

Honourable Speaker, Aldermen, Councillors, Municipal Manager, Directors, Staff and members of the Media and the Public

It is indeed a great honour and privilege to be elected as Executive Mayor of George. I thank you for the trust placed in me to take on this role.

We are all aware of the complicated process that has been involved in organising this unique meeting in the midst of Covid-19.

We wish to express our gratitude to the Speaker, the Municipal Manager and the entire Administration who have researched, planned, re-planned and prepared venues and systems for a meeting over the past week and longer for this meeting. The IT Department is also commended for getting Councillors sufficiently tech-savvy to enter the Virtual Meeting age that is rapidly becoming a feature of our lives.

As Mayor, I have been tasked by yourselves to lead Council during the difficult and uncertain times precipitated by the Covid-19 pandemic. The world, our country, our Province and our City of George now face the 4-pronged attack: Health, Hunger, Economy, Unemployment.

In the coming weeks and months we are going to need to give both ongoing and special attention to all of these challenges and devise ways to counter them, to provide assistance, advice and facilitate solutions.

We will need all the Wisdom, Hope and Inspiration we can muster.

Within the next few days, we will need to table George Municipality's Draft Budget for 2020/21 along with the Draft Integrated Development Plan. In the period up to the end of June, we will then be required to re-examine the Budget and IDP to take corrective action for the impact of Covid-19 on Municipal Revenue, additional expenditure that will need to be incurred as well as cutbacks in Expenditure.

Very shortly we will also be commencing to hold engagements with the entire Business Sector to discuss and evaluate the support process going forward.

We need to join hands to together build George as the best small city in the country. We constantly need to be driving measures to improve the lives of all our citizens.

Thank you for granting me this honour and privilege to lead this Council.