

New BTC CEO calls for broadband expansion

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While Mobile phone services in Botswana are on the same level with other countries, the Botswana Telecommunications Corporation is still facing challenges to provide customers with wireless internet or broadband.

This emerged at the first press conference held by the new British BTC chief executive officer, Paul Taylor. Taylor said last

week that internet services should be made available on broadband, and that BTC has to work with stakeholders to find ways to provide internet services. "Internet is not a necessity, it is a right," he stressed.

The board chairman of the BTC Leonard Makwinja reiterated that broadband services in Botswana have been challenging. He added that BTC was ready and willing to play its role in providing such services to Botswana. Taylor's arrival at the BTC



comes at a time when the BTC is undergoing privatisation. Some of the priority areas for Taylor at the BTC is to ensure that the company is a business in all aspects.

"This means that we go back to basics, brilliant basics. We need to focus on the customer and ensure they get value for money, for their services." Regarding privatisation, Taylor, said that his plan is to make sure that the BTC works closely with stakeholders like PEEPA, MCT and privatisation advisors appointed to deliver this government ambition.

Taylor's predecessor, Thapelo Lippe was last relieved of his job after internal investigations following the alleged sour working relations with the Board. Taylor is not oblivious to these, and admitted at his maiden press conference that the demands of the job were made clear to him. "I have always relished a challenge and with a challenge, comes pressure." In the last year, Keabetswe Segola has

been the acting CEO, a position many had expected will easily fill especially since he seemed to be exerting himself well. But it was not to be so. Responding to how Taylor was chosen for the post, Makwinja said that the selection process was very long and strict. "You want to get the right person for the purpose and we believe we have brought the right person", Makwinja stressed.

Taylor has a three year contract with BTC, and one of his duties is to implement a succession plan. He will be expected to find a successor from candidates within the company. The 51-year old Taylor is a seasoned business leader with over 25 years of service in the telecoms sector. His recent long term assignment was in Turkey where he worked for Turk telecom as the deputy chief commercial officer. He has lived in Asia, the Middle East, Europe and the Caribbean.