

OPENING ADDRESS BY HER WORSHIP, THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR CLLR. EN MAKHABANE AT THE STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION (LEKGOTLA) HELD ON THE 24th APRIL 2013

Programme Director,

Honourable Speaker Cllr. RK Segone,

Chief Whip,

Members of the Mayoral Committee,

Fellow Councillors,

Municipal Manager and her team

Officials from NDM and other Sector Departments

I greet you all.

Last year on the 21st – 23rd May 2012 we held a gathering of this nature wherein we wanted to pave a long-term vision of where we want this municipality to be in 20/30 years time. This then gave birth to the “vision 2030”

When the proceedings concluded all of us who were part of that meeting were so excited as it appeared that there seemed to be light at the end of the tunnel and we signed a “Lekgotla Declaration” wherein all of us made a commitment of making sure that we will own the process going forward.

Today’s meeting comes almost a year after the said Lekgotla, I want to believe that the resolutions taken then are still fresh on our minds. Today’s meeting is aimed at assessing our progress in terms of the implementation of those resolutions.

In an ideal situation, we would have loved to have the frequency of these meetings at least quarterly so as to constantly monitor our progress however due to budgetary constraints,

we are unable to do so but in the future this should be given serious consideration.

It is also a blessing in disguise that this Lekgotla is held whilst we are busy with our budgetary processes. The question that we should ask ourselves is, is our Integrated Development Plan, Budget and the Vision 2030 aligned. If the three documents and other sector plans such as the National Development Plan (NDP), Spatial Development Framework (SDF), etc. are not talking to each other, we will be sitting here just talking and the implementation of resolutions will be difficult to realise.

We do not want that because our people have given us a clear mandate of what should be done. The manifesto is central to any service delivery planning, it is from this platform that the ruling party wins elections and get a mandate to

govern. It is within this context that the manifesto takes precedence in matters relating to service delivery planning, it is the ruling parties policy imperative.

The provision of sustainable services to our communities remains at a core of our function. We are almost two years into our term of office and the community will judge us on what we have done for them.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I believe that it will be proper that we should base our discussions on the five key performance areas as outlined in the 5 year Local Government Strategic Agenda.

1. BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY

This is one of the most important of the 5 KPA's because it is impacting directly to the people as such it should be given the priority it deserves.

WATER – We know that the quality of our water has improved tremendously (blue drop status) however our challenge remains with the quantity thereof. Residents of Botleng Ext. 3, 4, 5, and 6 are the ones who are hard hit by the shortage in supply. While we all know that the rand water connection is now at an advanced stage (about 99%) in terms of completion, the question is what are we doing in the interim to make sure that our people receive an uninterrupted service?

SANITATION – Sanitation backlogs are also a challenge especially for the residents of Mawaag and Mandela Informal Settlements however we have partnered with the Nkangala District Municipality in a bid to address the above.

We are doing quite well in the rural areas in terms of the installation of the VIP toilets.

2. LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Our municipality is strategically situated and we should take full advantage of this by luring big

business to invest in our town. Flagship projects such as the Nkangala Airport should be given priority because of the spins offs that they bring. These will create quite a substantial amount of job opportunities thus improving the lives of our people.

We must also continue engaging the mines that they should give locals a priority in terms of recruitment because currently the number of mines in our area v/s the number of locals employed in those mines does not paint a good picture

3. FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Our draft budget for the 2013/2014 financial year indicates that our own funding (internal revenue) is anticipated to be at around R2.5million. This is far too little compared to the number of households that we service.

We should come up with clear revenue enhancement strategies because as of now it is evident that we are reliant on grants to keep us afloat.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

On this KPA I must applaud both Councillors and the officials for the wonderful work they are doing but of course there is room for improvement.

5. GOOD GOVERNANCE

Some of our internal policies have been criticized or the lack of implementation thereof by the Auditor-General. Let us come up with clear operational plans on how we are going to address this for us to be able to claim back our "Clean Audit Status".

With these few words I welcome all present and declare the Lekgotla officially opened.

*I thank you
Ngiyabonga
Baie Dankie*