EDEN
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY
UMASIPALA WESITHILI
DISTRIKSMUNISIPALITEIT

Funding and Reserves Policy

Reviewed by Council: 27 May 2016

Resolution number: DC 1054/05/16

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FUNDING AND RESERVE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

The funding and reserves policy is aimed to ensure that the municipality has sufficient and cost-effective funding in order to achieve its objectives through the implementation of its operating and capital budgets.

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The objectives of the policy are to:

1.1 Ensure that the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (annual budget) of the municipality is appropriately funded.
1.2 Ensure that cash resources and reserves are maintained at the required levels to avoid future year unfunded liabilities.
1.3 To achieve financial sustainability.

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2. SECTION A: FUNDING POLICY

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

This policy is mandated by Section 8 of the Local Government: Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations which is made in terms of section 168 of the Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003, (Act No. 56 of 2003) (MFMA). In terms of Sections 18 and 19 of the MFMA, an annual budget may only be funded from:

- Realistically anticipated revenues to be collected;
- Cash backed accumulated funds from previous years' surpluses not committed for other purposes. and
- Borrowed funds, but only for capital projects.

Furthermore, spending on a capital project may only be commenced once the funding sources have been considered, are available and have not been committed for other purposes.

The requirements of the MFMA are therefore clear in that the budget must be cash – backed i.e. cash receipts inclusive of prior cash surpluses must equal or be more than cash paid.

In determining whether the budget is actually cash-backed and in addition ensuring long term financial sustainability, the municipality will use analytical processes, including those specified by National Treasury from time to time.

2.2 STATEMENT OF INTENT

The municipality will not pass a budget which is not cash – backed or where any of the indicators as listed in this document are negative, unless acceptable reasons can be provided for non-compliance, provided that the requirements of the MFMA must at all times be adhered to.

2.3 CASH MANAGEMENT

Cash must be managed in terms of the municipality's Cash Management and Investment Policy.

2.4 DEBT MANAGEMENT

Debt must be managed in terms of the municipality's Debt Management Policy, together with any requirements in this policy.

2.5 FUNDING THE OPERATING BUDGET

2.5.1 INTRODUCTION

The municipality's objective is that the user of municipal resources must pay for such usage in the period it occurs.

The municipality however, recognises the plight of the poor, and in line with national and provincial objectives, the municipality commits itself to subsidised services to the poor. This will necessitate cross subsidisation in tariffs to be calculated in the budget process.

2.5.2 GENERAL PRINCIPLE WHEN COMPILING THE OPERATING BUDGET

The following specific principles apply when compiling the budget:

a) The budget must be cash – backed, i.e. revenue and expenditure projections must be realistic and the provision for impairment of receivables must be calculated on proven recovery rates;
b) Growth parameters must be realistic and be based on historic patterns adjusted for current reliable information;
c) Tariff adjustments must be fair;
d) Revenue from Government Grants and Subsides must be in accordance with the amounts promulgated in the Division of Revenue Act, proven provincial transfers and any possible transfers to or from other municipalities.

    For the purpose of the Cash flow budget any National or Provincial grants that have been re-appropriated for roll–over purposes must be excluded from the calculation as it must be included in changes in Cash and Cash Equivalents and Payables.

    Furthermore, in the budget the total grants recognised as revenue must equal the total expected expenditure from grants, inclusive of capital expenditure and VAT as per directive given in MFMA circular 48.

e) Projected revenue from services charges must be reflected as net (all billing less revenue foregone, which is free basic services, discounts and rebates).

f) Only changes in fair values related to cash may be included in the cash flow budget. Changes to unamortised discount must be included in the Operating Budget but excluded in the cash flow budget.

g) Employee related costs include contributions to non-current and current employee benefits. It is acknowledged that the non-current benefits' requirements are well above the initial cash capabilities of the municipality, and it is therefore determined that provision for the short term portion of employee benefits, as well as an operating surplus calculated at 5% of the prior year balance of the long–term benefits, be included in the operating budget, in order to build sufficient cash for these requirements. The cash portion of the employee benefits must be accounted for in an "Employee Benefits Reserve".

h) Depreciation must be fully budgeted for in the operating budget.

   In order to ensure a sufficient accumulation of cash for the replacement of Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible Assets, the amount of depreciation on assets funded from own sources, excluding assets funded from grants, public contributions and external loans must be reflected as a surplus on the cash flow budget.

i) Contributions to provisions (non-current and current) do not form part of the cash flow. It is however, necessary to provide for an increase in cash resources in order to comply with the conditions of the provision at the time when it is needed.

2.6 FUNDING THE CAPITAL BUDGET

2.6.1 INTRODUCTION

The municipality's objective is to maintain, through proper maintenance and replacement measures, existing levels of service and to improve and implement services which are neglected or non – existent.

In order to achieve this objective, the municipality must annually, within financial means, budget for the replacement of redundant assets as well as new assets.

2.6.2 FUNDING SOURCES FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The capital budget can be funded by way of own contributions, grants, public contributions as well as external loans.

Own Contributions

The capital budget financed from own contributions must primarily be funded from the Capital Replacement Reserve.

Notwithstanding the above the capital budget or portions thereof may also be funded from surplus cash. The allocations of the funding sources from own contributions are determined during the budget process.

Grants (Including Public Contributions)

Grants for capital expenditure have become a common practice, especially in order to extend service delivery to previously disadvantaged areas. While such grants are welcomed, care should also be taken that unusual grant funding does not place an unreasonable burden on future operating and maintenance costs which may be higher than the ability to maintain the service(s).

It is therefore determined that the accounting officer must evaluate the long term effect of unusual capital grants on future tariffs, and if deemed necessary, report on such to Council.

It is furthermore determined that the depreciation charges on assets financed from grants and donations must not have a negative effect on tariffs charged to the users of such assets. The Accounting Officer must put such accounting measures in place to comply with this requirement, to a reasonable extent.

External Loans

The municipality may only raise loans in accordance with its Debt Management Policy.

The Accounting Officer must also put such accounting measures in place to ensure that no unspent portions of loans are utilised for operating purposes.

For budgeting purposes any difference between proposed capital spending from loans and proposed loans raised must be included in the cash surplus for the year.

2.7 FUNDING COMPLIANCE MEASUREMENT

2.7.1 INTRODUCTION

The municipality wants to ensure that the budget or adjustments budget complies with the requirements of the MFMA and this policy. For this purpose, a set of indicators must be used as part of the budget process and be submitted with the budget. These indicators include all the indicators as recommended by National Treasury as well as reconciliations according to this policy. Any additional indicators recommended by National Treasury in future must also be taken into account, as well as any additional reconciliation items as either determined by the Council or the Accounting Officer.

If any of the indicators are negative during the compilation or approval process of the budget, the budget may not be approved until all the indicators provide a positive return, unless any negative indicators can be reasonably explained and future budget projections address the turn-around of these indicators to within acceptable levels.

2.7.2 CASH PLUS INVESTMENTS LESS APPLICATION OF FUNDS

The overall cash position of the municipality must be sufficient to include:

- unspent conditional grants;
- unspent conditional public contributions;
- unspent borrowings;
- vat due to SARS;
- secured investments;
- the cash portion of statutory funds such as the Housing Development Fund;
- other working capital requirements; and
- In addition, it must be sufficient to back reserves as approved by the municipality and the portions of provisions as indicated elsewhere in this policy.

2.7.3 SURPLUS/DEFICIT EXCLUDING DEPRECIATION OFFSETS

Should the budget result in a deficit after the offsetting, the budget will be deemed unfunded and must be revised.

3. SECTION B: RESERVES POLICY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The municipality recognises the importance of providing to the municipality itself, as well as its creditors, financiers, staff, and general public a measure of protection for future losses, as well as providing the necessary cash resources for future capital replacements and other current and non-current liabilities.

This policy aims to provide for such measure of protection by creating certain reserves.

3.2 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

There are no specific legal requirements for the creation of reserves, except for the Housing Development Fund. The GRAP Standards itself also do not provide for reserves.

However, the GRAP "Framework for the Preparation and Presentation of Financial Statements" states in paragraph 91 that such reserves may be created, but "Fund Accounting" is not allowed and any such reserves must be a "legal" reserve, i.e. created by law or Council Resolution.

3.3 TYPES OF RESERVES

In order to provide for sufficient cash resources for future expenditure, the municipality hereby approves the establishment of the following reserves:

(a) Capital Replacement Reserve (CRR)

The CRR is to be utilised for future capital expenditure from own funds and may not be used for maintenance or other operating expenditure.

4. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it complies with changes in applicable legislation and regulation.