

## NEWS UPDATE

ISSUE 13

11 MARCH 2013



Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee Human Settlements and Housing Clr Lulama Titi Odili, and MMC Clr Xolo Pongolo taking notes during the interaction



MMM EM Clr Thabo Manyoni addressing the church leaders

### “Churches must reclaim their places in society:” EM Manyoni

The Executive Mayor of Mangaung Clr Thabo Manyoni has called upon churches in the Mangaung area to fight the injustices prevalent in today’s society, like they did in the past.

“It is high time we stand together. If we could fight apartheid back then in the day, then why can’t we fight against all the evil that is happening now,” the EM asked last week.

This was one of the Executive Mayor’s primary concerns when he was addressing church leaders from Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu in the City Hall on Thursday, 07 March.

By working with all various churches in the Mangaung area, the EM is hoping that the gap between the municipality and communities will be bridged as church leaders tend to know about

the social situations in their immediate surroundings.

Together with the MMC for Human Settlements and Housing Clr Xolo Pongolo, the EM wanted to discuss issues pertaining to the formalisation of church sites in the three areas, a priority area for city.

There is particular concern that some churches are erected haphazardly, in dangerous places or do not have the right services for their congregation which may result in a health risk. Furthermore, some churches have high unpaid bills of electricity; with a suggestion given that they should opt for prepaid electricity as this would reduce their woes.

“We request that those who know that the places they are on are not suitable must meet with the relevant officials so that



Church leaders from Mangaung came in their numbers for the meeting with the EM and city officials

suitable places may be found. We also request that you install prepaid meters for your electricity. Tlohellang ko kolota masepala (stop owing the municipality),” the EM cautioned.

To this effect, the EM said that there would be regular meetings with churches to ensure that their needs are met, and that everyone has a valid and acceptable area. However, he urged against the mushrooming of churches.

Some of the issues raised by the church leaders were to get help from the municipality in terms of dealing with their debt as well as the need to quicken procedure in terms of site allocation. Nonetheless, they also expressed satis-

faction with the initiative by the EM to find out their concerns and how a partnership to build society can be formed.

However, there was consensus amongst the different institutions that more needs to be done to ensure that the moral fibre of society is restored, in response to the alarming number of rapes, murder and other violent crimes pervading the nation at large.

“We know that there are still a lot of things to fix, but we cannot allow our societies to degenerate while we are still here. Churches were formed to fight evil. We cannot have churches which are helpless and hopeless with all these social ills,” Clr Manyoni concluded.

#### MANGAUNG NEWS UPDATE

This platform has been created to communicate all the activities, projects, events and the latest developments within MMM. If an individual Directorate wants to publish their information, please contact the communications unit: (Tel: 051-4058212 or e-mail qondile.khedama@mangaung.co.za)

AT THE HEART OF IT ALL