

'WE DIDN'T IGNORE GRIPES'



Getrude Makhafola

Kopanong municipal manager Lebo Moletsane says community leaders who organised Monday's protest in Reddersburg did so despite being given feedback by the municipality on service delivery.

Moletsane said the community's leaders were informed by her and the department of human settlements of progress regarding their demands. She said it was not true the municipality had ignored the residents' concerns.

"We met with them a week earlier and updated them on the issues they had raised. We made it clear that their concerns were being attended to. They told me that the community had already taken the decision to march already and that it could not be cancelled," she said.

The residents are demanding housing and that the municipality be incorporated into the Bloemfontein-based Mangaung metropolitan municipality. Moletsane said the department would not build new houses this financial year, but would work on finishing partly built houses.

"The municipality does not build houses, that is the (housing) department's mandate. We told them there was delay by the department because there was no money in the previous financial year and therefore could not pay contractors," she said.

Moletsane said the residents had also demanded 2000 open stands, but the provincial government released 500 as the number of stands requested was too high for a town of Reddersburg's size.

With regards to the demand for the area to be incorporated into the Mangaung metro, Moletsane said that would not be an easy thing to do as there were processes to be followed before a town could be included into another municipality.

"Bodies such as the Demarcation Board are responsible for such processes but there must first be a community consensus on the issue, not one by a few individuals."

Moletsane said MECs for corporative governance, police and roads would visit Reddersburg on Tuesday to address the residents.

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