



AUDITOR-GENERAL
SOUTH AFRICA

AUDIT REPORT

Ugu District Municipality

2022-23

Date: 30 November 2023

Report of the auditor-general to the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Legislature and council on Ugu District Municipality

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

1. I have audited the financial statements of the Ugu District Municipality set out on pages xx to xx, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023, statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets and cash flow statement and statement of comparison of budget with actual amounts for the year then ended, as well as 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 Ugu District Municipality as at 30 June 2023 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the South African Standards of Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (SA Standards of GRAP) and the requirements of the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA) and the Division of Revenue Act 5 of 2021(Dora).

Basis for 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 responsibilities of the auditor-general for the audit of the financial statements section of my 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.

Material uncertainty relating to going concern

6. I draw attention to the matter below. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.
7. I draw attention to note 56 to the financial statements, which indicates that liquidity of the municipality remains a challenge which could result in it not being able to fulfil its financial obligations. As stated in note 56, these events or conditions, along with other matters as set forth in note 56 indicate that a material uncertainty exists that may cast significant doubt on the municipality's ability to continue as a going concern.

Emphasis of matters

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

Restatement of corresponding figures

9. As disclosed in note 51 to the financial statements, the corresponding figures for 30 June 2022 were restated as a result of errors in the financial statements of the municipality at, and for the year ended, 30 June 2023.

Debt impairment

10. As disclosed in note 34 to the financial statements, material impairments of R126,20 million (2021-22: R189.60 million) were raised by the municipality on debtors as the recoverability of these amounts was doubtful.

Water losses

11. As disclosed in note 37 to the financial statements, material water losses of R130,72 million (2021-22: R116,37 million) was incurred. Unbilled authorised losses amounted to R52,98 million (2021-22: R44,06 million) and was due to metered and unmetered consumption. Commercial / apparent losses amounted to R22,14 million (2021-22: R13,34 million) and was due to unauthorised consumption and customer meter inaccuracies. Physical / real losses amounted to R55,59 million (2021-22: R58,57 million) and were due to leakages.

Other matter

12. I draw attention to the matter below. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Unaudited disclosure notes

13. In terms of section 125(2)(e) of the MFMA, the particulars of non-compliance with the MFMA should be disclosed 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.

Responsibilities of the accounting officer for the financial statements

14. The accounting officer is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the SA Standards of GRAP 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.
15. 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 appropriate governance structure either intends to liquidate the municipality or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Responsibilities of the auditor-general for the audit of the financial statements

16. 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 the 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 aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.
17. 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

18. In accordance with the Public Audit Act 25 of 2004 (PAA) and the general notice issued in terms thereof, I must audit and report on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance against predetermined objectives for the selected key performance area presented in the annual performance report. The accounting officer is responsible for the preparation of the annual performance report.
19. I selected the following key performance area presented in the annual performance report for the year ended 30 June 2023 for auditing. I selected key performance area that measures the district municipality's performance on its primary mandated functions and that is of significant national, community or public interest.

Key performance area	Page numbers	Purpose
Basic Service and Infrastructure delivery	[XX]	To ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all: ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.

20. I evaluated the reported performance information for the selected key performance area against the criteria developed from the performance management and reporting framework, as defined in the general notice. When an annual performance report is prepared using these criteria, it provides useful and reliable information and insights to users on the district municipality's planning and delivery on its mandate and objectives.
21. I performed procedures to test whether:
- the indicators used for planning and reporting on performance can be linked directly to the district municipality's mandate and the achievement of its planned objectives.
 - the indicators are well defined to ensure that they are easy to understand and can be applied consistently, as well as verifiable so that I can confirm the methods and processes to be used for measuring achievements.

- the targets can be linked directly to the achievement of the indicators and are specific, time bound and measurable to ensure that it is easy to understand what should be delivered and by when, the required level of performance as well as how performance will be evaluated.
- the indicators and targets reported on in the annual performance report are the same as those committed to in the approved initial or revised planning documents.
- the reported performance information is presented in the annual performance report in the prescribed manner.
- there is adequate supporting evidence for the achievements reported and for the measures taken to improve performance.

22. I performed the procedures for the purpose of reporting material findings only; and not to express an assurance opinion or conclusion.

23. The material findings on the reported performance information for the selected key performance area are as follows:

Basic Service and Infrastructure Delivery

BSD3: Number of Litres of water delivered via water tankers

24. An achievement of 55,86 million litres was reported against a target of 192 million litres. I could not determine the actual achievement, but I estimated it to be materially more than reported. Consequently, it is likely that the achievement against the target was better than reported.

Various indicators

25. I could not determine how the planned indicator would be measured and what evidence would be needed to support the achievement, as adequate supporting evidence was not provided for auditing. This was due to a lack of measurement definitions and processes.

Indicator	Target	Reported achievement
BSD 13: Progress reports on the 5.5 ML/d Extension of Umbango WWTW-Planning Phase	4	2
BSD 14: Progress reports on the 1.5 ML/d Melville WWTW-Planning phase	4	2
BSD 16: Progress reports for Mazakhele Sanitation Project	4	3

BSD 17: Malangen-Percentage progress of work done on construction of 2ML/day reinforced concrete reservoir

26. An achievement of 91,7% was reported against a target of 100%. I could not determine if the reported achievement was correct, as adequate supporting evidence was not provided for auditing. Consequently, the achievement might be more or less than reported and was not reliable for determining if the target had been achieved.

BSD 21: Cumulative Number of Households benefiting from VIP Toilets

27. The source information and method of calculation for measuring the planned indicator was not clearly defined and related systems and processes were not adequate to enable consistent measurement and reliable reporting of performance against the predetermined definitions. As a result, limitations were placed on the scope of my work, and I was unable to audit the reliability of the achievement of 4463 reported against target of 3000 in the APR.

BSD 22: Mabheleni-Percentage implementation of project

28. Evidence was not provided to confirm that processes had been established to consistently measure and reliably report on this indicator. This was due to a lack of measurement definitions and processes. Consequently, I could not confirm the reliability of the reported achievement.

Other matters

29. I draw attention to the matters below.

Achievement of planned targets

30. The annual performance report includes information on reported achievements against planned targets and provides measures taken to improve performance. This information should be considered in the context of the material findings on the reported performance information.

Material misstatements

31. I identified material misstatements in the annual performance report submitted for auditing. These material misstatements were in the reported performance information for Basic Service and Infrastructure Delivery key performance area. Management did not correct all of the misstatements and I reported material findings in this regard.

Report on compliance with legislation

32. In accordance with the PAA and the general notice issued in terms thereof, I must audit and report on compliance with applicable legislation relating to financial matters, financial management and other related matters. The accounting officer is responsible for the district municipality's compliance with legislation.

33. I performed procedures to test compliance with selected requirements in key legislation in accordance with the findings engagement methodology of the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA). This engagement is not an assurance engagement. Accordingly, I do not express an assurance opinion or conclusion.

34. Through an established AGSA process, I selected requirements in key legislation for compliance testing that are relevant to the financial and performance management of the district municipality, clear to allow consistent measurement and evaluation, while also sufficiently detailed and readily available to report in an understandable manner. The selected legislative requirements are included in the annexure to this auditor's report.

35. The material findings on compliance with the selected legislative requirements, presented per compliance theme, are as follows:

Annual Financial statements

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

Expenditure management

37. Money owed by the municipality was not always paid within 30 days, as required by section 65(2)(e) of the MFMA.

38. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent irregular expenditure amounting to R242,35 million as disclosed in note 49 to the annual financial statements, as required by section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA. The majority of the disclosed irregular expenditure was caused by non-compliance with the 2017 Preferential Procurement Regulation 8(2) on local content.

39. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent fruitless and wasteful expenditure amounting to R4,52m as disclosed in note 48 to the annual financial statement, in contravention section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA. The majority of the disclosed fruitless and wasteful expenditure was caused by interest incurred due non-compliance with 65(2)(e) of the MFMA.

40. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent unauthorised expenditure amounting to R431,56 million as disclosed in note 47 to the annual financial statement, in contravention of section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA. The majority of the disclosed unauthorised expenditure was caused by contracted services due to expenditure exceeding approved budgeted amount.

Consequence management

41. Some of the irregular expenditure incurred by the municipality were not investigated to determine if any person is liable for the expenditure, as required by section 32(2)(b) of the MFMA.

Strategic Planning and Performance

42. The performance management system and related controls were inadequate as it did not describe how the performance planning, monitoring, measurement, review and reporting processes should be conducted and organised and managed, as required by municipal planning and performance management regulation 7(1).

Procurement and contract management

43. Some of the invitation to tender for procurement of commodities designated for local content and production, did not stipulate the minimum threshold for local production and content as required by the 2017 Preferential Procurement Regulation 8(2). Similar non-compliance was also reported in the prior year.
44. Some of the commodities designated for local content and production, were procured from suppliers who did not submit a declaration on local production and content as required by the 2017 Preferential Procurement Regulation 8(5). Similar non-compliance was also reported in the prior year.

Other information in the annual report

45. The accounting officer is responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information referred to does not include the financial statements, the auditor's report and the selected key performance area presented in the annual performance report that has been specifically reported on in this auditor's report.
46. My opinion on the financial statements, the report on the audit of the annual performance report and the report on compliance with legislation do not cover the other information included in the annual report and I do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion on it.
47. My responsibility is to read this other information and, in doing so, consider whether it is materially inconsistent with the financial statements and the selected key performance area presented in the annual performance report or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.
48. I did not receive the other information prior to the date of this report. When I do receive and read 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 retract this auditor's report and re-issue an amended report as appropriate. However, if it is corrected this will not be necessary.

Internal control deficiencies

49. I considered internal control relevant to my audit of the financial statements, annual performance report and compliance with applicable legislation; however, my objective was not to express any form of assurance on it.
50. The matters reported below are limited to the significant internal control deficiencies that resulted in the material findings on the annual performance report and the material findings on compliance with legislation included in this report.

51. Inadequate reviews of financial statements to ensure compliance with the standards of GRAP reporting framework.
52. Inadequate review and reconciling of performance information in preparation of the annual performance report.
53. Inadequate standard operating procedures to ensure that the collection of input data is documented to facilitate the collection, verification, and reporting of actual achievement for the planned indicators.
54. Management did not adequately implement controls over compliance with key legislation.

Material irregularities

55. In accordance with the PAA and the Material Irregularity Regulations, I have a responsibility to report on material irregularities identified during the audit and on the status of material irregularities as previously reported in the auditor's report.

Status of previously reported material irregularities

Outstanding invoices not paid within 30 days

56. The municipality did not comply with sections 65(2)(e) of the MFMA which requires the municipality to pay invoices received within 30 days. The municipality failed to ensure that the payments due to Umngeni Water Board were made within 30 days of the invoice date and thus incurred interest of R2,16 million on the outstanding amounts due, as a result, a financial loss was incurred.
57. The accounting officer was notified of the material irregularity on 17 January 2022 and was invited to make a written submission on the actions to be taken to address the matter.
58. The following actions were taken to address the material irregularity:
- The accounting officer has subsequently formalised a financial recovery plan and entered into a payment agreement with uMngeni Water.
 - Further losses were prevented on the old debt as the interest was ring-fenced by uMngeni Water.
59. The actions taken by the accounting officer have adequately addressed the material irregularity.

Auditor - General

Pietermaritzburg

30 November 2023



AUDITOR - GENERAL
SOUTH AFRICA

Auditing to build public confidence

Annexure to the auditor's report

The annexure includes the following:

- The auditor-general's responsibility for the audit
- The selected legislative requirements for compliance testing

Auditor-general's responsibility for the audit

Professional judgement and professional scepticism

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 the selected key performance area and on the municipality's compliance with selected requirements in key legislation.

Financial statements

In addition to my responsibility for the audit of the financial statements as described in this 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
- conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements. I also conclude, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists relating to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the municipality 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 my opinion on the financial statements. My conclusions are based on the information available to me at the date of this auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause a municipality to cease operating as a going concern
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and determine whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

Communication with those charged with governance

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.

I also provide the accounting officer with a statement that I have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence and communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on my independence and, where applicable, actions taken to eliminate threats or safeguards applied.

Compliance with legislation – selected legislative requirements

The selected legislative requirements are as follows:

Legislation	Sections or regulations
Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003	Section 1 – Paragraph (a), (b) & (d) of the definition: irregular expenditure Section 1 – Definition: service delivery and budget implementation plan Sections 11(1), 13(2), 14(1), 14(2)(a), 14(2)(b), 15, 24(2)(c)(iv), 29(1), Sections 29(2)(b), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(a)(i), 32(2)(a)(ii), 32(2)(b), 32(6)(a), Sections 32(7), 53(1)(c)(ii), 54(1)(c), 62(1)(d), 62(1)(f)(i), 62(1)(f)(iii), Sections 62(1)(f)(iii), 63(1)(a), 63(2)(a), 63(2)(c), 64(2)(b), 64(2)(c), 64(2)(e), Sections 64(2)(f), 64(2)(g), 65(2)(a), 65(2)(b), 65(2)(e), 72(1)(a)(ii), 112(1)(j), Sections 116(2)(b), 116(2)(c)(ii), 117, 122(1), 122(2), 126(1)(a), 126(1)(b), Sections 127(2), 127(5)(a)(i), 127(5)(a)(ii), 129(1), 129(3), 133(1)(a), Sections 133(1)(c)(i), 133(1)(c)(ii), 170, 171(4)(a), 171(4)(b)
MFMA: Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations, 2009	Regulation 71(1), 71(2), 72
MFMA: Municipal Investment Regulations, 2005	Regulations 3(1)(a), 3(3), 6, 7, 12(2), 12(3)
MFMA: Municipal Regulations on Financial Misconduct Procedures and Criminal Proceedings, 2014	Regulations 5(4), 6(8)(a), 6(8)(b), 10(1)
MFMA: Municipal Supply Chain Management Regulations, 2017	Regulations 5, 12(1)(c), 12(3), 13(b), 13(c), 13(c)(i), 16(a), 17(1)(a), 17(1)(b),

Legislation	Sections or regulations
	Regulations 17(1)(c), 19(a), 21(b), 22(1)(b)(i), 22(2), 27(2)(a), 27(2)(e), Regulations 28(1)(a)(i), 28(1)(a)(ii), 29(1)(a) and (b), 29(5)(a)(ii), 29(5)(b)(iii), Regulations 32, 36(1), 36(1)(a), 38(1)(c), 38(1)(d)(ii), 38(1)(e), 38(1)(g)(i), Regulations 38(1)(g)(ii), 38(1)(g)(iii), 43, 44, 46(2)(e), 46(2)(f)
MSA: Disciplinary Regulations for Senior Managers, 2011	Regulations 5(2), 5(3), 5(6), 8(4)
Annual Division of Revenue Act	Sections 11(6)(b), 12(5), 16(1); 16(3)
Construction Industry Development Board Act 38 of 2000	Section 18(1)
Construction Industry Development Board Regulations, 2004	Regulations 17, 25(7A)
Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act 5 of 2000	Sections 2(1)(a), 2(1)(f)
Preferential Procurement Regulations, 2017	Regulations 4(1), 4(2), 5(1), 5(3), 5(6), 5(7), 6(1), 6(2), 6(3), 6(6), 6(8), 7(1), Regulations 7(2), 7(3), 7(6), 7(8), 8(2), 8(5), 9(1), 10(1), 10(2), 11(1), 11(2)
Preferential Procurement Regulations, 2022	Regulations 4(1), 4(2), 4(3), 4(4), 5(1), 5(2), 5(3), 5(4)
Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act 12 of 2004	Section 34(1)
Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000	Sections 25(1), 26(a), 26(c), 26(h), 26(i), 27(1), 29(1)(b)(ii), 29(2)(a), Sections 29(2)(c), 34(a), 34(b), 38(a), 41(1)(a), 41(1)(b), 41(1)(c)(ii), 42, Sections 43(2), 56(a), 57(2)(a), 57(4B), 57(6)(a), 66(1)(a), 66(1)(b), Sections 67(1)(d), 74(1), 93J(1), 96(b) Parent municipality with ME: Sections 93B(a), 93B(b) Parent municipality with shared control of ME: Sections 93C(a)(iv), 93C(a)(v)
MSA: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001	Regulations 2(1)(e), 2(3)(a), 3(3), 3(4)(b), 3(5)(a), 7(1), 8, 9(1)(a), 10(a), Regulations 12(1), 15(1)(a)(i), 15(1)(a)(ii)

Legislation	Sections or regulations
MSA: Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers directly Accountable to Municipal Managers, 2006	Regulations 2(3)(a), 4(4)(b), 8(1), 8(2), 8(3)
MSA: Regulations on Appointment and Conditions of Employment of Senior Managers, 2014	Regulations 17(2), 36(1)(a)