

WELCOME ADDRESS BY HER WORSHIP MAYOR OF GREATER TZANEEN MUNICIPALITY, DJ MMETLE DURING LEKGOTLA HELD AT KARIBU LEISURE RESORT ON 03 FEBRUARY 2016

Speaker, Councillor Cassius Machimana

Chief Whip of the Ruling Party, the ANC, Councillor Maripe Mangena

Members of the Executive Committee

All PR and Ward councillors present here

The Municipal Manager, Mr Republic Monakedi

All Directors and acting Directors

All officials Present here

Esteemed guests and delegates

Ladies and gentlemen

Programme Director.

Let me from the onset take this very rare privileged opportunity and extend a warm word of welcome to all in attendance here this morning.

We are all gathered here as the servants of our people, whose hopes we hold and whose future we can influence.

It is solely for these specific reasons that we should attach to a certain extent a high degree of importance to the work that we do and the positions we hold.

We hold very influential positions and it must therefore be our daily struggle to perfect our trade in order to offer practical implementable solutions to our residents whose only source of hope is government.

Fellow Councillors, we are approaching the end of our terms as councillors not only here in Tzaneen but all over the country. It is time to take stock of what we have given our communities,

It is time to share heart-warming stories on how our work has changed the lives of ordinary citizens in our communities.

It is not time to slow down because we are told that our journey has come to an abrupt end, for our job is not an ordinary one but calling, our job is a sacrifice, our job is patriotism.

Patriots don't abandon their countries even in difficult times.

Patriots defend the integrity of their countries in times when doing so present imminent danger.

So all of us here today must be patriots.

Throughout our term we have delivered more than any other council before us but there are still those who diminish our work, undermine our achievements and do their best to discredit our contribution.

They turn everything we touch into what they want others to see in us, when we deliver projects they accuse us of nepotism in the hiring of labours.

When we deliver roads they say the roads won't last a single storm.

When we build thousands of RDP house they pick the one with a crack and make it a front page story.

When we build a pool and delay its opening they make it a story in their newspaper every week.

There are those who take us to court and delay much needed service delivery to our communities, they perpetuate and prolong the pain that our people have suffered as a result of apartheid.

So when you are a patriot you are always prepared for these things, you know how to deal with these things, you know better not to lose focus because that is what they want to achieve.

They drive a wedge between us, they make us compete so that we can lose focus on what is at stake

Programme Director

They say that together we stand and divided we fall, the need for cohesion is of critical importance.

We must be united because if we are divided we can never achieve anything.

All of us here in this building must protect one another and support one another.

The attainment of a better a better life for all is dependent on collective efforts and effective implementation of government initiatives.

Divided we can never be effective, we are weakened beyond imagination and outside enemies can easily infiltrate us.

There is an African saying which reads “if there is no enemy within the enemies outside cannot harm us”.

We must from today realise that we are our worst enemy and if we cease to be the architects of our own destruction things will begin to move is a more faster pace.

Programme Director, *Although we have made notable progress in our quest to liberate our people from the bondages of poverty in the past 5 years, there is still a huge service delivery backlog that remains.*

We must pat ourselves in the back and celebrate because the little that we have done has changed so many lives.

From delivering electricity to over 5 000 households to building multimillion rand roads that could not be washed away by heavy rain as predicted by the prophets of doom.

We have facilitated the building of hundreds of RDP houses and the laying of critical water infrastructure to our rural communities.

We have governed in the period where our collaborative efforts have resulted in the construction of two new libraries.

It is in our time that a new state of the art sport centre was build in Nkowankowa section C, also in our time that the Tzaneen Swimming pool was rebuilt to international standards, the only pool of its kind in the entire province of Limpopo.

In this term Lenyenye Stadium is being revamped, Nkowankowa is next so is Julesburg and Burgerdorp. In our term we will see a community hall being built in Relela and Sport precinct built in Runnymede.

Programme Director, it is in this term that a tar road was build in Ramotsiyandi, also in this term that a R16 million bridge was built over the Miragoma river also in Ramotshinyadi.

We built another road in Mafarana, then another one from Senakwe to Morapapala and even though it was hard we finally delivered another land mark project in the form Sakekani to Nkowankowa Road upgrade. The people of Thapane will also tell you that we built another road from Thapane to Morutji.

We made our people in Dan Ext 2 and Nkowankowa C proud owners of their own houses and land when we delivered title deeds to houses government built them for free.

During this period we also went from one challenge to another, a budging legal biil and overspend overtime budget. We were litigated on major projects not one or twice but a half dozen times. These were obstacles that reduced the impact of this council, it reduced council's ability to deliver project in a large scale.

Efficient use of our financial resources and extra care of our other important resources will surely lead us towards halving that backlog.

As officials tasked with the implementation of Council decisions, which off course are taken on behalf of our people you must exercise care when handling our limited resources.

We must conduct our business above board so that no service provider can take us to court and win.

We must do this because we will be held responsible for delaying development and we run the risk of going down history as a group that sold the dreams of a nation.

We must also plan properly and in advance to avoid delays in the implementation of projects which our people have been waiting for, for a long

It is upon us to speed up the process of developing our municipality so that all households have access to sustainable basic services and economic prosperity.

There is a need to strengthen the capacity of the municipality to implement programmes and provide services, we must agree on measures to be put in place to counter these challenges, in order to achieve the goals and objectives of Vision 2030.

We must also familiarise ourselves with the key concepts of the National Developmental Plan which is the blue print to a better South Africa.

Our plans and programmes must be aligned to the NDP as well as the Limpopo provincial growth and development strategy in order for us to properly achieve our goals collectively.

We must do all of this bearing in mind our mission of stimulating economic growth through sustainable integrated service delivery and partnerships.

Our activities must be guided by our vision and our mission, because unless we know where we are heading we won't get anywhere.

Programme Director

We have in recent times improved our public engagement not because we have targets to meet but because we see this as a fundamental element of democracy.

Public consultation and engagement remains the central feature of our democracy; we must maintain the closest possible contact with our people at all times.

Our people must be at the centre of all major decisions that we take on their behalf. These decisions must find ownership in all our residents.

Our people must have a say in everything that has a potential to impact their lives.

The masses of our people are conscious of the challenges that we face as a direct result of apartheid, therefore they have a vested interest in establishing government's programme of action in addressing these challenges.

We at government have a joint responsibility to properly and continuously respond to this desire for information.

I must also stress that frequent consultation with our people will immensely contribute to the achievement of government's objective to be seen as transparent and accountable.

Programme Director

There is an urgent need to fill the policy vacuum that exists in our municipality. The development of plans and master plans must also be given urgent attention in order to ensure that our work has shape and direction.

It is also of great concern that in the execution of our responsibilities, which are legislated we have not gazetted our by-laws. The absence of by –laws will soon render our municipality ungovernable in certain areas. In ensuring compliance with all legislation we need to apply the law with our fear or favour.

Programme Director

Directors are fully conscious of the fact that performance is tied to targets, this fact must serve as a guiding tool that must be borne in mind whilst executing their responsibilities. We must meet targets while conforming to standard practices.

Compliance is a given and while chasing targets we must also meet all compliance requirements. It is not possible to allay the fears of our people, who are worried that their government has neglected them if we do not accelerate our rate in which we deliver services.

The need to speed up service delivery is urgent, because we cannot under any circumstance deny our people the right of access to sustainable equitable services.

Victory in this regard will guarantee that we succeed to move forward decisively towards the attainment of the objective of a better life for all. I am confident that the GTM will rise to this test.

I thank you for your attention.