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## *Dipaleseng Municipality*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM RE-LAUNCHED IN DIPALESENG**

Due to the recent disruptions of development and economic activities within Dipaleseng Local Municipality, the municipality convened a meeting to re-launch the Local Economic Development Forum (LEDF) structure on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at Siyathemba Community Hall.

This came as a result of distressing challenges that the institution faced when a certain group of community members started disrupting municipal, sector departments, state owned enterprises as well as privately owned business activities; programs and projects. This situation had been on-going for well over a month and had reached uncomfortable levels even after the municipality attempted to engage the disgruntled group on numerous occasions.

Drastic measures such as the disbandment of the Local Economic Development Forum (LEDF) structure that was in place which was accused of demonstrating monopolistic attributes and not being pro-Dipaleseng by the disgruntled group were taken. An interim committee was then elected to oversee LEDF objectives until the structure is re-launched. However, these efforts did not seem to have been adequate in yielding any positive outcome as these unfavourable acts perpetuated.

The municipality, through intergovernmental processes requested the presence of the Mpumalanga Provincial Department of Economic Development & Tourism to assist in clarifying the purpose, role and responsibilities of this structure to avert any future miscomprehensions about the intention behind having such a structure in place.

To demonstrate transparency and impartiality, the said department, represented by Mr. Mohlala, Director of Economic Development was also tasked with facilitating the process of electing the new executive membership of the forum.

Local Business chambers, government sector, Parastatals, organized labour, Non-government sector, and community based organizations are some of the structures that need to be represented in the forum.

The forum is chaired by the Executive Mayor and has working groups according to the local economic demands and opportunities. Each working group then has its own chairperson whom collectively with the Executive Mayor forms the executive committee of the structure.

The executive now has Mr. Mpho Mphuthi leading the Agriculture sub-committee while Mr. Zakhele Maya is responsible for the SMME. Transversal sub-committee is headed by Mrs. Nomsa Sibiya and Mr. Andile Mkhumbeni and Mr. Sibusiso Motaung lead the Manufacturing and Mining sub-committees respectively.

Dipaleseng is relatively small with a population of 45 232 as per the 2016 statistics and only contributed 0.7% to the provincial economy in 2015, depicting a projected decrease in annual economic growth from 1.9% for the 1995 to 2015 period to 0.4% between 2015 and 2020.

The Executive Mayor, Clr. Mafunda Makhubu congratulated the newly elected executive and pleaded for cooperation and unity in efforts in order to build and grow the local economy. It is anticipated that the executive will work tirelessly to ensure this, with their

first main goal is the facilitation of the review of the Local Economic Development Strategy which will serve as the blue print for local economic development in its entirety.

--Ends –

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**ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER**