aimed at stabilising bulk water supply, reducing losses, improving water quality and strengthening system resilience.

Emergency and medium-term interventions have already shown results. More than 960 leaks have been repaired, pressure management zones have been introduced, and four

advanced controllers are now in place. These measures have contributed to reduced real losses by 15% - 38%, stabilised reservoir levels, and improved overall system efficiency.



## BENEFITS FOR RESIDENTS AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Residents are already benefiting from improved system stability and reduced water losses. In addition, a large-scale water meter installation and replacement programme is improving billing accuracy and fairness, while protecting municipal revenue for reinvestment into service delivery. 5828 water meters have been installed to date.

The BFI project is also creating economic opportunities. To date, 49 SMMEs have been appointed, and more than 324 jobs have been created, with strong participation from local labour and youth. 32.4% of the targeted 1000 jobs for the BFI project have been reached to date.

## CONFIDENCE IN THE PROJECT

The oversight visit concluded at the municipal council chambers, where committee members were briefed on project expenditure, milestones and future phases. Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation expressed satisfaction with the progress of the project.

While residents may continue to experience short-term disruptions as upgrades progress, these interventions represent a critical investment in the municipality's long-term water security. The bulk water infrastructure project is laying the foundation for a more reliable, efficient and sustainable water system that will serve the Sol Plaatje community for decades to come.





*The bulk water infrastructure maintenance and upgrade project includes the replacement of the pipeline from Riverton to Kimberley with high-quality steel pipes. These pipes are designed for durability and are expected to last for more than 50 years.*



*The oversight visit concluded at the municipal council chambers*

**WELCOME REMARKS BY: HON. ACTING EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF THE SOL PLAATJE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, CLLR DITEKO DIOKA**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE OVERSIGHT VISIT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON WATER AND SANITATION**

**Themed: Assessment of mega water and sanitation infrastructure developments to enhance water services delivery**

**Kimberley, Northern Cape Province, Republic of South Africa**

**THURSDAY, 29 JANUARY 2026**

**Hon. Chairperson for the Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation,  
Hon. Mr Leonard Jones Basson,  
All Honourable Members of the Portfolio Committee,  
Members of the Provincial Legislature present,  
MMCs and All Councillors,  
Acting Municipal Manager of Sol Plaatje Municipality, Ms. Busisiwe Mgaguli and  
Northern Cape Regional Dept. Water and Sanitation,  
Provincial Head, Ms. Iketletso Lekalake and staff,  
Representatives of the Various Partners in the Water and Sanitation fraternity,  
Senior Civil Servants and All Civil Servants,  
All participants present,**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to extend my sincerest and warmest welcome on behalf of the people of Sol Plaatje Local Municipality. Utmost thanks to the Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation for undertaking this oversight visit.

This mission underscores parliament's all-important role in fostering accountability and transparency by municipalities that are recipients of government grants.

Through this voyage, we once get to appreciate the good in us being beneficiaries of grants proffered by national government for ensuring the uninterrupted supply of water to residents and the need for it to be of the highest quality.

Equally, and it is of utmost significance that we ought to emphasise that this fact-finding mission, will be able to raise the alarm should there be a vestige of mismanagement and undermining of good governance.

Hold us accountable for it is not in the interests of the South African taxpayer for consequence management to be uttered as a buzzword without concomitant action being taken.

South Africans have grown wary of the embezzlement of public funds; they have become more inclined of their part in whistleblowing and the constitutional obligation that you are embarking upon is highly appreciated.

We support the masses of our people in the clarion call for effective service delivery, for a corruption-free Sol Plaatje Municipality and for the upholding of good governance always.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sol Plaatje Municipality is a growing municipality, Kimberley is a growing city. When water was first abstracted from the Vaal River in the 1940s, we sat at a population of just over 70 000 and today we are at a populace of 270 000. Our increasing student population is to be cited as a key factor in the support towards our water and sanitation infrastructural developments.

Our city of historical greats, a city of many an early civilization feat in the wake of the discovery of diamonds, is now able to avoid an economic downturn due to a perceived inability to supply water to a growing population.

Honourable Members of this Portfolio Committee,

We are heavily indebted for the Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI) allocation to the tune of R2.5 billion, a grant allocation towards our bulk water supply infrastructure upgrades.

We are on the mend and highly appreciative of the immeasurable support from national government and the overt functionality of the three spheres of government.

Uninterrupted water supply is a linchpin for economic growth and stimulation of sustainable livelihoods. We will be completely out of the woods at the end of the BFI lifespan.

We are into our third year of the BFI, and the assessment set to unfold is therefore critical in ensuring we stay on the rails.

The frequency of our water shutdowns has been rolled back. Our last shutdown was at end May and beginning June 2025. Water supply interruptions when they occurred in certain suburbia were related to burst pipes due to the large number of asbestos pipes in the distribution network.

On Sunday, we experienced a setback which was an Eskom power related failure. Power supply to the Riverton Water Treatment Plants lasted into the afternoon of past Monday. Pumping of water from Riverton to Kimberley's Newton Reservoirs was halted and from the latter facility to residents and this was to avoid depleting the reservoirs.

We are currently undertaking an all-out-effort in replenishing the reservoirs through a recovery programme; we implemented a nightly water supply interruption of 21:00 to 04:00 and will tomorrow make an assessment on whether to continue or not.

Honourable Members,

In having alluded to the population growth, and in considering that the building of the new Riverton Water Treatment Plant was in the early 1970s as one of the last most significant bulk water supply infrastructure strides. The BFI grant allocation thus stands out as a major post democracy water infrastructure investment.

Honourable Members, the reality is that we are faced by another dire infrastructure overhaul; our sanitation infrastructure is under siege.

An urgent investment is needed into arresting sewage spills, theft of components at pump stations and the deliberate acts of vandalism. An application like the BFI one, has been made for sanitation maintenance and upgrades.

We are pleading for your support, that you rally behind us in ensuring it meets endorsement.

Human dignity ought to be entrenched, our people deserve to live in habitable

environments free from sewerage spillages.

Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen

As I conclude, I think it is of importance that I desist from delving into details about BFI and all allocated funds, and to cite an example – Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant. This is to avoid influencing your oversight purview and the clarity you would be seeking from presentations to be made.

Thank you, Honourable Members, for this oversight visit. Thank you to the Minister Pemmy Majodina for her own visits.

Thank you to the Director General Mr Sean Phillips and staff for the public consultations on the workshops on the amendments of the National Water Act (NWA) and Water Services Act and workshops on other pieces of legislation.

Once again, and as a parting shot, I wish to assert Honourable Members, do probe, do squeeze for answers and provide guidance where necessary.

We trust that you will enjoy your stay, the city's renowned civilities embedded in the warmth of its people.

Thank You, Re A Leboga, Enkosi, Baie Dankie



## Reflections on the legacy of Brian Hermanus

**Text:** Executive Mayor Cllr Martha Bartlett

The reopening of the Brian Hermanus public swimming pool was not only a service delivery gain. It chronicles our optimism that through this facility's accessibility to the youth, Brian Hermanus's denied swimming Olympic gold aspirations under Apartheid rule are set to be achieved someday.

I am glad to have spurred on the repair work which involved electrical upgrade - rewiring and replacing stolen cables, replacing stolen and broken basins, repainting, fixing the pool, and much more. Vandals had ransacked the facility over a period of time.

In the last two weeks of December 2025, the contractor pulled out all the stops to complete the task at hand. Ours is to urgently address all security concerns.

Equally, we are challenging the Florianville community to ensure they protect the facility. Municipal infrastructure is a community asset and should be protected against wanton theft and vandalism.



**Executive Mayor Cllr Martha Bartlett, Speaker Cllr Dipuo Peters, Cllr Diteko Dioka, Chief Whip Martin White flanked by siblings, a niece and nephew of late Brian Hermanus**

Symbolically, I was joined on New Year's Day by the siblings and nephew of the late Brian "Bruno" Hermanus. They were the first to take a dip, showcasing their generational swimming prowess.

We urge the youth in Florianville to become friends of the swimming pool and establish a Brian Hermanus Amateur Swimming Club of their own. They should get involved in hosting swimming galas and ensure each child is taught to swim.

Equally, we also applaud the family of Brian for being eager to participate in the activities of the swimming pool.

With the entire Florianville community involved, the clarion call and slogan of Brian "Bruno" Hermanus of "A Child in Sport Is a Child out of Court" shall live on.

The life and times of Brian "Bruno" Hermanus:

The bitter and soul destroying part of Brian "Bruno" Hermanus's life under Apartheid was in having been denied the opportunity to compete in the Olympics and the most presti-

gious of world swimming competitions due to racial segregation at the time. Apart from having possessed the ability to fly in the water, he was adored and admired as a versatile local sporting hero. Brian Hermanus excelled in soccer, rugby, table tennis, athletics, and tennis — both at school and on the provincial stage.

Hermanus was a real victim of Apartheid in sports. He is best remembered for the swimming feat he achieved, making a mockery of Apartheid South Africa swimming, equalling a 100-metre Olympic and world record in 1972, this is after Brian together with Ashreef Abass, were selected among the Top 5 swimmers in South Africa to receive advanced training in London.

Apartheid South Africa blocked the prospect of him having to be remembered as South Africa's greatest swimmer.

The late Brian "Bruno" Hermanus was a local leader of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and a formidable leader of the ANC.

At the time of his death in a car crash on a gravel road between Britstown and Vosburg on Wednesday, 26 July 2000, he was serving as MEC for Sport, Arts and Culture. Ironically, he was en route to Calvinia to attend a hearing on racism in sport. He died alongside his fellow Comrade and Personal Assistant, Mervin Erlank.



**Childhood friend of Brian Hermanus spoke on his legacy in an interview with the SABC News.**



**Portraits of Brian Hermanus**



## Sol's Adopted Homevale High School Achieves Whopping Matric Result

**Text:** Thabo Mothibi

**Photos:** Thabo Mothibi & Vodacom

Kimberley's Homevale High School has extricated itself from the matric results doom and gloom of multiple academic years. Hail the Class of 2025! The school achieved a staggering increase, standing atop at 87% from a mark of 46% in 2024. From the shadows of having once been labelled as the *Worst Performing High School* in the province and country to earning the honour of *Most Improved High School*.

In having drawn the undesirable marker of *Worst Performing High School in the Province* in



**Photo:** Motivational speaker and actor in popular television drama series Murendeni Ndanduleni (white jacket) with a Class of 2025 learner, school principal Ms Raadiya Amien and Vodacom staffer

2025, the municipality stepped in to salvage the situation. The municipality urged telecommunications giant, Vodacom, to up the ante on its e-learning interventions and much needed motivational talks were provided.

The Class of 2025 came to the party, and the Class of 2026 has promised to do better. Executive Mayor Councillor Martha Bartlett, flanked by ward-three Councillor Derick Korkie and Member of the Mayoral Committee Councillor Frikkie Banda, visited the school on the 15 of January 2026 and further interventions are being looked at in improving on making the learning environment conducive.

In its visit to the school on Friday, 30 January 2026, Vodacom's contagious joy was unleashed on the Class of 2026. The powerful academic motivator, Murendeni Musanda Ndanduleni of Musanda Foundation, a stern proponent in "making education fashionable," had the learners spellbound. He is much renowned for his role in popular television drama series *Muvhango*.

**Photos right:** Executive Mayor Cllr Martha Bartlett, flanked by ward three Cllr Derick Korkie and Member of the Mayoral Committee Cllr Frikkie Banda in a visit to the school on 15 January 2026



**Class of 2026**





## New Year's Day Merriment Returned To Popular Langleg Pleasure Resort

*Text and Photos:* Thabo Mothibi

It was shoulder to the wheel of service delivery for the municipality's Executive Mayor Cllr Martha Bartlett and Speaker Cllr Dipuo Peters. The mothers of the municipality embarked on an inspection mission, ensuring holidaymakers were at ease and making merry.

Boasting upgraded chalets, accommodation at this popular resort was fully booked ahead and into New Year's Day.

Revellers returned to Langleg amid its closure resulting from COVID-19 restrictions and all-round

**Photos:** Holidaymakers at Langleg Pleasure Resort happily received the Executive Mayor Cllr Martha Bartlett on New Year's Day.



flood related damages.

Multitudes of daytime visitors descended on the facility, with some expressing their appreciation to the municipality for the reopening and were also at hand sharing fond memories of many a visit.

As expected, the swimming pool, which was declared unsafe in previous years, was a huge drawcard. Other revellers appreciably kept themselves to enjoying the scenic beauty, natural attributes, and infrastructure of the resort.

### RESORTS CONTACT NUMBERS

Langleg Pleasure Resort - 053 830 6977,  
Fees for daytime visitors: R60, Car R40.

Riverton Pleasure Resort - 053 830 6977,  
Fees for daytime visitors: R60, Car R40.

Rekaofela Pleasure Resort - 053 531 0626  
No daytime visitors.

Transka Pleasure Resort - 053 497 3115,  
Fees for daytime visitors: R50, Car R40,  
Six bed chalets: R1350 per night midweek,  
R1490 per night weekend and public holidays,  
Four bed chalets: R970 per night weekend  
and public holidays.

Refundable deposit is R600.

We plead with the public and holidaymakers to report all acts of vandalism at our resorts to Sol Plaatje Municipality's Security Unit - 053 830 6661 - and SAPS 10111.



The SABC News crew had three live crossings for its 24-hour TV news channel on DSTVs channel 404 from Langleg Pleasure Resort, with a sharp focus on the resort's reopening.



## WELCOMING BUNDLES OF JOY

**Text:** Thabo Mothibi

**Photos:** Department of Health

On New Year's Day, the Northern Cape Department of Health in collaboration with Sol Plaatje Municipality, marked a joyful and symbolic beginning to the new year at Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe Memorial Hospital and Galeshewe Day Hospital in Kimberley. The occasion was the welcoming of newborn babies delivered on 1 January 2026 at the city's two hospitals.

The Executive Mayor of Sol Plaatje Municipality, Cllr Martha Bartlett, was accompanied by Speaker of the municipality, Cllr Dipuo Peters, and Members of the Mayoral Committee, and senior management within the Health Department. They weaved through the maternity beds, extending heartfelt congratulations, words of encouragement, and hugs of human compassion.

Armed with gifts for the mothers and their bundles of joy, the Executive Mayor celebrated, wishing the babies good health and proclaiming a motherhood journey of contentment upon the mothers.

Speaking to SABC News in a live TV interview, she gave the assurance that the municipal-

ity will continue to honour its service delivery commitment to health facilities in the city.

The Department of Health reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring quality maternal and child healthcare services, emphasising that every birth is a reminder of the importance of nurturing healthy families and building strong communities.

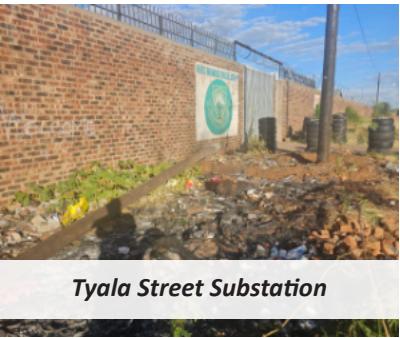
**Photos: Welcoming new bundles of joy into the world on New Year's Day**





## POWER SUPPLY SABOTAGE CONTINUES UNABATED

**Text:** Thabo Mothibi, **Photos:** Thabo Mothibi & Supplied



**Tyala Street Substation**



**Corner of Mampe and Rosa streets**

A series of well orchestrated and deliberate attacks occurred on our electrical infrastructure in January 2026.

In the early hours of Saturday, 17 January, residents of Galeshewe, supplied from the Tyala Street Substation were left without power supply for twelve hours.

A medium-voltage cable at Tyala Street Substation was repaired after a pole was burned.

In another act of arson and in what appeared to have been a coordinated act of sabotage, a pole had to be replaced after overhead lines had collapsed at corner Mampe and Rosa streets in Number Two.

According to eyewitness accounts, at the two scenes, arsonists simultaneously started fires at about 04:00, resulting in a widespread outage.

Areas that were affected were Tlhageng, Number Two, John Daka, White City, Shantytown, Sobantu, Santa, Newtown, Kagisho, and other neighbouring areas.

We appeal for increased community vigilance as we are faced by an assault on public infrastructure by thieves and vandals who are carrying out the attacks at the behest of cable theft kingpins.

Please do report all acts of theft and vandalism against our infrastructure to SAPS at 10 111.



## SOL PLAATJE EMERGENCY SERVICES' FIRE DEPARTMENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The unit's acting manager (assistant fire chief) Antonie Moller, flanked by retiring station commander Cameron Andrews, engaged the SABC News in a live interview, providing an overview on the municipality's preparations to deal with any disasters on New Year's Day.

Advice was also given on safety precautions, especially concerning New Year's Day celebrations.



**Sol Plaatje Municipality**



## FIRE DEPARTMENT QUELLS FOUR HOUSE-HOLD FIRES ON SUNDAY, 25 JANUARY 2026

**Text and Photos:** Thabo Mothibi

From the morning of 25 January 2026 at 01:00 to late afternoon at 17:00, the municipality's Fire Department responded to four call-outs; a burning house in Ritchie and three shack fires in Kimberley.

For all incidents, no casualties were reported.

The last call-out was a speedy response to the burning of a backyard shack at Crutze Square in Galeshewe. The blaze nearly resulted in the adjacent house and the car parked in the yard being caught in the flare-up.

We extend our appreciation to the municipality's Emergency Services for always being combat ready to deal with disaster scenarios, which includes, amongst others, household fires, veld fires, rescue operations, and hazardous spillages.



*Pictures:* Shack fire at Crutze Square in Galeshewe.

## PUBLIC NOTICE EMERGENCY SERVICES

Sol Plaatje Municipality Emergency Services Section is on full alert around the clock. All preparations are forever in place to deal with all rescue operations, especially firefighting.

It also deals with the illegal selling and use of fireworks. Applications for the use of fireworks should always and timemously be directed to this section. In addition, it is responsive to building compliance enforcement.

In times of emergencies, members of the public are encouraged to call the municipality's Emergency Services section control room at 053 832 2222/4111.

**Issued By:** Sol Plaatje Municipality's Communications Unit on behalf of the Emergency Services Section.



## Reserve Bank keeps repo rate at 6.75%

The South African Reserve Bank's Monetary Policy Committee has kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.75%.

This was announced by Reserve Bank Governor, Leshetja Kganyago on Thursday, 29 January 2026.

The prime lending rate will also stay steady at 10.25%.

“Two members [of the MPC] favoured a cut of 25 basis points, while four preferred a hold.

“The Quarterly Projection Model continues to forecast gradual rate cuts as inflation subsides. The model interprets the policy stance as moderately restrictive currently, with rates reaching neutral levels during 2027.

“As before, this rate path remains a broad policy guide. Our decisions will continue to be taken on a meeting-by-meeting basis, with careful attention to the outlook, data outcomes, and the balance of risks to the forecast,” he said.

Kganyago added that South Africa's economic growth “looks steadier”, noting that there has been expansion for four quarters – with available data suggesting that “it grew further in the most recent quarter”.

For more information visit: <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/reserve-bank-keeps-repo-rate-675>

Source: SANews



## government communications

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### MEDIA RELEASE

26 January 2026

#### GCIS Northern Cape to Embark on Communication Outreach Programme on the State of the Nation Address (SONA)

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in the Northern Cape will embark on a province-wide communication outreach programme to popularise and unpack the 2026 State of the Nation Address (SONA).

The outreach programme seeks to ensure that communities across the province understand government priorities, policy direction, and key commitments that President Cyril Ramaphosa will outline during SONA. Through direct engagement, GCIS will promote public participation, transparency, and access to government information.

The programme will include community activations, dialogues, media engagements and stakeholder briefings in various districts of the Northern Cape. These platforms will provide residents with an opportunity to engage with the government, ask questions and gain clarity on how national priorities translate into tangible programmes and services at provincial and local levels. The outreach will focus on key SONA themes, including economic growth and job creation, service delivery, infrastructure development, social , safety, and nation-building.

GCIS calls on communities, civil society organisations, traditional leaders, youth formations, women's groups and the media to actively participate in the outreach activities and contribute to constructive dialogue on government programmes.

Further details regarding dates, venues and targeted communities will be communicated through local and social media platforms.

Issued by:

Government Communication and Information System (GCIS): Northern Cape Provincial Office

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*Thank you*  
for participating in the Public Participation  
Programme for the 2025/26 IDP Review

Sol Plaatje Municipality wishes to thank residents for their participation in the Public Participation Programme for the 2025/26 Integrated Development Plan (IDP) Review. The IDP is a strategic planning tool that guides the Municipality's planning and budgeting processes by identifying and prioritising residents' most important needs.

Participation in the IDP process gives communities a meaningful voice in local planning and development. It also provides residents with an opportunity to hold the Municipality accountable, as plans are written down, tracked, and reported on.

The IDP further ensures alignment between local priorities and provincial and national government priorities, enabling coordinated planning, support, and funding.



**Champion of Public Participation, Speaker Cllr Dipuo Peters, taking to the airwaves, talking about the IDP Review Public Participation processes.**

## Sol Plaatje Municipality 2025/26 IDP Review Public Participation Programme



