

Auditor-General

ILembe District Municipality and its
municipal entity
Audit report for the year ending 30 June
2020

Report of the auditor-general to the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Legislature and the Council on the ILembe District Municipality and its municipal entity

Report on the audit of the consolidated and separate financial statements

Opinion

1. I have audited the consolidated and separate financial statements of the ILembe District Municipality and its municipal entity (the group), set out on pages xx to xx, which comprise the consolidated and separate statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020, the consolidated and separate statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets, cash flow statement and statement of comparison of budget information with actual information for the year then ended, as well as the notes to the consolidated and separate financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.
2. In my opinion, the consolidated and separate financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated and separate financial position of the group as at 30 June 2020, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the requirements of South African Standards of Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (SA Standards of GRAP) and the requirements of the Municipal Finance Management Act of South Africa, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003) (MFMA) and the Division of Revenue Act of South Africa, 2019 (Act No. 16 of 2019) (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 consolidated and separate financial statements section of this auditor's report.
4. I am independent of the group 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 the 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 losses - trade and other receivables from exchange transactions

7. As disclosed in note to 35.7.2 the financial statements, material losses of R56,19 million were incurred as a result of the write off of long outstanding debtors.

Material losses - water

8. As disclosed in note 35.8 to the financial statements, the municipality incurred material water losses of R123,46 million (2018-19: R92,96 million), which represents 59,75% (2018-19: 61,74%) of total water purchased. The losses were mainly due to illegal connections, main leaks, reservoir overflows and service connection leaks.

Other matter

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

Unaudited disclosure notes

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

Responsibilities of the accounting officer for the financial statements

11. The accounting officer is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated and separate financial statements in accordance with 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 the consolidated and separate financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
12. In preparing the consolidated and separate financial statements, the accounting officer is responsible for assessing the group'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 consolidated and separate financial statements

13. My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated and separate 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 consolidated and separate financial statements.

14. A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the consolidated and separate financial statements is included in the annexure to this auditor's report.

Report on the audit of the annual performance report

Introduction and scope

15. In accordance with the Public Audit Act of South Africa, 2004 (Act No. 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.
16. 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 also do not extend to any disclosures or assertions relating to planned performance strategies and information in respect of future periods that may be included as part of the reported performance information. Accordingly, my findings do not extend to these matters.
17. 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 basic service delivery development priority presented in the municipality's annual performance report for the year ended 30 June 2020.
18. 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.
19. I did not raise any material findings on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information for the basic service delivery development priority.

Other matters

20. I draw attention to the matters below.

Achievement of planned targets

21. The annual performance report on pages' x to x sets out information on the achievement of planned targets for the year under review.

Adjustment of material misstatements

22. I identified material misstatements in the annual performance report submitted for auditing. These material misstatements were on the reported performance information of the basic service delivery development priority. As management subsequently corrected the misstatements, I did not raise any material findings on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information.

Report on the audit of compliance with legislation

Introduction and scope

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

Annual financial statement

25. The consolidated and separated annual 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, expenditure and disclosure items identified by the auditors in the submitted financial statements were subsequently corrected and the supporting records were provided subsequently, resulting in the consolidated and separate annual financial statements receiving an unqualified audit opinion.

Expenditure management

26. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent irregular expenditure amounting to R 58,70 million disclosed in note 34.3 to the annual financial statements, as required by section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA. The majority of the irregular expenditure was caused by expenditure incurred on security services as a result of contract extensions.

Consequence management

27. Cases of financial misconduct that constitute a crime committed by officials were not always reported to the South African Police Service as required by the municipal regulations on financial misconduct procedures and criminal proceedings 10(1).

Other information

28. The accounting officer is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report. The other information does not include the consolidated and separate financial statements, the auditor's report and the selected development priority presented in the annual performance report that has been specifically reported in the auditor's report.
29. My opinion on the consolidated and separate financial statements and findings on the reported performance information and compliance with legislation do not cover the other information and I do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion thereon.
30. 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 consolidated and separate 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.
31. 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

32. I considered internal control relevant to my audit of the consolidated and separate 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 findings on the performance report the findings on compliance with legislation included in this report.
33. Management did not prepare accurate and complete consolidated and separate annual financial statements that were supported and evidence by reliable information as material misstatements were identified in the annual financial statements.
34. The review and monitoring of compliance with the laws and regulations were not adequately implemented to prevent the material non-compliance identified.

Other reports

35. I draw attention to the following engagements conducted that had, or could have, an impact on the matters reported in the municipality's financial statements, reported performance

information, compliance with applicable legislation and other related matters. These reports did not form part of my opinion on the consolidated and separate financial statements or my findings on the reported performance information or compliance with legislation.

36. An independent consultant investigated five allegations for misappropriation of the municipality's assets at the request of the municipality, which covered the period 2016-17. The investigations were concluded in February 2021 and resulted in disciplinary proceedings against two employees. The recommendations have partially been implemented at the date of this report.

Auditor-General

Pietermaritzburg

8 April 2021



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 consolidated and separate financial statements, and the procedures performed on reported performance information for selected development priorities 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 consolidated and separate financial statements as described in this auditor's report, I also:
 - identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated and separate 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 consolidated and separate financial statements. I also conclude, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ILembe District Municipality and its municipal entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements about the material uncertainty or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the opinion on the financial statements. My conclusions are based on the information available to me at the date of this auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause a municipality to cease continuing as a going concern
 - evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the consolidated and separate financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation
 - obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the group to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. I am responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the group audit. I remain solely responsible for my audit opinion.

Communication with those charged with governance

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

