

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO BE DELIVERED BY EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF THE EKURHULENI METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY CLR NTOMBI MEKGWE, AT THE INSTITUTE OF MUNICIPAL FINANCE OFFICERS CONFERENCE, AT EMPERORS PALACE, ON 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009**

Topic: "Making a bureaucracy more effective and efficient"

THE PROGRAMME DIRECTOR; MR SYDWELL MOFOKENG;  
EXECUTIVE MAYORS AND MAYORS PRESENT;  
MMC FINANCE; CLR LUNGILE MTSHALI;  
MAYORAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS;  
FELLOW COUNCILLORS;  
IMFO PRESIDENT; MR GEORGE VAN SCHALKWYK;  
MUNICIPAL MANAGERS;  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICERS;  
DIRECTOR CITY OF CAPE TOWN; MS LOUISE MULLER,  
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS;  
MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA;  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;

It is with great pride and privilege that I welcome you all to the City of Ekurhuleni this morning and our special word of welcome goes to those delegates attending from other parts of the country.

The City of Ekurhuleni is home to an estimated 826 000 households, with an estimated population of 2,6 million people. The growth of the population has been less than the growth of the economy, which is a good sign for improving the quality of life. Ekurhuleni makes a significant contribution as one of 284 municipalities to the national economy for which, we account for 7,7%. From 2003 to 2005 density has increased. This is due to migration and the fact that the available space for housing is limited. Unemployment has decreased marginally from 40% to 38%, while the number of people in informal employment has increased. But, the wealth gap in the region has widened, and at least 1/3 of the households in the region live in poverty.

The establishment of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (EMM) in December 2000 came as a result of bringing together of nine towns and two administrations of the previous Khayalami and Greater East Rand. In order to advance the growth, include all people and to develop the City, it was important to also define a clear identity of the city.

I have been requested to address the conference on the topic, "Making a bureaucracy more effective and efficient." This will be done within the context of the theme for this year's conference "making the elephant dance" and this makes mine a daunting task indeed.

I think we will all agree with the President of the Institute, Mr George van Schalwyk, in the foreword to the invitation to the conference when he says that the "theme creates, rather a

strange picture” in our minds. The theme indeed at first indicates a huge and clumsy animal and the challenge of teaching it to make some fleet footed moves, which seems to make the whole exercise humanly impossible.

However, acknowledging the fact that the annual IMFO conference is a key platform where Municipal Finance Officials, Councillors and other stakeholders gather to share best practices and formulate proposals dealing with challenges facing local government, in the words of the Chairperson of SALGA, Clr Sophie Molokoane-Machika, the task has to be tackled, however difficult it may be.

The transformation from 11 administrations into one was no easy task. The metro grappled with the placing of staff from the previous structures onto the organisational structure. The metro may now be delivering services with fewer staff than the total number of staff of the erstwhile cities prior to the formation of the Metro.

Our institutional review process had to ensure the organisation is more efficient and effective in how we function and deliver services. The work included a consultative approach with key internal and external role players through intensive interviews, conducting an organisational analysis of current strategies, structures and processes and researching best practices in organisational design, including benchmarking with other world cities.

Our Growth and Development Strategy (GDS 2025) addresses issues of growth and development of both the region and the municipality 20 years into the future, and aims to proactively position Ekurhuleni as a leading role-player and contributor to the vision of Gauteng as the smart Province and economic hub of the country.

The IDP process further provides the mechanisms and processes required for assessing the performance of the organisation in meeting the GDS agenda, and for refining and reviewing the process as a whole as it unfolds.

The fact that municipalities in South Africa are emerging from a long and difficult transformation process in itself creates a huge challenge towards the effective and efficient running of our municipalities.

The greatest challenge is how we within constitutional democracy ensure that we make bureaucracy more effective and efficient. Our constitutional democracy enjoins us to work relentlessly towards the creation of a better life for our communities and improved living conditions.

As Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, we have over the years, in pursuit of best practice towards fulfilling our mandate, sought to make our programmes and projects people centred and development driven.

To this end, our emphasis in our daily administration is to endeavour, at all costs, to want to comply with legislative provisions from the Municipal Structures Act, the Municipal Systems Act and last but not least, the Municipal Finances Management Act amongst others, and ensuring that our systems and processes are strictly adhered to while they remain user friendly and delivery driven.

Our firm belief has always been that for bureaucracy to be effective and efficient within the environment where democratisation of our society is in process, there has to be strong and vibrant public participation and buy in into democratic governance. To this end, we have encouraged through strong ward based campaigns and community engagement the establishment of strong and capacitated Ward Committees covering a wide range of community sectors representation.

We will continue to deepen the democratic process of governance in Ekurhuleni. Community Based Planning (CBP) is one of the initiatives identified to achieve this objective. CBP is a planning and implementation process that provides a platform for the communities to engage in interactive participation in planning and decision making for implementation in their wards. Our previous processes on community participation have focussed on quarterly workshops or consultations with wards. This form of consultation resulted in only problems being listed by the community without their involvement in the analysis of their local contexts. It did not either provide a platform for the communities direct involvement in planning their future or their involvement in the implementation of their development. CBP has been embarked upon by the municipality as it seeks to address these challenges and provide a systematic opportunity for the community, ward councillor and its elected ward committees, to be actively involved in the analysis of their situation, planning their future development and become active in the implementation process in their wards.

As a result of the intensive planning process undertaken through the IDP, our budget is in line with the needs of the communities we serve.

The capital budget and the IDP are aligned in terms of the Growth and Development Strategic agenda 2025, the Local Government Strategic Agenda, the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy and the Five Year Programme for 2006-2011. All projects in the capital budget support one or more of the focus areas of the GDS 2025 to start addressing the relevant deliverables and milestones set. And; all projects have been referenced, to the departmental Key Performance Area's (KPA's) contained in the IDP and the Performance Contracts of senior managers.

The detailed projects have a focus on visible service delivery and community development and are linked to specific objectives set out in the IDP.

In addition to the above, we encourage and promote the use and involvement of Community Development Workers on a wider scale both on the engagement of our communities in relation

to our programmes and projects as well as the campaigns around projects and national events. This ensures that our communities are afforded an opportunity to engage on issues and buy in at an early stage which later allows for a large and broader participation.

This together with our Ward Committee system ensures that our communities throughout are allowed an opportunity to influence processes from inception all the way to the end product. This allows them the opportunity to take ownership of programmes and projects and ensures in most cases uninterrupted service delivery.

We have also as Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality established the Municipal Public Accounts Committee which is headed by a Councillor. The focus of this Committee is to ensure that there is accountability in respect of the public finances and also investigates matters reported to it in relation to expenditures that are a deviation from the systems. In addition the Committee also oversees and ensures that cases of fraud and corruption are dealt with effectively and people are called and made to account. The importance of this Committee cannot be overemphasised and its work over the years has been highly effective in our Metro.

Taking into account that our City, is essentially a collection of nine major towns, each with its own unique personality and profile, this necessitated the establishment of what we came to refer to as a Customer Care Centres in every town as well as what is normally referred to as townships. This ensures that our communities are enabled to have access to the Customer Care Centre Managers for purposes of raising their concerns around service delivery issues in their own areas. This ensures that concerns are dealt with effectively and efficiently where they arise at the first given opportunity after being reported.

The Customer Care Centre concept is a significant strategy adopted by EMM to decentralise and further localise people's access to the municipality. CBP have been coupled to this approach to service delivery, and this not only provides access to, but an opportunity for greater involvement of the communities' in the governance process of the municipality in planning the future of the areas they live in, gain access to the implementation process and derive greater control over their lives. This will not only be of benefit to the community but will also be of enormous benefit to the municipality too.

Alongside this work, we have also commenced with the implementation of our service delivery model to make our municipality more accessible to local citizens. The Institutional Review process highlighted several shortcomings in the service delivery model of the Metro. Services were rendered in a fragmented and uncoordinated manner. In many instances residents were shunted from pillar to post in order to receive basic services and communities had to travel far to receive information and services. In order to address the situation and to adhere to the principles of Batho Pele, the EMM extended the concept of Customer Care Centres (CCC's) to include one stop service areas. It is envisaged that, through these centres, government will improve service delivery and make information accessible. This programme is making Batho Pele a reality and will transform the way in which we interact and respond to citizens. The institution is being geared up to provide immediate and uniform reaction to requests from

citizens. In addition, an improved process to engage with communities will allow our people greater access and participation in government's delivery programmes

The primary function of a CCC is to *inter alia*, provide services to the community such as bookings of halls and facilities, payments, access to information, licensing, service delivery, complaints and account related services. The CCC will also act as a link with the line Departments and provide a one stop service to every member of the community. We are convinced that with the creation of CCC's, another milestone will be reached in the commitment of the Ekurhuleni Metro to not only bring service delivery closer to our communities, but also to make a bigger stride in the quality of services that are being rendered in a sustained and equitable manner.

The City of Ekurhuleni has approved Service Standards for all Departments which will enable customers to assess the response time taken to address their concerns in terms of the Batho Pele Principles. The Customer Care Managers will monitor the effective implementation and compliance of Departments with the service standards.

The CCC Manager will inter-alia, have the responsibilities of managing all aspects of service delivery within the specific area and ensure compliance with Batho Pele Principles. They will also facilitate and establish short and medium term needs and priorities of wards and communities within an area. The CCC Managers will also look at indentifying shortcomings in service delivery and project execution and advise the line function to take necessary management action to rectify such shortcomings.

To ensure that senior management performs up to the maximum we have put in place a performance management system which is located in the Office the City Manager. The System is applied in a stringent manner and no flaws are allowed for. At the end of the financial year every senior manager is subjected to an assessment evaluation in terms of the system and is remunerated accordingly and where there is a need remedial methods are recommended for improvement. This ensures that our senior managers are always result driven and become effective in serving our communities.

Indicators on service delivery were improved by all departments and are contained in the Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP).

A concerted effort was undertaken from February 2007 to April 2008 to develop meaningful indicators and realistic measures. Integrated annual planning on Budget, IDP, Research, Audits on service delivery results were carried out throughout the year. This process has brought about rapid transformation in the municipality at an institutional level. The programme linked to Monitoring and Evaluation has assisted in early identification of critical interventions. These have been instituted on capacity building and process re-engineering to reduce delays in the work process.

The SDBIP process has been utilized to co-ordinate interventions and projects that are cross-cutting and has brought into monitoring and evaluation processes the critical element of building a learning organization.

This has resulted in:

- Leveraging the SDBIP as a tool for monitoring and evaluating performance on service delivery and has enabled improved compliance with respect to reporting.
- Quarterly reviews of performance of functional areas have been in place since April 2007. In terms of a full life cycle for this project and programme, an audit of results reported also takes place.
- An application assists with mapping of the linkages between delivery and the strategic priorities. All reports produced on performance arise from one set of data on delivery.

In taking the process further to implement detailed programmes to respond to the challenges of the Second Economy, we have consolidated a plan to implement the Expanded Public Works Programme in Ekurhuleni, which will help us reduce poverty and involve the unemployed in work opportunities and skills development. This is a key intervention to realise Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment at community level and will help us build a social security net aimed at reducing poverty. Through the expanded public works programme, we have been able to provide the dignity that comes with earning an income.

**In conclusion,** as Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, we are the first to agree that all of these measures and others that we could not have highlighted because of time and space, are not sufficient to make the elephant dance the fleet footed moves we want to see it dancing but we remain hopeful that we will get to that stage. It is true that we will have to do things differently in an effort to keep up with the changing tide within the ongoing transformation process taking place in our country. In the whole process we will need to heed the advise of the President of the Institute and need to be innovative and learn the new tune, the beat and the appropriate steps to better utilize the available resources and processes to advance the aspirations of our communities while working relentlessly to strengthen the capacity of local government to deliver quality services.

Local government works closest to the people. It is where each of our plans must be put into practice. It must therefore be an effective and efficient instrument for change.

On behalf of the leadership of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality and the people we serve, we wish you well in your deliberations!

**I Thank You!**