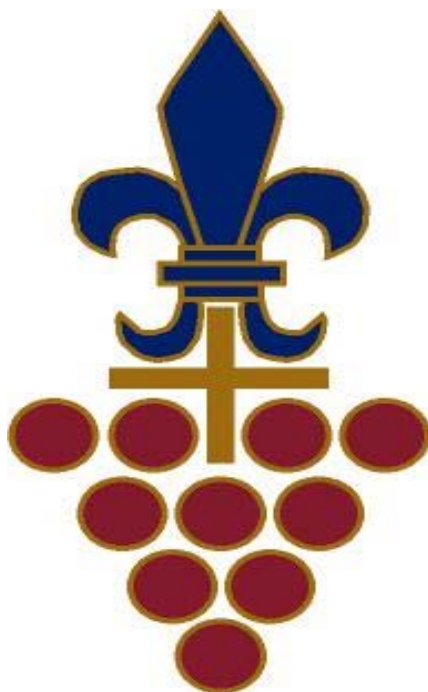


STELLENBOSCH MUNICIPALITY



MFMA Circular No.129

**MUNICIPAL BUDGET
CIRCULAR FOR THE 2025/2026
MTREF**



Municipal Budget Circular for the 2025/26 MTREF

CONTENTS:

1. THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMY AND INFLATION TARGETS	3
2. KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR THE 2025/26 BUDGET PROCESS	4
2.1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONDITIONAL GRANTS ALLOCATIONS	4
2.2 METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITIES TRADING SERVICES REFORM PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE.....	6
2.3. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR DISASTER ALLOCATIONS	7
2.4. BUDGETING AND REPORTING OF THE INTEGRATED NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION PROGRAMME (INEP)	8
2.5. STOPPING AND REALLOCATION GUIDELINES	9
3. REVENUE MANAGEMENT	10
3.1 REVENUE ENHANCEMENT AND IMPROVED DEBT COLLECTION.....	11
3.2 MAXIMISING THE REVENUE GENERATION OF THE MUNICIPAL REVENUE BASE	11
3.3 SETTING COST REFLECTIVE TARIFFS	13
3.4 CONSUMER DEPOSITS AND SECURITIES.....	13
3.5 CONTRACTS WITH CUSTOMERS	14
3.6 INDIGENT MANAGEMENT	14
3.7. VOLUNTARY RESTRICTION OF NOTIFIED MAXIMUM DEMAND (NMD).....	14
3.8. PRO-ACTIVELY MANAGING COLLECTION OF MUNICIPAL REVENUE IN ESKOM SUPPLIED AREAS	15
3.9. ESKOM BULK TARIFF INCREASES.....	15
3.10. ORGAN OF STATE DEBT.....	15
4. FUNDING OF MUNICIPAL BUDGETS AND OTHER MANAGEMENT ISSUES	16
4.1. FUNDING OF MUNICIPAL BUDGETS	16
4.2. EMPLOYEE RELATED COSTS	16
4.3. REMUNERATION OF COUNCILLORS	17
4.4. MUNICIPAL PENSION FUND CONTRIBUTIONS	17
4.5. UNAUTHORISED, IRREGULAR, FRUITLESS AND WASTEFUL EXPENDITURE REDUCTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSEQUENCE MANAGEMENT.....	18
4.6. SPECIAL ADJUSTMENT BUDGET TO AUTHORISE 2023/24 UNAUTHORISED EXPENDITURE.....	19
5. MUNICIPAL STANDARD CHART OF ACCOUNTS (MSCOA).....	19
5.1. RELEASE OF VERSION 6.9 OF THE CHART.....	19
5.2. FUTURE CHART CHANGES	20
5.2.1. Cost capitalisation to assets (current and non-current)	20
5.2.2. Entity reporting	21
5.2.3. SARS binding general ruling BGR74.....	21
5.2.4. Costing segment	22
5.3. IMPROVING MSCOA DATA STRINGS CREDIBILITY	22
5.3.1 Balance Sheet Budgeting	22
5.3.2 Use of external service providers.....	22
5.3.4 Use of modules on integrated system solution	23
5.3.5 Audited Actuals (AUDA) Data String vs Annual Financial Statements (AFS)	24
5.4. OWNERSHIP OF DATA ON MUNICIPAL SYSTEMS	24
5.5. BUDGET OVERRIDE AND VIREMENT	24
5.6. REGULATION OF THE MINIMUM BUSINESS PROCESSES AND TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR MSCOA.....	25
6. MUNI EMONITOR, FMCMM AND AUDIT ACTION PLAN SYSTEM	25
6.1 MUNI EMONITOR	25
6.2 AUDIT ACTION PLANS	26
6.3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY MATURITY MODEL (FMCMM)	26

7. SERVICE DELIVERY BUDGET AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS (SDBIP)	27
7.1. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) IN THE TOP-LAYER OF SDBIP	27
7.2. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE SDBIP	28
7.3. CRITERIA FOR ADJUSTING KPIs IN THE SDBIP	28
7.4. ALIGNMENT OF THE ADJUSTMENTS BUDGET AND ADJUSTMENTS TO THE SDBIP	29
8. THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET AND REPORTING REGULATIONS	30
8.1. ASSISTANCE WITH THE COMPILATION OF BUDGETS	30
9. SUBMITTING BUDGET DOCUMENTATION AND A SCHEDULES FOR THE 2025/26 MTREF	30
9.1. SUBMISSIONS TO THE NATIONAL TREASURY	31
9.2. TIME FRAMES FOR SUBMISSION	31
9.3. UPDATING OF CONTACT DETAILS ON GoMUNI	31
9.4. TRAINING ON GoMUNI	32

Introduction

This budget circular provides guidance to municipalities with their compilation of the 2025/26 Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF). It is linked to the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations (MBRR) and the Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (mSCOA) and strives to support municipalities' budget preparation processes so that the minimum requirements are achieved.

Among the objectives of this budget circular is to demonstrate how municipalities should undertake annual budget preparation in accordance with the budget and financial management reform agenda by focussing on key "game changers". These game-changers include ensuring that municipal budgets are funded, revenue management is optimised, assets are managed efficiently, supply chain management processes are adhered to, mSCOA is implemented correctly and that audit findings are addressed. Municipalities are reminded to refer to the annual budget circulars of the previous years for guidance in areas of the budget preparation that are not covered in this circular.

1. The South African economy and inflation targets

The National Treasury has lowered its 2024 economic growth forecast to 1.1 per cent, from the 1.3 per cent projected in the 2024 Budget Review, weighed down by stop-start economic growth and stubborn inflation in the first half of the year. The economy has since strengthened in response to the suspension of power cuts since March 2024, improved confidence following the formation of the government of national unity in June, better than-expected inflation outcomes in recent months and reduced borrowing costs. All these factors are expected to continue to support the economy over the period ahead.

GDP growth is projected to average 1.8 per cent from 2025 to 2027, up from 1.2 per cent in the preceding three years. The pace of growth is still being limited by persistent – though gradually easing – constraints, particularly in logistics infrastructure. Faster growth depends largely on maintaining macroeconomic stability, the continued implementation of structural economic reforms, improving state capabilities and supporting higher infrastructure investment.

The following macro-economic forecasts must be considered when preparing the 2025/26 MTREF municipal budgets.

Table 1: Macroeconomic performance and projections, 2023 - 2027

Fiscal year	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Actual	Estimate	Forecast		
CPI Inflation	5.9%	4.6%	4.4%	4.5%	2.5%

Source: Medium Term Budget Policy Statement 2024.

Note: the fiscal year referred to is the national fiscal year (April to March) which is more closely aligned to the municipal fiscal year (July to June) than the calendar year inflation.

Growth in household consumption expenditure is expected to improve to 1.2 per cent in 2024, up from 0.7 per cent in 2023. Households have seen growth in real incomes as this year progressed and inflation has cooled, while consumer confidence has been buoyed by several factors, including stable electricity supply and expectations of improving financial conditions following a September cut in interest rates. Real purchasing power is expected to be bolstered by a further moderation in inflation and lower interest rates supporting household balance sheets. The newly implemented two-pot retirement system, which allows consumers to withdraw a portion of their savings before retirement, may also boost household consumption over the next few years depending on the eventual use of the withdrawn funds.

During 2024, headline inflation has cooled to its lowest rate in over three years, supported by lower food and transport prices. Underlying inflation – measured by the core inflation rate, which excludes volatile items such as food, non-alcoholic beverages, fuels, and energy – has also moderated to two-year lows, supported by lower imported inflation. Headline inflation is projected to stabilise around the midpoint of the 3–6 per cent inflation target range in the medium term. Lower food prices, a stronger rand and comparatively low oil prices present favourable risks. Meanwhile, unfavourable risks to the outlook include higher administered prices and unfavourable weather conditions for agriculture.

Even though confidence of the consumers has been uplifted by the improved economy, households are still struggling to pay municipal accounts and that has a negative impact on municipal own revenues. It is therefore noted that variations in regional specifics are possible, however, any variation of assumptions must be explicitly set out and well explained in the budget narratives, in the absence of which the Treasuries will refer the budget back to council for alignment to the macroeconomic performance projections.

2. Key focus areas for the 2025/26 budget process

2.1 Local government conditional grants allocations

Over the 2025 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), the government proposes an allocation of 9.8 per cent to local government. Local government funding is projected to increase from R184.8 billion in 2025/26 to R197.9 billion in 2027/28. In 2025/26, this comprises R106.1 billion for the local government equitable share, R16.8 billion from the general fuel levy sharing with metros, and R61.8 billion for both direct and indirect conditional grants. The increased allocations to local government reflect the government's commitment to social protection as a cornerstone of its fiscal strategy, ensuring ongoing support for indigent populations and the expansion of critical infrastructure through conditional grants. These figures represent the preliminary fiscal framework outlined in the 2024 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement. The final details will be provided in the 2025 Budget Review.

Notable changes to the conditional grants system

Government has finalised its review of the conditional grant system and developed a range of reforms based on the results. These reforms are aimed to rationalise conditional grants and enhance their effectiveness and will be implemented from 2025/26.

In the metro space, National Treasury remain committed to consolidating grants to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Starting with the 2025 Budget, the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (NDPG direct) and the Programme and Project Preparation Support Grant (PPPSG) will be consolidated. Over the 2025 Medium-Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF), further reforms will include integrating the Municipal Systems Improvement Grant (MSIG) and the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (NDPG indirect) into the budget baselines of the Department of Cooperative Governance and the National Treasury, respectively. Both departments will still earmark these to ensure that these allocations are used for their original purposes.

Additionally, the non-metro components of the NDPG direct will be merged with a portion of the PPPSG, and the grant will be redesigned to better serve its objectives. Most of other proposed reforms being discussed currently are planned for medium- to long-term implementation.

NT advise municipalities to utilise the indicative numbers that were presented in the 2024 Division of Revenue Act when developing the 2025/26 MTREF calculations. It is crucial to also consider the

proposed changes to baselines that were presented in the 2024 MTBPS, as they may have an impact. NT recommend this must be prioritised in all budgetary planning for the upcoming fiscal year. In terms of the outer year allocations (2027/28 financial year), it is proposed that municipalities conservatively limit funding allocations to the indicative numbers as presented in the 2024 Division of Revenue Act for 2025/26. The Division of Revenue Bill, 2024, which includes the annexures outlining allocations to each municipality is available at:

<https://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2024/default.aspx>

Division Of Revenue Amendment Bill, 2024 (DoRAB)

Additional funding to the Municipal Disaster Recovery Grant – R684 million is added to the Municipal Disaster Recovery Grant (MDRG – Recovery) to fund the reconstruction and rehabilitation of municipal infrastructure damaged by the flood and storm surges that occurred in various parts of the country between December 2023 and July 2024. This will benefit several municipalities in five provinces with the following breakdown: Eastern Cape municipalities (10): R319 million; Free State municipalities (4): R48 million; KwaZulu-Natal municipalities (7): R152 million; Limpopo municipalities (4): R88 million; and Mpumalanga municipalities (4): R77 million.

Reprioritisation from the Public Transport Network Grant – R300 million is shifted from the Public Transport Network Grant (PTNG) to the Taxi Relief Fund to fund the extension of the programme. While the fund was introduced as a relief measure during the height of the COVID- 19 pandemic, it has been extended and forms part of the work that the Department of Transport is undertaking in the formalisation of the taxi industry.

Rescheduling of BFI funding in the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant – reduction of R225 million to the allocation of Drakenstein Local Municipality in the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) to align to the revised implementation plan and cashflow projections for the sanitation infrastructure upgrade project funded through the BFI.

Roll-over – R29 million is rolled over in the MSIG to complete projects related to the development of the Smart Cities Framework, Capital Expenditure Framework, Data Management Project, and Records Management Project.

Changes to conditional grant frameworks and allocations

The framework of the MDRG – recovery will be amended to ring-fence the additional funds for the repair and reconstruction of municipal infrastructure damaged by the disasters that occurred between December 2023 and June 2024.

The framework of the RBIG will be updated to amend the ring-fenced BFI amount for Drakenstein Local Municipality's sanitation infrastructure upgrade project.

The framework of the PTNG is amended to reflect the revised 2024/25 baseline following the reprioritisation towards the Taxi Relief Fund.

The framework of the MSIG is amended to account for the approved roll-over in the 2024/25 financial year.

Details per municipality, of the changes to allocations for the municipal disaster recovery grant, municipal systems improvement grant, public transport network grant and regional bulk infrastructure grant that have been described in Part 2 of the explanatory memorandum to the DoRAB will be gazetted. These changes per municipality are shown in **Annexures D to E and Appendix A** of the DoRAB.

All amended frameworks will be gazetted in terms of section 15(2) of the 2024 DoRA, after consulting Parliament.

2.2 Metropolitan Municipalities Trading Services Reform performance incentive

The provision of water, sanitation, electricity, and solid waste management are in a significant decline, resulting in poor reliability, safety, and accessibility of these services. The immediate cause of service decline is long-term and systemic underinvestment in maintaining, rehabilitating, and expanding infrastructure assets. Fundamental weaknesses in the structure and management of trading services underpin and exacerbate underinvestment in trading services infrastructure and assets. Currently, trading services face negative cash flows, placing at risk overall metropolitan municipalities (refers herein as metros)'s finances and their ability to support the necessary investments and contribute to the financial health of the entire municipality. Thus, there is a growing risk to municipal finances from the impact of failing trading services and an urgent need to incentivise the turnaround of trading services/ utilities to improve performance and increase investment in infrastructure.

A new feature of the conditional grant structure from 2024/25 is a performance incentive for metros who agree to embark upon specific trading services reforms, subject to performance on accountability, financial and operational performance metrics. The purpose of the Metro Trading Services performance incentive is to support and incentivise the turnaround of metro trading services to functional utilities that can access loan finance.

The incentive programme is currently planned to run over six years, from 2024/25 to 2030/31, and will cover water and sanitation (W&S), electricity and energy (E&E), and solid waste management (SWM). Maximum performance incentive amounts will be allocated to metros through the annual Division of Revenue Act, based on household and poverty indices. The envisaged scale of the incentive is such that, with commensurate internally generated funding, metro trading services capital expenditure can more than double compared to the current baseline.

To access the performance incentive, most metros have already developed Trading Services Reform Strategies, with two annexures (A1: Institutional Road Map, and A2: Business and Investment Plans) for their Water and Sanitation and Electricity and Energy Trading Services. (See Guidance Note 2: Assessment Criteria, Process and Timeframes, Metro preparations for the introduction of trading services infrastructure financing reforms). The date for submission of Solid Waste Management A, A1 and A2s is 31 July 2025. The guidance note is accessible [at this link on the National Treasury website](#).

Metros with acceptable reform strategies for W&S and E&E will need to develop a third Annexure to their sector-specific Trading Services Reform Strategies, namely Annexure 3: Performance Improvement Action Plan (PIAP). Each A3: PIAP will have approximately 40 indicators across three performance areas (Accountability, Financial and Operational (W&S or E&E or SWM)).

For each indicator, metros will specify their starting points, ambitions, programmes to accomplish the ambitions, and annual targets for the six years of the programme. The A3: PIAP as agreed to by National Treasury and passed by the metro council will become the metro's trading service **performance contract** against which incentive allocations are confirmed or adjusted, through the Division of Revenue Act. The Council-approved sector-specific A3: PIAP must be submitted to National Treasury as part of the metro's submission of budget documentation.

Metros are currently receiving formal feedback on submissions already made. Workshop briefings, a Guidance Note, and direct support will be provided to enable metros to complete the A3: PIAP template.

For metros seeking to access the incentive, the second day of the Mid-year Budget and Performance Review (MYBR) engagements will be dedicated in assessing the readiness for trading services reform and the details of A3: PIAP. Metros should submit a complete first draft A3: PIAP prior to the MYBR engagement.

Similarly, for metros seeking to access the incentive, the Budget and Benchmark engagements will devote time to assess investment plans, commercial initiatives, of trading services. Metros should be ready for the meeting with a final A3: PIAP.

Metros who have been or are unable to generate satisfactory Trading Services Reform Strategy documents will have further opportunities (with assistance of NT) to join the programme in future.

2.3. Reporting requirements for Disaster Allocations

National Treasury has in the previous circular (MFMA Circular No. 126 dated 07 December 2023) indicated that municipalities that receive their disaster funding before the start of the municipal year, i.e., 01 July, but after the end of the national financial year, 31 March, do not need to request a rollover as any deemed unspent disaster fund transferred to municipalities during that period (01 April to 30 June) will be regarded as an automatic rollover. This consideration is done because funding for this form of a disaster would have been transferred from the new year's allocation. Therefore, National Treasury will support that these unspent monies be carried over into the new municipal year's budget. The contents of MFMA Circular No 126 are not repeated here as the position still holds.

Disaster response funding for local government is provided for in the Division of Revenue Act, 2024 (Act No. 24 of 2024) (DoRA) through the Municipal Disaster Response Grant schedule 7B (MDRG 7B); and the Municipal Recovery Grant schedule 5B (MDRG 5B).

Funds from the MDRG 7B allocations are unallocated until a classification of a disaster by the Head of National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) in terms of Section 23(1)(b) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002). This grant provides for the immediate release of funds for disaster response if an occurrence cannot be adequately addressed in line with section 2(1)(b) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002).

The MDRG 5B funds longer-term rehabilitation and reconstruction of municipal infrastructure damaged by a disaster.

Section 25 of the 2024 DoRA provides that:

(3) (a) The transferring officer may, with the approval of the National Treasury, make one or more transfers of a Schedule 7 allocation to a province or municipality for a classified disaster, within 100 days after the date of the classification of the disaster.

(c) The National Treasury must, within 21 days after the end of the 100-day period envisaged in paragraph (a), by notice in the Gazette, publish all transfers of a Schedule 7 allocations made for a classified disaster.

(f) The funds approved in terms of paragraph (a) must be included in municipal adjustments budgets.

Any additional disaster funding that may be approved by the National Treasury through section 19 (6) of the DoRA which states that "On a joint request by the transferring officer and the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), the National Treasury may approve that a conditional allocation in Schedule 4, 5 or 6, or a portion thereof, be reallocated to pay for the alleviation of the impact of a classified disaster or the reconstruction or rehabilitation of infrastructure damage caused by a classified disaster", must comply with all the reporting requirements in the DoRA. Before the National Treasury approves a reallocation, the receiving officer of the conditional allocation in Schedule 4 or 5 or the transferring officer of a Schedule 6

allocation must confirm that the affected funds are not committed in terms of any statutory or contractual obligation". These funds upon approval constitute a part of the total disaster allocation for that financial year and must comply with the framework conditions of the disaster funding.

Upon approval by the National Treasury either through section 25(3)(a) or section 19(6), municipalities are required to follow all reporting prescripts in terms of the DoRA. In terms of the duties of receiving officer in respect of schedule 5 or 7 allocations, section 12 requires municipalities to report expenditure and transfers received monthly, not later than 10 working days after the end of each month. Further, a municipality must submit a quarterly non-financial performance report within 30 days after the end of each quarter. Lastly, municipalities must evaluate the financial and non-financial performance of the municipality, in respect of programmes partially or fully funded by a schedule 5 allocation and submit such evaluation to the transferring officer and the relevant provincial treasury within two months after the end of the 2024/25 financial year applicable to a municipality. The reporting must also comply with the framework of the Disaster grant.

In addition to the reporting requirements outlined in section 12 of the DoRA, municipalities must adhere to the reporting guidelines specified in the disaster management frameworks. Municipalities are required to implement all approved projects and ensure that allocated funds are used for their intended purposes. Municipalities should submit disaster assessment reports and funding requests, signed by the Accounting Officer, to the Provincial Disaster Management Centre (PDMC) within 14 days of the disaster classification. Additionally, municipalities must provide a performance report, including supporting evidence (such as payment certificates, photographs, and invoices) demonstrating the progress of project implementation, to the PDMC within 30 days after the end of the quarter in which the funds were utilised. National Treasury may withhold and / or stop any funds due to the municipality that does not adhere to the reporting requirements in the DoRA.

In terms of any disaster funding that municipalities receive between 01 July and 31 March and have not been spent by the end of the municipal year, 30 June, a request for a rollover is required and it is not deemed automatic. This is slightly different from an instance wherein disaster response funds are transferred to municipalities after the end of the national financial year, 31 March.

2.4. Budgeting and reporting of the Integrated National Electrification Programme (INEP)

The DoRA provides for the allocation to ensure access to electricity through provision of capital subsidies to Eskom and municipalities for the eradication of the household's electrification backlogs and to ensure universal access to electricity.

These allocations are made to Eskom for the Eskom areas of supply and to municipalities for their areas of supply. This allocation criteria on the electrification programme follows the powers and functions (licensed and unlicensed) to both municipalities and Eskom. However, there are instances where some allocations that are within the Eskom areas of supply, are made to municipalities. This is done to accelerate the delivery of the electrification services and the eradication of backlogs.

National Treasury has therefore issued the *mSCOA Circular No. 16* dated 16 October 2024 to provide more detailed guidance on the budgeting for these forms of funding. Municipalities are therefore requested to follow the *mSCOA Circular No. 16*.

2.5. Stopping and reallocation guidelines

The Division of Revenue Act provides that in instances where municipalities reflect a serious or persistent material breach of the Act (DoRA and MFMA), i.e., non-compliance against the provisions of the Acts, non-compliance against grant framework and significant under-expenditure, National Treasury may at its discretion or at the request of the transferring officer stop and reallocate the conditional grants from non-complying municipalities to best performing municipalities.

Following the 2024/25 mid-year expenditure reports (second quarter report) in terms of section 10 of the 2024 DoRA and sections 71 and 72 of the Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003) (MFMA), National Treasury annually considers invoking sections 18 and 19 of DoRA.

In terms of DoRA, National Treasury utilises the reported information from both municipalities and the transferring officers in terms of section 10 and section 71 of the DoRA and MFMA, respectively. The second quarter reports dated 31 December annually is targeted as a benchmark to determine whether municipalities have adequately performed against the total allocations made. Various conditional grant frameworks give guide on the conditions required for compliance and as a measure of the performance of the municipalities.

Transferring officers are required as part of section 12 of DoRA (duties of the transferring officer) to assess and monitor the performance of the municipalities against the conditional grants and recommend to National Treasury that underperforming municipalities should be considered for stopping, while best performing municipalities are considered for additional funding in terms of sections 18 and 19 of DoRA (stopping and reallocation). In terms of section 18(2) of DoRA, a request by a transferring officer or a receiving officer to stop the transfer of a schedule 4B or 5B allocation, or a portion thereof must be submitted to the National Treasury by **31 January 2025**.

National Treasury is required in terms of sections 17, 18 and 19 of DoRA and section 38 of the MFMA to consult municipalities and afford them an opportunity to make a written representation as to why their conditional grants should not be stopped. Only after National Treasury has consulted and engaged municipalities on this intention (stopping), would the Treasury decide to either stop or not stop. Therefore, the stopping and reallocation process is a consultative “process” for which National Treasury must decide on. Recommendations from all relevant stakeholders, i.e., transferring officers and provincial treasuries are considered before the National Treasury decides.

The following questions form part of the decision when National Treasury writes to municipalities to consider stopping the allocation due to persistent underspending and non-compliance against the provisions of the legislations:

- Why expenditure reported as at 31 December 2024 is below 40 per cent;
- Progress report against approved projections (provide list/ names of approved projects);
- Representation on the cash coverage for grants transferred (Liquidity ratio) and all committed unspent funds must be ringfenced;
- Representation on the initial cash flow projections against actual performance;
- Progress report on any approved rolled over for 2023/24 financial year;
- Commitment that the allocated funds are committed and that they will be fully spent by the end of the financial year, 30 June 2025, i.e., commitment that the municipality will not request rollover against the funds proposed to be stopped;
- Representation on all projects awarded after the second quarter of the municipal financial year as at 31 December 2024;

- Representation on any commitments made against Supply Chain Management Regulation 32 projects in terms of the Supply Chain Management policy and chapter 11 of the MFMA and progress made against these projects;
- Declaration by the municipality on the amount that should be stopped by National Treasury;
- All reporting must be accurate and aligned to mSCOA system and
- An acceleration plan against the 2024/25 approved implementation plan.

According to section 19 of DoRA, when a schedule 4B or 5B allocation, or a portion thereof, is stopped in terms of section 18, the National Treasury may, after consultation with the transferring officer and the relevant provincial treasury, determine the portion of the allocation to be reallocated, as the same type of allocation as it was allocated originally, to one or more provinces or municipalities, on condition that the allocation must be spent by the end of the 2024/25 financial year.

Reallocation is therefore based on availability of funding, with priority being reallocation of funds within the same district or a province. Priority is also given to the best performing municipalities, municipalities with ready projects for implementation, committed multi-projects that could be brought forward, etc i.e., A maximum expenditure of 70 per cent against original allocation is used as an indicator for reallocation. In terms of stopping of the allocations against slow spending municipalities, a 40 per cent benchmark is used to engage municipalities whether their funds should be stopped or not. It is important to note that a representation from municipalities in terms of section 38(2) (a) of the MFMA and a recommendation from the transferring officer/provincial treasury is considered before National Treasury can stop the funds.

3. Revenue Management

The weak economic growth continues to impact municipal finances, and this has strained consumers' ability to pay for services as communicated in MFMA Circular No. 89. Coupled with this conundrum is the marginal growth in national transfers as compared to the past. These two critical factors necessitate municipalities to function optimally, suggesting that municipal operations, processes, and procedures must be efficient. Inefficiencies in this space are guaranteed to manifest on municipal finances. Although some municipalities have managed these challenges well, others have fallen into financial distress and face liquidity challenges. Subsequently, municipalities are unable to meet their payment obligations to Eskom, water boards and other creditors. Therefore, municipalities must maximise their revenue generating potential and collect what is due to them and concurrently, eliminate wasteful and non-core spending. Municipal budgets will be scrutinised to ensure that municipalities adequately provide for their core mandate and to service their debt obligations. Municipalities must ensure that expenditure is limited to the maximum revenue collected and not spend money that they do not have.

National Treasury encourages municipalities to maintain tariff increases at levels that reflect an appropriate balance between the affordability to poorer households and other customers while ensuring that the tariffs are cost reflective for the financial sustainability of the municipality. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation is forecasted to be 4.4 per cent; therefore, municipalities are required to justify all increases more than the projected inflation target for 2025/26 in their budget narratives and pay careful attention to the differential incidence of tariff increases across all consumer groups. In addition, municipalities should include details of their revenue growth assumptions for the different service charges in the budget narrative.

3.1 Revenue enhancement and Improved debt collection

Although different methods and tools are available to municipalities for improving revenue and debt collection through external sources, National Treasury would like to encourage municipalities to productively make use of the available revenue tools developed and available.

A useful method to ensure that all properties in the municipality are levied as per the 2014 Amended Property Rates Act and the municipality's tariffs and rates policies, is the correct use of the **National Treasury Valuation Roll Reconciliation Tool**. Except for property rates, other statistical data of consumers, like the number of users for different services (although it will not perfectly match) can also be benchmarked against.

The correct use of **National Treasury Cost Reflective Tariff** and **Valuation Roll Reconciliation Tools**, together with the statistical data from the municipal billing system, must be utilised to ensure the maximum levying of revenue. Unfortunately, these tools cannot be used successfully if the input data is not correct and / or output is not correctly interpreted.

The **Smart Meters Grant Roll-Out** and **RT29-2024** Transversal Tender (available to all government institutions) are both useful not only to improve revenue in municipalities, but also to assist in improving debt collection. Not only can water and electricity losses be reduced, but cash can be generated up front.

By making use of the available tools and smart metering systems, municipalities will be in a better position to prepare cost-reflective tariffs and credible funded budgets, budgets that align with actual revenues and expenditures.

Municipalities must focus on increasing collection rates, curbing material losses, and aligning their budgets with actual financial realities.

3.2 Maximising the revenue generation of the municipal revenue base

Property Rates

Reference is made to MFMA Circulars No. 93, paragraph 3, 98 paragraph 4.1 and 123 paragraph 5.1. The emphasis in these MFMA Circulars is to ensure that municipalities are using their entire revenue base for the revenue budget projections. The status quo remains; however, it is essential that municipalities reconcile their most recent consolidated valuation roll data to that of the current billing system to ensure that revenue anticipated from property rates is realistic. The municipalities should implement a data management strategy and develop internal capacity to perform these reconciliations and investigations to improve completeness of billing.

The periodic general valuation of properties can result in significant changes in the market values of properties, especially where regular supplementary valuations are not done during the period of validity of the valuation roll. In the year in which a new valuation roll is implemented, where the general valuation of properties results in significant increases in the market values of a significant proportion of the properties, it would be advisable to reduce the cent in the Rand rates for categories of rateable properties for which the greater proportion of the market values increased significantly in the general valuation. To do this, the municipality must run various permutations of different cent in the Rand rates against different categories of properties to ascertain the rates payable against the different permutations.

The use of the Valuation Roll Reconciliation tool of National Treasury, can assist to test the various permutations of tariffs. After running the different permutations, the municipality can then determine cent in the Rand rates for the different categories of rateable properties that do not cause rates shocks that increase the rates payable by property owners excessively.

Municipalities are referred to the Department of Cooperative Governance's practice note in this regard, which is contained in the Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act General Guidelines (March 2020) which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.cogta.gov.za/index.php/municipal-property-rates/>

Requirements for a billing report

The Billing report must at a minimum provide the following per each property:

- Market value;
- Property category;
- Amount billed;
- Unique property identifier (linked to the Valuation Roll);
- Property owner;
- Rebate value;
- Exemption value; and
- Reduction value.

Although the format of the billing reports will vary across municipalities, the billing report will always have the above-mentioned specifics for any municipality regardless of the financial system used as they all use the valuation roll as the basis to update the municipal financial system. Municipalities are advised to engage their service providers in ensuring that there is a standardised billing report that considers the minimum billing report requirements.

Part A and Part B Register

Reference is made to the Municipal Property Rates Act – section 23 of the MPRA reads as follows:

1. A municipality must draw up and maintain a register in respect of properties situated within that municipality, consisting of a Part A and Part B;
2. Part A of the register consists of the current valuation roll of the municipality, including any supplementary valuation rolls of the municipality prepared in terms of section 78;
3. Part B of the register must specify which properties on the valuation roll or any supplementary valuation rolls are subject to – (a) an exemption from the rate in terms of section 15; (b) a rebate on or a reduction in the rate in terms of section 15; (c) a phasing-in of the rate in terms of section 21; or (d) an exclusion referred to in section 17 (1) (a), (e), (g), (h) and (i);
4. The register must be open for inspection by the public during office hours. If the municipality has an official website or another website available to it, the register must be displayed on that website; and
5. A municipality must at regular intervals, but at least annually, update Part B of the register. Part A of the register must be updated in accordance with the provisions of this Act relating to the updating and supplementing of valuation rolls.

Based on the cited section, municipalities are expected to comply with the provisions of section 23 of the MPRA to ensure that the latest information is used in the reconciliation process. All revenue foregone as supported by municipal policies due to municipal reductions rebates and exemptions must be accounted for in the Part B register and all subsequent supplementary rolls performed are accounted for using a Part A register.

Furthermore, municipalities are also advised and expected to comply with section 8(1) of the MPRA in terms of the billing methodology that should be specified within their policies to ensure that the correct categories (based on the selection made by the municipality) are used

in the reconciliation process. A further test would be to reconcile this information with the Deeds Office registry.

In accordance with the MFMA Circular No. 93, municipalities are once more requested to submit their reconciliation of the Valuation roll, Part A register of the billing system to National Treasury on a quarterly basis by no later than the 10th working day after the end of the quarter. A detailed action plan must accompany the reconciliation where variances are noted.

[A copy of the Valuation Roll Reconciliation Tool template is available as Annexure A of this Circular.](#)

The information must be uploaded by the municipality's approved registered user(s) using the GoMuni Upload Portal at: https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin.

3.3 Setting cost reflective tariffs

It is important that municipalities periodically conduct cost of supply studies in the provision of each basic service. Municipalities must ensure that when tariffs are designed that consumption charges for services are only based on consumption and all other variable costs and fixed costs e.g., salary and wages, etc. should be covered by a fixed charge. Municipalities must ensure that when tariffs are designed, capital repayment of loans are included in the provision for depreciation that must be budgeted for.

During the budgeting process, provision must be made for revenue to be generated by the tariffs levied for services to address the maintenance of infrastructure. Repairs and Maintenance need to be sufficiently covered in Employee Related Costs, Contracted Services, Operational Expenditure, and Inventory Consumed. New infrastructure developments in a municipal area of jurisdiction should be obliged to consider and incorporate efficiency sources of energy available such as solar or wind to respond to the ongoing global energy crisis. Using the latest format of the Cost Reflective Tariff Tool after the upload of the Adjustments Budget, again after the Tabled Budget (Draft Budget) and again after the Council Approved Budget, municipalities will be able to have a better understanding of the cost reflectiveness of its tariffs and future tariff adjustments successfully explained.

It is important to note that the Cost Reflective Tariff Tool's outcome is dependent on a well-structured budget with all applicable revenue and expenditure items included.

The latest version, National Treasury Tariff Tool Linked Vol. 2 of 27 November 2024, is available as **Annexure B** of this Circular. This latest Volume 2 now replaces the Tariff Setting Tool - 05 November 2019 mentioned in MFMA Circular No. 98.

The populated Cost Reflective Tariff Tool, must be uploaded by the municipality's approved registered user(s) using the GoMuni Upload Portal at:

https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin.

3.4 Consumer Deposits and securities

Credit control policies must be reviewed and amended to include the raising of consumer deposits, the authority to raise deposits must be deleted where it is still in the Electricity and Water by-laws, this must be included in the credit control and debt collection by-laws. Deposits must be equal or more than two months bulk accounts from water services authorities and Eskom.

3.5 Contracts with customers

All municipalities should ensure that their service agreements with customers address the following matters:

- Requirements of POPIA;
- Digital and Physical Domicile for the delivery of notices;
- Acceptance of liability in the case of proven tampering of services;
- Acceptance of Magistrates Court Jurisdiction if in arrears and legal action has been taken;
- Acceptance to adhere to Municipal policies and by-laws;
- Acceptance and approval to be handed over to third party if in arrears inclusive of credit bureau;
- Acceptance to give access to meter readers to read meters;
- Municipality accept to render promptly bills; and
- Municipality accept to limit the estimation of consumption on meters.

3.6 Indigent Management

It is critical to progressively manage the restriction of free basic services to national policy limits. Therefore, free basic services to indigent households must be restricted. Where any unlimited supply or supply above national policy limits is provided, the budget narrative must explicitly articulate how this is funded, also in a context of facilitating adequate asset management and adequate provision for related debt impairment and ability to maintain payment of Eskom, bulk water, and other creditors.

Establishing and maintaining credible indigent register – It is important that the municipalities undertake the following actions to conduct quality control and monitor the indigents:

- Check accuracy and identify any overstatement of the indigent debtor which will enable municipalities to confirm the accuracy of the reported number of indigent debtors;
- Proactively identify indigent citizens and accelerate the registration process through data-driven indigency status verification, as a precursor to tabling applications to Council for approval;
- Verify the status of indigents on the current indigent register thereby reducing the risk of citizens benefiting from the indigent subsidy when they do not qualify for it anymore;
- Create a verifiable indigent register which reduces performance audit risk through the provision of monthly controls and credible, third party, data-driven evidence to support the validity of households registered as indigent;
- Use the insight provided regarding indigents to make any necessary amendments to current Indigent Policy; and
- Municipalities are advised to work closely with DCoG and their respective provincial counterparts to simplify its indigent management registration processes – even consider qualifying criteria that can be independently checked without requiring a hefty administration burden on indigent households that are already financially constrained, including facilitating such on-site close to where indigents may reside. It is noted that the municipality needs to report on all indigent households for water and energy within its demarcation also in the Eskom supplied areas since the LGES: Free basis services (FBS) allocation is targeted at the demarcation. The municipality must therefore focus in its 2024/25 MTREF Schedule A submission to report on all indigent households (also in Eskom supplied areas).

3.7. Voluntary restriction of notified maximum demand (NMD)

Municipalities are advised that Eskom agreed with National Treasury that once a municipality in principle agreed to a Notified Maximum Demand (NMD) restriction with National Treasury,

Eskom will within 30 days of National Treasury request advise on its ability to restrict the NMD at bulk supply points in that municipality. Eskom will restrict the NMD or not charge any NMD exceedance charges and penalties to the municipality until 30 June 2027 or earlier as may be agreed between National Treasury and the municipality. Should any municipality with the electricity function not be able to maintain its Eskom bulk account, it is strongly urged to make an application to the National Treasury for such a voluntary restriction of its NMD by Eskom. The application must include a council resolution to the effect that council approves and agrees to such a voluntary restriction and the effective date thereof. National Treasury will then make an application to Eskom for this purpose.

3.8. Pro-actively managing collection of municipal revenue in Eskom supplied areas

The National Treasury notes that in the context of the Electricity Regulation Act, 2006 (ERA) existing section 21(5) prohibiting Eskom to cut supply in their areas to assist municipalities to collect on rates, water, wastewater and refuse removal – municipalities have no other tool but the restriction of water to collect in Eskom supply areas. Until ERA is amended it is critical that municipalities update their By-laws and policies to facilitate and legally allow the restriction of water as part of proper credit control for municipal revenue collection in Eskom supplied areas. The process before the supply of water is restricted/ limited, must honour the water supply rights of the indigent as well as the administrative processes and procedures, as contained in the municipal by-laws and policies read with section 4(3)(a) of the Water Services Act.

3.9. Eskom Bulk Tariff increases

The National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) is responsible for the price determination of the bulk costs of electricity. In the municipal financial year 2024/25, bulk electricity costs increased by 12.7 per cent, a slight decrease as compared to 15.0 per cent in the 2023/24 municipal financial year.

Given the absence of an approved tariff increase by Eskom and no approval of Eskom tariff application available yet for the 2025/26 financial year, municipalities are cautioned to not only use the National Treasury Cost Reflective Tariff Tool, but also to do the Cost of Supply Study as prescribed by NERSA.

3.10. Organ of State Debt

The reconciliation of Organ of State debt begins with the municipal statement as the foundational document, serving as the baseline for reviewing and verifying all transactions, balances, and outstanding amounts between the municipality and the respective organ of state. This statement ensures that the reconciliation process is rooted in the municipality's official financial records. Technical and provincial advisors must meticulously analyse the statement to confirm that it accurately reflects all billed amounts, payments received, adjustments made, and any interest or penalties applied. By starting with the municipal statement, the process systematically identifies discrepancies and allows for their resolution through collaboration with the municipality and the organ of state.

Using the municipal statement as the starting point, the municipality will cross-check it against the organ of state's financial records, identifying mismatches or omissions. The detailed analysis will uncover issues such as unrecorded payments, incorrect billing, or misallocated funds. Once all discrepancies are resolved and the accounts are reconciled, the verified amounts become final and binding. It is imperative that all accounts verified during this reconciliation process are settled in full. This ensures that both the municipality and the organ of state fulfil their financial obligations, promoting accountability and reducing long-standing debt burdens.

As part of the reconciliation, municipalities must apply their credit control and debt collection policies, which are also applicable to Organ of State accounts. These policies ensure structured and proactive debt management, including efforts to engage the organ of state to finalise payment agreements for the settled amounts. Additionally, any credits or overpayments identified during reconciliation must be processed promptly by the municipality through issuing credit notes or adjusting in their financial systems. Evidence supporting reconciled balances, credits, or any adjustments must be retained to ensure compliance with financial management standards and to maintain transparency.

Finally, once the reconciliation is complete and all parties agree on the verified balances, the municipality must formally sign off on the reconciled accounts. This step signifies the accuracy and acceptance of the financial records. The organ of state must then ensure that all verified accounts are settled in full without delay, demonstrating its commitment to sound financial management and equitable treatment of debtors. By enforcing credit control measures and focusing on timely settlement, the municipality not only improves its financial position, but also strengthens relationships with organs of state, fostering a culture of accountability and mutual respect.

4. Funding of municipal budgets and other management issues

4.1. Funding of municipal budgets

National Treasury has observed over the years that many municipalities that adopt unfunded budgets are adopting budget funding plans as a mere compliance exercise. There is very little progress made to turn around from an unfunded budget position, to a funded one. To this effect, National Treasury will only allow municipalities to turn around from an unfunded budget position to a funded position within three years, of which in each year there should be measurable progress in terms of the improvement in the collection rate and cost containment initiatives. Failure for the municipalities to show visible progress each year, such municipality will not be allowed to table an unfunded budget. On monthly basis, these municipalities are required to submit progress reports to the GoMuni Portal which must be closely monitored by the respective Provincial Treasuries.

Also note that all municipalities that adopted funded budgets in 2024/25, will not be allowed to adopt unfunded budgets in 2025/26 and going forward, this implies that such budget will be referred by National/ Provincial treasury for review until the funded position is achieved. This is to enforce compliance with Section 18 of the MFMA and to encourage prudent financial management which includes collecting what is due to a municipality and paying for services rendered.

4.2. Employee related Costs

The salary and wage collective agreement were signed by the parties of the South African Local Government Bargaining Council (SALGBC) on Friday, 6 September 2024 and municipalities are expected to implement the agreement with immediate effect as from 1 July 2024.

In respect of the 2025/26 financial year, all employees covered by this agreement shall receive, with effect from 1 July 2025, an increase based on the average CPI percentage for the period 1 February 2024 until 31 January 2025, plus 0.75 per cent. The publications of Statistics South Africa shall be used to determine the average CPI.

In case the average CPI percentage for the period 1 February 2025 until 31 January 2026 is less than 4 per cent, it will be deemed to be 4 per cent, and if the average CPI percentage for this period is higher than 7 per cent, it will be deemed to be 7 per cent.

Municipalities that wish to be exempted from the collective agreement for this financial year, should apply 30-days from the date of approval of the budget of the municipality by the municipal council, or 30 June 2025. The onus to prove the case for the granting of exemption lies with the applicant municipality, and guidance is provided by SALGA.

If the municipality has missed the deadline to apply for exemption, and still wishes to do so, then the municipality will have to apply for condonation for the late referral and must show good cause of the referral as the panellist has the power to condone any failure to meet timelines. The panellist has the powers to grant full or partial exemption, and a municipality can apply to be exempted from any provision in the agreement.

In addition, the municipality must ensure that it enlists responses to all the indicators in terms of Sections 138 and 140 of the Municipal Finance Management Act. All the above are intended to ensure that municipalities find it easier to file appropriate exemption applications backed by relevant financial information.

4.3. Remuneration of Councillors

Municipalities are advised to budget for the actual costs approved in accordance with the Government Gazette on the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act: Determination of Upper Limits of Salaries, Allowances and Benefits of different members of municipal councils published annually between December and January by the Department of Cooperative Governance. It is anticipated that this salary determination will also consider the fiscal constraints. Municipalities should also consider the guidance provided above on salary increases for municipal officials during this process. Any overpayment to councilors contrary to the upper limits as published by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs will be irregular expenditure in terms of section 167 of the MFMA and must be recovered from the councilor(s) concerned.

4.4. Municipal Pension Fund Contributions

It has been observed that municipalities have defaulted on their responsibility to ensure that 3rd party payment obligations are met, despite deductions being made from employees' salaries. This has put several municipal employees in a very unfortunate situation where they have no funds in their pension fund accounts despite salary deductions having been made.

We wish to refer accounting officers to their fiduciary responsibilities as outlined in section 61(2)(a) of the MFMA, in terms of which an accounting officer may not act in a way that is inconsistent with the duties assigned to accounting officers of municipalities in terms of the MFMA. The failure to pay over deductions to pension funds is inconsistent with section 65(2)(f) of the MFMA which requires the accounting officer to ensure that the municipality complies with its tax, levy, duty, pension, medical aid, audit fees and other statutory commitments. Equally of importance is to ensure that payments to these statutory bodies are prioritised, or suitable arrangements are made with them towards settling their accounts.

Such failure constitutes an act of financial misconduct in terms of section 171(1)(b) of the MFMA, which provides that the accounting officer of a municipality commits an act of financial misconduct if he or she deliberately or negligently fails to comply with a duty imposed by a provision of the Act on the accounting officer of a municipality.

Additionally, the above failure also constitutes a financial offence in terms of section 173 of the MFMA, read together with the Municipal Regulations on Financial Misconduct Procedures and Criminal Proceedings. Section 173 of the MFMA provides that the accounting officer is guilty of an offence if that accounting officer, amongst others, deliberately or in a grossly negligent way contravenes or fails to comply with section 65(2)(f) of the MFMA.

Municipalities must therefore ensure that measures are put in place to ensure that salary deductions for pension fund contributions are paid over to the pension funds. In addition, those municipalities who have outstanding pension fund contributions are advised to ensure that any outstanding payments are paid over by latest end of the 2024/25 financial year, failure which will result in punitive measures being implemented against relevant municipalities.

Equally important is to ensure that payments to these statutory bodies are prioritised, or suitable arrangements are made with them towards settling their accounts. The two bodies must be equally urged to ensure that they provide suitable attachments when they issue their invoices to the municipality so that there is clarity of payments being made.

4.5. Unauthorised, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure reduction and implementation of consequence management

Section 62(1)(d) of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (MFMA) requires an accounting officer of a municipality to take reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised, irregular, or fruitless and wasteful expenditure (UIFWE) and other losses. Section 62(1)(e) of the MFMA obligates the accounting officer to ensure that disciplinary or, when appropriate, criminal proceedings are instituted against any municipal official who has allegedly committed an act of financial misconduct or an offence in terms of Chapter 15 of the MFMA.

We have noted that many municipalities still have high UIFWE disclosed in their annual financial statements. The high UIFWE balances confirms that more still needs to be done by the Municipal Public Accounts Committee (MPAC) in line with section 32 of the MFMA to address the balance of UIFWE. Municipalities are continuing to incur UIFWE year-on-year, which is indicative of ineffective preventative.

In addition to the above, many municipalities are still not establishing disciplinary boards or ensuring that the board in place to investigate allegations or instances of financial misconduct are functional. The disciplinary board is an independent advisory body that assists the council with the investigation of allegations of financial misconduct and is required in terms of regulation 4(1) of the Municipal Regulations on Financial Misconduct Procedures and Criminal Proceedings, 2014. Therefore, the establishment of a disciplinary board is a legislative requirement.

Therefore, municipalities are required to submit an action plan that must address timelines for the establishment of the disciplinary board (where one does not exist) as well as addressing the backlogs of financial misconduct investigations. The action plan must address the period from 02 January 2024 to 31 August 2025. The action plan should include monthly calendar actions that will allow the monitoring of the compiled action plan.

The action plan should include the following information:

- a. a plan to process the UIFWE balances up to 30 June 2024 by 31 August 2025 and how future UIFWE will be prevented with specific UIFWE prevention controls;
- b. the key process changes (including administrative processes) the municipality will implement to ensure that the UIFWE balances are processed to adhere to the August 2025 deadline; and
- c. the process to be followed to establish and appoint members of the disciplinary board and address the backlog of financial misconduct referrals to the disciplinary board.

The above action plan must be approved by council together with the 2024/25 adjustments budget and should be submitted to the National Treasury through the MFMA helpdesk at mfma@treasury.gov.za by the latest end of February 2025.

4.6. Special Adjustment Budget to authorise 2023/24 Unauthorised Expenditure

Section 28(2)(g) of the MFMA, read with regulation 23(6) of the Municipal Budget and Reporting (MBRR), provides the circumstances and the timelines within which the municipality must adjust its budget in relation to the unauthorised expenditure incurred during the previous financial year.

Regulation 23(6)(a) of the MBRR requires that the budget be dealt with as part of the adjustments budget contemplated in sub-regulation (1) of the MBRR. In terms of sub-regulation (1), an adjustments budget referred to in sections 28(2)(b), (d) and (f) of the MFMA may be tabled in the municipal council at any time after the mid-year budget and performance assessment has been tabled in the council but not later than 28 February of the current year. Additionally, in terms of regulation 23(6)(b), a special adjustments budget must be tabled in the municipal council when a mayor tables the annual report in terms of section 127(2) of the MFMA, which may only deal with unauthorised expenditure from the previous financial year which the council is being requested to authorise in terms of section 32(2)(a)(i) of the MFMA.

Therefore, municipalities are reminded to take this opportunity to table and approve an adjustments budget in relation to the unauthorised expenditure which was incurred during the 2023/24 financial year in line with section 28(2)(g) of the MFMA, read with regulation 23(6).

5. Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (*mSCOA*)

5.1. Release of Version 6.9 of the Chart

On an annual basis, the *mSCOA* chart is reviewed to address implementation challenges and correct chart related errors. Towards this end, Version 6.9 is released with this circular. Version 6.9 of the chart will be effective from 2025/26 and must be used to compile the 2025/26 MTREF. The linkages to chart version 6.9 can be downloaded from GoMuni on the following link under the *mSCOA*/ List *mSCOA* WIP account linkages menu option:

https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin

The reports on the Local Government and Reporting System (LGDRS) are populated from financial and non-financial data strings. Municipalities must use the linkages on GoMuni referred to above and not the formulas in the regulated MBRR Schedules when generating their data strings.

The MBRR Schedules (A to F) and non-financial data string (A1S) was also aligned to chart version 6.9. A protected version of the MBRR Schedules for version 6.9 of the A1S are available on the MFMA Webpage on the link below:

<http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/RegulationsandGazettes/Municipal%20Budget%20and%20Reporting%20Regulations/Pages/default.aspx>

Municipalities must verify that the A1S data string does not contain spaces and special characters prior to submission to the GoMuni Upload portal as this will result in the data not pulling through on table A10 of the A1 system generated schedule.

All municipalities must prepare their 2025/26 MTREF budgets using the budget modules of their integrated systems solution, generate their financial and non-financial data string and produce the Schedule A1 directly from the integrated systems solution. The manual preparation of these documents outside the integrated systems solution is not allowed in terms of the *mSCOA* Regulations.

For the National Treasury to consider a new chart change in version 6.10 of the chart, the issue must be logged with all relevant detail, supporting documents and screenshots (where applicable) on the *mSCOA* Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) portal by 31 August 2025. The *mSCOA* FAQ portal can be accessed by all registered GoMuni users on the following link:

https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin

Importantly, when a FAQ is logged, it is considered by the FAQ committee after it has been investigated. If the FAQ members do not find grounds for a chart change, the FAQ will be closed with an explanation. If there is merit for a chart change in the next version of the chart, the matter is referred to the *mSCOA* Technical and Steering Committees for recommendation and approval. This process only concludes by the end of October annually. The FAQ process will therefore not provide quick responses to queries.

If a query pertains to GoMuni related issues (such as the **A**, **B** and **C** Schedules) and not a chart change, then an email with all relevant detail, supporting documents and screenshots must be send to lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za.

It should also be noted that *mSCOA* Circulars No 9, 10, 11 and 12 have also been aligned to *mSCOA* chart version 6.9 and the addendums to these circulars are released with this circular and will be published on the MFMA webpage. The addendums to these circulars can be accessed on the following link:

<https://mfma.treasury.gov.za/RegulationsandGazettes/MunicipalRegulationsOnAStandardChartOfAccountsFinal/Pages/default.aspx>

5.2. Future chart changes

The following chart changes are still under consultation and if approved, it will be effected in chart version 6.10:

5.2.1. Cost capitalisation to assets (current and non-current)

The National Treasury has received multiple requests through the *mSCOA* FAQ database to include items for Cost Capitalisation to Assets (current and non-Current) in alignment with the principle applied to Employee Related Costs (Cost Capitalisation to PPE). The requested items pertain mainly to the following categories:

- Employee Related Cost
- Depreciation
- Contracted services (such as maintenance)
- Consumables and materials
- Other operating costs etc

In terms of the Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (GRAP), GRAP 1.104 states that *an entity shall present an analysis of expenses using a classification based on either the nature of expenses or their function within the entity, whichever provides information that is reliable and more relevant.*

Municipalities provide this analysis based on the nature of the expenses.

GRAP 12 further requires that *Inventories paragraphs 19 to 28 must be considered to determine which costs must be included in the cost price of inventory. In terms of paragraph 19 the cost of inventories shall comprise all costs of purchase, costs of conversion and other costs incurred in bringing the inventories to their present location and condition.*

This GRAP standard specifically requires that any conversion costs be accounted for as part of the cost of inventory, rather than being expensed according to their nature. These costs may include labour and other expenses for personnel directly involved in the conversion process, such as water purification, as well as any attributable overheads.

When costs related to water inventory are capitalised in accordance with GRAP 12.19, no expense is recognised at the time of incurrence since a capital item is created. The expense is only recognised when the water inventory is distributed, at which point it is recorded as "Inventory consumed". This will reflect the nature of the expense incurred.

This is similar in principle to costs that are capitalised to property, plant, and equipment in accordance with GRAP 17.22. GRAP 17.22 outlines that examples of directly attributable costs that should be capitalised as part of the cost of an item of property, plant, and equipment (PPE) include expenses such as employee costs related to the construction or acquisition of the PPE, site preparation, delivery, installation, and assembly costs, among others. Once the PPE is ready for use (i.e., when it becomes available for its intended purpose), an expense is recognised in the form of "Depreciation". This depreciation represents the nature of the expense incurred over time, rather than the individual costs that were initially capitalised.

Therefore, it would not be correct to analyse and present the cost items incurred per GRAP 12.19 as the expense items outlined in the requirements of GRAP 1.104. The actual expense, by nature, is the "inventory consumed" expense, which reflects the consumption of the inventory rather than the individual costs incurred during its acquisition or conversion.

Given the current lack of consistency and the fact that only a few municipalities are accurately accounting for cost capitalisation, a guide will be issued once the consultation process with National Treasury's Office of the Accountant-General, the Accounting Standards Board (OAG), and the Auditor-General (AGSA) has been concluded.

5.2.2. Entity reporting

Currently the Local Government Database and Reporting System (LGDRS) does not make provision for the separate submission of data strings for municipal entities. However, NT is in the process of developing data strings for entities for implementation in chart version 6.10. In the interim, municipalities must verify the VAT 201 return information directly with their entity. It should be emphasised that SARS is using the *mSCOA* data strings submitted to the GoMuni Upload portal for their verification processes relating to VAT 201 returns, and municipalities should ensure that their consolidated data strings are credible, as incorrect data will negatively impact this process.

5.2.3. SARS binding general ruling BGR74

This binding general ruling issued by SARS under section 89 of the Tax Administration Act 28 of 2011 sets out the VAT treatment of supplies of goods or services made by municipalities to the national or provincial government under each contracting method. This BGR does not determine the contractual agreement between the parties but gives the VAT implications based on the nature of the transaction and the contractual capacity of the parties to the agreement. Note that the BGR 74 must be interpreted with the Value-Added Tax Act 89 of 1991.

In applying the principles of BGR 74, it is possible for municipalities to recognise output tax liabilities which they previously did not recognise. Municipalities must make appropriate payment arrangements with SARS to settle their previous unrecognised output tax liabilities due to SARS while ensuring that current output tax liabilities are settled without delay. While municipalities under BGR 74 may need to recognise output tax liabilities, municipalities should

also recognise possible previously unrecognised input tax deductions, for example, in the case of VAT expenditure incurred while completing certain housing programmes.

In accordance with the guidelines outlined in mSCOA Circular No. 12: Guidance on Value Added Tax (VAT), where municipalities are the developers for housing projects (excluding where the housing project relates to rental stock), municipalities can deduct the input tax on VAT expenditure incurred in the payment of housing and other contractors, which they have contracted in the course of constructing the houses. The VAT 409 Guide for Fixed Property and Construction for Vendors provides further guidance on the issue of low-cost housing.

In accordance with section 65(2)(f) of the MFMA, the municipality must comply with its tax commitments. Failure by the accounting officer of a municipality to comply with the duty imposed by section 65(2)(f) of the MFMA, which relates to tax commitments, not only constitutes an act of financial misconduct in terms of section 171(1)(b) of the MFMA, but also a financial offence in terms of section 173 of the MFMA. In terms of MFMA Circular No. 74, municipalities were advised to refrain from engaging tax consultants or other external service providers in preparing and reviewing their VAT returns. Where municipalities appoint tax consultants and other service providers to assist with the preparation, submission, review or correcting of VAT returns, the expenditure incurred in paying for the tax consultants and other service providers constitutes fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

5.2.4. Costing segment

The costing segment includes provisions for secondary cost allocation and categorise charge-out and recoveries separately. This approach ensures that there is a clear distinction in costs associated with both internal allocations and external recoveries, allowing for more accurate financial management and reporting. Due to the inconsistent implementation of the costing segment across municipalities, the National Treasury will review the costing segment in 2025. Changes to the principles in the Project Summary Document (PSD) as well as the mSCOA chart version 6.10 are envisaged.

5.3. Improving mSCOA data strings credibility

5.3.1 Balance Sheet Budgeting

Balance sheet budgeting refers to the practise where the revenue and expenditure transactions, as well as the financial impact of these transactions on the statement of financial position, are included in the budget. In other words, all the planned transactions must be included in the budget. The debiting and crediting of all the transactions that will transpire in the ensuing financial year equates to balance sheet budgeting; thus, planning for the expense as well as the accrual, and payment of the liability. The revenue and expenditure must be accrued in the control accounts at correct posting levels and payments made and received. The correct combination of the mSCOA segments must also be used to ensure that data strings are credible. The PSD provides guidance on data string combinations.

Financial system solutions should be set-up correctly for balance sheet budgeting.

5.3.2 Use of external service providers

When municipalities appoint external service providers, they must ensure that these service providers have the expertise and skills to comply with the mSCOA Regulations. Section 5(2) of these regulations states that:

(2) The financial and business applications or systems used by a municipality or municipal entity must—

- (a) provide for the hosting of the general ledger structured in accordance with the classification framework determined in terms of regulation 4(2);
- (b) be capable of accommodating and operating the standard chart of accounts;
- (c) provide a portal allowing for free access, for information purposes, to the general ledger of the municipality or municipal entity, by any person authorised by the Director-General or the Accounting officer of the municipality.

This means that service providers appointed by the municipality **must** comply with the following requirements when performing the work that they were appointed to do:

- Have sufficient working knowledge to use the *mSCOA* accounts and regulated segments correctly;
- Use systems and tools that comply with the provisions of the *mSCOA* Regulation 5(1) and (2);
- Use the data available on the integrated financial system solution of the municipality to:
 - Prepare key documents such as the IDP, budget, in-year reports, AFS, asset registers, etc.; and
 - Develop analysis tools and dashboards for the municipality.

When an external service provider uses excel spreadsheets or systems and tools that are not *mSCOA* compliant and populate these spreadsheets and tools from data outside of the system solution, it has a detrimental impact on the credibility of data string submitted to the GoMuni Upload portal as the data will not be aligned to the data in the spreadsheets and tools of the external service provider. This compromises the intention of *mSCOA* to have one version of the truth for reporting to municipal management, council, provincial and national government.

mSCOA requires planning, budgeting, transacting, and reporting to be done directly in and from the integrated financial system solution. Furthermore, the MFMA and the Preferential Procurement Regulations (2022) that became effective on 16 January 2023 allows for the blacklisting of companies to do business with the state for a period of up to 10 years for non-performance and other malpractices such as not complying with legislative requirements.

5.3.4 Use of modules on integrated system solution

The *mSCOA* Regulations required municipalities to acquire integrated system solutions from 01 July 2017 to enable the seamless integration of information to the General Ledger on the core financial system. Whereas most municipalities have complied with the Regulations, a number of municipalities are not fully utilising the modules available on their integrated system solution. Instead, they are purchasing the same modules from third-party system providers, and this constitutes fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

Often these third-party modules and sub-systems do not integrate seamlessly with the core system solution to ensure smooth and efficient operations; thereby necessitating manual intervention to integrate and consolidate reporting.

Where third-party modules/ sub-systems are being used by municipalities, it is important to ensure that monthly and year-end adjustments are processed in the core system solution and not in the third-party modules/ sub-systems to achieve accuracy in financial reporting and

prevent discrepancies in information. It should also be noted that the rules for integration between the core system solution and third-party modules/ sub-systems must be set by the core system provider and the latter is not required to integrate with any third-party module/ sub-system provider unless this has been agreed upon in the service level agreement.

5.3.5 Audited Actuals (AUDA) Data String vs Annual Financial Statements (AFS)

The *m*SCOA data string assessments performed by the national and provincial treasuries identified that there is generally poor alignment between the audited data strings submitted to the GoMuni Upload portal and the AFS submitted and audited by the Auditor-General South Africa (AGSA).

Adjusting journals agreed upon with AGSA must be processed in the core financial system and not in the AFS Tool. The misalignment has a direct impact on the opening balances that is critical to the statement of financial position and cash flow.

Municipalities must ensure that the pre-audited (PAUD), audited (AUDA) and restated (RAUD) data strings are carefully reviewed before submission thereof to the GoMuni Upload portal. The Trial Balance, audit data strings and AFS must be in perfect alignment before submission.

5.4. Ownership of data on municipal systems

Section 65(2)(e) of the MFMA requires that monies owed by the municipality must be paid within 30 days of receipt of an invoice. Often when municipalities default for extended periods on payments to municipal system providers, system support is suspended until payment has been received or a payment plan has been agreed to. National Treasury supports that penalties are imposed by creditors for the non-payment of services and goods that were delivered. However, it must be emphasised that the ownership of the data contained in municipal systems rests with the municipality and in cases where services are suspended, the municipality should still be able to access their data. Also, where there is a migration to another system solution, the data on the legacy system must be transferred to the municipality. This applies to data stored on a server owned by the municipality, off-site server owned by a third party or in the cloud.

It is therefore important that the service level agreement entered with system providers clearly outlines the format and procedures related to access to data to minimise operational disruptions and ensure that legislative deadlines are met.

5.5. Budget override and virement

In terms of Sections 15 of the MFMA, a municipality may incur expenditure only within the limits of the amounts appropriated for the different votes in a council approved budget. However, National and Provincial Treasuries often identify transactions against items where no budget has been allocated in their data string analysis. This is a clear indication that the budget controls in the integrated system solution have been overridden. The National Treasury has instructed system vendors to ensure that strict controls are in place when the budget is overridden on the system as this bad practice circumvents the build-in system controls that should eliminate unauthorised and irregular expenditure.

Municipalities must review their Virement policy annually and ensure that it aligns with the principles and guidance in *m*SCOA Circular No. 8 (29 April 2020). Virements may only be made between existing budget provisions and must be included in an adjustments budget.

Accounting Officers are reminded that once the council has approved the annual budget for the financial year, it must be locked, and any amendments to the budget can only be made through the adjustments budget process, in accordance with the MBRR.

From the 2025/26 MTREF, municipalities will be required to report on their virements through the submission of a separate data string on virements in the form of a virement string and budget report. Validation rules applicable to the virement data string will be communicated in due course.

5.6. Regulation of the minimum business processes and technical specifications for *mSCOA*

In terms of Regulation 6(1) and 7(1) of Municipal Regulations on Standard Chart of Accounts (2014), the Minister of Finance may determine the minimum business process requirements and system requirements for municipalities and municipal entities to enable the implementation of the regulations.

In 2024, extensive work was done regarding the regulations. The project consists of the following main outputs and planned time frames:

No	Output	Planned Time Frame
1	Review and update the minimum business processes for <i>mSCOA</i>	April 2024 to March 2025
2	Develop standard operating procedures for <i>mSCOA</i>	February 2025 to April 2025
3	Review and update the minimum technical specifications for <i>mSCOA</i>	April 2025 to Oct 2025
4	Align the current ICT due diligence assessment for <i>mSCOA</i> to the updated <i>mSCOA</i> requirements	
5	Develop Regulations on the minimum business processes and technical specifications for <i>mSCOA</i>	Oct/November 2025
6	Training on the new Regulations	November 2025 to Feb 2026

The comments and inputs received at the working groups engagements and via the dedicated email box on the minimum business processes for *mSCOA* have been considered and incorporated as applicable. Stakeholders are encouraged to provide their final inputs **by 31 January 2025** to mSCOARegs@treasury.gov.za

All presentations and draft documents for comments can be located on the MFMA Webpage under *mSCOA* – Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts/ Regulations on Minimum Business Processes and Technical Specifications for *mSCOA*/ Working Groups on the following link:

<https://mfma.treasury.gov.za/RegulationsandGazettes/MunicipalRegulationsOnAStandardChartOfAccountsFinal/mSCOA%20Minimum%20Requirements/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

6. Muni eMonitor, FMCMM and Audit Action Plan System

6.1 Muni eMonitor

National Treasury launched and rolled out the Muni eMonitor System in November 2023 to strengthen the capacity and capability of municipalities and municipal entities to comply with the provisions of the MFMA and its regulations, to improve information flows for public accountability, to enhance monitoring, oversight, support measures and effective reporting by various stakeholders in municipalities, municipal entities, provincial treasuries, and National Treasury. Numerous capacity-building sessions were undertaken with various stakeholders, and Muni eMonitor champions were identified in every municipality and provincial treasury. More information on the system is also provided in MFMA Circular No. 125 on National Treasury's website.

The system consists of two main components, namely: the MFMA legislated calendar with the Actions Management function and the Evaluations Questionnaire function. The implementation plan of the two main components is as follows:

MFMA legislated calendar with the Actions Management function – All Actions appearing under the legislative calendar for each month must be processed within the specific month that they appear in the calendar.

Evaluations Questionnaire – Evaluations (covering various financial management disciplines) will be published by National Treasury (on a quarterly and ad hoc basis) for municipalities to complete and submit on the system within the deadlines stipulated by National Treasury (These evaluations replace the previous reporting requirements that municipalities were required to complete in Excel).

It has been noted that since the launch and rollout of the system, there are still municipalities/ municipal entities that have not completed and submitted the Actions Management and Evaluation Questionnaire on the Muni eMonitor system. Please note that sections 74 and 104 of the MFMA state that the Accounting Officer of a municipality/ municipal entity must submit to the National Treasury such information, returns, documents, explanations, and motivations as may be prescribed or as may be required. Therefore, to avoid any possible non-compliance, municipalities are requested to complete and submit both the Actions Management and Evaluation Questionnaires within the timeframes/ deadlines stipulated in the system.

Furthermore, it has also been noted that some municipalities are reporting information without adequate review and verification of the accuracy of the information provided by the municipality/ municipal entity. Municipalities/ municipal entities are advised that National Treasury will be using the information submitted on the Muni eMonitor system as input into the MFMA Compliance report, and thus, the onus lies with municipalities/municipal entities to submit credible information on the system to ensure that the report correctly reflects the situation at their institution.

6.2 Audit Action Plans

It is mandatory that municipalities and municipal entities develop their Audit Action plans on the FMCMM and Audit Action Plan web-enabled system and monitor and report on the implementation of the developed action plans to address the findings on the system. It has been noted that a few municipalities are still preparing and monitoring audit action plans outside of the web-enabled system.

Municipalities are reminded that the completion of the Audit Action Plan on the web-enabled system is one of the criteria required for the disbursement of the Equitable Share. Therefore, to avoid any possible withholding of the grant, municipalities are requested to develop, monitor, and report on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan on the FMCMM and Audit Action Plan web-enabled system.

6.3 Financial Management Capability Maturity Model (FMCMM)

MFMA Circular No. 114 documents the annual implementation plan for the completion of the FMCMM assessment. It breaks down the completion of the 21 modules over a 12-month period. It has been noted that many municipalities are still not completing the FMCMM on the web-enabled system and/ or are not developing action plans to address internal control deficiencies identified through the assessment.

The Auditor General of South Africa has repeatedly reported that the system of internal controls at municipalities is either not in place or ineffective. Furthermore, the 2022/23 audit outcomes indicate that 42 per cent of municipalities (excluding outstanding audits) are still receiving

negative audit outcomes, thereby highlighting weaknesses in financial management and internal control deficiencies.

We have also noted a strong correlation between municipalities scoring low in specific modules and them having audit findings in those same disciplines. Therefore, it is requested that municipalities prioritise the completion of the FMCMM assessment (in line with MFMA Circular No. 114) as well as complete the development and implementation of the generated action plans to address the internal control deficiencies identified and to put in place risk mitigation strategies to ensure that weaknesses identified are addressed proactively so that they do not adversely impact on the future audit outcomes.

7. SERVICE DELIVERY BUDGET AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS (SDBIP)

7.1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the top-layer of SDBIP

SDBIPs serve as a critical performance management tool, aligning municipal KPIs with budgets and Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) to enable effective monitoring of service delivery performance, as emphasised in MFMA Circular No. 13. To operationalise IDPs, municipalities translate the broader strategic objectives outlined in IDPs into specific, measurable, and monitorable performance indicators and targets in the SDBIP. A distinguishing feature of the SDBIP is its emphasis on measurability. National Treasury has observed ongoing challenges in structuring and revising key KPIs within the SDBIP during the financial year. These challenges stem from misalignment between the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), budget, and SDBIP, leading to ineffective performance monitoring and reporting.

To address these issues, municipalities are advised to adhere to the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) and guidance outlined in related MFMA Circulars. Specifically, MFMA Circular No. 13 emphasises the importance of aligning the SDBIP with the IDP and budget to ensure cohesive planning and execution. Additionally, MFMA Circular No. 88 provides guidance on standardised set of indicators, aiming to improve the quality of performance information across municipalities.

Overcrowding of KPIs in the SDBIP

Municipalities continue to include an extensive number of KPIs in their strategic scorecard or top-layer SDBIP or without aggregating departmental output indicators or lower layer SDBIP, despite the guidance outlined in MFMA Circular No. 13. This high volume of indicators in top-layer SDBIPs can dilute focus and make monitoring cumbersome. Municipalities are therefore encouraged to streamline their indicators by consolidating KPIs in the top-layer SDBIP, focusing on most critical indicators in achieving strategic objectives, ensuring a more manageable and effective monitoring process.

Clarity of objectives

Many KPIs lack clarity regarding their alignment with municipal objectives and intended service delivery outcomes outlined in the IDPs. This raises concerns about the 'ultimate objective' of these indicators, questioning their relevance and purpose. Additionally, municipalities duplicate KPIs across multiple functional areas or departments, resulting in redundant reporting efforts. Municipalities are urged to align all KPIs with the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) and strategic objectives or priorities outlined in IDPs, this will enable better monitoring of progress, identifying performance challenges, and taking

timely corrective actions. Reference is made to the Framework of Managing Performance and Programme Information (FMPPI) for further guidance on performance management.

7.2. Adjustments to the SDBIP

Municipalities adjust KPIs during the financial year, generally following adjustments budgets under Section 28 of the MFMA. While these KPI adjustments may be necessary to respond to unforeseen circumstances, underperformance of revenue or policy changes, some municipalities use this process to manipulate original KPIs to avoid accountability for underperformance. This practice undermines transparency, as original KPIs are excluded from Section 52(d) reports or Annual Performance Reports (APRs), compromising the municipal council's role to exercise oversight, and limiting stakeholders' ability to assess actual performance against initial KPIs and targets.

Adjustments to KPIs are driven by either external or internal factors. External factors include but are not limited to, significant changes in external circumstances, unforeseeable or unavoidable expenditure referred to in Sections 28(2)(c) and 29, national policy developments or changes to nationally prescribed indicators. Internal factors include, adjustments budgets as contemplated in Section 28(2) (a, b, d, e, and f), wording errors and poorly defined KPIs.

7.3. Criteria for adjusting KPIs in the SDBIP

The following criteria outline the conditions under which a municipality may amend the KPIs in the SDBIP during the financial year:

Internal factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only KPI targets may be adjusted due to under-collection of revenue or reprioritisation of funds, in terms of the council-approved adjustments budget referred to in Section 28(2) (a, e & d) of the MFMA. Only KPI targets may be adjusted during the financial year, in line with Section 28(2)(b), to account for additional funding or resources that have become available during the financial year, enabling the revision or acceleration of spending programme already prioritised in the IDP. KPI description may be revised to correct errors in the wording. An explanation for the correction must accompany the revision. KPIs may be adjusted to align with changes in municipal circumstances or emergencies, provided these adjustments remain consistent with the strategic objectives and priorities outlined in the IDP. The reasons for these changes must be clearly explained in the revised SDBIP.
External factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KPIs may be adjusted in response to amendments to legislation, government policies, or frameworks introduced by national or relevant provincial departments, affecting original KPIs. The related legislation or policy must be referenced and documented as evidence for the change. KPIs may be changed to respond to natural disasters, unforeseeable or unavoidable expenditures referred to in Sections 28(2)(c) and 29 of the MFMA. The reasons for these changes must be adequately justified. KPIs may change because of revisions to nationally prescribed indicators as contemplated by the applicable legislation or circular. An explanation for these KPI revisions must be articulated in the SDBIP, referencing the relevant legislation, framework or circular.
Cross-cutting conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipalities must reflect all KPI changes in their SDBIPs and APRs, providing clear and justifiable reasons for each change and detailing the process followed.

- Both the original and revised KPIs must continue to be reported on in the Section 52(d) of the MFMA and the APR for accountability and transparency.
- KPI changes are prohibited during the fourth quarter of the financial year (April – June). Only KPI changes in relation to natural disaster or unavoidable or unforeseen expenditure will be permitted during the fourth quarter of the financial year.

7.4. Alignment of the adjustments budget and adjustments to the SDBIP

When a municipality adjusts its KPIs during the financial year, it must align the changes with the provisions of Section 28 of the MFMA and the Municipal Budgeting and Reporting Regulations (MBRR). The table below outlines the different types of adjustments budgets and their linkage to SDBIP adjustments:

Types of adjustments budget	Timeframes	Sections of MFMA and MBRR	SDBIP KPIs in-year changes
Adjustments due to under-collection of revenue	Anytime	S.28(2)(a)	Only changes to KPI targets are allowed
Main adjustments budget	February – after the tabling of the mid-year budget assessment and performance Only one adjustments budget referred to in Section 23(1) except S.28(2)(b)	S.28(2) (b, d & f) Reg. 23(1&2)	Allows for amendments to the SDBIP to address underperformance or realignment with revised priorities and allocations. This is subjected to the conditions outlined above
Additional funds from national / provincial government	60 days after the approval of the relevant national / provincial adjustments budget	S.28(2)(b) Reg. 23(3)	Only changes to KPI targets are allowed
Unforeseen and unavoidable expenditure	Within 60 days of expenditure being incurred	S.28(2)(c), 29(3) & 32 Reg. 23(4), 71 & 72	KPIs may be adjusted to reflect changes in resources or priorities caused by these expenditures
Roll-over of municipal funds	Before 25 August	S.28 (2)(e), Reg. 23(5)	Linked to revisions of the SDBIP to include projects and targets funded by rolled-over amounts
Authorisation of unauthorised expenditure	During main adjustments budget in February. After tabling of the annual report for that year (7 months after the financial year end)	S. 28(g), 32, 127(2) Reg. 23(6)	No changes to KPIs are allowed

All SDBIP adjustments must be tabled and approved in council.

National Treasury further discourages excessive or unjustified KPI revisions during the financial year as such practices distort municipal performance monitoring and reporting.

N.B This guidance relating to in-year KPI changes in SDBIP should be read in conjunction with guidance provided in the MFMA Circular No. 88 – Addendum 6.

8. The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations

8.1. Assistance with the compilation of budgets

If municipalities require advice with the compilation of their respective budgets, specifically the budget documents or Schedule A, they should direct their enquiries to their respective provincial treasuries or to the following National Treasury officials:

Province	Responsible NT officials	Tel. No.	Email
Eastern Cape	Matjatji Mashoeshoe	012-315 5553	Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za
Buffalo City	Pitso Zwane	012-315 5171	Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za
	Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5807	Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za
Free State	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952	Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za
	Cethekile Moshane	012-315 5079	Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za
Gauteng	Matjatji Mashoeshoe	012-315 5553	Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za
	Pitso Zwane	012-315 5171	Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za
	Oreal Tshidino	012 315 5090	Oreal.Tshidino@Treasury.gov.za
City of Tshwane and City of Johannesburg	Willem Voigt	012-315 5830	WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za
	Makgabo Mabotja	012-315 5156	Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za
	Enock Ndlovu	012-315 5866	Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za
City of Ekurhuleni	Kgomotso Baloyi	012-315 5866	Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za
	Lunathi Dumani		Lunathi.dumani@treasury.gov.za
KwaZulu-Natal	Kgomotso Baloyi	012-315 5866	Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za
	Lunathi Dumani		Lunathi.dumani@treasury.gov.za
	Kevin Bell	012-315 5725	Kevin.Bell@treasury.gov.za
eThekweni	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952	Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za
uMhlathuze	Matjatji Mashoeshoe	012-315 5553	Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za
	Pitso Zwane		Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za
Limpopo	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952	Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za
	Jabulile Ngwenya		Jabulile.ngwenya@treasury.gov.za
Mpumalanga	Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5807	Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za
	Liyasa Nxosi	012 315 5613	liyasa.nxosi@treasury.gov.za
Northern Cape	Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5807	Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za
	Liyasa Nxosi	012 315 5613	liyasa.nxosi@treasury.gov.za
North West	Willem Voigt	012-315 5830	WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za
	Makgabo Mabotja	012-315 5156	Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za
	Khanyisile Khosa		khanyisile.khosa@treasury.gov.za
Mafikeng	Cethekile Moshane	012-315 5079	Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za
Western Cape	Willem Voigt	012-315 5830	WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za
	Enock Ndlovu	012-315 5385	Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za
	Khanyisile Khoza		khanyisile.khoza@treasury.gov.za
Cape Town	Kgomotso Baloyi	012-315 5866	Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za
George	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952	Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za
Technical issues on GoMuni Website	Data management		lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za

9. Submitting budget documentation and A schedules for the 2025/26 MTREF

9.1. Submissions to the National Treasury

Municipalities are reminded to submit documents and queries to the correct portals/ mailboxes. These portals/ mailboxes are:

- https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/welcome (GoMuni Upload Portal) – All documents required in terms of legislation by approved registered users, including: mSCOA Data Strings; Budget-related, in-year and year-end documents and schedules (A, B and C); Revenue and MFRS Documents (as per MFMA Circular No. 126) procurement spent reports, etc.:
- lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za – Database related and submission queries;
- lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za – Only Provincial Treasuries may send contact details to lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za ; and
- mSCOA Regulations@treasury.gov.za – all inputs and comments relating to the intended mSCOA Regulations on the minimum business processes and system specifications; and
- Rolloverapplication@treasury.gov.za – all rollover applications and queries related to the conditional grants.

Any document/ queries that are submitted to the incorrect portal/ mailbox will not be processed and the submission status report will continue to reflect the documents as outstanding.

9.2. Time frames for submission

The LGDRS will be locked at 00:00 on the 10th working day of every month for the submission of data strings due, as required in terms of section 71 of the MFMA. Closed periods will not be opened to correct errors or to accommodate non-submission of data strings, regardless of whether a Schedule G application was done or not.

Municipalities must therefore verify the credibility and accuracy of the information in their financial system prior to closing the month on the ERP system and submitting the mSCOA data strings to the LGDRS. In 2025, functionality will be added to the GoMuni Upload portal that will require accounting officers and Chief Financial Officers to sign-off on the accuracy and completeness of the data strings prior to the submission thereof.

The GoMuni Upload portal can be accessed by registered users on the following link:

https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin

Since the 2020/21 MTREF, municipalities are no longer required to submit hard copies of all required documents including budget related, Annual Financial Statements and Annual Reports to National Treasury via post or courier services. PDF versions of documents must be submitted to the GoMuni Upload portal.

9.3. Updating of contact details on GoMuni

Municipalities are reminded to update their contact details on the LGDRS as and when changes occur. Often emails containing important information and deadlines are returned and do not reach the intended LGDRS users due to outdated contact information of users. From 01 July 2024, municipal officials must update their own contact details on the LGDRS. Updates made by municipal officials on the LGDRS are validated and approved for upload by the Contacts Administrators within each municipality that was nominated by the Municipal Manager for this purpose.

Municipalities that have not yet nominated Contact Administrators to validate and approve changes in contact details for their municipality are requested to nominate two officials by 30 January 2025 to ensure that the contact details for their respective municipality are always up

to date. Nomination forms can be requested from lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za. Municipal Contacts Administrators will be trained in a virtual session to perform this task.

Registered LGDRS users can download the contact details for their municipality on the LGDRS by logging-in to GoMuni on the following link and then accessing the report under Database/Contacts/Reporting/Contact information:

https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin

9.4. Training on GoMuni

The training schedule and GoMuni links for 2025 to assist those users that require new or refresher training on how to draw reports on the LGDRS, is available on the GoMuni/ Go Training portal on the following link:

https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/portal

Contact



national treasury

Department:
National Treasury
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Post Private Bag X115, Pretoria 0001
Phone 012 315 5009
Fax 012 395 6553
Website <http://www.treasury.gov.za/default.aspx>

JH Hattingh

Chief Director: Local Government Budget Analysis

06 December 2024

