



MEDIA STATEMENT

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THURSDAY, 13 JULY 2023

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS PRIORITISED TO INFORM FINAL BOARD DECISION

For the first time in the history of the MDB, an overwhelming number of 51180 (Batch 1) views and representations from members of the public has been recorded following the publication of section 26 notices on proposals for change to municipal boundaries. This reflects that the awareness, education, and engagement initiatives have yielded positive results as more members of the public are taking interest in and actively participating in demarcation processes.

Proposals for outer municipal boundary changes currently under consideration emanate from members of the public, organised groups, political parties, municipalities, national and provincial government, among others, while only a few proposals came from Municipal Demarcation Board – exercising its own initiative according to Section 22(1)(a) of Municipal Demarcation Act 27 of 1998 (MDA). All proposals were analysed against the demarcation criteria as espoused in section 24 and 25 of the MDA and section 2 of the Municipal Structures Act (MSA).

In terms of section 27 of the MDA, when the period for written representations and views has expired, the Board-

- a. Must consider all representations and views submitted to it; and
- b. May take a decision on the determination (i.e., it may decide whether to proceed and change the boundary or close the matter) or before it takes such a decision-
 - i. Hold a public meeting;
 - ii. Conduct a formal investigation; or
 - iii. Do both.

On 27 June 2023, the Board considered representations and views received and took decisions as outlined above. Resolutions of the Board were enriched by findings and lessons learnt from, amongst others, section 26 submissions, research conducted by itself and from other stakeholders.

The MDB will therefore embark on public consultations and/or formal investigations from August to September 2023. Members of the public in affected areas are encouraged to actively participate in the meetings to air their views. The MDB is committed to ensure that it takes its decisions in consideration of inputs from members of the public and stakeholders. Therefore, members of the public are encouraged to be on the lookout for updates of the process including the public meetings schedule. The schedule will be shared through various channels including the MDB website, www.demarcation.org.za.

“We are pleased to inform members of the public that no decisions will be taken without proper consultations. We have heard concerns of our communities and we encourage them to use this opportunity to engage with the Board. This will ensure that when the final decision is taken, the Board would have considered their views to reach an objective decision aligned with the criteria for demarcation (Section 24 & 25 of the MDA)” says Thabo Manyoni, Chairperson of the Board.

Furthermore, the MDB reiterates that boundary changes are not a solution to the governance, socio-economic, service delivery, administrative and financial dysfunctionality in municipalities. The basis for most of the requests for municipal boundary changes have little or nothing to do with the geographical character of the municipality i.e., demarcated boundaries, but poor institutional governance and related financial dysfunctionality which end up negatively affecting service delivery.

Lastly, the MDB is committed to a functional, stable, and efficient local government, hence a need for limited to no major municipal boundary changes.

-ENDS-

ENQUIRIES

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