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TO THE EDITOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SUBJECT: BLM MAYOR CONCERNED ABOUT YOUTH ROAD FATALITIES IN BUSHBUCKRIDGE**

The Executive Mayor of Bushbuckridge Local Municipality Cllr Renias Khumalo is very much concerned about road fatalities that have claimed the lives of young people in Bushbuckridge. On Saturday, the 03<sup>rd</sup> October 2015, at the 04h00 in the early morning two bakkies full of people bumped each other at Athurstone near Baloyi chicken farm. It is alleged that one bakkie was from matric dance function while the other one was going to a funeral.

Four people died on the spot while those who sustained injuries were taken to hospital. In terms of Census 2011 statistics, 57% of the population of Bushbuckridge is made up of people from the ages of 15-64 and those above 65 is only 5.30%. Given the youth mortality rate, the mayor is very disturbed because the integral cog of the population seems to be fading away due to alcohol, speeding, drunk driving and disregarding of road rules.

Research has revealed that the death rate of young drivers is at least 5 times higher than that of older people –car crashes is the major cause of death among people aged 18-29 years old.

The Executive Mayor is pleading with the youth to desist from drunk driving and speeding. He has instructed municipal traffic law enforcement officers to apply zero tolerance to all traffic offences and act decisively without fear or favour; those who will fail to obey the law will face its full wrath. He is urging the youth and other road users to respect and adhere to road rules.

The Executive Mayor values the contribution of the youth and expect them to become agents of change themselves hence his concern. He expects the youth to contribute to the development of Bushbuckridge.

The municipality will soon issue bursaries to young academically deserving matriculants to further their studies at institutions of higher learning. Community members are urged to report reckless and negligent driving to the municipality on **079 874 3363**. The Mayor will engage the MMC responsible for Community Services to educate young people about alcohol abuse and the danger of drunk driving.

The Executive Mayor would like to send his deepest and heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased.

Regards,

Aubrey Mnisi

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