

Report of the auditor-general to the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature and the council on Gamagara Local municipality

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

1. I have audited the financial statements of the Gagamara Local Municipality set out on pages X to X, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets, cash flow statement and statement of comparison of budget information and actual amount 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 Gamagara Local Municipality as at 30 June 2024 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the Standards of Generally Recognised Accounting Practise (Standards of GRAP) and the requirements of the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA) and the Division of Revenue Act 5 of 2023 (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 50 to the financial statements, the corresponding figures for 30 June 2023 were restated as a result of an error in the financial statements of the municipality at, and for the year ended, 30 June 2024.

Going concern

8. I draw attention to note 51 in the financial statements, which deals with the possible effects of the future implications of the negative key financial ratios, challenges in settling debt as they fall due, ineffective cash management and significant debt owed to the bulk electricity provider. Management has also outlined their plans to address these challenges and conditions.

Material losses - electricity

9. As disclosed in note 55 to the financial statements, material electricity losses of R21 475 028 (2023-2024: R21 908 882) was incurred, which represents 12.35% (2023: 15.09%) of total electricity purchased.

Material losses - water

10. As disclosed in note 55 to the financial statements, material water losses of R27 447 667 (2023: R25 688 550) was incurred, which represents 69.85% (2023: 73%) of total water purchased.

Debt impairments

11. As disclosed in note 43 to the financial statements, material losses of R20 412 332 (2023: R19 504 021) were incurred as a result of significant impairment of debtors due to poor collection practices.

Bad debts written off

12. As disclosed in the financial statements, material losses of R11 438 239 were incurred as a result of result of outstanding indigent balances that were written off.

Other matter

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

Unaudited disclosure notes

14. 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

15. The accounting officer is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the Standards of 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.
16. 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

17. 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.
18. A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is included in the annexure to this auditor's report. This description, which is located at page **XX** of the annexure to the auditor's report, forms part of our auditor's report.

Report on the annual performance report

19. 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 information 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.
20. I selected the following development priority related to Basic services and Infrastructure Investment presented in the annual performance report for the year ended 30 June 2024. I selected those indicators that measure the municipality's performance on its primary mandated functions and that are of significant national, community or public interest.
- Number of LED streetlights retrofitted in all wards by 30th June 2024.
 - Number of boreholes linked to bulk water pipeline in Olifantshoek by 31st Dec 2023
 - % of work done on construction of bulk water augmentation equipping of 3 boreholes in Dibeng by 30 June 2024.
 - Number of water and electrical meters audits conducted by 30 June 2024.
 - Number of Reservoir Pump station refurbished at Mapoteng by 30th June 2024.
 - Percentage of Construction work done for Internal sewer network for 797 households in Dibeng (Phase4) by 30 June 2024.
 - Percentage Construction work done for internal sewer network to 529 households in Dibeng (Phase 5) by 30th June 2024.

- Percentage of work done in Constructing gravity flow Sewer network to Mapoteng pump station by 30th June 2024.
- Number of kilometres of internal roads resurfaced in Kathu by 30th June 2024.

21. 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.

22. 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
- all the indicators relevant for measuring the municipality's performance against its primary mandated and prioritised functions and planned objectives are included
- 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 presented in the annual performance report in the prescribed manner
- there is adequate supporting evidence for the achievements reported and for measures taken to improve performance.

23. I performed the procedures to report material findings only; and not to express an assurance opinion or conclusion.

24. I did not identify any material findings on the reported performance information for the selected indicators.

Other matters

25. I draw attention to the matters below.

Achievement of planned targets

26. The annual performance report includes information on reported achievements against planned targets and provides measures taken to improve performance.

27. The table that follow provides information on the achievement of planned targets and lists the key Performance Indicators that were not achieved as reported in the annual performance report. The measures taken to improve performance are included in the annual performance report on pages X to X.

Basic Services and Infrastructure Investment

<i>Targets achieved: 75%</i> <i>Budget spent: 45.46%</i>		
Key Performance Indicator not achieved	Planned target	Reported achievement
Number of LED streetlights retrofitted in all wards by the 30th June 2024	700	0
Percentage Construction work done for internal sewer network to 529 households in Dibeng (Phase 5) by 30th June 2024	15%	10%
Number of boreholes linked to bulk water pipeline in Olifantshoek by 31st Dec 2023	4	3

Material misstatements

28. I identified material misstatements in the annual performance report submitted for auditing. These material misstatements were in the reported performance information Basic Services and Infrastructure Investment. Management subsequently corrected all the misstatements, and I did not include any material findings in this report.

Report on compliance with legislation

29. 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.

30. 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.

31. 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.

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

Annual financial statement and annual report

33. 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 assets, non-current liabilities, revenue from non-exchange transactions and disclosure items identified by the auditors in the submitted financial statement were subsequently corrected and the supporting records were provided subsequently, resulting in the financial statements receiving an unqualified audit opinion.
34. The council failed to adopt an oversight report containing the council's comments on the 2022/23 annual report, as required by section 129(1) of the MFMA.

Consequence management

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

Procurement and Contract Management

37. Some of the goods and services within the prescribed transaction values for formal written price quotations were procured without obtaining the required price quotations, in contravention of by SCM Regulation 17(1)(a) and (c)

Expenditure management

38. Money owed by the municipality was not always paid within 30 days, as required by section 65(2)(e) of the MFMA.
39. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent irregular expenditure amounting to R123 266 403 as disclosed in note 54 to the annual financial statements, as required by section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA. The majority of the irregular expenditure was caused by not correct procurement and contract management process.
40. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent fruitless and wasteful expenditure amounting to R16 579 119, as disclosed in note 53 to the annual financial statements, in contravention of section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA. The majority of the disclosed fruitless and wasteful expenditure was caused by interest charged on overdue accounts.
41. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent unauthorised expenditure amounting to R28 618 444, as disclosed in note 52 to the annual financial statements, in contravention of section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA. The majority of the unauthorised expenditure was caused by over expenditure incurred by municipal departments.

Human resource management

42. Appropriate systems and procedures to monitor, measure and evaluate performance of staff were not developed and adopted, as required by section 67(1)(d) of the MSA and regulation 31 of Municipal Staff Regulations.

Other information in the annual report

43. 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.
44. 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.
45. 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.
46. I did not receive the other information prior to the date of this auditor's 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

47. 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.
48. The matters reported below are limited to the significant internal control deficiencies that resulted in the basis for the opinion, the material adjustments on the annual performance report and the material findings on compliance with legislation included in this report.
49. Leadership did not exercise oversight responsibility regarding financial and performance reporting and compliance as well as related internal controls.
50. Leadership did not implement effective human resource management to ensure that adequate and sufficiently skilled resources are in place and that performance is monitored.

51. Leadership did not establish and communicate policies and procedures to enable and support the understanding and execution of internal control objectives, processes and responsibilities.
52. Leadership did not develop and monitor the implementation of action plans to address internal control deficiencies.
53. Management did not establish an IT governance framework that supports and enables the business, delivers value and improves performance.
54. Management did not prepare regular, accurate and complete financial and performance reports that are supported and evidenced by reliable information.
55. Management did not review and monitor compliance with applicable legislation.

Material irregularities

56. 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

The material irregularities identified are as follows:

Internal capacity not developed to prepare annual financial statements resulting in over reliance on consultants

57. Section 62(1)(a) of the MFMA states that the accounting officer of a municipality is responsible for managing the financial administration of the municipality and must for this purpose take all reasonable steps to ensure that the resources of the municipality are used effectively, efficiently and economically.
58. In addition, the municipal cost containment regulation 5(5) requires that when consultants are appointed, an accounting officer must -
 - (d) Ensure the transfer of skills by consultants to the relevant officials of a municipality or municipal entity;
 - (e) Develop consultancy reduction plans to reduce the reliance on consultants.
59. Contrary to the above requirement, no transfer of skills took place during the period that consultants were appointed and the municipality only developed a draft consultancy reduction plan, during the 2022/23 financial year, to reduce reliance on consultants.
60. Furthermore, insufficient steps are being taken to fill vacancies that are critical to AFS preparation. There is no internal capacity to prepare AFS at the municipality and there is a history of steps not being taken to develop such capacity as indicated in the municipal cost containment regulations. This has resulted in dependence on consultants and excessive

amounts being paid to consultants for services that could have been performed internally at a lower cost should the finance unit have been capacitated.

61. On 18 September 2024, the accounting officer's response on the actions taken and that will be taken to address the matter was received. The municipality has addressed the critical finding made on the non-compliances identified regarding the council approved consultancy reduction plan.
62. I will continue to monitor the remedial actions taken regarding the internal capacity not developed to prepare annual financial statements resulting that in over reliance on consultants.

Auditor General

Kimberley

30 November 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	<p>Sections: 1, 11(1), 13(2), 14(1), 14(2)(a), 14(2)(b), 15, 24(2)(c)(iv), 28(1), 29(1), 29(2)(b), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(a)(i), 32(2)(a)(ii),</p> <p>Sections: 32(2)(b), 32(6)(a), 32(7), 53(1)(c)(ii), 54(1)(c), 62(1)(d), 63(2)(a), 63(2)(c), 64(2)(b), 64(2)(c), 64(2)(e), 64(2)(f),</p> <p>Sections: 64(2)(g), 65(2)(a), 65(2)(b), 65(2)(e), 72(1)(a)(ii), 112(1)(j), 116(2)(b), 116(2)(c)(ii), 117, 122(1), 122(2), 126(1)(a),</p> <p>Sections: 126(1)(b), 127(2), 127(5)(a)(i), 127(5)(a)(ii), 129(1), 129(3), 133(1)(a), 133(1)(c)(i), 133(1)(c)(ii), 170, 171(4)(a), 171(4)(b)</p>
MFMA: Municipal budget and reporting regulations, 2009	Regulations: 71(1)(a), 71(1)(a)(b), 71(2)(a), 71(2)(b), 71(2)(d), 72(a), 72(b), 72(c)
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	<p>Regulations: 5, 12(1)(c), 12(3), 13(b), 13(c), 16(a), 17(1)(a), 17(1)(b), 17(1)(c), 19(a), 21(b), 22(1)(b)(i), 22(2), 27(2)(a), 27(2)(e),</p> <p>Regulations: 28(1)(a)(i), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b), 29(5)(a)(ii), 29(5)(b)(ii), 32, 36(1), 36(1)(a), 38(1)(c), 38(1)(d)(ii), 38(1)(e), 38(1)(g)(i),</p> <p>Regulations: 38(1)(g)(ii), 38(1)(g)(iii), 43, 44, 46(2)(e), 46(2)(f)</p>
Construction Industry Development Board Act 38 of 2000	Section: 18(1)
Construction Industry Development Board Regulations, 2004	Regulations: 17, 25(7A)
Division of Revenue Act	Sections: 11(6)(b), 12(5), 16(1); 16(3)
Municipal Property Rates Act 6 of 2004	Section: 3(1)
Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000	<p>Sections: 25(1), 26(a), 26(c), 26(h), 26(i), 29(1)(b)(ii), 34(a), 34(b), 38(a), 41(1)(a), 41(1)(b), 41(1)(c)(ii), 42, 43(2),</p> <p>Sections: 54A(1)(a), 56(1)(a), 57(2)(a), 57(6)(a), 66(1)(a), 66(1)(b), 67(1)(d), 74(1), 96(b)</p>
MSA: Disciplinary Regulations for Senior Managers, 2011	Regulations: 5(2), 5(3), 5(6), 8(4)

Legislation	Sections or regulations
MSA: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001	Regulations: 2(1)(e), 2(3)(a), 3(3), 3(4)(b), 7(1), 8, 9(1)(a), 10(a), 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)
MSA: Municipal Staff Regulations	Regulations: 7(1),31
Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act 12 of 2004	Section: 34(1)
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), 7(2), 7(3), 7(6), 7(8), 8(2), 8(5), 9(1), 10(1), 10(2), Regulations: 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)

