

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

OVERSIGHT VISITS TO PROJECTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS - CITY OF MBOMBELA (BARBERTON)

1. INTRODUCTION

The Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature (the Legislature) has a responsibility in terms of Section 118 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, (the Constitution) to facilitate public involvement in its legislative and other processes. Section 115 (a) and (b) of the Constitution empowers the Legislature to (a) "*summon any person to appear before it to give evidence on oath or affirmation, or to produce documents*" and sub-section (b) states that "*the Legislature or any of its Committees may require any person or provincial institution to report to it*".

This is a report back on the site visits that were conducted by the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (the Committee) to projects of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (the department) on the 01 November 2016. The report seeks to inform the House on the activities and recommendations that were taken during the oversight visits.

2. METHOD OF WORK

The Committee conducted oversight visits to projects of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs on 01 November 2016. The oversight visits were conducted in the City of Mbombela in Barberton.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE OVERSIGHT VISITS

- a) **The following objectives shaped the oversight visits to the projects of the department:**
 - To evaluate the progress made on projects reflected in the Annual Performance Plan (APP) implemented by the department.

- To determine the extent to which public funds are efficiently, economically and effectively used by the department in the implementation of its projects;
- To interact with project beneficiaries in order to hear their concerns.
- To fast track service delivery of core services to the communities within the municipality in which the department has funded projects.
- To assess the progress made in implementation of the Fortune-40 programme.

4. OVERSIGHT ON GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROJECTS

4.1. BARBERTON FORTUNE-40 FARM.

The Committee conducted an oversight visit to the farm on the 01 November 2016.

4.1.1. Project Background

The project was started in February 2016. The project comprised of 10 beneficiaries (two cooperatives with 5 beneficiaries each). There are almost 20 hectares for vegetable and pig production. The project currently planted spinach, tomato, carrots, beetroot, onions, green pepper and butternuts (about 1.5ha).

4.1.2. Infrastructure

Three boreholders have been drilled and tested, and one has already been equipped. A new F40 tractor has been delivered to the project as part of project resources.

4.1.3. Budget

The department reported that **R750 000** has been spent in the project for infrastructure development and stipends.

4.1.4. Planned Activities

The department reported the following planned activities for the project:

- The department plans to construct a piggery structure, mapping of the site has already been done.

- Fencing for 20ha of the field is being done to prevent wild animals from trampling over the crops and people from stealing since the project is adjacent to the road and the nearby township. Furthermore, the department reported that the fencing was at 95% complete.

P1 and P2: Pictures taken at the project on the day of the visit:





4.1.5. Findings made during the oversight visit

The Committee made the following findings:

- (i) This is one of the most promising Fortune-40 project.
- (ii) The project does not have an established market for the produce. It was reported that the vegetables are sold at Chop-tjop and Multisave.
- (iii) Project beneficiaries raised a concern that implements are not always received on time.

4.1.6. Recommendations

The Committee therefore recommends that the department must:

- (i) Continue to support the project and motivate the youth to ensure that the project is sustained.
- (ii) Ensure that there is an established market for the project.
- (iii) Ensure that implements are always provided on time to the project.

5. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, Hon BD Dube, extends his appreciation to Members of the Committee and the support staff of the Legislature for their participation during this oversight visit to the projects of the department in enhancing the oversight role of the Legislature. The Portfolio Committee tables this report to the House for adoption with its recommendations.

Unless otherwise stated a report detailing progress on the implementation of all recommendations in this report should be forwarded to the Committee by **31 August 2017**.



HON. BD DUBE (MPL)

22/06/17
DATE

**CHAIRPERSON: PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND
AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**