

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

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

1. I have audited the financial statements of the Kouga Local Municipality set out on pages ... to ..., which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets, cash flow statement and statement of comparison of budget and actual amounts 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 Kouga Local Municipality as at 30 June 2021, 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 4 of 2020 (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 auditor-general's responsibilities 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.

Emphasis of matters

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

Material impairments

7. As disclosed in notes 2 and 3 to the financial statements, receivables from exchange transactions of R167,3 million (2019-20: R129,1 million) and receivables from non-exchange transactions of R55,7 million (2019-19: R46,8 million) were impaired.

Material losses

8. As disclosed in note 46.1.8 to the financial statements, the municipality incurred material losses relating to water and electricity of R34,2 million (2019-20: R18,3 million) and R20,1 million (2019-20: R32,1 million), respectively.

Restatement of corresponding figures

9. As disclosed in notes 42 and 43 to the financial statements, the corresponding figures for 30 June 2020 were restated as a result of errors and reclassification of accounts in the financial statements of the municipality at, and for the year ended, 30 June 2021.

Other matter

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

Unaudited disclosure notes

11. 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.

Responsibilities of the accounting officer for the financial statements

12. 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.
13. 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.

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

14. 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.

15. 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

16. 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 the selected development priority presented in the annual performance report. I performed procedures to identify material findings but not to gather evidence to express assurance.
17. 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 included in the planning documents. My procedures do not examine whether the actions taken by the municipality enabled service delivery. My procedures do not extend to any disclosures or assertions relating to the extent of achievements in the current year, or planned performance strategies and information in respect of future periods that may be included as part of the reported performance information. Accordingly, my finding do not extend to these matters.
18. 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 development priority presented in the municipality's annual performance report for the year ended 30 June 2021:

Development priority	Pages in the annual performance report
KPA 1 – infrastructure and basic service delivery	x – x

19. 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.

20. The material finding in respect of the reliability of the selected development priority is as follows:

% Completion of the upgrade to the Kwanomzamo WWTW

21. The reported indicator, % Completion of the upgrade to the Kwanomzamo WWTW, did not agree with the planned indicator, Upgrade Kwanomzamo WWTW, as per the approved service delivery budget and implementation plan.

Other matters

22. I draw attention to the matters below.

Achievement of planned targets

23. Refer to the annual performance report on pages ... to ... for information on the achievement of planned targets for the year. This information should be considered in the context of the material finding on the usefulness of the reported performance information in paragraph 21 of this report.

Adjustment of material misstatements

24. I identified material misstatements in the annual performance report submitted for auditing. These material misstatements were in the reported performance information of key performance area 1: infrastructure and basic service delivery. As management subsequently corrected only some of the misstatements, I raised a material finding on the usefulness of the reported performance information. The material misstatement that was not corrected is reported above.

Report on the audit of compliance with legislation

Introduction and scope

25. 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.
26. The material findings on compliance with specific matters in key legislation are as follows:

Annual financial statements, performance and annual reports

27. 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 current assets, revenue, expenditure and disclosure items identified by the auditors in the submitted financial statements were subsequently corrected, resulting in the financial statements receiving an unqualified audit opinion.

Strategic planning and performance management

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

Other information

29. The accounting officer is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report and the audit committee's report. The other information does not include the financial statements, the auditor's report and the selected development priority presented in the annual performance report that has been specifically reported in this auditor's report.
30. My opinion on the financial statements and report 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 on it.
31. 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.
32. I did not receive the other information prior to the date of this auditor's report. When I do receive and read this information, and 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

33. 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 on it. The matters reported below are limited to the significant internal control deficiencies that resulted in the finding on the annual performance report and the findings on compliance with legislation included in this report.
34. Leadership was slow in responding to previous audit recommendations and did not implement adequate review processes over performance reporting.
35. The municipality has defined the processes for collection, collation, verification and capturing of performance information to ensure valid, accurate and complete reporting against planned objectives; however, these processes were not adequately implemented in all instances.

36. The review processes over the preparation of the annual financial statements were not implemented adequately, resulting in material misstatements in the financial statements submitted for audit. This and the finding relating to the annual performance report resulted in the non-compliance reported in this report.

Auditor - General

East London

31 January 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 the selected development priority 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 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 by the accounting officer
 - conclude on the appropriateness of the accounting officer's 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 Kouga Local 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 the 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

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 provide the accounting officer with a statement 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, where applicable, actions taken to eliminate threats or safeguards applied.