



## How easy is it to do business with our local municipality?

On several occasions business has commented that the local municipality needs to support local businesses. This asks the question: "How easy is it to do business with the municipality?" With this in mind the Middelburg Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI) jumped at the chance to be part of finding the solution for this question.

A relationship was established in 2009 between the municipalities of Leeds City Council in the United Kingdom, EThekweni Municipality in Kwa-Zulu Natal, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality and MCCI. Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) in partnership with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) implemented a Good Practice Scheme project (GPS) which involved the above mentioned municipalities. The main purpose of this exercise was to identify and implement the best practices between the three municipalities.

Since then the procurement departments of the three municipalities exchange operation practices and vigorously discuss their problems and solutions. These discussions give the participants the opportunity to find possible solutions to their problems, benefits and potential savings for the municipalities.

A tangible result of these activities and meetings is a tender guideline document by the three participating municipalities that gives business clear information and guidelines on how to tender for municipal contracts.

Copies of these tender guideline/documents are available at the Information Office for the public. It is also available electronically. Businesses interested in this document can contact Valerie Pienaar at 013 243 2253. The MCCI congratulates the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality for their open-minded approach to ensure business knows how to prepare their documents.

## First ever SMME Fair held

The first ever Small, Medium and Micro business fair was held on ..... at the Middelburg Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI). This fair is another pilot programme of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) programme that the Steve Tshwete (STLM), EThekweni and Leeds municipalities are cooperating on.

The EThekweni business fair is growing each year and is an example of the role local government plays in the growth of the business community within the municipality they operate in. This is the model that is being developed by MCCI and STLM with the assistance of the EThekweni Municipality.

The second Procurement Managers meeting was held at the same time as the SMME fair. This project gave the procurement managers the opportunity to interact with potential local SMME businesses.

It also exposed the SMME's to procurement managers they have never before been exposed to. Although the first fair was small it set a good example of what can be achieved.

We are planning to have this exhibition annually.

## Chambers' discussed Provincial Economic Growth Plan

The South African Chambers of Commerce & Industry (SACCI) affiliated chambers in Mpumalanga attended a meeting in Middelburg on Tuesday, 20 September 2011 to discuss the Mpumalanga Economic Development Growth Plan.

The general consensus from the chambers are that it is a well drafted plan and that the input of business will be key to the success of the plan and the economic development of our province. The chambers requested that their members support this initiative so that we can have a say in what is planned for our province economically and not be committed to unreachable targets.

Sector workshops will be held within the next month to formalise the sector's input into the Growth Plan. A copy of the Growth Plan is available at the secretariat and will also be attached to the invitations of the sector meetings. We urge all interested parties to please support this initiative and attend the meetings that will be arranged. Interested persons can contact Natasja Hattingh at 013 243 2253 or secretary@middelburginfo.com.

## SMME's and SARS e-Filing

Towards the end of 2010 SARS began issuing notices making it mandatory for large taxpayers to use e-filing for PAYE and VAT submissions.

The Minister of Finance was recently asked by a Member of Parliament about the likely impact of mandatory e-filing on small businesses, particularly those which lack access to the internet.

### Benefit of e-filing

In his written reply, the Finance Minister answered that SARS has for a number of years been encouraging the use of electronic filing for PAYE and VAT submissions. Electronic filing contributes towards cost reduction and increased efficiency for SARS. Taxpayers benefit in the form of greater convenience, security, speed and cost saving. At present, 75% of all PAYE submissions and 93% of VAT submissions are submitted electronically.

### Impact on SMMEs

SARS is acutely aware of the fact that some small businesses may not have access to the internet or email. For this reason, the threshold for compulsory electronic submission was set at significantly high levels: R10 million in PAYE payments per annum and R30 million in turnover for VAT.

Registered vendors and VAT vendors whose payments and/or turnover are below these thresholds may still submit their PAYE and VAT returns manually in print, via the post office or at a SARS branch.

However SARS requires vendors and employers to request that they be issued with printed forms. To reduce costs and the environmental impact associated with the automatic issue of print returns.

Requests for printed returns can be made via the SARS Contact Centre at 0800 00 7277 or at a SARS branch.

## Picture Gallery

# Chamber Personnel



**Anna-Marth Ott**  
CEO



**Valerie Pienaar**  
Business  
Linkage Officer



**Carina de Jager**  
Marketing  
Officer



**Hameem Tayob**  
Administrative  
Officer



**Natasja Hattingh**  
Secretary



**Mildred Daniels**  
Reservations  
Officer

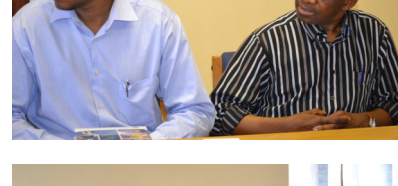
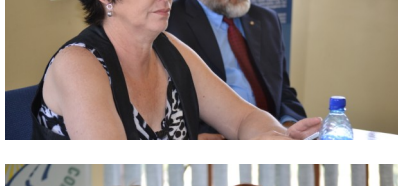


**Elsabe Dawson**  
Administrative  
Officer GTR



**Busi Khumalo**  
Information  
Officer

# Procurement Forum



## Casual Day



## WHAT THE CHAMBER DID

- Inauguration Ceremony of the Executive Mayor Cllr M.A. Masina attended by Anna-Marth Ott and various business persons.
- The Middelburg Chamber President, Ebrahim Patel and CEO, Anna-Marth Ott attended a meeting with Witbank Chamber's President, Sam Nape.
- CPF Meeting – Alta Baartman and various other members attended.
- Valerie Pienaar hosted a very successful Procurement Forum – Various members attended.
- Middelburg West Mining Forum – Anna-Marth Ott Chaired the meeting and various other members attended.
- Valerie Pienaar attended the Business Expo at the Coca-Cola Dome.
- Valerie Pienaar attended a meeting with Columbus and National Youth Development Agency (NYDA).
- Mpumalanga Chamber meeting together with SACCI. Building Bridges between Government and Business – Various Mpumalanga Chambers attended.
- Valerie Pienaar and Anna-Marth Ott attended the Leeds Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) project closing at Ethukweni Local Municipality in Durban
- Ken Clark, possible investor had a meeting with Albert Myburgh and Ebrahim Patel.
- Middelburg Chamber hosted a very successful Business Buzz sponsored by Middelburg Rotary Club.
- Middelburg Chamber hosted a very successful training session with Dr Kobus Neethling – Various members attended.
- Middelburg Chamber personnel attended the Action Coach Alignment Training, facilitated by Alida Niehouse.

**THE END**

**SEPTEMBER 2011**

## Newsletter Spotlight

- How easy is it?
- First ever SMME Fair.
- Provincial Economic Growth Plan.
- SMME's & SARS e-Filing.
- Picture Gallery
- What the Chamber did during the month of September 2011.

## OCTOBER BUZZ:



**SUZUKI**

**Date: 20 October 2011**

**Time: 17:30 for 18:00**

**Venue: Busmid Auditorium**

**RSVP Natasja on**

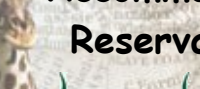
**013 243 2253**

**secretary@middelburginfo.com**



## Information Centre

**Accommodation Reservations**



**South African NATIONAL PARKS**

**All the SAN Parks**

**And other**

**Accommodation in SA**

**013 243 2253**

**078 801 9719**

## Happy Birthday!!

**Congratulations to our Executive Committee members who celebrated their birthdays in September**

**Geoffrey Bernitz (Motomid)**

**19 September**

**Charles Deiner (Wolma Farms)**

**21 September**