

## MONTSHIOA'S DEATH SHOCKS WELKOM

*By Kgojane Matutle*

**WELKOM** – Ben Montshioa is no more. The veteran politician succumbed to diabetes last Wednesday at Welkom Medi Clinic following a long battle with the disease.

“Benito” as he was affectionately known by his friends was born in Madubulaville location in Ranfontein on July 28, 1956. He was the second child of Jacob and Selina Montshioa. He attended school at Saint Patrick's Higher Primary and Phahama Senior Secondary.

He began working for two British Multinational Companies namely: Patons & Baldwins and J&P Coats as a Production Clerk, from there he worked at Randfontein Gold Mine and proceeded to work as a Trade Union Organiser in the Textile Industry.

He became deeply involved in politics and helped to form the Mohlakeng Civic Organisation. When the apartheid police started to focus their attention on his activities; Ben fled the country and went into exile in Tanzania and Botswana.

Thereafter he lived quietly for some time in Welkom, away from the attention of the police. In the early 90's after the unbanning of liberation organisations he became a leader of the ANC Thabong branch as well as SANCO. He also served as chairperson of ANC Harry Gwala branch (Ward 27) from 2000 until 2011.

Ben became a councillor in the Matjhabeng Local Municipality from its inception in 2000 and served in different portfolios within the Mayoral Committee. His first appointment was as Member of the Mayoral Committee for Housing and then Local Economic Development. He also had a stint as MMC for Monitoring and Evaluation until 2010.

He was a ward councillor for Ward 27 from 2000 until 2011 when he was redeployed by the provincial Department of Agriculture. **Executive Mayor of Lejweleputswa District Municipality and former colleague of Ben, Me Mathabo Leeto** said the deceased was a capable leader and used to be her right-hand man who executed his duties diligently.

She said in her absence, Ben used to hold the fort with distinction.

“I want to thank the Montshioa family for bringing into our lives such a wonderful human spirit and a man who lived a valuable life. Ben contributed immensely to local and provincial governments and the African National Congress.”

Executive Mayor of Matjhabeng Local Municipality, Councillor Sebenzile Ngangelizwe extended the municipality's condolences to the Montshioa family. “Ben was a very dedicated leader in the struggle for a better life for all.

He was indeed a fearless leader and selfless revolutionary of the ANC. May his soul rest in peace.”

Ben will be remembered as a hard worker and also as a selfless person who was of assistance to the people he served both as a leader of the ANC and Councillor. He is survived by his wife Dipuo, three children Sello, Tshepo and Boitumelo, three grand children and nine siblings.

He will be buried at Welkom cemetery on Saturday, December 10.

[Source: [www.publiceyenews.com](http://www.publiceyenews.com)]