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Author: Ntsikelelo Qoyo



IMPORTANT MESSAGE:
Nelson Mandela Bay deputy mayor Babalwa Lobishe welcomed 80 workers to the Expanded Public Works Programme at the Khayamnandi Community Hall, in Despatch, yesterday.
Picture: FREDUN ADRIAN

Deputy mayor encourages workers to register to vote

Ntsikelelo Qoyo

Wards that receive the most government services have a low voter turnout, which contributes to coalition governments and causes instability.

This was the message of Nelson Mandela Bay deputy mayor Babalwa Lobishe yesterday at the Khayamnandi Community Hall, in Despatch, where she welcomed 80 workers to the Expanded Public Works Programme.

Encouraging voter registration, Lobishe said it was important for people to vote because

democracy only worked through public participation.

"If you are a beneficiary of a government, I am not saying go and vote for [a particular party], but the first step is to register, then think about who you are going to vote for," Lobishe said.

"It becomes important to have more voters so that when we select a government we select a government that will have a majority.

"We find ourselves in coalition governments because people opted not to register and in the main, it is areas that have

benefited from government services.

"So the question is ... do we really appreciate what the government is doing and do we have any other hope for the social services we receive?"

The Expanded Public Works Programme workers will focus on cleaning up litter in Joe Slovo and Khayamnandi.

Lobishe said it was important that workers used the programme to upskill themselves.

"We are going to coach the local councillor in making partnerships with local co-operatives so that the waste you are

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collecting is sold to companies that buy waste.

"You need to participate to make sure you acquire the skill that will help you understand the value of the waste you are handling and so that after the six months you are ready to run a community co-operative," she said.

The workers officially started work at the beginning of July, with 50 employed by the municipality and the remainder by the department of public works.