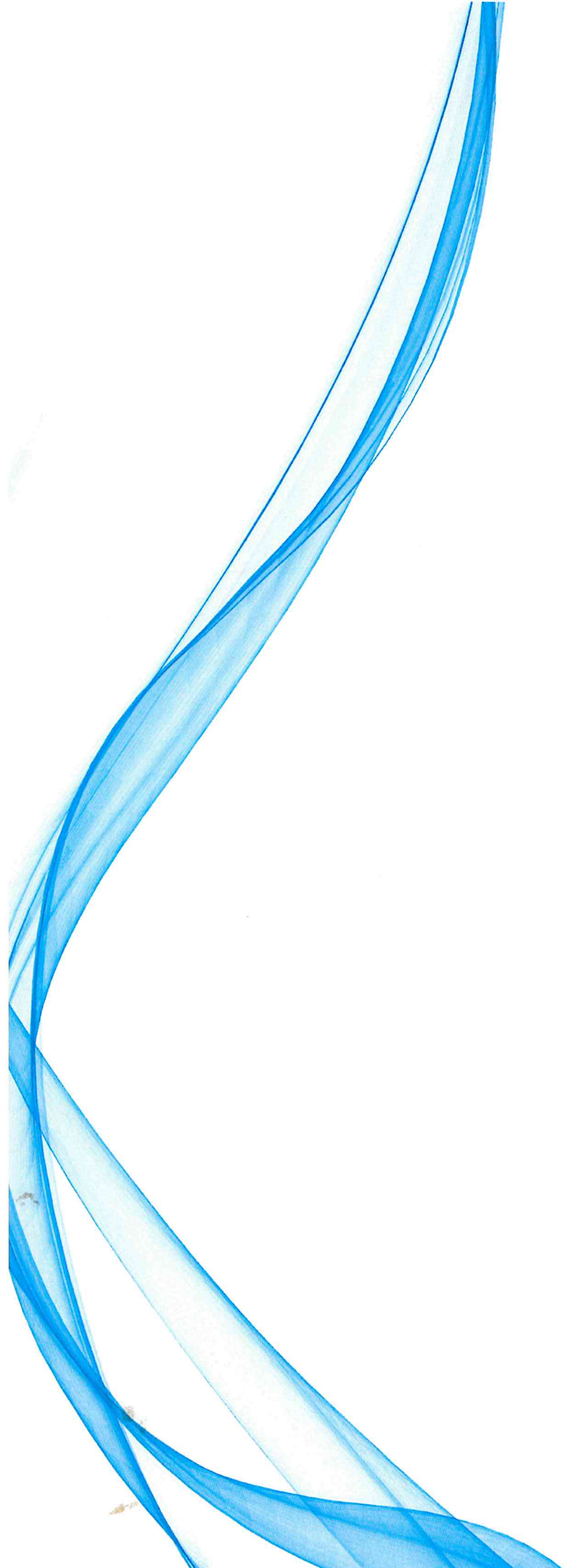




MBHASHE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Audit Report

For the year ended 30 June 2023



**AUDITOR - GENERAL
SOUTH AFRICA**

Auditing to build public confidence

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

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

1. I have audited the financial statements of the Mbhashe Local 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, cash flow statement and statement of comparison of budget and 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 Mbhashe Local Municipality as at 30 June 2023 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the Standards of Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (GRAP) and the requirements of the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA) and the Division of Revenue Act 5 of 2022 (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.

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 39 to the financial statements, the corresponding figures for 30 June 2022 were restated as a result of an error in the financial statements of the municipality at, and for the year ended, 30 June 2023.

Impairment of assets

8. As disclosed in note 30 to the financial statements, material impairments of R 6,2 million were incurred on infrastructure and community assets, mainly on roads and bridges as a result of floods that occurred during the financial year.

Unspent conditional grants and receipts

9. As disclosed in note 14 to the financial statements, the municipality had unspent conditional grants and receipts totalling R21,8 million.

Irregular expenditure

10. As disclosed in note 43 to the financial statements, irregular expenditure of R12,8 million was incurred during the year.

Other matter

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

Unaudited disclosure notes

12. In section 125(2) (e) of the MFMA, the Municipality must 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

13. The accounting officer is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the Standards of Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (GRAP) and the requirements of the MFMA and the 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.
14. 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

15. 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.

16. 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

17. 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 development priority presented in the annual performance report. The accounting officer is responsible for the preparation of the annual performance report.
18. I selected the following development priority presented in the annual performance report for the year ended 30 June 2023 for auditing. I selected development priority that measures municipality's performance on its primary mandated functions and that is of significant national, community or public interest.

Development priority	Page numbers	Purpose
Service delivery and infrastructure	XX	To develop, maintain and upgrade quality infrastructure

19. I evaluated the reported performance information for the selected development priority 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 municipality's planning and delivery on its mandate and objectives.
20. I performed procedures to test whether:
- the indicators used for planning and reporting on performance can be linked directly to the 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.
21. I performed the procedures for the purpose of reporting material findings only; and not to express an assurance opinion or conclusion.
22. The material findings on the reported performance information for the selected development priority are as follows:

Service Delivery & Infrastructure

SD.2.1 Number of households serviced

23. I was unable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence that clearly defined the predetermined nature and required level of performance to be used when measuring the reported achievement for the target of 60 124. This was due to a lack of measurement definitions and processes. I was unable to test whether the target for this indicator was clearly defined by alternative means. Consequently, I could not confirm the reliability of the reported achievement.

Other matters

24. I draw attention to the matters below.

Achievement of planned targets

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

Material misstatements

26. I identified material misstatements in the annual performance report submitted for auditing. These material misstatements were in the reported performance information for the development priority. Management did not correct all of the misstatements and I reported a material finding in this regard.

Report on compliance with legislation

27. 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 municipality's compliance with legislation.
28. 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.

29. 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 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.
30. The material findings on compliance with the selected legislative requirements, presented per compliance theme, are as follows:

Annual financial statements and annual report

31. 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 current asset, liabilities and disclosure items identified by the auditors in the submitted financial statement were subsequently corrected, resulting in the financial statements receiving an unqualified audit opinion.
32. The oversight report adopted by the council on the 2021/22 annual report was not made public, as required by section 129(3) of the MFMA.

Procurement and contract management

33. 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). This non-compliance was identified in the procurement processes for supply and delivery of law enforcement personal protective equipment.

Strategic planning and performance management

34. 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 managed, as required by municipal planning and performance management regulation 7(1).

Other information in the annual report

35. 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 those selected development priority presented in the annual performance report that have been specifically reported on in this auditor's report.
36. 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.

37. 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 development priority presented in the annual performance report or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.
38. 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

39. 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.
40. 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.
41. Leadership has not institutionalised all the disciplines necessary to enable oversight and monitoring to promote efficiency and effectiveness in financial and performance management and compliance with legislation. The leadership was unable to detect and prevent material misstatements in the financial statements and annual performance report as well as prevention of irregular expenditure. Management did not respond to all the recommendations of the audit committee and internal audit, which impacted the effectiveness of these governance structures and resulted repeat audit findings being raised.

Material irregularities

42. 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.

Material irregularities identified during the audit

43. The material irregularities identified are as follows:

Payment of hawkers stalls not received

44. The municipality did not comply with section 65(2)(a) of the MFMA, which requires that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the municipality has and maintains an effective system of expenditure control, including procedures for the approval, authorisation, withdrawal, and payment of funds.

45. The municipality appointed a contractor on 12 November 2015, for the installation of the Idutywa Hawker Stalls Phase 2 project for an amount of R16 million over a period of three years. The supplier delivered 60 hawker stalls, which left a balance of 260 hawker stalls not delivered. The municipality did not comply with section 65(2)(a) of the MFMA, as the accounting officer did not ensure that reasonable steps were in place to ensure payments were approved and made for goods that had been delivered and installed.
46. I notified the accounting officer of the material irregularity on 14 February 2023, and invited him to make a written submission on the actions taken.
47. In August 2022, the municipality advertised for a legal firm to remedy the matter and was appointed, and an urgent application for the delivery of the 260 Hawker Stalls from the supplier was sought.
48. On 6 March 2023, a consultation was conducted with the signatories who are still in the employ of the municipality. MPAC took the resolution that all involved employees must be investigated by the disciplinary board. The municipality had received correspondence from attorneys stating that it should approach a court of law to demand the hawker stalls from the supplier.
49. The matter was taken to East London High Court by the municipality on 12 October 2023, demanding monies that the consultants were unjustifiably enriched with as they never delivered the remaining 260 hawker stalls from the contractor. The municipality is in the process of making an application for the default judgement, as the consultant never filed their intention to oppose the matter.
50. A follow-up will be done in the next audit cycle to confirm that the monies lost have been recovered from the responsible parties.

Auditor - General

East London

06 February 2024



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 selected development priorities 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)(ii), 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), 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)(ii), 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)

Legislation	Sections or regulations
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)
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)