PSEF
PUBLIC SECTOR ECONOMIST FORUM

Public Sector Economists Forum

First Steering Committee Meeting

Venue: Emoya Hotel and Spa, Bloemfontein

Date: 20th March 2015

Time: 08:30-13:30

MINUTES

Attendees:		**Apologies:**
Pontso Chomane (FS Treasury)	Teboho Mokoena (GP DED)	
Lungile Shange (KZN Treasury)	Sunet Benade (NC Treasury)	Itumeleng Moses
Jacob Twala (KZN Treasury)	Matodzi Rathumbu (GP DED)	Lennard Van Vuren
Kambale Kavese (ECSECC)	Kgalalelo Setou (NW Treasury)	Clive Coetzee
Vuyo Nkohla (ECSECC)	Kgatedi Kobe (GP Treasury)	Nezaam Joseph
Thandeka Mkhunzangiwe (FS Treasury)	Mbuyiselo Sani (FS DETEA)	MJ Boshielo
Banny Machelo (FS Treasury)	Luthando Sogayise (MP Treasury)	Mark Hempson
Seore Mosala (FS Treasury)	David Mullins (Conningarth)	Frederik Fourie
Philip Lesia (FS Treasury)	Martha Mullins (Conningarth)	
Justin Visagie (EC DEDEA)		
Chairperson:	**Deputy Chair:**	
Paul Court (CT T&I)	Moses Mlangeni (WC Treasury)	

No	Item	By Whom
1	**Apologies (see above)**	**Chair**
2	**Welcome**	**Chair**
	• The chairperson welcomed members to the first steering committee meeting of the Public Sector Economist Forum for 2015 • Mr Tsotetsi, Senior Executive Manager of Sustainable Resource Management in the Free State welcomed members to the province and wished the committee fruitful deliberations.	
3	**Feedback on 2014 Congress**	**All**
	• Members expressed satisfaction with the Congress hosted in Cape Town and the quality of the presentations • It was requested that the MEC for Finance's speech be made available to forum members – Mr Mlangeni to follow up • Some members are having problems accessing the presentations from the Congress which are on the website – Ms Shange to follow	

	up	
	Constitution of the Forum and clarification of its role	**Chair, All**
	• Committee members agreed that the Forum was to act as an association of economists, working to the benefit of its members for the advancement of economic development • The forum did not have the capacity to act as a think tank, or research body • Instead the forum would concentrate on information and best practice sharing, networking, highlighting training opportunities and identifying opportunities for collaboration • Members also indicated the need to include a lobbying element in the role of the forum – particularly as regard to accessing better data • The committee, resolved once more that it would be open to all public sector economists but that the Steering Committee would be comprised of economists from provincial departments of economic development and treasuries, and metro economists • The TOR would need to be updated, where necessary, to reflect these resolutions – the Chair to attend to this	
4	**Website Modifications/Improvements**	**All**

	• The committee felt that the development and subsequent use of the website was a step forward for the forum
	• There were however a few improvements that were suggested
	  ○ The Vision on the home page needs to be updated
	  ○ Member details should be removed from the contact list. Contacts should be PSEF admin (i.e chairperson & website administrator) and other useful links
	  ○ The security of the site needs to be fixed – at present it's open access
	  ○ Research papers should be categorised according to location – global, national, provincial, city
	  ○ Research papers should be divided between working papers and finalised, signed off documents
	  ○ The link to the 2014 Congress presentations needs to be fixed
	  ○ Steering Committee minutes should be posted online together with dates for the next meetings	

5	**Presentation of Econ 3×3 work on the informal economy**	**Chair**
	• Mr Paul Court indicated that Prof Fourie would have liked to attend the meeting but was unable to do so. He has, however, committed to presenting at one of the future meetings or at the Congress at the end of the year • Mr Paul Court presented the slides which Prof Fourie had sent concerning the Econ 3×3 project and the Informal Economy work-stream in particular	

6	**Feedback on Econ 3×3 presentation**	**All**
	• The committee agreed that the presentation shed interesting light on the informal economy and requested that a copy of the presentation be made available. However, the Chairperson indicated that because the presentation appeared to be a working draft, it would be better for the members to directly request the presentation from Prof Fourie. Prof Fourie's email address is: fouriefc@ufs.ac.za • Mr Court noted that the City of Cape Town was currently finalising a large scale informal economy study for Cape Town and that the findings of this study can be shared with the Forum when the study is finalised • Mr Rathumbu, from Gauteng DEDAT, also indicated that Gauteng had recently approved a strategy for township economies • The committee stressed the need to extend partnerships like this one with Econ 3×3, and highlighted the importance of sub-national economists being included/consulted in these programmes	
7	**Presentation on Provincial SAMs by Conningarth**	**D Mullins**
	• Dr Mullins provided a history of the development of provincial SAMs • He indicated that the DBSA would not be funding an update of these SAMs, so Conningarth were approaching each of the provinces individually • Dr Mullins gave a quick run through of Conningarth's proposal and an overview of the model's functionality	
8	**Feedback on Conningarth Presentation**	**All**
	• A question was asked concerning how provinces' could source funding for the SAM update. Dr Mullins suggested that the forum approach the minister of COGTA or National Treasury to fund the project for all provinces, or that donor funding from GIZ or the like is sought • The committee posed the question of whether the model incorporates a general equilibrium perspective. Dr Mullins indicated that it was different to CGE models, and was more a partial equilibrium model • It was inquired whether a city-level model could be built. Dr Mullins indicated that this was entirely possible but that a provincial model would need to be developed as part of the process. Dr Mullins indicated that the combined development of a related provincial and city model would cost about R600k. • Mr Kobe indicated that Gauteng would be undertaking SAM training and that anyone interested should contact them • A number of technical questions were posed to Dr Mullins, some of	

	which were not able to be captured in these minutes	
9	**Finalisation of thematic areas for 2015**	**All**

	• The previous year's thematic areas were discussed and assessed for relevance
	• It was decided to remove the Millennium Development Goals as it was noted that these were past their expiry date
	• The rest of the previous thematic areas were retained, together with three new ones, see list below:
	  ○ The Informal Economy
	  ○ Unemployment, Inequality and Poverty
	  ○ Infrastructure development
	  ○ Incentivising investment
	  ○ Economic Impact Assessment (including SAMs; CGE)
	  ○ Rural development
	  ○ Accessing good quality sub-national economic data	

10	**Next Meeting**	**All**
	• Ms Benade volunteered for Northern Cape Treasury to host the next steering committee meeting in Kimberly • The date for the next meeting would be tentatively scheduled for the 27th June.	
11	**Meeting Closure**	**Chair**
	The Chair thanked all the members for their attendance and contributions. He also thanked Free State government, particularly Mr Sani and Mr Moses (in his absence) for hosting the forum and commended them on the selection of a great venue **The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 for lunch.**	