



EXCO MEDIA STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

All Media Houses

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PREMIER CONVENES EXCO MEETING TO INTENSIFY GOVERNANCE AND CAPACITY MEASURES OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Mpumalanga Premier, Mr Mandla Ndlovu convened the sitting of the Executive Council (EXCO) on Thursday to discuss governance and capacity measures of the Provincial Government. The measures are essential pillars for the realisation of the three priorities of the 7th Administration of inclusive growth and job creation, reducing the high cost of living and poverty, as well as building a capable, ethical and developmental state.

Local Government featured prominently as a lever of service delivery, during the deliberations. Poor revenue collection due to the culture of non-payment of services, was raised as a paralysis for the effectiveness of Local Government. EXCO urged communities to pay for municipal services such as water and electricity, to strengthen the financial capability of municipalities.

Governance and capacity measures for the Provincial Government were discussed extensively as a doorway to achieve set targets, among them, clean audits.

1. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE AUDIT ACTION PLAN

The 7th Administration has set clean audit outcomes amongst the targets for Provincial Departments and Public Entities. Clean audits are essential pillars of public trust in the management of public funds.

During the 2024/25 audit cycle, the Auditor-General of South Africa announced three Departments and one Public Entity in Mpumalanga on the list of clean audit achievements,

namely: Office of the Premier (OTP), Provincial Treasury and Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), as well as the Mpumalanga Economic Regulator (MER).

An audit action plan with clear timelines and remedial action for identified findings, has been developed to sustain the achievement, and to assist departments without clean audits to improve. A progress report was presented during the EXCO sitting, which indicate significant improvement between the February-March 2026 period, especially in areas where irregular expenditure, non-compliance with requirement of payment for services within thirty (30) days, were detected.

EXCO noted that the Provincial Treasury is supporting departments and entities to update irregular register monthly, train officials on contract management as part of the remedial action. It was resolved that progress for the implementation of the plan must be monitored continuously until all institutions achieve clean audits.

2. DECENTRALISATION OF BURSARIES

A presentation for the decentralisation of bursaries from the Department of Education to all Provincial departments was shared during the sitting. Until the EXCO resolution 17 of 2024, the approval of bursary applications, both internally and externally, was centralised within the Department of Education.

The Transversal Human Resource Development (THRD) performed the function, which entailed the approval of applications for students enrolled at South African and overseas-based institutions. Since 2014 up to date, 7593 bursaries have been awarded. This number signifies the extent in which the Provincial Government has implemented skills development measures, since the approval of the Human Resource Development Strategy.

EXCO noted that officials within the THRD have now moved to the Office of the Premier, in line with Resolution 17. This implies that all Provincial Departments will disburse bursaries through internal budget allocations. Furthermore, it was noted that the Department of Education will continue to manage bursary affairs of students who are still at tertiary

institutions in the country and the fourteen, registered at Russian Universities, seven of which will complete in July 2026 and the last seven in July next year.

EXCO approved the report, and directed Provincial Departments to include the bursaries in their Workplace Skills Plans (WSPs) with associated portion of the 1% budgetary provision, to build institutional capacity that respond to socio-economic challenges.

3. 2026 MPUMALANGA PREMIER'S CUP

A presentation which outlines the flagship programme of the Premier's Cup was considered. The Premier's Cup is one of the flagship programmes aimed at promoting nation building and social cohesion through Sport, boost the local economy through sport tourism, while showcasing the abundance of talent in the province and foster the development of athletes in the schools and in the communities.

The programme will afford schools and community clubs as well as professional clubs across the three districts, an opportunity to fine-tune their preparations for the next season and to display their talent and newly recruited players to their fans. These include the U/16 in-school teams and community clubs from grassroots to professional levels.

Casric Stars FC, TS Galaxy FC, The Bees FC and Kruger United FC are on the list of the participating teams.

EXCO noted that the programme will cement strong partnerships with the sport fraternity in Mpumalanga, and that winners in the different categories of school sport, community soccer and professional clubs will be incentivised. The incentives include among others, prize money, 15-seater school buses, trophies and sport equipment.

The activities of the Premier's cup will start in June 2026 and culminate into the finals to be played in July 2026, at the Solomon Mahlangu stadium in Thembisile Hani Local Municipality.

EXCO approved the 2026 Mpumalanga Premier's cup for implementation.



4. PROVINCIAL SCHOOL SAFETY INDABA

School premises in Mpumalanga are not immune from cases of violence and crime, which lead to injuries and fatalities of learners and educators. A plan to convene a Provincial School Safety Indaba was presented to EXCO, in a quest to improve safety measures within the school premises. The plan takes into consideration the lack of capacity by some School Government Bodies (SGBs) to implement the Learner Code of Conduct and the non-responsive School Safety Policy amid cases of violence and crime within school premises.

EXCO noted that the indaba seeks to intensify the School Safety Protocol which was signed in July 2025 by a broad range of key stakeholders, among them, the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison, the Department of Justice & Constitutional Development and the Department of Social Development (DSD).

The two days indaba is scheduled for the 28th - 29th of May 2026 in Sabie, Thaba Chweu Local Municipality, and seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- To outline the active role of the Districts in the implementation of the Provincial School Safety Integrated Strategy.
- To adopt a multi-stakeholder approach in implementing safety measures of the learners, as a societal matter.
- To establish resourceful and functional structures that will respond adequately to school safety and security in the province.

EXCO approved the plan as a major step to strengthen school safety, protecting learners, and creating a conducive environment for teaching and learning.

5. PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE WITH SAB

EXCO has resolved to work with various stakeholders and road users to reduce road accidents and fatalities. Many research studies attribute accidents to motorists driving under the influence of alcohol, among the contributing factors. This assertion is based on the analysis statistics recorded during the Easter holidays and the festive season annually.

In an attempt to stem the tide against road fatalities, EXCO has directed the Provincial Government to work in partnership with the South African Breweries (SAB) to promote road

safety in Mpumalanga, through awareness campaigns about the harmful effects of alcohol.

EXCO noted that SAB will convene round tables discussions across the province to include amongst others, the harmful effects of alcohol. As such the Provincial Government will participate in the round table discussions, with a focus on road safety, health awareness, and compliance to licence conditions of liquor outlets.

APPOINTMENTS

EXCO approved the following appointments to strengthen the capacity of the Provincial Government:

- **Mr Elijah Nkosi** - Deputy Director-General: Curriculum (Education).
- **Ms Queen Maswanganyi** - Director: Land Reform Management (DARDLEA).
- **Mr Sphetho Mhlongo** - Director: Pollution and Waste Management (DARDLEA)
- **Mr Aubrey Sibuyi** - Director: Masibuyele Emasimini (DARLEA).
- **Ms Toneka Thanda-Sithole** - Director: Legal Services (DARDLEA).
- **Ms Sylvia Molefi** – Director: Labour Relations (DARDLEA)
- **Mr Bafana Mahlangu** – Director: Project and Engineering Services (DARDLEA)
- **Ms Mildred Shabangu** – Director: Ehlanzeni North (DARDLEA)

Ends.

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Office of the Premier

Contact Person: MEC Thulasizwe Thomo (EXCO Spokesperson)

Enquiries: Mr George Mthethwa (Mpumalanga Provincial Government Spokesperson)

Contact: 013 766 2242/ 083 302 2774.