



MEDIA ARTICLE

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To All media houses

BLOUBERG MUNICIPALITY HOST SUCCESSFUL WARD COMMITTEES CONFERENCE

The 17th Annual Ward Committees Conference saw the ward committees, community development workers, the Council, Executive Management, Makgosi and other stakeholders converge at Miami Lodge in Polokwane in the Capricorn District to tackle issues of service delivery, how best they can work together to serve the community of Blouberg as well as sharing challenges and successes

Today, Blouberg Local Municipality is hailed champions of public participation throughout the country because of, amongst other things; the effectiveness of its ward committees system. Blouberg Local Municipality has always regarded its ward committees as the important mobilizing agent for community action.

The 22 wards translate into 220 ward committee members. Each ward is manned by 10 committee members who are selected from a broad range of interest groups that are most relevant to the key performance areas of the municipality and the government in general. The areas include services such as water and sanitation, electricity, housing, roads, storm-water and drainage, waste and environment and social services including health, safety and security among others.

The Blouberg Annual Ward Committees' Conference dates back from 2003 and has been running throughout the years without fail.

The conference was held under the theme: **“Rise of the New Dawn: Ward Committees leading the charge towards the *khawuleza* trajectory”**. President Cyril Ramaphosa has called on all spheres of government to move with speed in attending community challenges and delivering services to the people. “*Khawuleza*” which means “hurry up” is the name which seeks to improve government service delivery and development.

Delivering the keynote address, the Mayor, His Worship Cllr Maseka Pheedi said it is time to *khawuleza* – move with speed to attend to the community challenges. Mayor Pheedi also called on ward

committee members to always avail themselves when communities need them. He further indicated that ward committees play a major role in enhancing participatory democracy. "Ward committees help enhance public participation which is vital part of our democracy, which allows for citizens to involve in how their communities are governed".

Ward Committees and councillors' hard work did not go unnoticed as various categories in recognition of their outstanding performances and contributions to community development were in place. The three-day conference concluded with resolution on how to fastrack the delivery of services to the Blouberg citizenry.

The Blouberg Municipality still has its hands firmly gripping the public participation domain. This statement was backed up during the South African Local Government Association/ SALGA Peer Recognition Certificates Awards hosted by the Extended SALGA Provincial Speakers' Forum held earlier this year. Blouberg Municipality swept the boards in all categories entered namely: Best Public Participation Model, the Most Functional Schedule of Meetings as well as the Most Functional Municipal Public Accounts Committee (MPAC).

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