

WELCOME REMARKS TO THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY REVIEW WORKSHOP HELD AT MARGATE HOTEL ON 28-30 AUGUST 2012 DELIVERED BY HER WORSHIP THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR K.S. PHANGWA.

*Director of proceedings*

*EXCO Members*

*Speaker of Council*

*Chief Whip & the entire Whippery*

*Councillors*

*Esteemed Traditional Leaders*

*Municipal Manager & your team of Managers and officials*

*Provincial Communication Practitioners*

*Communicators from the GCIS*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

This morning I am being called upon to make a few welcome remarks to this important gathering. This Workshop takes place when the National Womens Month is drawing to a close. It is also of great significance that we are holding this review of our current communication strategy during the first quarter of our financial year.

In April this year, at this venue Mr Brent Simon from the GCIS Headquarters conducted a Councillor Induction Workshop on Communication. The following month we assembled councillors and senior managers for purposes of getting training on Protocol and Etiquette.

We did all this in order to familiarise ourselves with all aspects of communication and matters related thereto. It was also on the same period

that we committed ourselves to review our communication strategy before the end of the first quarter of 2012/2013 Financial Year and indeed our convergence here over the next few days seek to give a practical effect to that reality.

We are particularly happy that we have communication gurus from the Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), the Office of the Premier (OTP) and the Alfred Nzo District Municipality in this workshop.

I have no doubt that from today onwards, we will be equipped to communicate better. This does not mean that we are not communicating but there is always a room for improvement.

It is important to note that all Councillors are communicators by virtue of their positions as elected public representatives. In addition we have the officials to provide a technical and administrative back up. In this regard, for an example they made it possible for me to convey our message of the women's month and thus creating an ample opportunity to talk to the community of Umzimvubu through the Alfred Nzo Community Radio (ANCR). We also communicate through our quarterly publication called Umzimvubu Newsletter. It is also worth mentioning that our website continues to grow from strength to strength and it attracts the attention of people from as far as overseas.

What remains to be achieved though is to send each of our Ward Councillors to the local community radio station to talk to their respective communities with a view to profile the achievements and programmes of the democratic state in the three spheres of government.

In this regard, I have already instructed the Communications Department to draw up a clear programme of Radio Talkshows which I will closely monitor.

Such a programme is surely destined to succeed because my colleagues in council will build on the foundation laid during the Councillor Induction Workshop on Communication that I have already mentioned earlier on.

Also this Review Workshop must help us to become better communicators of service delivery. Equally, the Communications Department must assist us by levelling the playground so that working together we can enhance the

communication function by bombarding the community with accurate and timeous information and reporting.

In fact we have delayed the Radio Talkshows deliberately so that this workshop must equip us with strategies and tactics of dealing with issues of communication.

I want to believe that this is indeed possible because at our disposal there is a capable team of men and women called Community Development Workers (CDWs).

We also have to find creative means and ways of joint programmes with CDWs, Ward Clerks and the organs of peoples power. By organs of peoples power I am referring to structures like the School Governing Bodies (SGBs), Hospital Boards and Clinic Committees.

In conclusion I want to say to our facilitators and guests from the various levels of our government, feel free because you are all welcome to Umzimvubu Municipality Workshop. We are all your students and you are all our teachers for the two days of our stay here.

However, please do not ask us to write any test.

With those few words you are all welcome

I thank you