



**Press Release
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GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS SHOULD BE OUTPUT ORIENTED IN DELIVERING SERVICES

Government officials and other key stakeholders ought to be output oriented during the delivery of infrastructure projects and general services to communities. This is a call made by Mpumalanga Human Settlements MEC, Speed Mashilo when he addressed the Department's strategic planning session held at the City of Mbombela. The gathering which has brought under one roof the department's political head, administrative heads and senior managers is crafting better strategies to facilitate and fast track the development of sustainable integrated human settlements and other significant services to communities for the 2017/18 financial year and beyond.

The Department is mandated to coordinate integrated planning and drive developmental planning as per its broadened mandate of facilitating integrated sustainable human settlements. When quoting Premier David Mabuza, MEC Mashilo charged that, *"we take a cue from the United Nation's Habitat approach, and our planning and investment now considers a range of cross cutting issues including social inclusion, local economic development, urban prosperity and environmental stability"*. The department's performance indicates challenges around proper planning, poor coordination with municipalities and other role players. Head of Human Settlements, Mr Kebone Masange attributed the poor performance to service delivery challenges, amongst others at some projects, when he made the opening remarks.

The session acknowledged that challenges such as inept planning and lack of serviced land, amongst others, that continued to bedevil the department, can be addressed if all stakeholders join forces. *"Our operation calls for an integrated approach to planning where as a department; we do not plan in isolation from, for instance, the Departments of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Affairs, Social Development and Economic Development, led by the soon to be established Mpumalanga Planning Commission"*, the MEC quipped. The commission will amongst others inform the sector's long term horizon for the province. MEC Mashilo emphasised the importance to strengthen the planning component and complement each other as directorates.

Key areas to focus during the ensuing 2017/18 financial year, as MEC Mashilo contends, include the development of suitable located land for affordable housing and decent human settlements, transforming cities and rejuvenating dilapidating mining towns, to move towards efficiency, inclusivity and sustainability and building a cohesive, sustainable and caring communities, amongst others. *"We cannot therefore, in this coming financial year, give an excuse of not having adequate resources. We have appointed in key and strategic positions and therefore need to pull all our resources together and work towards the realisation of our goal"*, he stressed. The department has R1.6 billion to facilitate the creation of integrated sustainable human settlements in 2017/18.

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