

Mlibo set to bounce back at legislature

ANC to vote for former MEC as deputy speaker

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THE ANC at the Bhisho legislature will vote in favour of Mlibo Qoboshiyane as the new deputy speaker when the house sits at 10am today.

The position was left vacant last Thursday when premier Phumulo Masualle announced that the then-deputy speaker, Bulelwa Tunyiswa, would become the new sport, recreation, arts and culture (Dsrac) MEC.

A number of changes in Masualle's cabinet has seen four new MECs being sworn in and others moved to different posts.

Qoboshiyane was fired as agrarian reform and rural development MEC and three other MECs also lost their jobs in the shuffle.

Since the announcement, made last week, the former ANC Youth League provincial chairman has been an ordinary ANC MPL.

This was the only position that remained vacant in speaker Noxolo Kiviet's legislature.

Her spokeswoman Maria Harmans confirmed that Tunyiswa's previous position would be filled today.

She had only vacated her office on Monday after returning from an official trip abroad.

Harmans said the deputy speaker could only be appointed at a formal house sitting, in line with section 111(1) & (2) of the constitution "which provides that at its first sitting after the elections or whenever it is necessary to fill a vacancy, a provincial legislature must elect a speaker and a deputy speaker from among its members".

The "provisional date for the appointment of the deputy speaker is Thursday May 17," she added.

The Dispatch can reveal today that the ANC's deployment committee has instructed the members of the ANC caucus in Bhisho to

nominate and to vote for Qoboshiyane when the house convenes its sitting today.

This follows extensive consultation with alliance partners and other stakeholders who had to debate and choose between Qoboshiyane and Thandiswa Marawu, the then MEC for public works.

Contacted for comment, ANC chief whip Fundile Gade refused to be dragged into discussing names, except to say: "We have made proper consultation with the view of consolidation of the power and hegemony of the ANC as the only beacon of hope for the masses of our people.

"We have nominated one of the best cadres – with experience of governance, a strategist and a mature political individual who understands the terrain from where we are seated," said Gade.

However, Harmans said they had not received any nomination from any political party by late afternoon yesterday.

"All political parties represented at the legislature have been requested to make nominations if they so wish.

"But at this stage, no political party has made a nomination," said Harmans, adding that they had until midnight yesterday to do so.

The Dispatch understands that the final decision to field Qoboshiyane was taken on Monday and Gade was assigned to inform him accordingly and help him sign the required nomination form.

Harmans said there was also a provision that the "nomination may be made from the floor on the date of the sitting of the legislature."

The decision to assign Qoboshiyane to another strategic position, despite him being part of the lobby group which wanted the PEC led by Oscar Mabuyane nullified, could be viewed as a step towards the aim of uniting the party.

"He might have made a blunder politically but one cannot take away his drive and energy in implementing both government and ANC programmes," said a source close to the developments.

Qoboshiyane could not be reached for comment yesterday.