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14

COLLECTIVE WISDOM KEY TO CHANGE NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS ABOUT LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Addressing members of the Senior Management Services (SMS) in Bhisho, the new MEC for the department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta), Mr Zolile Williams said he does not possess individual wisdom to change local government and traditional affairs but will need collective wisdom to do that.

“Individual wisdom is not going to help us, rather the wisdom with all of us in this room. Let us put our heads together in an innovative manner to change the negative perceptions about our municipalities”, said MEC Williams.

This he said last week during his official introduction to SMS members. The Head of Department (HoD) Mr Andile Fani made a presentation on the current status of the department.

MEC Williams said the department needed to be innovative on how it is going to assist municipalities and traditional institutions and not come up with complex strategies.



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"As a department we need to position ourselves better to play our role of supporting and giving proper advice in the execution of our mandate. We must be known as delivering at a high level such that there is a demand for our officials even at national level," said MEC Williams.

He congratulated the department for achieving clean audit in the financial year 2021/2022.

"Congratulations on getting a clean audit in a row. I know it is not easy to get a clean audit and specially to sustain it. The clean audit indicates that we have achieved most of our performance objectives because we do performance evaluation. However, we are all aware that our achievements are not necessary the achievements of all municipalities in the Eastern Cape," he said.

MEC Williams further alluded to the fact that CoGTA has a responsibility to resolve the complex problems facing municipalities and must have a clear understanding of how the municipalities function.

"We need to position ourselves better to implement our own performance objectives as an ally to our municipalities", said MEC. Municipalities must feel and see the impact of our support through proper advice and solutions to their problems. I am a pragmatist and would want to see this a department active in solving the problems of local government," added MEC Williams.

He said innovation must surround everything that public servants do in the democratic government including thinking outside the box and strategically using our District Support Centre Offices as centres of service delivery excellence.

The MEC added that CoGTA must begin to clarify its role so that it responds to the expectations of municipalities.

"All these grand suggestions will not happen in an internally divided institution. Keep the peace, be happy and be a highly performing institution so that we become an attractive department. We are the only hope to the people of this Province. Let's gear ourselves through monitoring and evaluation and a vibrant Communication Strategy to profile the department and profile our municipalities and traditional leadership institutions.

SMS members welcomed the MEC and pledged their support to achieve his goals.

"You are welcome MEC Williams at Cogta and I hope we will have more interactive sessions with you so that we do not lose your pulse," said Mr Mlokothe who is the Deputy Director General (DDG) for Local Government.

By Siphokazi Nonyukela