

Report of the auditor-general to Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature and the council on the Matatiele Local Municipality

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

1. I have audited the financial statements of the Matatiele Local Municipality set out on pages XXX to XXX, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022, the statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets and cash flow statement and statement of comparison of budget information with actual information for the year then ended, as well as the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.
2. In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Matatiele Local Municipality as at 30 June 2022, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Standards of GRAP and the requirements of the Municipal Finance Management Act of South Africa, 2013 (Act No. 56 of 2003) (MFMA) and the Division of Revenue Act, 2020 (Act no. 9 of 2021) (Dora).

Basis for the opinion

3. I conducted my audit in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor-general's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of this auditor's report.
4. I am independent of the municipality in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *International code of ethics for professional accountants (including International Independence Standards)* (IESBA code) as well as other ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit in South Africa. I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the IESBA code.
5. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of matters

6. I draw attention to the matters below. My opinion is not modified in respect of these matters.

Restatement of corresponding figures

7. As disclosed in note 54 to the financial statements, the corresponding figures for 30 June 2021 were restated because of errors in the financial statements of the municipality for the year ended 30 June 2022.

Material impairments – Statutory receivables

8. As disclosed in notes 4 to the financial statements, material accumulated impairments loss balance of R50, 6 million (2021: R42, 1 million) was incurred as a result of irrecoverable debtors.

Material impairments – Trade receivables from exchange transactions

9. As disclosed in notes 7 to the financial statements, material accumulated impairments loss balance of R37, 7 million (2021: R28, 7 million) were incurred because of poor collections.

Material impairment loss – Property Plant and Equipment

10. As disclosed in note 11 to the financial statements, material impairment loss of R46, 6 million was incurred as a result of the Matatiele area being affected by severe weather conditions (floods) during the current year that resulted in some road infrastructure being significantly affected in terms of functionality and service delivery.

Unauthorised Expenditure

11. As disclosed in note 47 to the financial statements, the municipality incurred unauthorised expenditure of R93, 3 million, as the municipality did not budget for non-cash items.

Irregular Expenditure

12. As disclosed in note 49 to the financial statements, the municipality incurred irregular expenditure of R8, 7 million, due to SCM regulations which were not complied with. Council also wrote-off R15, 1 million after investigations were concluded.

Other matters

13. I draw attention to the following matters below. My opinion is not modified in respect of these matters.

Unaudited disclosure notes

14. In terms of section 125(2)(e) of the MFMA, the municipality is required to disclose particulars of non-compliance with the MFMA in the financial statements. This disclosure requirement did not form part of the audit of the financial statements and, accordingly, I do not express an opinion on it.

Unaudited supplementary schedules

15. The supplementary information set out on pages xx to xx does not form part of the financial statements and is presented as additional information. I have not audited these schedules and, accordingly, I do not express an opinion on them.

Responsibilities of the accounting officer for the financial statements

16. The accounting officer is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with South African Standards of General Recognised Accounting Practice and the requirements of the MFMA and DORA and for such internal control as the accounting officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
17. In preparing the financial statements, the accounting officer is responsible for assessing the municipality's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the accounting officer either intends to liquidate the municipality or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor-general's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

18. My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.
19. A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is included in the annexure to this auditor's report.

Report on the audit of the annual performance report

Introduction and scope

20. In accordance with the Public Audit Act 25 of 2004 (PAA) and the general notice issued in terms thereof, I have a responsibility to report on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information against predetermined objectives for selected key performance areas presented in the annual performance report. I performed procedures to identify material findings but not to gather evidence to express assurance.
21. My procedures address the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information, which must be based on the municipality's approved performance planning documents. I have not evaluated the completeness and appropriateness of the performance indicators/measures included in the planning documents. My procedures do not examine whether the actions taken by the municipality enabled service delivery. My procedures also do not extend to any disclosures or assertions relating to planned performance strategies and information in respect of future periods that may be included as part of the reported performance information. Accordingly, my findings do not extend to these matters.
22. I evaluated the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information in accordance with the criteria developed from the performance management and reporting

framework, as defined in the general notice, for the following selected key performance area presented in the municipality's annual performance report for the year ended 30 June 2022:

Key performance area	Pages in the annual performance report
Basic services delivery and infrastructure	x – x

23. I performed procedures to determine whether the reported performance information was properly presented and whether performance was consistent with the approved performance planning documents. I performed further procedures to determine whether the indicators and related targets were measurable and relevant, and assessed the reliability of the reported performance information to determine whether it was valid, accurate and complete.
24. The material findings in respect of the usefulness and reliability of the selected key performance areas are as follows:

Percentage of work on access roads completed by set date

25. I was unable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence for the relevance of the indicator as there was no logical link between the indicator and its related target as the indicator relates to percentage of work on access road completed by set date however the target relates to 60% maintenance of Mpotshongweni bridge (Rashule) completed by 30 June 2022. The indicator related to percentage completion of an access road while the target relates to the percentage completion of a bridge.

Other matters

26. I draw attention to the matters below.

Achievement of planned targets

27. Refer to the annual performance report on page x to x for information on the achievement of planned targets for the year and management's explanations provided for the under/over achievement of targets.

Adjustment of material misstatements

28. I identified material misstatements in the annual performance report submitted for auditing. These material misstatements were on the reported performance information of KPA 1: Basic services and infrastructure. As management subsequently corrected only some of the misstatements, I raised material findings on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information. Those that were not corrected are reported above.

Introduction and scope

29. In accordance with the PAA and the general notice issued in terms thereof, I have a responsibility to report material findings on the municipality's compliance with specific matters in key legislation. I performed procedures to identify findings but not to gather evidence to express assurance.
30. The material finding on compliance with specific matters in key legislation are as follows:

Annual financial statements, performance, and annual reports

31. The financial statements submitted for auditing were not prepared in all material respects in accordance with the requirements of section 122(1) of the MFMA. Material misstatements of expenditure and the statement of budget versus actual identified by the auditors in the submitted financial statement were subsequently corrected, resulting in the financial statements receiving an unqualified audit opinion.

Expenditure management

32. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent unauthorised expenditure amounting to R91,1 million, as disclosed in note 47 to the annual financial statements, in contravention section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA. The majority of the unauthorised expenditure was caused by inadequate budgeting for non-cash relating to depreciation, loss on disposal of Eskom electrification projects assets and debt impairment.
33. Unforeseen and unavoidable expenditure incurred by the municipality was not approved by the mayor as required by section 29(1) of the MFMA.

Strategic planning & performance Management

34. The performance management system and related controls were not maintained or managed as required by municipal planning and performance management regulation 7(1). Areas affected were consistency between planned and reported targets; secondly, consistency between reported achievements and the related target furthermore, accuracy of reported performance information.

Procurement and contract management

35. Some of the quotations were accepted from bidders whose tax matters had not been declared by the South African Revenue Service to be in order, in contravention of SCM regulation 43.

Consequence management

36. Fruitless and wasteful expenditure incurred by the municipality was not investigated to determine if any person is liable for the expenditure, as required by section 32(2)(b) of the MFMA .

Other information

37. The accounting officer is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information in the annual report. The other information does not include the financial statements, the auditor's report thereon and those selected development priority presented in the development priority that have been specifically reported on in the auditor's report.
38. My opinion on the financial statements and findings on the reported performance information and compliance with legislation do not cover the other information and I do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion thereon.
39. In connection with my audit, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements and the selected development priority presented in the annual performance report, or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.
40. I have not yet received the annual report. When I do receive this information, if I conclude that there is a material misstatement therein, I am required to communicate the matter to those charged with governance and request that the other information be corrected. If the other information is not corrected, I may have to re-issue my auditor's report amended as appropriate. However, if it is corrected this will not be necessary.

Internal control deficiencies

41. I considered internal control relevant to my audit of the financial statements, reported performance information and compliance with applicable legislation; however, my objective was not to express any form of assurance thereon. The matters reported below are limited to the significant internal control deficiencies that resulted in the basis for opinion, the findings on the annual performance report and the findings on compliance with legislation included in this report.
42. Leadership did not exercise oversight over processes of financial, performance and compliance reporting, as the annual financial statements, annual performance report and compliance were not adequately reviewed, which contributed to the material findings reported.

43. The audit committee and internal audit was functional during the financial year but their roles were made ineffective as management has not fully implemented the recommendations of this governance function.

Auditor-General

East London

30 November 2022



AUDITOR-GENERAL
SOUTH AFRICA

Auditing to build public confidence

Annexure – Auditor-general's responsibility for the audit

1. As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout my audit of the financial statements, and the procedures performed on reported performance information for selected objectives and on the municipality's compliance with respect to the selected subject matters.

Financial statements

2. In addition to my responsibility for the audit of the financial statements as described in the auditor's report, I also:
 - identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
 - obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the municipality's internal control.
 - evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the accounting officer.
 - conclude on the appropriateness of the accounting officer's use of the going concerns basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements. I also conclude, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Matatiele Local Municipality's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements about the material uncertainty or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the opinion on the financial statements. My conclusions are based on the information available to me at the date of the auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause a municipality to cease to continue as a going concern.
 - evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
 - obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the group to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. I am responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the group audit. I remain solely responsible for my audit opinion.

Communication with those charged with governance

3. I communicate with the accounting officer regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.
4. I also confirm to the accounting officer that I have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and communicate all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to have a bearing on my independence and here applicable, related safeguards.