

“As An Accounting Officer... We Are Going To Do Things Differently” – HOD Sharpley Story

by Vusi Shabalala & Images by Gugu Mtshali



Consultants in attendance at the special meeting with the Department's management

On Thursday 11 April 2019, Dr Gaster Gilbert Sharpley, Head of Department for Public Works in KwaZulu-Natal, accompanied by members of the Department's Management Committee (MANCO) made a significant imprint of cultivating healthy but prudent working relations with the Consultants, Contractors and Landlords of the province at a special gathering in the Auditorium of the Department's Head Office, Pietermaritzburg.

The aim of the three-part session was twofold, first with Dr Sharpley's *'get-to-know-you'* or personal meeting and introduction to a throng of consultants, contractors and property owners (landlords) as well as a strategic direction the department will take in doing government business for the good of effective service delivery that will move South Africans forward. He is now eight months at the helm as Head of Department and thought it befitting to get to business, start things afresh. Especially with the new financial year beginning to open its fresh leaves of *'good governance'*, it is probably the right time to take stock.

The session was like reading a book now and tell a good story later. As a *'new kid on the block'*, Dr Sharpley seek to open creativity in a new workspace and afford job enlargement for all. This sets and paves a conducive service delivery pathway. One has to start by oneself and or ourselves and do at least one thing different – do things right and do right things. Doing things right involves efficiency whilst doing the right things responds to effectiveness.

It is a paradigm shift towards the Supply Chain Management (SCM) policy review, proper alignment and implementation. The department is heading towards doing away with the *'Variation Orders'* – commonly known as *'VOs'* using KZN Public Works' jargon. On the other part, consultants, contractors and proprietors alike will have to adjust to new changes. They have to review their costing models. This will also assist in shaping the infrastructure development and economy of KwaZulu-Natal.



Interactive Session between the service providers and the Regional Directors (fltr) are Messrs Mchunu, Majola and Hadebe with Ms Fihlela

According to Dr Sharpley, the Department is 'an implementing agent of choice' and shall remain as such. Good partnership will be an order of the day with its 'chemistry' strongly natured but a strong warning from Dr Sharpley was on the element of 'corruption'. He has been very articulate and clear that 'corruption shall not be tolerated at all. "As an Accounting Officer, we are going to do things differently," he emphasised with firmness and confidence.

Let us acknowledge those committed partners (consultants, contractors and proprietors) who made it possible to honour the invitation. They remain ever loyal to the course. It is also with assurance that a message shall be extended to those who could not make it. As we turn the next page, Public Works shall turn over a new leaf... change for the betterment of the people we serve. Yes, things will be done differently.



HOD for Public Works, Dr Gaster Gilbert Sharpley during one of his key delivery address