



IDP AND BUDGET 2020/21 SOCIAL MEDIA PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON 20 MAY 2020 BY EXECUTIVE MAYOR Z.A. DUMZELA

Good day good citizens

2020 is a year of unusual business due to the covid-19 pandemic which holds the whole world in a grip of isolation and economic turmoil.

Last week, President Ramaphosa addressed the nation indicating that the country is ready to shift to a new phase in response to the coronavirus. As we are preparing to proceed cautiously, government will indicate progressively greater relaxation of restrictions in due course.

As a District Municipality we will continue to communicate at District level to explain and inform our communities on all regulations of the next level restrictions once it has been released.

In the Government Gazette nr. 510 issued on 07 May 2020, the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma issued directions to address, combat and prevent the spread of Covid-19 regarding municipal operations and governance. This includes amongst others that communities must be consulted using media platforms and alternative methods of consultation instead of contact meetings, to provide comments on the draft IDP and Budget.

In the absence of a community radio station reaching all the areas of Elundini Local Municipality, it was necessary to use alternative measures to inform the public about the draft IDP and Budget for the 2020/21 financial year - especially projects in this area hence the livestream on facebook. Whatsapp

recordings of the IDP and Budget will be forwarded to stakeholders in the Elundini areas, which will be filtered down to community members.

On the 17th of May , South Africa joined the world in observing World Telecommunications and Information Society Day. This day is aimed at raising awareness on the possibilities that the use of the internet and other information and communication technologies can bring to societies and economies, as well as of ways to bridge the digital divide. The value of technology during the covid-19 lockdown is beyond measure and strengthens my dream of rolling out free wi-fi to all towns in the District. Two years ago a wifi pilot project was launched by the District in Sterkspruit and the next phase is planned for Mt Fletcher in the new financial year with a budget of R200 000 .

Since the declaration of the corona virus as a National Disaster, the Joe Gqabi District Municipality has received a donation of 265 jojo tanks from the Department of Water and Sanitation, the Alimdaad Foundation and the Eastern Cape Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) . **133 Jojo tanks were installed through the Implementing Agent – Amatola Water – in villages in Elundini Local Municipality.**

5 Water trucks are availed by the Department of Water and Sanitation which are currently providing these jojo tanks with water. A further 5 water trucks were procured by the District Municipality for operating in wards 4, 8, 9, 10 and 11 .

Current projects include the **Elundini Rural Water** which will continue in the next financial year with a budget allocated to the amount of R15 m, and the **Elundini Rural Sanitation Project** amounting to R15m for the next financial year. The Joe Gqabi Economic Development Agency (JoGEDA) has been appointed as the Implementing Agent to implement the Elundini Rural Sanitation with a total budget of R48m.

Due to the Covid-19 shutdown, all projects were negatively affected with all construction sites being closed. This means that all projects lost momentum and time in the order of 2 – 3 months due to the level 5 shutdown and it is foreseen that not all projects will be spending their budget allocations for the 2019/20 financial year.

Contractors returned to site at the start of Level 4 shutdown, but are being hampered by the implementation of health and safety regulations related to social distancing and the new general health regulations related to the pandemic control measures.

Joe Gqabi District Municipality estimated that due to lost time, an amount of R42m would be unspent on the MIG programme at end of the current financial year.

No projects will be stopped due to Covid-19 and funding forfeited in this current year will be re-allocated in the 2020/21 financial year to ensure the completion of the projects.

New projects for the 2020/21 financial year include the **Maclear Water Upgrade** with a budget of R10m and the **Ugie Sanitation Infrastructure Phase 1 Project** with a budget of R15 m.

In addition to MIG funded projects, there are 2 projects to be implemented with loan funding from the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) in the form of **frontloading**. These projects are currently in the bid evaluation stage and include the **Maclear Water Treatment and Distribution Upgrade** with an approved budget of R96 m and the **Maclear Bulk Sanitation Infrastructure Upgrade** with an approved budget of R49 m.

The Elundini Municipality was hit hard by water shortages over the past 5 years due to the prevailing drought . Cooperate Governance and Traditional Affairs and National Treasury allowed municipalities an opportunity to identify and implement immediate short term projects which will enhance water and sanitation provision to fight Covid-19 including the **Elundini Drought Relief Project** with a budget allocation of R8.5 . This project sees some villages n Wards 1, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 provided with new boreholes and associated infrastructure :

In addition , National Treasury will distribute R2.235 m for the current financial year and R2.235m for the 2020/21 financial year for the municipality in the form of a **Municipal Disaster Relief Grant**. Further transfers may be received from CoGTA or National Treasury. This funding will mainly cater for procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for essential workers.

As per the district Budget, funding is availed for programmes including amongst others the Aids Programme – R90 000, Women’s Programmes – R100 000 and R220 000 for are budgeted for Youth Programmes

RAFI is a commercial initiative formed to enhance cooperative enterprises in the Eastern Cape in an attempt to assist agricultural cooperatives. In the District, the programme was piloted in Elundini Local Municipality in the current financial year and included Lower Tsitsana where 88 hectares were covered in soy bean crops and Hlankomo where 113 hectares covered with white maize crops. The plan is to extend the programme to cover about 30 000 hectares over a period of time. An amount of R2.5 m has been budgeted for the 2020/21 financial year.

The **District Livestock Improvement Programme** is meant to benefit previously disadvantaged farmers in the District who are situated in communal areas, commonages and farms. It is meant to improve the quality of their livestock by providing rams and bulls to improve the genes of the livestock. The District financed the building of 5 shearing sheds in Mt Fletcher and going forward, an amount of R300 000 will purchase 15 pure ;merinos and 15 dohne merinos. A feedlot is in the process of being operationalised in Maclear.

It is not clear how the Covid-19 regulations might affect programmes which include gatherings, and planning will have to be done accordingly. It must also be noted that some or all the relevant programmes’ budgets might be re-allocated to assist in funding the District Municipality’s responds to Covid-19.

Proposed tariff increases :

- Conventional meter tariffs increase by 7%
- Sanitation services increase with 8%
- All other services including pre-paid water increase with 6%
- Indigent households on pre-paid meters – no increase
- Indigent households with conventional meters – increase with 6%

It is a difficult year which lies ahead for the country in terms of job creation, building the economy and delivering services. I want to assure you that the

Council of Joe Gqabi District Municipality is committed to see that all measures possible be taken to provide quality services to our people.

I urge you to stay at home and wash your hands regularly with soap and water. Please wear a mask when you have to leave the house and keep your social distance.

God bless