



SEKHUKHUNE
District Municipality

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Office of the Executive Mayor

REMARKS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF SEKHUKHUNE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY CLLR MALEKE MOKGANYETJI ON THE OCASSION OF MID – TERM PERFORMANCE LEKGOTLA ON MONDAY 20, FEBRUARY 2023 AT THE RANCH HOTEL, POLOKWANE.

**Your Worship Honourable Mayors of our four Local Municipalities;
Mayor Cllr Eddie Maila of FetakgomoTubatse Local Municipality,
Mayor Cllr David Tladi of Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality,
Mayor Cllr Given Moimana of Ephriam Mogale Local Municipality,
Mayor Cllr Mainah Bahula of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality,
Honourable Members of Mayoral Committee;
Honourable Speaker of our Council, Cllr Kgwediebotse Chego;
Honourable Council Whip of Cllr Choris Phokane,
Municipal Managers and your teams,
Ladies and Gentlemen.
Good Morning !
Thobela!**

Programme Director,

Our meeting today happens just a few days after President Cyril Ramaphosa State of the Nation Address which happened in Cape Town. In his address to the nation the President reiterated that the poor performance of many local government remains an area of concern. “Too many of our municipalities, 163 out of 257, are dysfunctional or in distress due to poor governance, ineffective and sometimes corrupt financial and administrative management and poor service delivery”

In a way, one can concede that he was talking about us amongst many. If you take into consideration the spending by the backbone department of this municipality the Infrastructure and Water Services you too would concede to the fact that we are counted amongst those 165 municipalities mentioned by the President. So, I really employ every one of you here to really change your ways and put the people of Sekhukhune first

Programme Director,

before we go further, allow me to extend our congratulations to the Honourable Mayors of Makhuduthamaga and Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipalities, Mogaleadi, Cllr Minah Bahula, and Cllr David Tladi for their stewardship in leading their respective municipalities and achieving an unqualified audit opinions.

We wish that they share the good governance lessons with the rest of our respective municipalities in the district for the benefit of the people of Sekhukhune.

Re a le lebogiša.

Programme Director,

In his opening remarks at the lekgotla, Premier Stanley Chupu Mathabatha, reminded us as delegates that we have the means to correct problems of local government.

In addition, much of this responsibility will be carried by the newly-elected councillors and by the municipal officials with which we will be working.

This reminds us that the responsibility to provide services to our people lies with all of us in this Mayoral Performance Lekgotla.

This cannot be an individual effort.

We complement each other with our various responsibilities, and if anyone is going to drag us down, we will all fail in our mission.

None of you must be reminded about the unique nature of the local government sphere.

When people don't have water, electricity, roads and other basic services, they don't go to the Union Buildings to stage a protest.

Instead, they come to municipal offices.

Correctly so, because we are the sphere of government that is closest to them.

We are better positioned to bring tangible and material change in their lives.

We have a unique, yet enormous role to play in improving and making the biggest difference in communities.

Even though we are closely linked to the province and national spheres of government, we are the **four** (first) soldiers of service delivery at the community level.

It therefore becomes crucially important that we are collaborative in our way of doing things, particularly as the district municipality and local municipalities.

It all starts with us, and if ever it is going to fail, it will be all because of us.

COLLABORATION

The District Development Model, adopted by Cabinet in 2019, was introduced to do away with silo planning.

It embodies an approach by which the three spheres of government and state entities work in unison in an impact-oriented way, and where there is higher performance and accountability for coherent service delivery and development outcome.

Underlying the District Development Model is collaborative planning, so that we are all aware of what our sister municipalities are doing.

Equally, the local municipalities must know and take ownership of all the programmes of the district municipality.

It is against this backdrop that I employ upon our administration in the district to collectively work hand in glove with all our local municipalities to improve the delivery of service to all communities across the district. **The district municipality has launched intergovernmental forums (IGR) with the aim to strengthen the District Development Model. The forums were established in line with IGR Act Framework Act 13 of 2005. I hope and trust that all our units have functional IGR forums.** Ours is to learn from each other!! Share the best practices!! Plan together!! And in unison deliver the best services to our customers – all the people of our district.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Programme Director,

This is the first Performance Mayoral Lekgotla since we were elected in December 2022, and we dare not disappoint those who have faith in us.

Although it may seem as if it is still early into our term of office, the reality is that we

don't have the luxury of time on our side.

Our people have been patient enough.

They want to see us springing into action.

When we deliberate in this meeting, taking stock of our progress and failures, we should do all these with them in mind.

Let there must be a special focus on service delivery in general.

With so many projects that we are currently implementing in various communities, we should be in a position to explain why some of them have been going on for many years without completion.

But as a way forward, we must develop a clear programme of action outlining how we intend to improve our performance.

We should emerge with a clear vision that will map out a future for our municipalities.

Honourable Councillors and officials, it is very important that we turn the corner.

For sure you will agree with me that the COVID-19 excuse will not hold water going forward.

If anything, the post - COVID -19 pandemic situation must propel us forward and induce our creative abilities to resolving the service delivery challenges confronting our communities.

As this administration, we have made a commitment to our people during the elections that we will prioritise service delivery.

They gave us outright mandate to champion service delivery services.

We must not betray their continuous trust.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Programme Director,

There can be no argument that good governance is the foundation on which we must build our institutions.

The money we are presiding over is not ours. It belongs to the people of Sekhukhune.

We must be accountable for every expenditure that we incur.

We must close all the gaps and leakages that have been identified by either the

Auditor-General or our Audit Committees.

All our municipalities must, going forward, be known as trusted custodians of public funds.

We must cut the unnecessary costs and make sure that our people get value for money for every service that we provide for them.

All the municipalities in our district must get clean audit opinions for the financial year that is starting in July 2023.

We can only attain this if we appoint qualified and experienced personnel in our critical positions.

We are not going to cut corners.

All municipalities must prioritize filling in critical managerial and operational positions as soon as possible.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Honourable councillors,

In our recent stakeholders meeting and progress report on water provision in the region, the leadership of the governing party in the region took a harsh tone with us on our inability to provide sustainable clean drinking water to the communities of Sekhukhune. They made it clear to all of us that it is not going to be business as usual. This should propel us to wake up from the deep sleep we have been on in terms of service delivery.

The governing party has committed to ensuring that we undertake effective campaigns to deal with the culture of non-payment for services.

However, as we do this, we must ensure to deliver the necessary free basic services to those who do not afford to pay.

Without proper billing and sufficient revenue collection, we will not sustain the services that we are currently providing to the people.

Our current infrastructure network must be maintained in order to remain optimally effective.

On the other hand, we will not be able to extend these important water, sanitation, electricity, roads and other services to communities that currently don't have them with the required speed.

Our municipalities must develop debt recovery plans and embark on awareness campaigns to alert our people about the importance of paying for services.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Programme Director,

Unemployment, especially among young people is a thorny issue.

In terms of data from Statistics South Africa, official unemployment in the second Quarter of **2023**, stood at **33.9 percent**.

Disturbingly, the majority of those who are on the receiving end are young people.

Of the **7,6 million** unemployed persons, as many as **51,8 percent** do not have matric.

This is a crisis that requires the attention of everyone of us, including our social partners.

We need a vibrant Local Economic Development activity, stimulated by a clear-cut policy, to resolutely tackle this problem.

With unemployment among graduates sitting at only **2,7 percent**, it is evident that education is an effective tool through which we can fight unemployment and poverty.

I therefore challenge every municipality to double bursary offers to deserving learners who want to pursue their studies.

Honourable Councillors and officials,

in the past few performance lekgotla's that I have had the honour to be a part of the same persistent issues are always discussed. And those are –

- Weak internal capacity to provide quality water to our people in a sustainable manner.
- Our inability to spend at the required level on capital infrastructure in particular conditional grants.
- Our historical and stubborn legacy of poor financial management and controls leading to many negative audit outcomes.
- Our inability to coordinate spatial planning leading to unabated mushrooming of developments in our localities which not in line with the adopted precinct plans.
- Low productivity level on the part of our labour force.

For how much longer are we going to gather and spend public money in fancy hotels, wearing our nice clothes and perfumes but discussing the same issues over and over!!! This baloney must come to an end!! As individuals seated here today, I call upon your consciousness your inner hearts of hearts to do the right thing for the benefit of our people. I believe and hope that this year, at this

performance lekgotla and later the institutions strategic planning session the above referenced challenges will be taken head on, and our institution will move forward and provide services as it should.

I want to end this by reminding you of a quotation by former President Nelson Mandela who said, and I quote: ***“While poverty persists, there is no true freedom.”***

Thank you.