

'Rural roads need major focus'

CHARLOTE HLANGWANE

ROADS in villages of the province must be given full attention by the provincial government, says finance, economic development and tourism MEC Mac Jack.

This decision came after the MEC's visit to the Lotlhakjaneng village this week.

Department spokesperson Zandisile Luphahla said Jack's visit to the village highlighted the challenges faced by people living in rural areas.

"The MEC noted the poor road infrastructure and the long distances needed to fetch water. He has made an undertaking that he will engage roads and public works MEC Mxolisi Sokatsha on the issue of roads. I also hope that he will raise the issue of water with the executive mayor."

He said Jack knew that road access was crucially important.

The MEC visited the village near Kuruman on Tuesday, to celebrate International Week of Older Persons.

"As the MEC responsible for finance, I will have to sit down with Sokatsha and try and see how best we can assist.

"People in urban areas complain about potholes but people in rural areas, despite not having much infrastructure, continue to place their trust in our government. Something needs to be done to better the situation," Jack said.

Jack also encouraged all small, medium and micro-sized enterprises (SMMEs) who had not submitted their application forms for the Economic Growth and Development Fund, to do



ACCESS: MEC Mac Jack says the province must develop roads.

so before 12pm today.

Jack recently opened the application process for this financial year.

"This followed a round table consultation between the MEC and the senior leadership of the five district municipalities and the leadership of the department," Luphahla said.

"The MEC would like to bring to the attention of the SMMEs that this year's process is slightly different from the last financial year's process.

"The difference is that all applications are to be submitted to the district municipality for initial screening. The district municipality will then submit the screened applications to the department for further processing."

The department said the process of interviewing SMMEs and screen-

ing would take place in the province's districts. "This is to ensure that the process complies with the regulatory framework and prescribes to sound business principles."

charloteh@thenewage.co.za

QUICK FACTS

- » In the last financial year, a total of 32 businesses were funded across the province
- » Of the total beneficiaries, 32.1% were women, 25% were youth and 1% were disabled
- » Five companies were earmarked for support as black industrialists
- » Three of the five companies have already received support through the development fund