

# Kitui County Assembly

## THE HANSARD

First County Assembly – First Session

Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013

*The County Assembly met at 9:45am*

*[The Deputy Speaker (Hon. George Ndotto) in the chair]*

### PRAYERS

*(Communication from the Chair)*

**The Speaker:** First I want to apologise for the delay that we have. The budget has been delayed due to some unavoidable circumstances that forced the Budget and Appropriations Committee to sit long hours to prepare the report to be tabled in this house, but we are back on track.

Next order.

**County Assembly Clerk** [Mr Mutambuki]: Messages

**The Speaker:** Any messages?

Next order.

**County Assembly Clerk:** Petitions.

**The Speaker:** Any petitions?

Next order.

**County Assembly Clerk:** Papers.

**The Speaker:** Next order.

**County Assembly Clerk:** Notices of Motions

**The Speaker:** Next Order.

**County Assembly Clerk:** Statements.

**The Speaker:** Next Order.

**County Assembly Clerk:** Motions and Bills, Budget 2013/2014

The Speaker: Honourable Muthui...

**Hon. Muthui:** Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Committee on Budget and Appropriation is mandated to receive the budget from both the executive and the assembly.

This morning, I would like... my committee has received the report, we have prepared a small report and we would like to table it in the

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assembly. And I would like to ask Honourable Ngwele to second the motion so that I can proceed.

**The Speaker:** No! Mr Muthui, you finish all what you have to say, then after you finish, Mr Ngwele will second you.

**Hon. Muthui:** Thank you so much My Speaker for the correction.

Mr Speaker, I am happy this morning to present to the house, the budget for the Kitui County government for the year 2013/2014.

I am going to read the budget, but before I do that, I'm going to walk the house through some eh... some side of the report. I'll give a short background before I read the budget.

The budget of the Kitui County government for the financial year 2013/2014 was submitted to the County Assembly on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013, and committed to the Budget and Appropriations Committee as provided for under Standing Order number 207.

The Budget and appropriations committee has in the last two months held meetings with various entities that were involved in the preparation of the budget, including the County Assembly Service Board, the County Treasury, the Sectorial Committees of the County Assembly to review and analyse the budget as per Standing Order number 207 section 5.

The Budget and Appropriations Committee hereby presents to the Kitui County Assembly, the committee's report on budget estimates for the year 2013/2014.

The Budget and Appropriations Committee of this assembly is constituted by the following members:

- |                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Hon. Anthony K. Muthui | - Chairperson        |
| 2. Hon. Felix Kinuva      | - Deputy Chairperson |
| 3. Hon. Nzuki Ngwele      | - Member             |
| 4. Hon. Anastasia Mutunga | - Member             |
| 5. Hon. Muove Kinyala     | - Member             |
| 6. Hon. Joyce Mutemi      | - Member             |
| 7. Hon. James Munuve      | - Member             |
| 8. Hon. George Kililiku   | - Member             |
| 9. Hon. Mulongo           | - Member             |

It is therefore my pleasant duty and privilege, on behalf of the Budget and Appropriation Committee to table this report and recommend it to the house for adoption.

I'll walk you through the figures so that as we proceed; as I table it, you know what is contained in that document.

Kitui County Budget for the year 2013/2014.

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Mr Speaker, as you are aware that the budget is a statement; a financial statement showing... which shows the income to be generated, and the expenditure which is expected to be expended during the year.

I'm going to start with the income which the income which the Kitui County Government is expected to receive during the financial year 2013/2014.

It is expected that the Kitui County Government will receive Ksh 5,315,000,000 from the Commission on revenue Allocation.

It is also expected that we will receive Ksh 519million from the KPMprojects.

Estimated appropriation in aid is expected to be 448million.

Then we expect to receive some money from LATF (Local Authorities Transfer Fund) amounting to 120million.

Total income expected Mr Speaker for the year 2013/2014 will be Ksh 6,402, 000,000.

We go to the expected expenditure.

As you know, the government of Kitui is divided into departments; we have the executive, and we have the County Assembly. These two departments are separate, and each department has presented its budget estimates as follows, I'm going to start with the executive, then I go to the assembly:

From the side of the executive, we have 10 departments, plus the office of the governor. I will start with the first department:

We have the department of Agriculture, Water and irrigation.

My report is divided into four columns showing the personal emoluments first column, will show O&M and I will show development, then I will give you the total for both figures.

So for the department of Agriculture Water and Irrigation, the Personnel Emoluments is Ksh 249, 402, 952. On O&M its Ksh 93,349,960. Development is ksh 525,473,200.

Total expected expenditure on that Vote Head is Ksh 868,226,114.

On Basic Education and Skills Development, on Personnel Emoluments, we have Ksh 226,044,000. And on Operations and Maintenance (O&M), we have Ksh 25,390,760. On development, we have Ksh 6,362,000, totalling to Ksh 311,796,760.

Department of Lands, Infrastructure and Urban Development; Personal Emoluments, we have Ksh 87,599,905. On Operations and Maintenance, we have Ksh 309,443,060. On development, we have Ksh 938,417,451. That totals to Ksh1,335,460,406.

Department of Health and Sanitation. Personnel Emoluments, we have Ksh 699,506,709. On Operations and Maintenance, we have Ksh

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152,360,000. On development, we have Ksh 105,000,000. Total Ksh 906,866,709.

Department of Trade, Industry, ICT and Cooperatives; Personal Emoluments we have Ksh 17,539,589. On O&M; Ksh 88,407,445. Development is Ksh 141,261,076. Total: Ksh 247,208,010.

On Culture, Youth, Sports and Social Services, we have Ksh 51,466,580 (Personnel Emoluments) on O&M, we have Ksh 70,625,598. Development, Ksh 37,700,000. Total: Ksh 159,792,178.

Department of Environment, Energy and Mineral Resources, we have Ksh 10,000,000 on Personal Emoluments... Personal Emoluments, we have Ksh 10,044,768. O&M, we have Ksh 29,523,000. Development, we have Ksh 155million. Total: Ksh 194,567,768.

Department of Natural Resources and Tourism. We have nothing on Personal Emoluments because we are told that at the moment, there are no officers, but in O&M, we have Ksh 52,680,000. Total: the same figure.

Department of County Treasury. We have Ksh 16,474,904 (Personnel Emoluments). O&M we have Ksh 187,690,000. Total: Ksh 204,164,904.

**The Speaker:** Mr Muthui avoid abbreviations; pronounce everything in full.

**Hon. Muthui:** Okay, thank you Mr Speaker.

Number 10 is Planning Coordination Affairs. We have total, both Personnel, O&M, development, we have eh...

**The Speaker:** You start with Personal Emoluments.

**Hon. Muthui:** Okay, Personal Emoluments... Planning... we're on Treasury, County Treasury...

**The Speaker:** No, you are on Planning and Coordination Affairs...

**Hon. Muthui:** Okay we had captured that; we are on Planning and coordination Affairs.

Personal Emoluments: Ksh 230,198,690. O&M...

**The Speaker:** Operations & Maintenance!

**Hon. Muthui:** Operation and Maintenance... okay Operations and Maintenance we have Ksh 18, 945,582. Development, we have Ksh 120million. Totalling to Ksh 369,144,272.

Department of Office of the Governor; personal Emoluments Ksh 361,522,000. Operations and Maintenance, we have 589,000.... Sorry!

Ksh 589,232,032. Development, we have 270,000,000. Totalling to Ksh 1,220,756,032.

The total from the executive side, on Personal Emoluments totals to Ksh 1,949,802,099. Total on Operations and Maintenance comes to Ksh 1,617,647,437. On development, total is Ksh 2,353,213,727.

Total budget from the executive side is 9billion... sorry!

**The Speaker:** No...

**Hon. Muthui:** Sorry. Ksh 5,920,663,263.

That is that from the executive side.

On County Assembly, which is a separate entity:

Personal Emoluments, we have Ksh 237,818,448. Operation and Maintenance, we have 380 thousand... No, Sorry! Ksh 380,656,000. Development: Ksh 100million. Totalling to Ksh 718,474,448.

Grand total for both the executive and the assembly: Personal Emoluments: Ksh 2,187,620,547. Operation and Maintenance: Ksh 1,998,303,437. Development: Ksh 2,453,213,727.

Total expected expenditure: Ksh 6,639,137,711.

Deficit/Surplus; In this case it is deficit: Total expected income is Ksh 6,402,000,000 against Ksh 6,639,137,711. That reflects a total deficit of Ksh 237,137,711.

That is the financial statement, Mr Speaker, I wish to proceed.

I want to talk about this deficit budget.

The budget as presented presents a deficit of Ksh 237,137,711, however, the reality of the moment is that we cannot present a deficit budget because of a number of reasons.

These include: 1. According to the constitution of Kenya, chapter 12 article 212, a county government may borrow only if; on two conditions: if the national government guarantees the loan, and (b), with the approval of the County Government Assembly. Before any such guarantee can be granted, the National Government as well as this assembly must be satisfied on the ability of this County Government to repay the loan as well as the availability of securities for the loan.

Additionally, as a committee of this assembly, we are committed to encourage fiscal responsibility in our planning and operations so that the (county) government spends only what it can afford. So that we do not tie the people of Kitui in irredeemable debt, it is important that this responsibility starts now, with the first budget.

Mr Speaker, my committee has proposed the following cost cutting measures in order to reduce the deficit:

Therefore in order to achieve a balanced budget for the year 2013/2014, the committee requests the assembly to approve the following cost cutting measures:

Mr Speaker, measure number one is reducing expenditure in the following areas:

1. County assembly budget (this place now), proposes an expenditure of Ksh 100million for extension of the chambers and the construction of an additional office block. This amount can surely not be absorbed within one financial year due to the

lengthy procurement procedures, designing and approval process for structure and development.

We therefore propose to reduce this budget by 50 per cent, to Ksh 50million for the current financial year, and the difference to be financed in the subsequent financial year.

This amount should be enough to extend the current chambers and get the designs and work of the new offices started.

2. Measure number two: the 11 departments of the executive have a combined total budget of Ksh 88million for the current financial year on foreign travel. Foreign travel is important for our leaders for exposure and of our leaders and staff, building international relations for the country and for tapping into resources for our county. However, under the current financial constraints that face the county, plus the development needs of our people, foreign travel is certainly not a priority.

Therefore my committee proposes to reduce this amount by 50 per cent. But, there's an exception there. We propose to reduce by 50 per cent the budget for foreign travel by all departments, except for the Office of the Governor. This will save the county an amount of Ksh 36,700,000.

3. Measure number three: The office of the governor has proposed to spend Ksh 50 million for purchase of vehicles. In addition to this, other departments have made various allocations for motor vehicle purchases for Ksh 46million. The proposed total expenditure for motor vehicles for the year 2013/2014, is therefore Ksh 96million – For motor vehicles.

The governor's office requires Ksh 50million for purchase of vehicles for chief officers who need to be recruited to take charge of various departments which we propose to retain.

However, we propose to reduce the expenditure on motor vehicles for all other departments from Ksh 46million to 21million, thereby saving 25million. We propose that the balance of Ksh 21million to be allocated for the acquisition of vehicles, only for those departments without any or with the most critical needs.

Additionally, the defunct Local Authorities have many serviceable vehicles which can be redistributed to the departments with the most critical needs.

Any vehicles and plant machinery that are not serviceable should be liquidated to raise revenue for the county.

4. Measure number four: The Department of Agriculture, Water and Irrigation proposes to spend Ksh 64million on tractors to be located in each sub-county.

During the public hearing of the budget, there were overwhelming public sentiments that this arrangement is not practicable and is not helpful. The Budget and Appropriations Committee found the arrangement for two tractors being made available for an average of four wards, each with thousands of farming households not well conceptualised.

We therefore propose to reduce this budget by Ksh 60million, and allocate the remaining Ksh 4million for the development of an Agricultural Mechanisation Policy for the county as well as other policies for development of agri-business to be adopted and implemented in the next financial year.

5. Mr Speaker, measure number five. My committee proposes that the Department of Agriculture, Water and Irrigation has proposed to spend Ksh 77,750,000 for procurement of water tanks and green houses.

While water storage tanks are critical for rain water harvesting especially for public institutions such as public primary schools and dispensaries, greenhouse technology has been problematic in water-stressed communities as a fact.

We therefore propose to reduce this allocation by Ksh 27,750 and recommend the allocation of the balance of Ksh 50million for the supply of water tanks and putting up of roof gutters in primary schools in the coming financial year.

The county government should aim at attaining 100 per cent coverage of all.

6. Mr Speaker, measure number six: The planning and Coordination Affairs Department. That department proposes to spend Ksh 80million on construction of offices and residential buildings for county civil servants.

Whereas there is need for decent housing for staff working within the county, it may not be possible to absorb the entire budget of Ksh 80million within this financial year, especially given the lengthy procedures for land identification, acquisition and building design and approval.

We therefore propose to reduce this allocation to Ksh 60million in the 2013/2014 financial year.

7. Mr Speaker measure number seven. The eleven departments have a combined total budget of Ksh 118,395,948 designated for domestic travel.

We propose to reduce this by 30 per cent for all departments, save for the office of the Governor. This saves the county Ksh 31million.

8. Finally Mr Speaker, the eighth measure is that my committee is proposing is that the Department of Youth Development has allocated Ksh 17,500,000 for purchase of tools for Youth polytechnics.

Considering the huge problem of youth unemployment and lack of employable skills, the committee proposes to enhance this amount by Ksh 13million to make a total of Ksh 30.5million for the support of Youth Polytechnics.

The committee proposes that it is more workable to allocate and distribute these funds to the Youth Polytechnics on a per capita basis, based on a uniform amount per each student enrolled as has been the practice in the past.

Mr Speaker, that marks the end of my report. And Mr Speaker, I have read to you the measures that my committee has proposed. We feel that if the house is in agreement... if the house is going to approve these amendments; the ones I'm going to move now, the deficit will be cushioned and therefore, we'll present a balanced budget.

Mr Speaker I would like to move a motion for adoption in this house as follows:

The County Assembly Budget for the financial year 2013/2014.

The County Assembly Budget for the year 2013/2013 as presented by the County Assembly Service Board with a total expenditure of Ksh 813,940,398 to the County Assembly and subsequently committed to the Budget and Appropriations Committee, after scrutinising it, the committee found that the budget be reduced to Ksh 668, 474, 448 after revising the following items:

1. Item number one: Telephone, telex, website and router.  
Amount quoted by the County Assembly was Ksh 9,500,000. Amount quited for reduction is Ksh 456,000. Amount recommended after those reductions will be Ksh 9,044,000.
2. Item number 2210203; courier and postal services.  
Amount voted Ksh 1,376,000. Reduction: we are proposing a reduction of Ksh 876,000 because we anticipate a lot of correspondence will be done through e-mail because we are connecting all over, therefore we are recommending a saving of Ksh 500,000.
3. On item number 2210400: Foreign travels here in the assembly; the amount voted was Ksh 69million.

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- Amount proposed for reduction: Ksh 33,500,000.  
Amount recommended: Ksh 35,500,000.
4. Item number 2210502 is the publishing and printing services.  
Ksh 11million. Amount recommended for reduction is Ksh 3million. Amount to be retained: Ksh 8million.
  5. Item number 2210504: Advertising Awareness.  
Amount voted was Ksh 5,500,000.  
Amount recommended for reduction is Ksh 2million.  
Amount retained: Ksh 3,500,000.
  6. Item number 2210700: Training expenses.  
Amount voted Ksh 27million.  
Reduction or addition: We are reducing by Ksh 2million to retain Ksh 25million.
  7. Item number 2210802: Boards, Committees, Conferences, Gifts and Seminars.  
Amount voted is Ksh 117, 672,000. Amount recommended for reduction: Ksh 3,270,000. Amount recommended for retention: Ksh 114,402,000.
  8. Burial expenses.  
Mr Speaker death is inevitable, and therefore though the assembly had proposed a figure of Ksh 500,000, the committee proposes an addition of Ksh 100,000 to make a total of Ksh 600,000.  
The assumption is that during the year, as you know death is inevitable we may lose two members who will be compensated at the rate of Ksh 500,000.

*(Laughter and shouts of rebuke)*

- Hon. Muthui:** We also anticipate that we may also lose a member of staff... we may lose two, during the year. And if that happens, we propose to pay them Ksh 100,000 for burial expenses.  
But may God forbid.
9. Item number 2210901 is group medical insurance.  
Amount voted was Ksh 29,115,450.  
Amount recommended for reduction is Ksh 28,315,450.  
Amount recommended for retention is Ksh 800,000.
  10. Item number 2210902: Buildings' Insurance. That's for insurance; insurance for buildings.  
Amount voted was Ksh 2,250,000.

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- Amount voted... I mean, amount reduction is Ksh 2million, and this is based on the actual. So we are proposing to retain Ksh 250,000.
11. Account number 2210903: Plant, Equipment and Machinery Insurance.  
Amount voted was Ksh 2,250,000.  
Amount proposed for reduction: Ksh 2million.  
Amount proposed for retention: Ksh 250,000.
  12. Item number 2210904: Motor Vehicle Insurance.  
Amount voted is Ksh 2,400,000.  
Amount proposed for reduction: Ksh 210,000  
Amount Proposed for retention: Ksh 2,110,000.
  13. Account number 2210910: Medical insurance for members.  
Amount voted: Ksh 10,888,500.  
Amount proposed for reduction: Ksh 7,838,500.  
Amount proposed for retention: Ksh 3,050,000.
  14. Account number 2211101: General office Supplies.  
Amount voted: Ksh 2,500,000.  
Amount proposed for reduction is Ksh 1million.  
Amount proposed for retention: Ksh 1,500,000.
  15. 2211103: Sanitary and Cleaning Materials, Supplies & Services.  
Amount voted: Ksh 3,800,000.  
Amount proposed for reduction is Ksh 1,300,000.  
Amount retained: Ksh 2,500,000.
  16. Account number 2211105: Supplies and Accessories of Computers.  
Ksh 4,600,000 was proposed.  
Ksh 1,800,000 was proposed for reduction.  
Ksh 2,800,000 was proposed for retention.
  17. Account number 2220200: Maintenance of Other Office Equipment.  
Amount voted: 2,500,000.  
Amount proposed for reduction: Ksh 1million.  
Amount proposed for retention is Ksh 1,500,000.
  18. Account number 3110202: Construction of Non-Residential Buildings.  
Amount voted: Ksh 100million.  
Amount proposed for reduction: Ksh 50million.  
Amount proposed for retention: Ksh 50million.
  19. Account number 3130109: Maintenance of Other Office Equipment, Restaurant Equipment.  
Amount voted: Ksh 26,200,000.

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Amount proposed for reduction: Ksh 5million.  
Amount proposed for retention: Ksh 21,200,000.

That will give us... when all those adjustments are done in our budget, we'll have a total saving of Ksh 145,465,950; that is on the side of the assembly.

We go to the side of the executive.

The Kitui County Government executive budget for the financial year 2013/2014 was presented by the Principal Officer – Finance, with a total proposed expenditure of Ksh 9billion... sorry! Ksh 5,920,663,263.

That amount was presented to the County Assembly and subsequently committed to the Budget and Appropriations Committee. After scrutinising it, the committee proposed that the budget be reduced to Ksh 5,733,463,263 after revising the following items:

In fact these are the items I read in my report, but I now want to analyse to you in a decent format.

1. Item number 2210300: Domestic Travels for all departments.  
As I read, amount voted: Ksh 118,395,948.  
Reduction... or amount proposed for reduction: Ksh 31million.  
Amount recommended for retention: Ksh 87,395,948.
2. Item number 2210400: Foreign Travel for all departments, (save for Office of the Governor).  
Amount voted: Ksh 88million.  
Amount proposed for reduction: Ksh 36,700,000.  
Amount recommended for retention: Ksh 51,300,000.
3. Item number 3110109: purchase of Tools and equipment under Youth Department.  
Amount voted: 17,500,000.  
Amount recommended for reduction... no this is not a reduction.  
Amount recommended for addition: Ksh 13million. Totalling to...  
Amount recommended for retention: Ksh 30,500,000.
4. Item number 3110202: Construction of Non-Residential Buildings, under coordination department; the one we talked about.  
Amount voted: Ksh 80million.  
Amount recommended for reduction: Ksh 20million.  
Amount recommended for retention: Ksh 60million.
5. Item number 3110504: Purchase of Water Tanks and Green Houses under the Water Department.  
Amount voted: Ksh 77,500,000.  
Amount recommended for reduction: 27,500,000.

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- Amount recommended for retention: Ksh 50million.
6. Item number 3110700: Purchase of motor vehicles.  
Amount voted: Ksh 96million.  
Amount recommended for reduction(save for the governor's vehicles): Ksh 25million.  
Amount recommended for retention under this vote is Ksh 71million.
7. Finally Mr Speaker is item number 3110706: Purchase of Tractors under the Agriculture Department.  
Amount voted: Ksh 64million.  
Amount recommended for reduction: Ksh 60million.  
Amount recommended for retention: Ksh 4million.

And with those amendments Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**The Speaker:** Very well.

Anybody to second this motion?

Honourable Ngwele.

**Hon. Ngwele:** Mr Speaker Sir, I Nzungi Ngwele, representing the people of Ngomeni in this house, do wish to go on record that I second this motion.

Mr Speaker Sir...

**The Speaker:** Sit down Mr...

**Hon. Ngwele:** Mr Speaker Sir, in seconding the motion, I want to take this house a little bit back into history, specifically 18<sup>th</sup> of June 1940. For those of us who were born, Sir Winston Churchill while addressing the House of Commons; the British House of Commons made a famous statement, that "this is my finest hour".

Mr Speaker Sir, this is my finest hour, and I believe it is the finest hour for the Honourable Members seated in this humble house without carpets under our feet, as I have seen in some offices in this County and without a beautiful ceiling above our heads. But we are seated here Mr Speaker to approve, a budget of nearly Six Billion shillings, to go out and serve our people. Mr Speaker this is our finest hour.

We are approving money to go and purchase ambulances, to help women and girls, who are today perhaps, delivering unassisted in the villages of this county.

We are approving money to pay nursery school teachers and build nursery schools for boys and girls who are at this moment seated under trees in this very cold weather.

We are approving money to buy road graders, and to contract construction of roads in our villages so that the young men who are riding

the '*bodabodas*' (Motorcycle taxis) there so that they do not end up with broken backs.

We are approving money Mr Speaker Sir, to buy water tanks for our primary schools, so that the kids in those primary schools can wash their hands, can wash their faces so that they can have decent meals, decent lunch.

Mr Speaker Sir, this is our finest hour.

I would kindly appeal to the Honourable Members of this house to kindly support this motion, to approve this budget, so that we can send this money to go and work for our people.

Mr Speaker, I want to give this house some bit of background on how... eh, because I know there have been difficulties in the preparation of this budget, and as a pointer it looks like it was pointing on the competence of the Budget and Appropriations Committee; it looks like the committee was not doing its work.

Mr Speaker I would persuade this house to appreciate the difficulties that we had in reviewing and analysing this budget. The budget itself was done under very difficult circumstances. Mr Speaker the house will appreciate that our calendar was late; the elections that sent us here were supposed to have happened in August this year. And going by that calendar, we are supposed to have had the Fiscal Strategy paper presented in this assembly by the end of February. It was not possible because none of us was a member of this house, so that was not possible. By the time the county government started its budgeting process and preparation of the various papers; the strategy papers to be tabled here, it was way into April, and we want to appreciate the various budgeting entities, particularly the County Assembly, for working very hard to meet the deadlines – the constitutional deadlines. We had the budget submitted and tabled in this house by the constitutional deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> of April, and we really do greatly appreciate that fact.

Mr Speaker, because of that constraint of time, we have to be honest that there was very little public input into this budget. Mr Speaker Honourable Members will remember that afternoon when we were asked to adjourn so that we could go and give our contributions to the budget out in our wards, and we duly resisted; there was no time for us to go and make those contributions. And the men and women in our wards did not make contributions to that budget. As a result we had a budget that largely, or in very many areas did not reflect the needs and priorities of our people at the local level. And the budget statement that we received actually did not identify the policy priorities; did not identify the priorities for the county in this financial year, as is required in the Standing Orders, especially Standing Order number six, which specifies that the Fiscal Strategy Paper

or the budget should identify the strategic priorities for the county. This budget did not have that, but in our committee we applied ourselves to.. and also in consultation with Honourable Members, we identified the key priorities for this budgeting year as:

1. Water – Being a major priority,
2. Infrastructure and roads being a second priority,
3. And then education being a priority.

And if you look at the recommendations that we have made to this house and the areas of the budget that we have recommended for retention and enhancement, they do reflect those priorities. And we do appreciate the Honourable Members for the time that they took to take the budget estimates back to our people in the wards and the very vibrant discussions that the men and women of this county gave in relation to the budget that was presented to them in all the eight constituencies. And Mr Speaker I want to recognise the institution of the Catholic Diocese of Kitui for making very important inputs and suggestions in relation to that budget, we actually did receive very well written submissions by the Catholic Diocese; the development office and they were very helpful in highlighting some areas that needed attention on our budget.

Mr Speaker I want to address a few areas that I know the Honourable Members might be anxious about. But before I do that, I want to say that I'm not standing here to defend the budget - I did not prepare the budget, I only sat in the committee appointed by this house to analyse and review the budget. So I'm not doing this to defend the budget; the Honourable Members have their constitutional freedoms to say anything that they want to say about the budget and vote whichever way they want to vote on this budget.

But I know there are anxieties and questions as to whether there is money that is going to our wards; and that has been a concern for almost all the Honourable Members. The answer is YES – this budget has money that has been allocated for small projects in every ward and that money, we have to make the legal framework to make that fund of Ksh 250million operational.

When we come to making the legal framework, we'll recommend that the members of this house as representatives of our people provide leadership for the projects that are going to be funded under that vote and involve ward development committees in identifying those projects and also providing oversight in their implementation, so that that money can be made available to our local communities to construct classrooms – as we know primary schools is not a devolved function, and our primary schools have been left under the mercy of the National Government.

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So we will be raising a bill for approval by this house to operationalize that fund for small projects of the allocation of Ksh 250million.

We have also the allocation of a pro-poor vote, what the budget is calling a pro-poor vote of Ksh 110million. And that money will enable the Honourable Members of this house to identify households that are food poor, that are cash poor, and that can be supported to get bursaries, or to get (school) fees, or to get food aid, or to get seeds in our local communities.

So I think if the Honourable Members had anxieties as to whether this budget has money that is going to our wards, that is addressed.

The other area that I know that has raised a lot of anxiety with the Honourable members is issue of LASDAP projects that were not completed in the last financial year under the defunct Local Government Authorities. Mr Speaker in our budget hearings, we were made aware that there is a balance of about Ksh 120million that is currently held in the various accounts of the four defunct Local Authorities. And the question that a lot of members were asking is whether... if that money is appropriated, if it has been done in this budget, whether that money will still be available to complete those projects. And the answer is YES – because that money has been appropriated; it is part of the revenue that the county government is going to use.

But at the same time, that money has been budgeted for. In the budget, Ksh 100million has been budgeted for, to be disbursed to go and complete those projects. I do propose that in due course we bring a motion in this house to urge the County Executive to disburse that money as soon as possible because it is actually available and the list of projects that were funded under that fund is available... to disburse that money as soon as possible and directly to the Community Development Committees that were implementing those projects.

We are aware that there might be a few difficulties because the County executive might insist on documentation and financial procedures that might not have been existent when those projects were being identified, but we would persuade the County Executive to remember that those projects were identified directly by the communities and they were assured by the government entities existing at that time, that that money would be made available to them to implement those projects. Actually even as I speak now, members of a small community in my ward called *Ndunguni*... they have bricks that they made last year but one and they have been waiting for the allocation of Ksh 650,000 to be able to put up classrooms. So Mr Speaker Sir, we would persuade the County Executive to

disburse that money as soon as possible, as we would persuade this house to pass this budget.

Finally Mr Speaker Sir, I want to make a note of appreciation for particularly our chairman; the Honourable Anthony Muthui for the effort and personal energy that he has put in the process of deliberating for this budget, really going beyond the call of duty to consult with the various entities to work really... as you are aware that this assembly is short of staff, he at times took the role of accountant; and if you know him, professionally he's an accountant. He was very helpful. In that respect, I know in this community we have the tendency of waiting until people are dead and then we come saying very nice things about them. I'll not wait to go to Mr Muthui's funeral to say that he's a very hardworking man. But he's a very hardworking man, I want it to go on record now; that he's a very hardworking man, he's very diplomatic and he's a very generous man. And all the other eight members of the committee, they really worked with a lot of integrity, without personal interest to see that this county budget is scrutinised, reviewed, rationalised and presented to this house in time as we have done now.

I can't forget to appreciate the Honourable Vice Chair of the committee; the Honourable Felix Kinuva and also to appreciate myself as the immediate former Vice Chairman of the committee.

Mr Speaker I beg to support.

**The Speaker:** Very well...

I am going to propose the question, that pursuant to the provisions of the Interim County Assembly Standing Orders Number 207 (6), this County Assembly adopts the report of the Budget and appropriations Committee on the budget estimates for the County Government and the County Assembly, tabled in the County Assembly on 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2013.

Now, this is the budget for the next year being presented to you members for approval.

I am going to adjourn the house to this afternoon at 2:30, and in the meantime as you walk out, you pick your files there, where you'll find the statements that Mr Muthui has made and all the relevant documents relating to the budget so that you can have a look at it closely, and then when you come at 2:30 you'll be ready now to contribute to the budget of the County Assembly and the County Government.

It is important, you read it carefully, you understand it and you make useful suggestions and contributions because at the end of the day, or at the end of the debate I'll be putting a question for you to approve or to reject the recommendations of the budget committee. And therefore it is important to know what you are approving or what you are rejecting at the end of the day.

## County Assembly Debates

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So we will go out, as soon as I adjourn the house, we come back here at 2:30. Because of the time constraint, I will request the members... we will deal with this issue until we dispose of it by the end of the day today. Even if it means going up to midnight, we will make sure we debate the issue of the budget estimates; we deal with it until we approve the estimates. And unfortunately for you and for me, tomorrow morning we'll be in session. Because what is supposed to happen after we approve these estimates is we are supposed to debate and approve the Appropriations Bill, but we can't do it; there is no time – we have only today and tomorrow, the end is Sunday and I'm not going to ask you to work on Sunday.

We can't approve the Appropriations Bill, and in the absence of the Appropriations Bill, we can approve what we call 'Vote on Account'. Vote on Account – This assembly will authorise both the assembly and the executive to spend money from the County Revenue Fund; to withdraw... because the withdrawal is normally authorised by the Appropriations Bill, which we can't do it, but in the absence of the bill because of the time – the bill we'll do it from next week, in the absence of that bill, the government must continue, the services must be provided, the expenditure must be undertaken, and you cannot do so if you as the assembly authorise both the assembly and the executive to withdraw money from the fund before the bill is passed. And that is what we call Vote on Account.

If you finish the estimates before the end of the day, we can quickly put that other one through so that we don't have to meet tomorrow. Sometime in the afternoon... late in the afternoon, approve it; it's a simple straight forward... that you are authorising the executive and the County Assembly to withdraw money in the meantime from the fund, but they cannot withdraw more than 50 per cent of what you have approved to be the estimates.

So it depends on whether we'll finish approving the estimates on time, for us to do the other business. If we don't we'll have to do it tomorrow, because if you don't, there'll be no money for you and the executive as from Monday 1<sup>st</sup>. At all you cannot withdraw, and there is no Court of Appeal, there's nobody else who can authorise it; it's only you. So I hope that is very clear.

With those few remarks, I ask you to stand so that we can adjourn the house.

The house stands adjourned until 2:30pm this afternoon.

*The County Assembly rose at 11am.*