



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Department
SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE
OFFICE of the MEC

OPENING REMARKS DELIVERED BY HONOURABLE NAKEDI KEKANA ON THE OCCASION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION OF THE LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE

Tuesday, 14 February 2023

HOD Daphne Ramokgopha

Representatives from the Limpopo Tourism Agency

SA Culture Observatory

PSETA- The Public Service Education and Training Agency

Limpopo Film and Video Committee

Limpopo Library Association of South Africa

Limpopo Sport Confederation

Limpopo Sport Academy

Limpopo Moral Regeneration Committee

The Arts and Culture council

The Language committee

Representatives from the provincial Coghsta

Department of Correctional Services

Department of Health

Department of Education

Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure

Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism

Department of Social Development

The Limpopo Treasury Department

The transformation services from the Premiers office

Limpopo School Sport Committee

The South African Local Government committee

Representatives from Stats SA

Representatives from the Auditor General's office

Our Chief Directors Present here.

Other Statutory and non-statutory bodies present here.

Fellow colleagues,

I would like to welcome you all to this important Strategic Planning workshop for our beloved Department of Sport, Arts and Culture in Limpopo.

Over the next 3 days we will be working through our different commissions, to collectively develop our strategic plan. I look forward to seeing everyone contributing towards creating our sustainable and prolific future together. We are capable, and that in itself is enough to spark some belief from Limpopo citizens, to know that their government cares.

We already know that our Department is strategically placed to promote and contribute to good corporate governance , social and human capital development through timely and adequate outwards and internal reporting, adequate risk management and internal control systems, implementation of **Public Finance Management Amendment Act** (PFMA) and related regulations, developing and implementing policies and strategies in support of the strategic and operational plans, while at the same time looking to empower individual employees. We are at the centre of this department, and all hands need to be on deck.

In a time of crisis, we need a single point of command and a single line of march, as we address the calls of crisis, we also have to address the impact. We must act to lessen the impact on, smaller businesses, the transport network and other sectors that support our people's lives," Ramaphosa said.

The country is in a crisis of power, and some, if not all of our stakeholders are affected. The fashion designers and crafters of art, among many in South Africa, are unable to do their jobs. It is as such that I agree with the President in the very SONA speech that “..in a time of crisis, we need a single point of command and a single line of march, as we address the calls of crisis, we also have to address the impact. We must act to lessen the impact on farmers, smaller businesses... and other sectors that support our people’s lives,” the president said.

We have those people who are our stakeholders who are affected. It is through you at this session that you find ways to help our government communicate some of the measures that we will be able to do under the national state of disaster on energy that was announced by the President. Our Department is also included.

We need to find practical measures to assist a number of businesses applicable in the state of disaster. We may not have the finance to do so, but we definitely have the knowledge on how they could get about help and we should forward them in that direction.

Administration

Ladies and gentlemen, It is important that as we move to ensure that we are poised to deliver on our mandate as a Department, we need to dig deep and involve our ethics and conscience as we go about our trusted day to day jobs. Let me remind you of our bleak history wherein some of our own were found wanting as far as their dubious activities were concerned, including defrauding the institution and or involving themselves in corruption. We are however pleased to note that disciplinary action has been taken against such individuals.

In his State of the Nation speech last week, President Cyril Ramaphosa further noted that “...public institutions and state-owned enterprises (SOEs) were infiltrated by a criminal network with the intention of looting public money for private gain”. We cannot shy away from ensuring that in our strategies, we strengthen all the gates that need to keep corruption and malfeasance away. This is also a priority of the governing party.

Whistle-blowers

In the process of tightening our walls around our kitty and improving on our core mandate, we further need to walk on the same SONA speech delivered by our President, when he referred to the State Capture Commission of Enquiry report and recommendations on the protection of whistleblowers, and assist him and his team in in “...strengthening the system to protect whistle-blowers, who are a vital safeguard in the fight against corruption and who take huge personal risk in reporting wrongdoing,” he further said.

The President assures us colleagues of a detailed review of all applicable legislation and a comparative study of other jurisdictions to strengthen whistle-blower protection. You are protected- if there is wrongdoing in your corner, please do report it.

In his response to parliament in October of last year after receiving the very State of Capture report, President Ramaphosa further noted that there was “..a firm and clear indication of the primacy of the rule of law and a demonstration of our democratic system at work” and in that response “constitute an ethical, moral and institutional departure from the abuses revealed by the State Capture Commission”.

My responsibility as MEC is to ensure that decisions on priorities taken politically also find expression in the department in such a way that we lead our people to take action to build a better Africa. That is a priority! We must be deliberate in strengthening the fight against crime and corruption. We should not back down.

Finance and supply chain.

The Department managed to timeously submit the Draft 2023/24 Procurement plan to the Provincial Treasury, accordingly various business units are urged to submit the bid specifications within the first quarter of 2023/34 financial year so as to ensure seamless execution of projects.

The Departmental Supply Chain Management Service Standards have been developed and approved by the Accounting Officer during the third quarter. All officials are expected to adhere to these Service Standards to avoid non-compliances with laws and regulations.

I have noted that we are still very much a paper institution. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. The only hope is that one day, together with the provincial government, we could be able to move on from paperwork- and actually use technology to our advantage. Maybe through this strategic engagement, we may find ways to reduce the amount of paper we use currently, of course within the prescripts of the PFMA. We must evolve to meet new demands and supply chain challenges, and supply chain managers need to plan ahead to keep everything flowing smoothly.

All of us need to support that process, by equally planning ahead and informing the chain on time to do their work diligently and efficiently. The team needs to be accountable on how the monies of the state have been used, and we are all responsible to make sure that we make their jobs easier.

Skills Development

Colleagues- any institution that looks to better itself should constantly sharpen itself and its human resources. There is a skills audit that is currently taking place, and once that is done- there will be tailored skills development programmes that you would possibly be asked to participate in, please do so. You will not only be equipping yourselves with possible new ways of doing what you have always known how to do, but there could be innovation that comes through the programme. Please strongly consider them.

There has been a constant lack of interest in attending those trainings and courses, and today here and now- I say words of encouragement to you to actively participate. Your knowledge will help the department so dearly.

HR and Recruitment

For some time, there have been key portfolios that needed to be filled, and that was not the case. But walking in and out of the Department over the past month, I have noted the splendid job that our HR division has been doing of interviews to fill the vacant positions. As we hire new recruits, let us make sure that they blend into the values and objectives of the department.

It is imperative that through them, we can achieve our set goals and targets. We wish our new recruits well as they look to bring in efficiency and effectiveness. As we manage our work in our offices, I further encourage the “**Batho Pele**” principle across the whole Sport, Arts and Culture fraternity. When people need help, let us get up and be at their best assistance.

Arts and Cultural Affairs

Here in Arts and Cultural Affairs we encourage excellence and inclusivity.

It is in this strategic session that we should be in a position to come up with ways to ensure the implementation of all genres of arts and culture. We are talking about dance, the creative industry, virtual art and performance, fashion, craft, theatre, choral music, and many others which you would be aware of. We need to be conscious about providing information and creating platforms for the public to showcase and develop talent, and create environments of support for performing and creative arts practitioners, artists and musicians.

Nobody should be excluded from expressing themselves through the arts or enjoying the arts. When you plan, please ensure that youth, women and persons living with disabilities are remembered as members of the community with whom Cultural Services work particularly closely with, so that their creative input may be included and celebrated.

It is on that very thought that I further urge you to strengthen the build-up towards the annual Mapungubwe arts festival. Let us find a way to make our districts to harbour success stories in the arts and cultural movements before the ultimate provincial Mapungubwe arts festival. The activities at regional level should ordinarily deal with the influx of interest at the mega festival, as many other activities would have been held across the province. It should be done, and I encourage you to find the way for us.

Moreover, our choral activities should equally be reignited in the communities. That harmonious music is art, and we should preserve and celebrate it as a province.

Heritage and Museum

Ladies and gentlemen, once we complete our museum in the preceding financial year, we will then have to have ongoing revamps and maintenance of older ones in our province. We should guard our heritage jealously. During heritage month in September, profiling of all our districts and their heritage should be done to further document our proud history and diverse cultures. We have good stories to tell, and we should find ways to constantly communicate our culture and traditions and our beautiful history from all corners of our province. It can be done, and it should be done.

Library and Archives

In recent days, we have opened the state-of-the-art Runnymede Library in Nwamitwa. The people of Runnymede, particularly scholars, now have access to one of the milestones of our democratic government.

It is as such that we come out from this session even more determined to ensure that the programme for better infrastructure is prioritised, and concerted efforts on maintenance should then take centre stage.

We equally need to expedite the permanent appointment of librarians, while at the same time, promoting the usage of libraries. If reading competitions will help our 10-year-olds to read with meaning, then let there be such.

I say this because a panel led by former Deputy President of our country Phumzile Mlambo Nquka has found last week, that basic literacy among children in South Africa has declined, with most children leaving grade one without knowing the alphabet, while 82% of grade 4 children being unable to read for meaning. Gauteng and the Western Cape are leading the charge to change this through investments in their foundation phases- and we too need to be counted among those who are looking to change that scary scenario. Our libraries should be able to help, of course.

At the same time colleagues, on archives, we should ensure that we execute the Department's objectives to the core, foster a national identity and the protection of rights. In the process, we should be able to digitise our history, and ensure that it is readily available for the public and researchers.

I encourage you to find innovative ways to preserve a national archival heritage for use by the government and people of Limpopo; and promote efficient, accountable and transparent government through the proper management and care of government records.

Our oral history is our treasure. When we engage in commissions in this session, let us ensure that places of worship, historical sites, oral traditions, and indigenous knowledge systems are prioritised. There could be many other ideas shared here- thus we encourage inclusion and diversity as the province harbours different traditions and culture.

Sports and recreation

A very largely contested space here we have. This is one of our larger stakeholders, and of course sport is the code in which our social cohesion mandate is largely accomplished.

Our priority in discussions here, should be increasing our sport hubs in the preceding financial year. Hubs are the nuclear to sport development, and we should consider modelling a district and see how we could possibly ensure that the increment of these hubs come with actual impact in those very wards and areas.

We equally need to focus holistically on equity on geographic spread. We need to be inclusive in our approach, thus when we make plans and decisions here, we need to keep at the back of our minds the notion that the province is vast, and we move to decentralise some sporting codes wherein rural areas could also be host to our tournaments. One hub per ward may take a while to realise, but that is an undertaking we as a collective need to work tirelessly on realising.

On that note, we equally need to encourage all structures to affiliate to federations. It makes it easier for all of us to work and direct resources. It is important that we know how many clubs there are for which sporting code, and with the help of federations, we will be able to reach our mandates.

Recreation sporting codes at local levels should be supported at all costs. This will indicate that Strengthening of sport recreation at local level needs to be emphasised..

Let us also support all efforts to ensure that we support our own when it comes to this year's Netball World Cup that is scheduled to begin in July of this year.

Languages

We have 11 official languages in our country, and as Limpopo we are fortunate that our province boasts at least 6 of those spoken languages. As it is, we are as a country working towards ensuring that the South African Sign Language (SASL) becomes the 12th official language in our country.

As such, in our commissions, whatever plans and or decisions we come to, please bear in mind that persons with disabilities, particularly in language, are also part and parcel of the programmes we have. In fact, we should also earmark programmes looking at specifically those groups.

As it is, we will be hosting next Tuesday at Malamulele, all Provinces for the International Mother Language event to promote multilingualism and to foster Social

Cohesion and nation building. The promotion of multilingualism includes sign language as well.

Similarly, if there is a need for more translation of our work into our provincial languages, then we need to find measures on how that possibly could be done within the budget we have.

District Coordination

This chief directorate is the custodian of the District Development Model (DDM) which has been pronounced by the President in the SONA of 2019.

The President had emphasised the District Development Model approach as a way of government going back to the basics to start service delivery programmes and projects from a ward level – to a municipal level and to the district level. Districts are where constituencies belong and that is where service delivery takes place.

For the Department to make strides and be successful in promoting active and healthy living – and social cohesion, the coordination of sport, art and culture services have to be visible on the ground through the District Coordination. This is a chief directorate that should ensure that the services and programmes that are planned in these two days , are implemented, or rolled out in all 22 municipalities and five districts of the province.

This then calls for District Coordination to strengthen the intergovernmental relations with all municipalities, sector departments , civil organisations , NGOs , business sector in all the districts for integrated sport , arts and culture services to be rolled out successfully. Stakeholder Management and intergovernmental relations are the responsibility of the District Coordination and ways to deal with the service challenges in the sector of sport , arts and culture should be addressed at a district level.

One author, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry once said that " ..a goal without a plan is just a wish." Let us not wish, but come up with strategies, plans on execution, and give ourselves reasonable timelines in that execution. At the end of the day, once all is said and done, this room here has on its shoulders, the responsibility of carrying out objectives of the department to the best of its ability.

I wish you well in your engagements and look forward to the report back from commissions.

I thank you.