



The Gateway to Endless Opportunities

**OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON THE APPROVED 2023/2024
BUDGET, BY HIS WORSHIP, CLLR. JOSEPH
UAPINGENE, MAYOR OF WINDHOEK**

**7 November 2023
10H00
Council Chambers**

Your Worship, Cllr. Magdalena Lombardt, Deputy Mayor

Cllr. Shafiishuna Sam Nujoma, Chairperson of the Management Committee

All Local Authority Councillors, present

Mr. Moses Matyayi, Chief Executive Officer

Strategic Executives and Officials, present

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

I am pleased to share with the you, the now approved 2023/2024 Budget, the details of which will be presented shortly hereafter by the Strategic Executive of Finance and Customer Care, Ms. Jennifer Comalie.

Council deliberated on the budget at a workshop in May

2023, to subsequently table it at Council, for onward submission to the line minister for approval. Consensus on the key challenges was reached with a commitment to implement remedies, some of which include exiting the current PPP agreements and unlocking more land delivery opportunities.

Following the workshop, and in line with the Local Authority Act of 1992, as amended, Council conducted further consultations with the Khomas Regional Council, the Financial Sustainability, Performance Management and Policy Committee and the Management Committee.

The approved 2023/2024 Budget is now ready for presentation this morning. I would like to highlight that our budget has grown to N\$ 5 billion which is evidence of the growth of the city. That said and in lieu of the prevailing challenges we face, several interventions were also identified during the last quarter by way of mitigating some of the constraints faced by the City.

The 2023/2024 Budget focuses on the efficiency of service delivery with the Capital budget focusing on infrastructure maintenance and creating additional infrastructure in the areas of water and electricity, to cater to the demands of the growing city. The budget also makes significant provisions to ensure that our land delivery & Council housing objectives are met. On the operational side, we proposed to the minister, a Capital expenditure budget of N\$513 million of which N\$507 million was approved. approximately N\$ 460 million is allocated towards projects under infrastructure and housing.

We have tried to limit the financial impact on residents and kept the tariff increases in line with the previous year, despite the high inflation rate during the current year. In addition, we have maintained our biggest cost, which is salaries, at the same levels as the prior year, to ensure that the growth in revenue leads to a financially sustainable city.

For example, the Management Committee met with the Managing Director of our bankers, to discuss banking

facilities and concerns raised pertaining to the negative publicity surrounding the City's financial position and leadership instability. As Chairperson of Council, I would like to appeal to fellow Councillors to reflect on the way they treat sensitive information which may have far-reaching consequences that place the organisation's image and reputation at risk. The unfortunate events that transpired and played out over the last one and half financial year, are just an example of the kind of conduct that is detrimental to the organisation. In this regard and by way of refreshing all Councillors on issues of governance, a workshop facilitated by the Legal Division, is slated to take place during the early part of 2024, to address amongst others, the Code of Conduct and roles and responsibilities of Councillors.

Furthermore, I am concerned about the alarmingly slow rate of execution against our budget which was further exacerbated by the cash flow constraints, however I believe this financial year will be better! That said, the City is exploring various SMART City and SMART ICT solutions to

enhance our revenue collection efforts and improve our service delivery value proposition.

In addition, there is consideration for the Finance Department to look at the Debt Book which currently stands at N\$1.2 billion as at 31 October 2023, of which N\$963 million is in arrears. The exercise seeks to identify the long outstanding debts that are assessed as not collectable. Thereafter recommendations for the appropriate measures to clear the debt will be made, one of which is to consider incentives that encourage residents to pay their debts and thereby relieve the City and residents of the current debt.

Finally, we now have a substantive Chief Executive Officer which will significantly improve the leadership landscape of the City, and I have every confidence that all measures to ensure sound financial stewardship, accountability, and a performance-based culture will be implemented. The City will also develop a Turn-Around Strategy in terms of the City's brand image for good corporate governance and enhanced stakeholder business relations, moving forward.

In conclusion, I believe that this year's budget is a realistic representation of the current financial position within which we find ourselves. Now is the time to make significant inroads in the implementation of our strategic imperatives with a duty of care to our residents' needs and due diligence in the execution of our mandate with the limited resources at our disposal.

I take this opportunity to thank all Councillors as well as the Strategic Executives and officials, for your tireless inputs towards finalising the 2023/2024 Budget. I have every confidence that we will meet our objectives against the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. Before I end my address, allow me to leave you with these words from renowned financial expert, Dave Ramsey, to reflect upon: ***"A budget is telling your money where to go, instead of wondering where it went."***

Now that our budget is approved for the 2023/2024 financial year, let us ensure that all our efforts are aligned to the

2023/2024 budget and remain committed to sound financial stewardship with impactful results for our stakeholders.

With these few words, I thank you.