

## **MEC LENKOPANE WELCOMES THE NWPTB DECISIONS ON INDUSTRIAL ACTION AND EMPLOYEE SALARY INCREASE**

The MEC for department of economic development, environment, conservation and tourism (DEDECT) Bitsa Lenkopane, has welcomed the North West Parks and Tourism Board (NWPTB) resolutions to deal with an illegal industrial action by employees. Employees of the entity have, for the past month or so, embarked on an unprotected strike which destabilized operations both in the entity and the department, traumatized other staff members and disrupted tourism business operators.

The Board has briefed the MEC that the entity will take disciplinary and or prosecution action against employees or any individual involved in this illegality. The Board has acknowledged that protesting employees had obtained a permit to picket, but flouted the rules thereof, engaging in illegal actions that included intimidations to non-striking staff, vandalism and disruption of private business at lodges and parks. Lodge and park owners have since obtained a court interdict to prevent the illegal picketing and the disruption of their businesses.

The Board has directed the entity's acting Chief Executive Officer to be firm and decisive in implementing its resolutions to deal with any element of criminality and or unsanctioned absenteeism. The Board has also resolved that the situation be declared an emergency, to allow the deployment of extra security resources, to protect the property of the entity and its human resource capital. This is also to enabling business to normally run again.

MEC Lenkopane has also welcomed the Board's decision to implement a salary of 4.7% increase to the non-managerial positions. Half of the salary increase will be implemented retrospectively from March 2024 and another half in April 2025. The MEC appreciates the improved financial management on both the administration and the Directors of the entity. The department acknowledges the salary disparities between employees from the merged the then Parks and Tourism Boards. The MEC called on the current NWPTB Directors and management to bring balance thereto.

MEC Lenkopane has unreservedly apologized to all staff members and businesses who experienced the unruly behaviour of the illegal picketing, and assured them that parties are working together to bring the situation to normality. She appreciated the efforts of all who stood up and joined hands with the government to fight against the illegal strike.