



# MPUMALANGA THE PLACE OF THE RISING SUN

15 SEPTEMBER 2016 | MEDIA STATEMENT

## MPUMALANGA EXCO MEDIA STATEMENT

1.The Executive Council held its sitting yesterday Wednesday the 14th of September 2016 at Lekwa Municipality as part of Taking the Legislature to the People initiative.

2.The Executive Council was briefed on the socio economic situation and challenges of Lekwa Municipality including but not limited to, unemployment, access to water and electricity. Another concern within the Municipality is adverse state of the road networks, largely attributable to coal haulage.

3.The Executive Council has noted interventions by various spheres of Government and has subsequently called for the streamlining of such work and prioritization of essential services in order to optimize service delivery.

4.The Executive Council is also of the view once again that Eskom must be entrusted with the responsibility to efficiently distribute and sell electricity as most of our Municipalities do not have the requisite capacity to efficiently manage the distribution of electricity.

This is largely due to the fact that Municipalities have a very low revenue collection rate and in most instances, Municipalities do not have the mechanisms to address the issue of illegal electricity connections. This results in the Municipalities being subjected to

severe financial pressure due to the continuous penalties owed to Eskom over and above the principal debt.

5.The Executive Council resolved that this matter shall be discussed further at the Premier's Coordinating Forum scheduled for next week, as the outstanding electricity bill in the province is over R1 billion, which genuinely makes it viable.

### **STATUS REPORT ON HOSPITAL VISITS AND REPORT ON THE SECOND APPRAISAL OF FUNCTIONALITY OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS**

6.The Executive Council welcomed an improvement achieved thus far on the functionality of public hospitals in the Province after the initial assessment made in 2012.

7. In April this year, the Office of the Premier assessed the functionality of public hospitals in the Province. The exercise had been commissioned by the Premier to determine improvements since his initial assessment of December 2012.

8.The Executive Council noted the steady progress made thus far.

9. The Executive Council has expressed some satisfaction on the improvements achieved thus far at all



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the province's 33 hospitals.

10. A second brief fact finding tour of the hospitals was conducted by the Office of the Premier to observe the condition of buildings and equipment in the theatres, kitchens, mortuaries, some wards and access gates including fencing and transport.

11. Other observations made on hospital operations include , amongst others, matters such as patient flow from administration to outpatient department, consulting rooms, casualty, pharmacy, admissions and the wards. They also observed the patient rights, queue management and waiting times, cleanliness and comfort, infection control as well as clinical risks.

12. The Executive Council noted with pleasure the fact that all hospitals now have Chief Executive Officers and that the nursing staff rate has increased from 75 percent to 95 percent, as the lack of staff was previously one of the main problems.

13. Furthermore, a total of 89 more doctors have been employed from April 2016 to date and the Department of Health is intensifying the recruitment of more doctors.

14. Sabie Hospital has been completed, whilst Mid-delburg, Bethal, Mapulaneng and Mamethlake hospitals are currently under construction following a decision by the Provincial Government to repair, demolish and reconstruct some of the hospitals deemed to be in a bad state.

#### **GREEN PAPER ON RAIL POLICY**

15. The Executive Council received a briefing from the Department of Transport on National Government's plans and strategies to develop rail corridors linking the country with the neighbouring countries in order to alleviate pressure on the roads.

16. The Executive Council appreciated an opportunity to be engaged on this policy development and committed to engage and interact with the National Government on the development of Moloto Rail Corridor, which is expected to ease traffic on Moloto Road.

#### **TOWNSHIP ECONOMY REVITALIZATION**

17. The Executive Council welcomed the township economy revitalisation initiatives by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, and the Mpumalanga Economic Development Agency [MEGA] aimed at maximising the socio-economic development in the Province.

18. The township economy refers to enterprises and markets that are based in the townships, comprising of diverse set of enterprises ranging from survivalist micro-enterprises to opportunity-driven small medium enterprises.

19. Key challenges faced by participants in the township economy include the lack of appropriate operational infrastructure to suit the business needs, poor access to markets, restricted trading spaces, logistical constraints , unequal provision of municipal services and lack of funding.

20. An amount of R10 million has been set aside for the refurbishment of the industrial premises for warehousing and manufacturing owned by MEGA in this regard.

21. A further R40 million has been budgeted for the 2016/17 financial year to subsidise selected flagship projects such as the tyre manufacturing initiative, sanitary towels initiative , printing initiative, linen and clothing production, production of cleaning materials and bakery projects undertaken within the Department of Economic Development to stimulate the market value chain of the township economy.

#### **PROGRESS REPORT ON THE OPERATIONALIZATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE DONKERHOEK WATER BOTTLING PLANT**

22. The Executive Council was briefed that the commissioning for piloting of the Donkerhoek Water Bottling Plant will be done in October 2016.

23. Since the launch of the project in 2014, the operationalization of the project could not start due to some unforeseen operational challenges.

24. The Executive Council was briefed that all systems are now in place for the operationalization of the project which is aimed at benefiting the locals with prepared spring water arising from the local wells.

## **25. APPOINTMENTS**

- 25.1 Mr Jasper Chimanzi,  
appointed Director: Information  
Communication Technology  
[Department of Health]
- 25.2 Mr William Lubisi,  
appointed a board member:  
Mpumalanga Liquor Authority
- 25.3 Mr Ronny Lubisi,  
appointed a board member:  
Mpumalanga Liquor Authority
- 25.4 Mr Pat Mabaso,  
appointed Director: Legal Services  
Department of Human Settlements
- 25.5 Mr Makhundu Nkosi, appointed Director:  
Monitoring and Evaluation  
Department of Human Settlements

## **ENDS...**

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