

## Foreword

The information contained in the 2009 Estimates of Provincial Expenditure (EPE) provides a detail of the key thrust of the budget deliverables and is presented in a format that aligns service delivery commitments alongside resources.

The thrust of the estimates is underpinned by the principles of performance budgeting and are complemented by measurable objectives, performance measures and output indicators for each programme per vote.

The Public Finance Management Act places a responsibility on departments to present annual performance plans as part of budget documentation for resource allocation.

The Act also places a responsibility on the departments to ensure that these plans are tabled to the Provincial Legislature on or before 31 March of each year. It is pleasing to report that for the 2009 MTEF departments have finalised their Annual Performance plans and submitted them to the Provincial Treasury prior to the approval of the budget by the Executive Council on 23 February 2009.

The Annual Performance Plans are critical as they provide the targets and better understanding on how the various programmes of each department plans will bring about a better life to the people of Mpumalanga province.

The Provincial Treasury has concluded the analysis of these plans with respect to alignment with other key documents such as Makgotla reports, report from the Medium Term Expenditure Committee Hearings, State of Province Address, Provincial Growth and Development Strategy in an effort to ensure that resources will be targeted to fund the most strategic areas that have already been identified by the Executive Council.

We are confident that with this kind of preparedness for a new year most of our challenges with respect to projections, non financial information as well as clarity on what each department should be spending on will be a thing of the past in our province.

On the other hand, it is going to be exceedingly important that as a Province, we take bold steps to improve cash and budget management in order to reduce fiscal risks to the Provincial Budget.

In this regard, all Departments are urged to monitor spending closely and ensure that we remain within our budget, by taking specific cost curtailment measures for the remainder of the financial year, and the coming financial year. Such cost curtailment measures, should focus on areas of spending that are non-core and would not adversely impact on pro-poor service delivery. Departments are further urged to shift funds from non-core areas of spending, towards programmes that meet the broader social and development objectives of Government.

It is acknowledged that compiling a publication of this nature requires dedicated time and effort from all involved in the lengthy and often difficult budget processes.

My gratitude goes to the Members of the Executive Council for participating in the Medium Term Expenditure Committee Hearings, the Heads of Departments for delivering on the national and provincial priorities over the MTEF. To everyone else who participated and contributed to the successful conclusion of the budget process and making this publication a reality, my sincere appreciation.

My appreciation also goes to the Members of the Budget and Finance Committee under the leadership of the Honourable Premier, Mr TSP Makwetla for continuing to shape the provincial fiscal stance.

Mr JL Mahlangu  
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