

Report of the auditor-general to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and the council on the Swellendam Municipality

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

1. I have audited the financial statements of the Swellendam Municipality set out on pages 4 to 94, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2019, the 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 Swellendam Municipality as at 30 June 2019, 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 of South Africa, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003) (MFMA) and the Division of Revenue Act of South Africa, 2018 (Act No. 1 of 2018) (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 this auditor's report.
4. I am independent of the municipality in accordance with sections 290 and 291 of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *Code of ethics for professional accountants* and parts 1 and 3 of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *International code of ethics for professional accountants (including International Independence Standards)* (IESBA codes), 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 codes.
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 notes 43 and 44 to the financial statements, the corresponding figures for 30 June 2018 were restated as a result of errors detected during the 2018-19 financial year, as well as reclassifications, in the financial statements of the municipality at, and for the year ended, 30 June 2019.

Material impairments

8. As disclosed in note 9 to the financial statements, the municipality provided for the impairment of receivables from exchange transactions amounting to R13,7 million (2017-18: R12,5 million).

9. As disclosed in note 10 to the financial statements, the municipality provided for the impairment of receivables from non-exchange transactions amounting to R49,3 million (2017-18: R47,2 million).
10. As disclosed in note 42 to the financial statements, the municipality incurred an impairment loss on fixed assets of R5,7 million (2017-18: R0).

Other matters

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

Unaudited supplementary schedules

12. The supplementary information set out on pages 95 to 98 does not form part of the financial statements and is presented as additional information. I have not audited these schedules and, accordingly, I do not express an opinion thereon.

Unaudited disclosure notes

13. 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 thereon.

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 Swellendam 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

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

Introduction and scope

18. 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 material findings on the reported performance information against predetermined objectives for selected strategic objectives presented in the annual performance report. I performed procedures to identify findings but not to gather evidence to express assurance.
19. My procedures address the reported performance information, which must be based on the approved performance planning documents of the municipality. I have not evaluated the completeness and appropriateness of the performance indicators/measures included in the planning documents. My procedures also did 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.
20. 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 strategic objective presented in the annual performance report of the municipality for the year ended 30 June 2019:

Strategic objectives	Pages in the annual performance report
Strategic objective 4: to enhance access to basic services and address maintenance backlogs	11 – 15

21. 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.
22. I did not raise any material findings on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information of the selected strategic objective.

Other matters

23. I draw attention to the matters below.

Achievement of planned targets

24. Refer to the annual performance report on pages 11 to 15 for information on the achievement of planned targets for the year.

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 compliance of the municipality 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

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 the cash flow statement, statement of comparison of budget and actual amounts 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.

Expenditure management

28. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent irregular expenditure amounting to R7 207 163, as disclosed in note 50.3 to the financial statements, as required by section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA. The majority of the irregular expenditure was caused by non-compliance with the Supply Chain Management (SCM) Regulations.

Procurement and contract management

29. Some of the bid documentation for the procurement of commodities designated for local content and production did not stipulate the minimum threshold for local production and content, as required by preferential procurement regulation 8(2) of 2017.
30. Some of the commodities designated for local content and production were procured from suppliers who did not meet the prescribed minimum threshold for local production and content, as required by preferential procurement regulation 8(5) of 2017.
31. Bid specifications for some of the tenders were drafted in a biased manner and did not allow all potential suppliers to offer their goods or services, in contravention of SCM regulation 27(2)(a).
32. Some of the competitive bids were adjudicated by a bid adjudication committee that was not composed in accordance with SCM regulation 29(2).

Other information

33. 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 financial statements, the auditor's report and those selected strategic objectives presented in the annual performance report that have been specifically reported on in this auditor's report.
34. My opinion on the 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.
35. 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 strategic objectives presented in the annual performance report, or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.
36. I did not receive the other information prior to the date of this auditor's report. After I receive and read this information, and if I conclude that there is a material misstatement, 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 reissue an amended report as appropriate. However, if it is corrected this will not be necessary.

Internal control deficiencies

37. 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 findings on compliance with legislation included in this report.
38. Management did not ensure that timely and adequate reviews were performed to ensure that the financial statements submitted for auditing were accurate, resulting in numerous material misstatements being detected during the audit, which should have been detected by a management review prior to submission.
39. Monitoring of compliance with key legislation was not sufficient to prevent or detect instances of non-compliance relating to SCM and expenditure management. Management's controls were also not adequate to prevent and detect irregular expenditure.

Other reports

40. I draw attention to the following engagement conducted by various parties that had, or could have, an impact on the municipality's financial statements, reported performance information, compliance with applicable legislation and other related matters. This report did not form part of my opinion on the financial statements or my findings on the reported performance information or compliance with legislation.
41. The municipality appointed an audit firm during the year under review to conduct a forensic investigation into alleged fraud in the collection of traffic fines. The outcome of the forensic investigation confirmed that fraud took place and monies were misappropriated. The municipality opened a case of fraud with the South African Police Service.

Auditor-General

Cape Town

30 November 2019



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 selected strategic objectives 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 related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Swellednam Municipality’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 financial statements, including the disclosures, and 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 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, related safeguards.