



NEWSLETTER

# MSUKALIGWA

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**A BEACON OF SERVICE EXCELLENCE**

BREYTEN/KWAZANELE • DAVEL/KWADELA • ERMELO/WESSELTON • CHRISSIESMEER/KWACHIBIKHULU • LOTHAI/SILINDILE • SHEEPMOOR • WARBURTON



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Mr. MAJ Zwane

## KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SALGA NATIONAL COMMUNICATORS FORUM – SHAPING NARRATIVES FOR A STRONGER DEMOCRACY

In the dynamic landscape of local governance, effective communication serves as the lifeblood of public trust and citizen participation. On the 25th to 27th of February 2026 SALGA National Communicators Forum brought together municipal communicators from across South Africa to sharpen these vital skills. This gathering was not just a meeting of minds; it was a clarion call to proactively shape narratives, drive meaningful citizen engagement, and leverage evidence-based strategies for impact storytelling. As we stand on the cusp of critical elections, the forum's insights offer a roadmap for communicators to navigate challenges like low voter turnout, eroding institutional trust, and the pervasive threat of mis- and disinformation.

At the heart of the discussions was the theme of ethical municipal communication in election environments. Participants explored how municipalities can uphold integrity while countering the headwinds that undermine democracy. Low voter turnout emerged as a stark reality: recent research indicates that only about 49% of South Africans would vote if elections were held today. Historically, local government elections have seen participation rates below 50%, a trend that signals deep apathy or disillusionment. Forum speakers dissected the root causes—ranging from logistical barriers and economic pressures to a growing disconnect between citizens and government institutions. The consensus was clear: communicators must lead with empathy, delivering messages that resonate on a human level and inspire action.

Ethical communication demands vigilance against mis- and disinformation, which proliferates unchecked on social media platforms. The forum highlighted real-world examples, such as viral falsehoods about voting processes or fabricated municipal service failures, which erode confidence and suppress turnout. Communicators were urged to adopt a proactive stance: factchecking in real-time, partnering with community influencers, and crafting counter-narratives grounded in verifiable data.

Ethical considerations emphasized transparency, neutrality, and inclusiveness in multiple languages to engage diverse communities. Consistent messaging, exemplified by "Your Vote, Your Voice," seeks to rebuild trust and establish municipalities as credible partners in democracy.

**Ethical communication demands vigilance against mis- and disinformation, which proliferates unchecked on social media platforms**

Beyond elections, the forum's focus on impact storytelling equips us for everyday challenges. Attendees learned to transform dry data into compelling tales: imagine turning water outage stats into a narrative of community resilience and municipal responsiveness. Tools like data visualization and multimedia were recommended to amplify reach, ensuring messages cut through the noise of daily life.

As SALGA champions these efforts, the onus now falls on us. Municipal communicators, let's harness these insights to ignite participation. Develop your civic education drives, monitor social media for disinformation, and collaborate boldly.

The SALGA National Communicators Forum reminds us: communication is not passive—it's a force for change. Join the movement today.



Allow me to reflect on the progress achieved, the challenges encountered, and the corrective measures implemented to strengthen institutional performance and enhance service delivery to our communities during the 2024/2025 financial year and beyond.

The financial year under review was marked by a constrained fiscal environment, characterised by limited revenue, ageing infrastructure, rising service delivery demands, and an expanding debtors' book. Despite these pressures, the Municipality remained focused on its constitutional mandate to deliver basic services and improve the quality of life of all residents of Msukaligwa.

A key area of focus during the year was the strengthening of governance and financial management. We implemented targeted interventions to improve administrative capacity through the filling of critical funded vacancies, thereby enhancing institutional stability and service delivery capability. We also continued to implement and monitor the Financial Recovery Plan to strengthen financial discipline and ensure responsible expenditure management. Internal controls were tightened to reduce irregular, fruitless, and wasteful expenditure, while audit action plans were pursued in response to findings raised by the Auditor-General. In addition, revenue management was strengthened through improved credit control and debt collection measures, and the Municipality continued to honour its repayment agreements with Eskom and the Department of Water and Sanitation in order to safeguard service continuity. Performance management systems were also reinforced across all organisational levels, while interventions were introduced to reduce non-technical losses in water and electricity, including illegal connections, which continue to place pressure on municipal resources.

Notwithstanding these efforts, the audit outcomes have confirmed that significant challenges remain. Of particular concern are the severe losses in water distribution and electricity, which remain far above acceptable norms. These findings emphasize the urgent need for stronger demand management, improved asset protection, infrastructure rehabilitation, and enhanced revenue protection. As a Municipality, we accept these realities and remain committed to decisive corrective action.

In the area of service delivery and infrastructure development, the Municipality recorded notable progress during the year under review. Water reticulation infrastructure was installed in Wesselton Extension 11, Phase 1 and Phase 2, improving access to potable water for households. Work also continued on the Ermelo bulk water supply project to secure long-term water availability. In sanitation, key sewer pipelines, including the Everest and Phumula outfall lines, were upgraded to increase capacity and reduce spillages. The Ermelo Wastewater Treatment Works was refurbished, and a new bulk sewer pipeline was installed for Ermelo Extension 44. These interventions strengthen the wastewater network and support public health protection.

Electricity infrastructure was also improved through the upgrading of the 11kV network in the northern part of Ermelo, thereby enhancing supply reliability. In roads and stormwater, critical routes such as Mandela Drive and Gwebu Street were reconstructed and resurfaced, while Mavundla Street and new collector routes in Wesselton were upgraded to improve traffic flow and accessibility. The construction of culverts, access bridges, and a new stormwater channel in eMadamini further improved mobility and reduced flooding risks.

Beyond infrastructure, the Municipality continued to expand access to basic services, improve refuse removal, install water meters to manage demand, and support indigent households in accordance with the approved Indigent Policy. We also maintained a functional Local AIDS Council, appointed a dedicated official to coordinate Gender-Based Violence and Femicide programmes, and used the Expanded Public Works Program to create temporary employment and skills development opportunities, particularly for youth and women. Work is also underway to establish a Local Economic Development Forum to strengthen collaboration in addressing poverty, unemployment, and inequality.

As we look ahead, we remain fully committed to improving service delivery and addressing infrastructure backlogs. We call on all residents, councillors, and stakeholders to work with us in protecting municipal infrastructure, reporting faults, and supporting a culture of payment and accountability. On behalf of Council and the administration, I thank the people of Msukaligwa for their continued support and cooperation. Together, we will build a more transparent, accountable, and responsive municipality.

**We call on all residents to work with us in protecting municipal infrastructure, reporting faults, and supporting a culture of payment and accountability.**

**ALDERWOMAN MP NKOSI**  
EXECUTIVE MAYOR



**ALDERWOMAN M.P NKOSI**  
EXECUTIVE MAYOR



**ALDERWOMAN C.E MSEZANE**  
MMC FINANCE



**ALDERWOMAN T.C MOTH**  
MMC TECHNICAL SERVICES



**CLLR T.J MADLALA**  
MMC CORPORATE SERVICES



**CLLR B.G MOTH**  
MMC PLANNING &  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**CLLR S.E NGOVENE**  
COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

## EXECUTIVE MAYOR

The primary functions of the Executive Mayor among others is to promote the image of the municipality, Preside over Mayoral Committee meetings, leads and promote social and economic development in the municipality, Promote intergovernmental and inter-institutional relations.

## MAYORAL COMMITTEE

The primary functions of the Mayoral Committee, are to render assistance to the Executive Mayor in exercising of his/her authority. To identify the needs of the Municipality; review and evaluate those needs in order or priority. To recommend to the Municipal Council strategies, programmes and services to address priority needs through the Integrated Development Plan and estimated revenue and expenditure taking into account any applicable National and Provincial development plan; and recommend or determine the best methods including partnership and other approaches to deliver those strategies, programmes and services to the maximum benefit of the Community. Mayoral committee is appointed by the Executive Mayor and dissolve if the Executive Mayor ceases to hold.





**CLLR N.S XABA**  
SPEAKER



**ALDERWOMAN P.T SIBEKO**  
WHIP OF COUNCIL



**CLLR M.A NZIMANDE**  
MPAC CHAIRPERSON

## SPEAKER

In terms of Section 37 of the Municipal Structure Act as amended the functions.

The speaker of a municipal council:

- presides at meetings of the council;
- performs the duties and exercises the powers delegated to the speaker in terms of section 32;
- must ensure that the council meets at least quarterly.
- must maintain order during meetings:
- must ensure compliance in the council and Council committees with the Code of Conduct set out in Schedule 5: and
- must ensure that council meetings are conducted in accordance with the rules and orders of the council.

## WHIP

In terms of Section 41B of the Municipal Structure Act as amended the functions of the Whip of a municipal council:

- liaises with the different political parties to ensure representation in council and council committees;
- maintains sound relations between the various political parties;
- informs the whips of all parties on important matters on the council agenda;
- assists the speaker to count votes in the council meeting;
- facilitates the interaction between the executive and legislative oversight structures in the municipality; and
- resolves disputes between the speaker, mayor or executive mayor, or members of the mayoral committee.

## MUNICIPAL PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (MPAC)

In terms of Section 79A Subsection (3) of the Municipal Structure Act. The municipal council must determine the functions of the municipal public accounts committee, which must include the following:

- review the Auditor-General's reports and comments of the management committee and the audit committee and make recommendations to the municipal council.
- review internal audit reports together with comments from the management committee and the audit committee and make recommendations to the municipal council;
- initiate and develop the oversight report on annual reports contemplated in section 129 of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act;
- attend to and make recommendations to the municipal council on any matter referred to it by the municipal council, executive committee, a committee of the council, a member of this committee, a councillor and the municipal manager; and
- on its own initiative, subject to the direction of the municipal council, investigate and report to the municipal council on any matter affecting the municipality.

(4) Reports of the municipal public accounts committee must be submitted to the speaker who must table such reports in the next meeting of the municipal council.





## Municipal Manager Mr. M Kunene

As we move through the third quarter of the 2025/2026 financial year, I am proud of the progress we continue to make in improving the quality of life for our residents. Guided by integrity, professionalism, accountability, responsiveness, and innovation, we remain committed to delivering essential services efficiently and effectively.

### Feedback from ward imbizos and other community engagements has helped us respond directly to residents' needs

This quarter, I am pleased to share the strides we have made in infrastructure, utilities, and community support. Together with our teams, we have completed key projects, including the reconstruction of Mandela Drive, the rehabilitation of Mabuza Access Bridge near Mthonjeni Clinic, and the upgrade of the Cluster 2 regional bulk water scheme serving Breyten, KwaZanele, Chrissiesmeer, Lothair, and Warburton, a project valued at R390 million. We have also installed over 4,600 electricity meters and 1,000 water meters, while piloting innovative load management solutions in Breyten and KwaZanele to enhance service reliability and safety.

Our efforts are guided by internal strategic planning sessions with staff and political leadership, ensuring that projects and programmes are effectively prioritized and implemented. In addition, feedback from ward imbizos and other community engagements has helped us respond directly to residents' needs, shaping the delivery of key services and reinforcing transparency and accountability.

Water quality remains a critical focus, particularly in areas affected by upstream mining activities. In partnership with the Gert Sibande District

Municipality (GSDM) and the National Mineral Energy (NME), we have successfully reduced manganese levels and are conducting trials to address elevated sulphates in the Ermelo cluster. Longer-term solutions, such as the Nootgedacht Dam raw water supply project, are being pursued to secure sustainable water access for all residents.

We are also addressing wastewater management challenges. The Ermelo Wastewater Treatment Works is undergoing an R850 million refurbishment, while the KwaZanele facility upgrade has received technical approval and will proceed once funding is secured. These initiatives aim to enhance service delivery and safeguard public health.

Despite these accomplishments, we continue to navigate operational pressures, including ageing infrastructure, service interruptions, and unaccounted water and electricity losses. We are addressing human resource challenges, such as high vacancy rates and skills shortages, through targeted recruitment and job grading reviews to attract and retain critical personnel.

Supporting vulnerable residents remains a priority. Programmes such as Water Conservation and Demand Management (WCWDM), the drilling of nine boreholes (five already connected), and the indigent and amnesty programmes provide tangible assistance and help ensure equitable access to essential services.

Financial management continues to improve, with strong utilization of infrastructure grants. The Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) and Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG) have achieved 90% expenditure, reflecting effective project delivery, while the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) and Municipal Disaster Recovery Grant (MDRG) indicate areas where implementation challenges remain a focus.

Through inclusive community engagement and strategic planning, we remain accountable, responsive, and aligned with the needs of our residents. Guided by our vision of "A Beacon of Service Excellence," I am confident that, together, we will continue to advance sustainable development, improve service delivery, and build a resilient municipality for all.





**MR. M KUNENE**  
MUNICIPAL MANAGER



**MR. MS DLAMINI**  
DIRECTOR:  
CORPORATE SERVICES



**MR. LT MOTLOUNG**  
DIRECTOR: PLANNING &  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**MR. K NHLABATHI**  
DIRECTOR:  
FINANCE / CFO



**MS. PZ DUMA**  
DIRECTOR:  
TECHNICAL SERVICES



**MR MS LUKHELE**  
DIRECTOR: COMMUNITY  
& SOCIAL SERVICES

## MUNICIPAL MANAGER: OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER

The purpose of the Office of the Municipal Manager is "To coordinate and manage the provision of service delivery in accordance with the legislation governing local government." and the functions are as follows:

- Manage technical services;
- Coordinate the provision of community services;
- Coordinate municipal planning and economic development;
- Manage financial matters;
- Manage corporate services;
- Manage communication, IGR and contact centre services;
- Render internal audit services;
- Render risk management services;
- Manage organisational performance management system; and
- Manage and coordinate the provision of municipal services in the service delivery units.

## DIRECTOR: COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The purpose of the Department is "To coordinate the provision of community services" and the functions are as follows:

- Render disaster, security management and law enforcement services;
- Coordinate waste management and environmental services;
- Coordinate the maintenance of parks, sports and cemeteries;
- Render traffic management services;
- Render fire management services; and
- Render library and information services.

## DIRECTOR: CORPORATE SERVICES

The purpose of the department is "To manage corporate services" and the functions are as follows:

- Render human resource management and development services;
- Render legal services;
- Render secretariat and records management services;
- Render vehicle and plant mechanical services;
- Manage information and communication technology services;
- Manage fleet services;
- Provide maintenance to municipal buildings;

## DIRECTOR (CFO): FINANCE

The purpose of the department is "To manage financial matters" and the functions are as follows:

- Manage municipal budget and financial reporting;
- Manage municipal assets and insurance;
- Manage expenditure services;
- Render supply chain management services; and
- Render revenue, credit control and cash management services

## DIRECTOR: PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of the department is "To coordinate municipal planning and economic development" and the functions are as follows:

- Render spatial planning and land use management services;
- Render sustainable and integrated human settlements planning and property management; and
- Promote local economic development services.
- Manage integrated development planning

## DIRECTOR: TECHNICAL SERVICES

The purpose of the department is "To manage technical services" and the functions are as follows:

- Manage municipal infrastructure development programmes;
- Manage roads and storm water services;
- Manage water and sanitation services; and
- Render electricity services.



# Strengthening Learner Support Through Back-to-School and Educational Initiatives



**E**rmelo, Mpumalanga - Between 14 and 22 January 2026, Msukaligwa Local Municipality, under the leadership of Executive Mayor Alderwoman M.P. Nkosi, implemented a series of educational support initiatives across schools and communities. These initiatives included the annual Back-to-School Programme, partnerships with local stakeholders, and targeted funding to support learners' registration and academic readiness for the 2026 school year.

Msukaligwa achieved an overall pass rate of 91.4 % for the Class of 2025, ranking second in the Gert Sibande District and fourth in the province. This reflects the dedication of learners, educators, and school communities across both urban and rural areas.

The Back-to-School Programme began on 14 January 2026 at Ithafa Secondary School (Ward 1) in Wesselton, Ermelo. Learners received 40 pairs of school shoes and 40 scientific calculators, with an additional 50 study guides pledged to support their academic readiness. Ithafa Secondary achieved a 70 % matric pass rate for the Class of 2025.

On 16 January 2026, Msukaligwa visited Umzimvelo Agricultural High School (Ward 18), providing 40 pairs of school shoes and 40 scientific calculators to learners. Umzimvelo Agricultural High School achieved a 96.8 % pass rate for the Class of 2025. Executive Mayor Nkosi engaged learners and educators, discussing the opportunities and challenges associated with rural and agricultural education.

The Back-to-School Programme concluded on 21 January 2026 at Lake Chrissie Secondary School (Ward 19) in Chrissiesmeer, where learners received similar support. Lake Chrissie achieved a 93 % matric pass rate for the Class of 2025. Executive Mayor Nkosi congratulated learners and educators on their achievements and encouraged the current cohort to maintain focus and dedication in the year ahead.

In addition to the Back-to-School Programme, Msukaligwa Local Municipality supported Seriti Green Social and Economic Development and the Gert Sibande District Municipality on 16 January 2026 in Davel (Ward 10). School shoes were handed over to learners from Davel Primary School, Laerskool Davel, KwaDela Secondary School, and Umfudlana Combined School, while partner organisations provided laptops, sanitary products, books, stationery, bursaries, and skills development support.

On 22 January 2026, MLM's Youth Office in the Office of the Mayor coordinated another educational initiative in partnership with EST Sourcing (Pty) Ltd and MaxProf, providing registration support for seven selected learners from the Class of 2025, ensuring their continued access to education.

These initiatives demonstrate Msukaligwa Local Municipality's ongoing commitment to creating functional learning environments, promoting equitable access to education, and supporting learners across both urban and rural communities.





## Celebrating Academic Achievement at the Annual NSC Mayoral Excellence Awards

Msukaligwa Local Municipality (MLM) partnered with the Department of Education in the Gert Sibande District to host its annual NSC Matric Mayoral Excellence Awards at the Civic Centre on Wednesday, 4 February 2026. The ceremony marked the culmination of the municipality's Back-to-School Programme and recognised learners who excelled in the 2025 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations.

**MLM recorded an impressive 91,4% matric pass rate, ranking second in the Gert Sibande District and fourth in Mpumalanga.**

The awards brought together Council leadership, municipal officials, educators, parents, guardians and community stakeholders, reflecting a shared responsibility in supporting learner achievement. Through its partnership with the Department of Education, the programme reinforced MLM's role in strengthening educational outcomes and affirmed that learner success is built through collective effort across schools, families and communities.

MLM recorded an impressive 91,4% matric pass rate, ranking second in the Gert Sibande District and fourth in Mpumalanga. Top-performing learners were acknowledged through a range of awards, including certificates, vouchers, funding support and laptops to assist with further studies. Educators and school management teams were also recognised for their guidance and leadership throughout the academic year.

The Back-to-School Programme, implemented between 14 and 22 January 2026, laid a strong foundation for the academic year by addressing barriers to learning and supporting learner readiness. Interventions included the provision of school shoes, scientific calculators, study guides, laptops and registration assistance. Schools reached through the programme included Ithafa Secondary School in Wesselton, Umzimvelo Agricultural High School and Lake Chrissie Secondary School in Chrissiesmeer.

Further support initiatives were extended to learners in Davel through partnerships with external stakeholders. These interventions included bursaries, stationery, sanitary products and skills development support, ensuring that learners in both urban and rural areas had access to the resources required to participate meaningfully in education.

Msukaligwa Local Municipality demonstrates a structured and intentional approach to learner support, combining early intervention with recognition of achievement. This approach positions education as a key driver of long-term social and economic development within the municipality. It remains committed to working closely with the Department of Education, schools, families and community stakeholders to promote academic excellence and youth development. The achievements of the Class of 2025 reflect the value of sustained collaboration and encourage future cohorts to pursue similar success.







# Wesselton Community Engages Leadership at Mayoral Imbizo

Residents of Wards 3, 4 and 6 connect directly with municipal leadership as service delivery, economic support, and community voices take centre stage.

On 19 March 2026, Executive Mayor Ald. MP Nkosi led a Mayoral Imbizo at Mpumalanga Stadium in Wesselton, bringing together over 700 residents from Wards 3, 4 and 6 for a day of meaningful interaction and service delivery support.

The event was attended by the Mayoral Committee, ward councillors, Proportional Representation (PR) councillors, and municipal administration, demonstrating a united presence of both political and administrative leadership.

Residents interacted directly with municipal leadership, raising concerns and discussing issues affecting their daily lives. Topics included service delivery challenges, ongoing municipal programmes, and progress on the implementation of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP).

Addressing the community, Executive Mayor Ald. MP Nkosi emphasised the municipality's commitment to engagement:

"We are committed to listening to our communities and ensuring that their voices guide our planning and service delivery," she said.

In support of local economic development, the Municipality's Planning and Economic Development Department provided start-up materials to one beneficiary per ward, helping emerging entrepreneurs establish or grow their small businesses. Selected residents also received farming inputs and guidance on suitable crops, promoting household food security and self-sustainability.

A range of stakeholders provided services and support on-site, including government departments such as Home Affairs, Health, Social Development, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), and Education, as well as private sector partners like Sithole Funerals and Nape Kunene. Mr Thusi, Manager of Human Settlements and Properties, serving as Acting Director of Planning and Economic Development,

highlighted the importance of grassroots support: "Equipping beneficiaries with the resources they need empowers sustainable livelihoods and strengthens our local economy."

Adding to the vibrancy of the Imbizo, local entrepreneurs and informal traders showcased and sold products such as homemade charcoal and footwear, reflecting the growing spirit of enterprise within Wesselton. One resident expressed appreciation for the opportunity to be heard: "We are grateful for platforms like this where we can speak directly to our leaders. It gives us hope that our concerns are being taken seriously."

**The Imbizo is not just about listening, but about responding to the needs of our communities and working together to build sustainable solutions.**

The strong community turnout underscored the importance of such engagements, reflecting a shared commitment between residents and the municipality to work together for improved service delivery and sustainable development.

Through initiatives like the Mayoral Imbizo, Msukaligwa Local Municipality continues to build a transparent, accountable, and people-centred local government that listens, engages, and delivers on the needs of its communities.



# Msukaligwa Strengthens Service Delivery with Fleet Handover to Technical Services



In a move aimed at strengthening service delivery and ensuring rapid response to community needs, Msukaligwa Local Municipality (MLM) officially handed over a fleet of vehicles and plant equipment to its Technical Services Department at the AJ Swanepoel Stadium on 15 January 2026.

The fleet has been allocated to key sections within the department, including Water, Sanitation, Roads, and Electricity. It comprises eight bakkies, a cherry picker, a bulldozer, and a front-end loader, which will support day-to-day operations and infrastructure maintenance.

**The vehicles help monitor driving behaviour, track locations in real time, improve accountability, and ensure the fleet is used efficiently, safely, and responsibly**

This strengthened fleet will enable the municipality to respond more effectively to service delivery challenges, from water leak repairs and road maintenance to electricity restoration and sanitation services, ensuring communities receive reliable and timely municipal services.

Equipped with dashcams and GPS trackers, the vehicles help monitor driving behaviour, track locations in real time, improve accountability, and ensure the fleet is used efficiently, safely, and responsibly, while also strengthening oversight and governance.

In line with its commitment to internal capacity building, the branding and designs on the vehicles were developed in-house by the Municipality's Communications Unit, showcasing local talent and reinforcing Msukaligwa's professional municipal identity. The handover forms part of a broader fleet improvement initiative focused on modernising resources, strengthening operational capacity, and ensuring municipal assets are effectively used to serve residents.

With these enhanced capabilities, Msukaligwa Local Municipality continues to prioritise communities, delivering services that are reliable, responsive, and sustainable.



# Roadworks Progress Across Msukaligwa

**M**sukaligwa Local Municipality has been actively overseeing major road upgrade and rehabilitation projects across the municipality, including in Wesselton and Ermelo. These are aimed at improving safety, accessibility, and travel for residents.

In Wesselton, significant rehabilitation work is underway on Mabilisa, Magwaza, Mabuza Streets, and Mandela Drive. These projects involve rebuilding the road base, improving drainage, and preparing the roads for durable surfacing to withstand daily traffic and weather conditions.

Meanwhile, in the town of Ermelo, municipal crews have been active on several roads, including Alkmaar Street, where improvements are enhancing travel conditions and safety for motorists, pedestrians, and local businesses. Other streets across the town have also seen attention as part of broader municipal efforts to strengthen road infrastructure. These upgrades are part of ongoing efforts to address long-standing issues with road quality and access in central and residential areas.

Elsewhere in the municipality, additional improvement work has been carried out to ensure roads are more reliable and safer. These activities include structural strengthening, surfacing improvements, and drainage upgrades on various streets that are vital for residents' daily travel.

## Ongoing efforts to address long-standing issues with road quality and access in central and residential areas

These projects are designed to deliver long-term benefits for the community. Rehabilitated roads reduce travel hazards, limit vehicle damage, and create smoother, safer journeys. They also support local economic activity by making it easier for residents, businesses, and service providers to move efficiently throughout the municipality.

Msukaligwa is taking visible steps to ensure the municipality's road network is safer, stronger, and more reliable.





# Work Progresses on Ermelo and Wesselton Wastewater Plant Upgrade

The Msukaligwa Local Municipality reports steady progress on the refurbishment and extension of the Ermelo/Wesselton Wastewater Treatment Plant, a project that will improve sanitation services and protect local water resources.

Since the project began, the plant has remained operational while contractors restore and expand its capacity. The facility currently treats around 4 million litres of wastewater a day, below its intended capacity. The refurbishment will restore treatment to approximately 9 million litres per day, enhancing the municipality's ability to manage wastewater reliably and reduce the risk of sewer overflows. The extension includes new inlet works capable of receiving up to 33 million litres a day, allowing the plant to handle future growth.

The project is also providing economic benefits for the local community. To date, 31 work opportunities have been created, and 15 local Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) are participating in the work, ensuring that the municipality's investment supports local employment and business participation.

During an oversight visit on 10 March 2026, the Executive Mayor, Alderwoman M.P. Nkosi, and municipal officials received an update from the contractor and observed work underway. The visit highlighted the municipality's commitment to transparency, accountability and effective project oversight.

The refurbishment and extension will reduce environmental risks, ensure cleaner water enters local rivers, and provide a more reliable

wastewater service. Addressing the plant's capacity and efficiency issues will strengthen the infrastructure that supports public health and environmental protection.

## Addressing the plant's capacity and efficiency issues will strengthen the infrastructure that supports public health

Residents can expect long-term benefits once the project is complete. The upgraded plant will provide consistent wastewater management, minimise service interruptions, and improve the reliability of sanitation services in Ermelo and Wesselton. The work represents a significant step towards sustainable and resilient infrastructure that meets the current and future needs of the community.

The municipality remains committed to carrying out the project efficiently, safely, and with maximum benefit for residents, with regular updates provided to keep the community informed of progress.



# Multi-Agency Compliance Inspection Conducted In Industrial Area

M  
Msukaligwa Local Municipality (MLM), through its Planning and Economic Development Department (PED), conducted a joint compliance inspection aimed at addressing widespread non-compliance with Municipal By-Laws and the National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act, 1977 (Act No. 103 of 1977). The operation, which took place on Thursday, 29 January 2026, formed part of the MLM's ongoing efforts to promote lawful development, public safety and orderly land use management.

## Attention was given to rezoning compliance, as the unlawful conversion of residential properties into business premises has become an increasing concern

The inspection was led by our Building Inspectors, Town Planners and our Fire & Rescue department in collaboration with the South African Police Service (SAPS) and various municipal and external stakeholders. The operation commenced along Voortrekker Road and extended into the Industrial Area, where several premises had been identified as posing potential regulatory and safety concerns.

The primary objective of the operation was to assess compliance with land use management requirements, approved building plans and applicable safety standards. Attention was given to rezoning compliance, as the unlawful conversion of residential properties into business premises has become an increasing concern within the MLM. Such practices undermine proper planning processes and may pose risks to surrounding communities and infrastructure.

During the inspection, officials identified a number of instances where properties were being utilised for business purposes without the necessary rezoning approvals. Additional non-compliance issues included building works undertaken without approved plans, fire and occupational safety risks, and contraventions that may negatively affect service delivery and public safety.

Where non-compliance was identified, enforcement actions were initiated in accordance with applicable legislation. Notices were issued to affected property owners, and guidance was provided on the corrective steps required to regularise their properties. In one instance, a business was closed due to serious regulatory violations that warranted immediate intervention.

Beyond enforcement, the operation placed strong emphasis on education and engagement. Property owners and business operators were informed of the importance of complying with land use and building regulations, not only to meet legal requirements but also to ensure safety, sustainability and certainty for their operations.

The joint inspection is expected to yield broader benefits for the MLM, including improved regulatory compliance, safer industrial operations and strengthened inter-departmental cooperation. It is also anticipated that regularisation of unauthorised developments and improved adherence to planning procedures will contribute positively to municipal revenue through approved building plans, accurate billing and lawful application of tariffs and service charges.

Msukaligwa Local Municipality remains committed to collaborative enforcement and recognises the value of coordinated operations involving SAPS and other key stakeholders. Similar inspections will continue as part of an ongoing strategy to promote compliance, support sustainable economic development and ensure a well-regulated municipal environment.



# Process Controllers Learnership: Practical Knowledge Sharing at the Ermelo Wastewater Treatment Works

Msukaligwa Local Municipality continues to strengthen technical capacity within the Technical Services Department through structured training initiatives, under the guidance of the Skills Development Facilitator.

Complementing this initiative, Global Skills Solutions invited the Technical Services Department to enrol employees in a nine-month Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Programme for Water and Wastewater Reticulation. The programme focuses on the maintenance of pipe networks that distribute potable water and collect sewage or stormwater. Participation extended beyond the Technical Services Unit, with General Workers selected from various sections of the municipality to strengthen technical skills and enhance operational capacity across departments.

“We are proud to see our General Workers applying their learning in real-world environments, gaining confidence and technical expertise,” said the Skills Development Facilitator.

As part of their practical training, the learners recently hosted a hands-on knowledge-sharing session at the Ermelo Wastewater Treatment Works, located on Mandela Drive Street.

During the visit, the learners, supported by senior process controllers on site, guided the Communication Unit and the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Unit through the wastewater treatment processes. The session allowed staff to observe plant operations up close, ask questions, and engage directly with the learners, showcasing their growing confidence and technical understanding.

## Overview of the Wastewater Treatment Processes

The walkthrough began with the preliminary treatment stage, where incoming sewage is screened to remove large objects such as plastics and debris. This protects equipment and ensures smooth plant operation. Learners then explained the primary treatment process, where wastewater settles in sedimentation tanks. Heavier solids sink to form

sludge, while lighter materials are removed from the surface, significantly reducing solid waste in the water.

The session continued with the secondary treatment phase, during which micro-organisms break down organic matter to further improve water quality. Finally, the clarification and disinfection stage prepare the treated water for safe discharge. All activities were conducted in line with occupational health and safety requirements.

**By guiding colleagues and sharing their skills, the learners are contributing to smoother day-to-day operations and improved service delivery for the community.**

Throughout the visit, senior process controllers reinforced key technical concepts and shared practical insights from their experience, supporting the learners as they applied their knowledge in a real operational environment.

The knowledge-sharing session highlighted the value of structured training, mentorship, and hands-on exposure in building municipal technical capacity. By guiding colleagues and sharing their skills, the learners are contributing to smoother day-to-day operations and improved service delivery for the community.



# Revenue Team Empowers Residents Through Information, Access, and Dignified Service

The Revenue Team are on a mission to empower residents through information, access, and dignified service, and this was seen on 2 February 2026 at the Civic Centre, where they were helping residents with account enquiries, payments, and understanding their financial information.

The team provided frontline support, guiding residents to the right service points and explaining municipal revenue processes. This reduced unnecessary movement between offices, cut waiting times, and allowed residents to resolve queries in a single visit, making their experience at the municipal offices smoother.

A big part of the day was financial guidance. The team found that many residents were not in arrears but did not know about available payment options. They explained how to use online payment platforms and submit proof of payment electronically. Email addresses and contact numbers were shared so residents could follow up directly, avoiding unnecessary repeat trips to the Civic Centre.

Where residents said they had not been receiving monthly account statements, the team updated their email addresses immediately, ensuring statements would be sent on time in future. This helped households stay on top of their accounts and made the process more transparent.

The team also took time to explain electricity billing. Residents learned that electricity bought online or at the Civic Centre is charged at the same approved rate. They were also shown how the inclining block tariff works, helping them understand how usage affects costs and giving them the information needed to manage electricity wisely.

**This reduced unnecessary movement between offices, cut waiting times, and allowed residents to resolve queries in a single visit**

The work of the Revenue Team reflects the Batho Pele Principles in action: providing access, giving clear information, being open and transparent, and treating people with courtesy. Residents were treated respectfully and with dignity, showing that municipal service can be people-focused.

By putting accurate information and easy access first, the Revenue Team improved residents' experience, eased pressure on municipal offices, and strengthened trust between the municipality and the community.

In recognition of this consistent and people-centred service, we crown the Revenue Team, February 2026 Batho Pele Principles Champions, showing how local government can empower residents through effective revenue services.



# Supporting Flood Relief and Championing Community Engagement

**M**sukaligwa Local Municipality (MLM) supported residents affected by the ongoing floods in the region. The municipality supported the Department of Social Development on 3 February 2026, which partnered with Vodacom to deliver flood relief donations to households impacted by heavy rainfall. The handover took place at the Civic Centre, and the donations were personally delivered by Ms Nompumelelo Hlophe, MEC for Social Development. Leading the MLM delegation was Executive Mayor Alderwoman M.P. Nkosi, demonstrating the municipality's commitment to service and community support during this challenging period.

**A proactive and coordinated approach to protecting residents and strengthening community resilience during this period of extreme weather.**

Relevant municipal officials, including Musa Eugene Malaza (Manager of Parks and Grounds) and the Communications Unit, also partnered with the Mpumalanga Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) to raise awareness on flood safety through VOC FM and Ligwa FM. Led by GCIS's Vuyisile Cindi, these engagements provided residents with practical guidance on recognising early warning signs, planning evacuations and implementing safety measures to protect lives and property during the ongoing floods.

Several communities within Msukaligwa experienced localised flooding and property disruptions, but these impacts formed part of a broader provincial crisis. Across Mpumalanga, heavy rainfall continued to cause severe flooding, resulting in at least 20 reported fatalities, while neighbouring provinces such as Limpopo were also severely affected. The National Disaster Management Centre classified the situation as a national disaster, and emergency response teams were actively deployed to support affected communities and manage ongoing risks.

Through these combined efforts, including political leadership, intergovernmental collaboration, community engagement and on-the-ground support, the MLM stood in solidarity and demonstrated a proactive and coordinated approach to protecting residents and strengthening community resilience during this period of extreme weather.



# Sibungaza Usuku Lomhlaba Lwezindawo Ezimanzi



Ihhovisi Lezemvelo liyaqhubeka nokuqwashisa ngezindaba zemvelo kanye nokukhuthaza izinqubo ezisimeme esifundeni sonke. Umsebenzi wayo ugxile ekubandakanyeni abafundi, izikole, kanye nemiphakathi ezinhlelweni ezivikela imithombo yemvelo, eziqinisa ulwazi lwezemvelo, kanye nokuhlakulela ubuphathi obunomthwalo wemfanelo.

## Ubushoshovu baseChrissiesmeer buyingxenye yohlelo olubanzi nehhovisi lethu lezemvelo

Lokhu kuzibophezela kwagqanyiswa ukusebenzelana okubalulekile nabafundi nothisha esikoleni samabanga aphantsi Kwachibikhulu eChrissiesmeer, lapho izikhulu zikamasipala zigqugquzele ukuqonda indima ebalulekile edlalwa amaxhaphozi ekusimamiseni imiphakathi kanye nemvelo. Lokhu kwenziwa ngokuhlonipha uSuku Lomhlaba Lwezindawo Ezimanzi 2026, kugqamisa ubudlelwano obuhlala njalo phakathi kwezindawo ezihlala ezindaweni ezihlala emanzini kanye nemikhuba yamasiko nolwazi oluqondise ukuphathwa kwazo okusimeme ezizukulwaneni ngezizukulwane.

Amaxhaphozi ahlala ephakathi kwezindawo ezikhiqiza kakhulu futhi ezibalulekile ngokwezemvelo, ezihlinzeka ngezinsizakalo ezibalulekile njengokuhlaza amanzi, ukulawulwa kwezikhukhula, kanye nezindawo zokuhlala zezinhlobonhlobo zezitshalo nezilwane. Lezi zinhlelo zemvelo

ziyaqhubeka nokusekela izinhlobonhlobo zezinto eziphilayo ezicebile, zithuthukisa ukuvikeleka kwamanzi ezweni elintula amanzi, futhi zisekela amandla ale ndawo e-eco-tourism, ziheha izivakashi ngokubuka izinyoni, okuhlanganwe nakho kwemvelo, nokwazisa amagugu amasiko.

Ngesikhathi sokuxoxisana kwesikole, abafundi babambe iqhaza ezimisweni zokuxoxisana zokuhlola imisebenzi yamaxhaphozi, izinsongo ababhekana nazo, nezindlela ulwazi lwendabuko olunikelela ngayo ekuphatheni okusimeme. Ukuze kuhunyushwe ukufunda kube izenzo ezingokoqobo, abafundi nezikhulu zikamasipala batshala izihlahla ukuze kuthuthukiswe izindawo zokuhlala ezihlala endaweni engamaxhaphozi. Ngaphezu kwalokho, umasipala wenze ukuhlaza endaweni engamaxhaphozi eseduze, wasusa udoti kanye nemfucumfucu ebeka engcupheni ikhwalithi yamanzi kanye nobuqotho bemvelo. Le misebenzi inikeza ubufakazi obubambekayo bokuzibophezela okuqhubekayo kukamasipala ekunakekeleni imvelo.

Ubushoshovu baseChrissiesmeer buyingxenye yohlelo olubanzi nehhovisi lethu lezemvelo, oluhlanganisa nezinhlelo eziqaliswe ekuqaleni kukaJanuwari. NgoSuku Lwamazwe Ngamazwe Lokunciphisa I-CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions, iHhovisi Lezemvelo livakashele izikole zamabanga aphantsi iPhumula, Umsebe, kanye neLucky Dube Primary ukuze lixoxisane nabafundi ezingxoxweni zokunciphisa ukukhishwa kwekhabhoni ngokugaywa kabusha kanye nokonga ugesi.

Ngezinhlelo zayo eziqhubekayo, sigcizelela ukuhlangana kwezintshisekelo zemvelo, amasiko, kanye nezomnotho. Amaxhaphozi kanye nezinye izinsiza zemvelo zibhekwa njengezinto zombili zemvelo nezamasiko, ezinikeza amathuba okuziphilisa esimeme, ukuthuthukiswa kwamakhono ekuphathweni kwemvelo kanye ne-eco-tourism, kanye nokuhlomisa umphakathi. Ukushumeka imfundo ehambisana nomsebenzi wokongiwa kwemvelo kukhombisa ukuthi ukuphatha kwemithombo yemvelo kuwumthwalo ohlanganyelwe futhi kubalulekile ekuqiniseni kokubili imiphakathi kanye nemvelo.





## Quality of our drinking water

This report indicates an overview of water quality status for the past 3 months (i.e. December 2025 to February 2026) across Msukaligwa local municipality jurisdiction area. The report is generated from the monthly water results received from Gert Sibande District Municipality water quality laboratory.

Msukaligwa local municipality serves as the water service authority (WSA) as well as water service provider (WSP). The municipality provides access to clean water for the communities within its jurisdiction in accordance with the Constitution of the republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, the municipal structures (Act 117 Of 1998).

Approximately 35% of the population of Msukaligwa local Municipality reside in rural areas (farms or villages). The municipality uses both the internal and external expertise and capacity to provide water services to the communities within the six supply schemes, namely Ermelo/Wesselton scheme, Davel/kwaDela scheme, Breyten/kwaZanele & Chrissiesmeer/kwaChibikhulu scheme, Lothair scheme, Sheepmoor scheme and rural scheme.

### ERMELO/WESSELTON SCHEME

The Ermelo water supply scheme abstracts raw water from Jericho, Douglas and Brummer Dams for the treatment in two water treatment works namely Southern treatment plant (Jericho Dam) at 13 Mega litres per day and Northern treatment plant (Douglas Dam & Brummer Dam) at 14 Mega litres per day with a combined capacity of 27 Mega litres per day and distributed to 155 351 of the populations which covers areas like the whole of Ermelo.

### BREYTEN/KWAZANELE & CHRISSIESMEER/KWACHIBIKHULU SCHEME

The Breyten/kwaZanele & Chrissiesmeer/kwaChibikhulu scheme water supply scheme abstracts raw water from the Torbanite dam and Usutu – transfer pipeline via the upper Komati pipeline for treatment in Breyten treatment work with a design capacity of 3 Mega litres per day and distributed to a population of over 26 177 in Breyten / kwaZanele and Chrissiesmeer / KwaChibikhulu.

### DAVEL/KWADELA SCHEME

The Jericho scheme/Usutu pipeline water supply scheme abstracts raw water from the Jericho dam for treatment in Davel water treatment plant with a design capacity of 1 Mega litres per day and distributed to a population of 5 711 in Davel and kwaDela.

### LOTHAIR SCHEME

The Lothair water supply scheme abstracts raw water from Impuluzi River for the treatment in capacity of 1 Mega litre per day and distributed to over 8 435 population in Slindile and Lothair.

### SHEEPMOOR SCHEME

The Sheepmoor scheme abstracts raw water from Jericho dam for the treatment in Sheepmoor water treatment works with the capacity of 1 Mega litre per day distributed a population of 3 886. RURAL SCHEME Drinking water is provided to farms and villages through the maintenance and operation of over 100 boreholes and 8 water tankers for fifty-two farms and villages.

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### WATER LABORATORY IN USE

Water samples are collected by Gert Sibande District laboratory samplers for analysis once a month at all our water treatment plants to be tested at their accredited laboratory. The results are then sent to the municipality to be analysed by the technician & water quality supervisor for compliance SANS 241: 2015.

### WATER QUALITY PARAMETERS

The following Water quality parameters are taken into consideration when analysing the quality of drinking water: Microbiological properties (presence of bacteria, viruses and pathogens); Physical properties (conductivity, PH and turbidity) Chemical properties (fluoride, chloride, nitrate, sulphate, iron, manganese, dissolves salts, metals etc.)

### WATER QUALITY OVERVIEW

During the 3 months period from December 2025 – February 2026, 241 water samples were taken. The samples were taken from different locations of water supply schemes which include the treatment works, reservoirs, household's taps, schools and boreholes, etc. 241 analyses were done from those samples to determine physical, chemical and microbiological compliance of final water.

Month	No. of samples	Chemical failures	Percentage chemical compliance	Microbial failures	Percentage microbial compliance
December	80	5	94%	30	63%
January	81	4	95%	41	49%
February	80	1	98%	19	76%

No. of samples	241 samples and/or represent
Microbial failures	90
Chemical failures	10

90 (Ninety) samples (Microbial) points failed to comply with class 1 SANS 241: 2015 and thus equated to 63% compliant.

10 (Ten) samples (Chemical) points failed to comply with class 1 SANS 241: 2015 and thus equated to 96% compliant.

### CONCLUSION

The municipality remains committed in safeguarding public health through continuously and consistently monitoring of drinking water quality.

The municipality is confident about the quality of drinking water supply at each and every tap. Clean and drinkable water in line with SANS 241:2015 the municipality will ensure the following:

- That all unacceptable sample result at various points will be monitored weekly until they improve.
- Gert Sibande District Municipality will take samples once every month for all water treatment plants to be analysed at their accredited laboratory.





### THE PHOENIX

The rebuilding of Ermelo after the destruction of almost all buildings during the 1899 to 1902 war.



### THE UNIFORMED BLACK AND WHITE TRIANGLES

The mining and coal industry in the immediately vicinity of Greater Ermelo and the integration of the two towns.



### THE CROSSED SHOVEL AND SHEEP SHEARS

Representing the two most important farming operations - horticulture and sheep farming.



### THE MOTTO

"Stabiliter Progredivens" which means stable progress.