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ALL MEDIA HOUSES

ATT: Editors/Journalists

MEDIA STATEMENT: DIPALESENG HOSTED FIRST COUNCIL MEETING FOR 2024

As legally required, Dipaleseng Local Municipality held its Ordinary Council Meeting on Wednesday, 31st January 2024 which was accordingly open for community members to attend and observe proceedings from the gallery.

Mr. Vusi Gcaba presented the 2022/23 Auditor General's Management Report for Dipaleseng Local Municipality which revealed that the institution received a Qualified audit opinion, indicating that the institution did not regress but maintained its status. A strong emphasis was placed on the entire culture and ecosystem of accountability to all stakeholders ranging from the Administration, Executive Authority, Council and its Oversight Committee all the way to Provincial Leadership and Parliament.

The Audit & Performance Committee report for the second quarter of the current financial year was presented to Council by Mr. S Mofokeng who is the Chairperson of the Risk Management Committee on behalf of Chairperson, Mrs. Jane Masite who was not in attendance.

The Audit & Performance Committee concurred with the Auditor General on the Qualification outcome and all recommendations as presented. The report also came with key commitments from the Audit and Performance Committee and the Auditor General.

The second quarter performance for the institution indicated overall or average performance of 50% with regards to set targets in terms of the service delivery budget and implementation plan for the quarter which regrettably is a measurable decline compared with the same quarter year on year. Attributing factors to this declines have their genesis to the high vacancy levels at both senior managerial position and other key elementary positions within the organizational structure including the fiscal health of the municipality.

Opportunely, some reports which were tabled, such as the Integrated Waste Management Plan and Audit Action Plan reports, directly speak to remedial action/s in

response to Auditor General Report and concerns, importing the institution's trajectory towards a more positive outcome in the future.

Of particular worth to note were the revised 2023/24 MIG and new 2024/25 MIG funded capital projects. This is necessitated by the fact that as at the end of December 2023, the municipality had received R7 13 570 000 and only managed to spend R 5 974 581, 00 which translated to a 29% expenditure on the overall allocation of R20 253 000, 00 which was below the targeted 40% and further should have reached 50% and above by the end of December 2023, which requires immediate intervention in order to avert funds from being forfeited due to poor expenditure.

In order to avert the above undesirable situation of continuous underperformance on the MIG funding, the resolutions at the Strategic Planning Session which was held from 15th to 17th January 2024 advised to revise its projects with a focus on those projects that are much more ready for implementation and are considered to be "low hanging fruits" and easily achievable and these include the acquisition of two new solid waste trucks and the designing of Charles Street.

Council members spent a relative amount of time and focus conferring on service delivery reports and matters as the institution undergoes slight pressures on certain service delivery areas within the jurisdiction.

After much consideration of the Mid-Term Budget and Performance Assessment, the municipality's Mid-year Budget Adjustment will be tabled before the end of February 2024, wherein all necessary budgetary adjustments will be duly reformed and approved as required by law. This will also allow the institution cause adjustments to its service delivery targets in accordance with the service delivery and budget implementation plans that are directly interlinked to individual performance of each senior manager.

Dipaleseng Council deliberated on all these matters as well as standing reports that ordinary council normally considers on a quarterly basis which also invited constructive debates amongst councilors. The current service delivery challenges especially in the delivery of reliable and potable water supply to all customers, call centre complaints, erratic electricity supply in some areas of the municipality and the state of municipal vehicles and fleet were also deliberated. The need to encourage member of the public to enroll on the indigent register of the municipality was once again brought to attention and further encouragement to all consumers to pay for municipal services to sustain a fiscally viable institution that is able to render sustainable services. Lastly, the need to review Council Rules and Standing Orders was also proposed under the Speaker's reports.

Active participation of council members, management as well as other stakeholders continues to be appreciated as all the collective efforts assists in rowing this boat forward.

ENDS

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