

Good Morning And On Behalf Of The Mayor, May I Take This Opportunity Of Welcoming

- Senior Management and Political Leadership Present
- Our Esteemed Guests from Information Technology in the Private and Public sector
- The delegates representing the various Academic Institutions
- The Government Officials from our neighbouring municipalities and
- Municipal delegates of eThekweni Municipality

It is a privilege and honour to be hosting you at the eThekweni Municipality Technology and Innovation Learning Exchange. We are all well aware of the challenges that are facing service delivery and the impact that this is having on the lives of the majority of the people that are living in poverty in our country. While we face these challenges, technological megatrends are transforming the way people work, live and communicate with each other. These trends are increasing the digital divide between first world countries and a developing country such as South Africa. Technology plays a significant role in infrastructure development and economic growth in developing countries. As government officials and committed citizens in this country we must seize the opportunity to capitalise on these

technological trends to deliver more accessible and efficient services to the people that we serve.

South Africa's NDP 2030 provides the public and private sectors as well as society at large with an opportunity to jointly plan for a new South Africa. Technology is regarded as a critical enabler for South African municipalities to reach their objectives and ultimately deliver sustainable services to their communities. It is critical for information and knowledge sharing initiatives to be explored with all sectors that can positively influence the mandate of service delivery. It is against this backdrop that eThekweni is proud to be hosting the first "Technology and Innovation in Service Delivery Learning Exchange".

It is events of this nature that provide a platform for the private sector, public sector and academia to share ideas, exchange knowledge and learn from one another's experience. By engaging with one another we will be more comfortable to embrace the technological revolution and digital age with confidence as we can form new networks and partnerships that support each other.

A number of challenges still stand in the way of smart cities becoming a reality in South Africa. Along with underdeveloped infrastructure, an even more troubling obstacle is the skills deficit. This is a particularly vexing hindrance to the advancement of smart cities nationally, requiring well-trained, tech-savvy individuals who understand and can use IT systems. I am advised that the Smart City concept as well as bridging the skills gap will be deliberated at this event. This is an important discussion relating to the development of our city and I urge each one of you to actively engage and contribute your views and brainstorm ideas that could assist us in forging the way forward. Collaboration is key to facing challenges and as local government we rely on business and academia to assist us discover innovative ways that pave the way for a progressive society.

I am positive that you will have a rewarding workshop and our warm eThekweni hospitality will make this workshop an enjoyable one.

I wish you well on this learning journey.

Thank you

