

# **Opening Address Delivered by The Mayor of the Greater Tzaneen Municipality, His Worship Councillor Gerson Molapisane at the IDP Strategic Planning Session at Forever Resort Blyde on 04 December 2023**

Madam Speaker, Councillor Sanie Tiba  
The Whip of Council, Councillor Given Malatji  
Members of the Executive Committee  
Chairpersons of Section 79 Committees  
PR and Ward Councillors  
Leader of the official opposition  
The Municipal Manager, Mr. Donald Mhangwana  
Directors and managers, and all employees of the **Greater Tzaneen Municipality**  
Distinguished guests  
Ladies and gentlemen

As we gather here today, it's important to reflect on our previous IDP strategic planning session that took place in December 2022. During that three-day session, we reviewed our performance in line with our strategic objectives as outlined in our IDP, as well as resolutions that we have taken in the IDP strategic session that took place in Thsipise in January 2022. We crafted strategies that aimed to provide sustainable solutions to the multiple challenges that affect our ability to deliver basic services optimally.

Now, it's time to review the strategies that we resolved upon in our previous strategic planning session. We need to take stock of what we've achieved, where we've struggled, and what we need to do to improve. We must conduct a thorough introspection and ask ourselves whether our failure to implement some of the resolutions that we agreed upon is a reflection of our inability or a lack of will. It's worth noting that all the strategies we agreed upon were crafted having taken into consideration both our financial resources and human capital.

We need to conduct a proper introspection and a thorough review of our work. It's essential to ask ourselves whether we are delivering on the promises we made to our communities. This self-introspection will assist us in paving a way forward that works for both the institution and the people.

I am pleased to officially announce that we have received another unqualified audit opinion from the Auditor General, marking the sixth consecutive financial year that we've received such an opinion. This year is special because, for the first time, we also received an unqualified audit on performance. This means that we were able to account for, take good care of, and correctly use the public purse according to the acceptable accounting standards.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all the political leaders, the administrative components, the Budget Steering Committee, the Audit Committee, the Municipal Public Committee (MPAC), and everyone else who has contributed to this achievement. There is no benefit better than the benefit of a united Greater Tzaneen Municipality collaborating on all fronts. Let us remain united and achieve more because by working together, we can achieve more.

The next three days are critical, and we must use them effectively because it is in these three days that we plan for the next 12 months. These three days will potentially determine our success or failure in the next twelve months. Each one of you in this hall has a specific responsibility, and each one of you is an integral part of this machinery that our masses look upon for solutions.

Therefore, let us prioritize the areas where we have struggled and come up with workable practical solutions to improve service delivery. Through the IDP and our interaction with communities, we all know what areas remain critical challenges. Our focus must intentionally be on those areas.

As much as we have sustained an unqualified audit opinion for six consecutive financial years, there is still more room for improvement. We need to move from an unqualified audit with findings to an unqualified audit without findings or a clean audit. This can be done if we drastically reduce unauthorized, irregular, and fruitless expenditure. This is possible if those who fail to plan and lead us to UIF are held accountable.

To be the best municipality, we need men and women who understand their roles and play their roles with passion. Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola says that “recruitment is 80 % success and hard work on plays 20 percent in success”. If we do not have the right people for the job, our work here will be a fruitless expenditure.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you all for your attendance today, and I hope that we can work together to achieve our goals for the next 12 months and beyond.

I thank you