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\*For Immediate release\*

**\*KZN FINANCE MEC WELCOMES YET ANOTHER CLEAN AUDIT FOR PROVINCIAL TREASURY, PLEDGES TO ASSIST MORE PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS TO GAIN CLEAN AUDITS\***

MEC Nomusa Dube-Ncube has welcomed the Auditor-General's Provincial Treasury's Audit Report for 2021/21 which revealed that the Department has received yet another clean audit with no findings for the year ended 31 March 2022. This is the Department's 14th consecutive clean audit.

MEC Dube-Ncube thanked the Office of the Auditor-General for its continued support to make the Department lead by example. She stressed that audit workshops should be strengthened and supported for them to yield fruitful outcomes. She also thanked the Provincial Treasury team of managers led by Head of Department, Carol Coetzee.

"The Financial year 2021/22 has been the most challenging one. That is why we welcome this positive news and we wish to thank you for all the support and guidance," she told the officials from the Office of the Auditor-General following the presentation of the 2022 Public Finance Management Act Outcomes.

"Still we cannot rest on our laurels, we need to work hard to ensure that things are done in a proper manner across all government departments to realise a province free of negative audit findings. As the ones who are the custodians of the public purse we can't continue to have other departments having negative findings. We need to support them using the skills at our disposal,".

Dube-Ncube conceded that KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government institutions have been improving, albeit slowly, and she expressed further commitment to working towards showing an overall picture of a Provincial Administration that is not only determined to service delivery commitments, but also that is dedicated to infusing various efficiencies in financial governance.

"We understand the significance of having all departments, municipalities and state entities to have positive audit outcomes. We often say that it is not enough for Provincial Treasury to maintain clean audit outcomes as we have been over 13 years consecutively, but we need this efficiency to rub off other departments, municipalities and state entities alike so that the overall picture will be that of a government that cares about financial protocols as it should be," she said.

Dube-Ncube added that as the Provincial Government, she and her colleagues in the Executive have undertaken to take drastic steps to ensure that audit outcomes improve, year-after-year.

"KZN Treasury is not only ready to provide technical assistance to departments, municipalities and state entities, but we also want to continue to be pro-active and attend to possible adverse financial outcomes before they actually become real and negative.

The Provincial Deliverable Target is to achieve 90% unqualified audit outcomes in the Provincial Departments and public entities by 2024. To achieve this target, Provincial Treasury has resolved to implementing a multi-faceted Rapid Response Mechanism that includes providing on-going specialist financial management and audit support to provincial agencies to enhance financial management skills and capabilities and the application of proper and sound financial reporting processes with a focus on enhanced operational outcomes and improved service delivery.

“Part of this mechanism is also to have accounting officers analyse audit findings and address them with a particular focus on financial reporting and improvement of financial internal controls,” she said.

The Office of the Auditor-General heaped praise on the Department’s sterling work and commitment to maintaining clean audit outcomes.

“We congratulate you on this clean audit as Provincial Treasury,” the AG’s office remarked.

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