



 **Malkerns Town Board**

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ANNUAL REPORT



2021/2022 FINANCIAL YEAR

SEPTEMBER 2022

MALKERNS TOWN COUNCIL (2017-22)



CLLR. DLAMINI, M.C
CHAIRMAN TO COUNCIL



CLLR. VILAKATI, P.
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON



CLLR. DLAMINI, B.



CLLR. LORENTZ, P.



CLLR. FITZPATRICK, B.



CLLR. MABUZA, B



CLLR. MNGOMEZULU, S.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020/2021 FINANCIAL YEAR

VISION

“To be an innovative high-tech agro-tourist Town which is economically friendly and environmentally sustainable in Southern Africa”

MISSION

“Malkerns will provide quality urban and agro-business services through the use of cutting edge processes and technology, ensuring decent living conditions, development and sustained growth in partnership with stakeholders”

OUR VALUES

- ***Impartiality***—Treating all residents fairly and with equality
- ***Integrity***—Upright and straight in all our dealing and execution of duties
- ***Accountability and Transparency***—Open and giving feedback to our community at all times
- ***Professionalism***—Using best practices and embracing appropriate business attitude and disposition in our relations and dealings with clients, business partners and the community.
- ***Innovation***—Always looking for better and more efficient ways to do our business and serving our community

MALKERNS TOWN COUNCIL

OPERATIONAL PORTFOLIO HEADS



MDUDUZI DLAMINI
TOWN TREASURER (Actg)



APPOLO MAPHALALA
TOWN CLERK



ZIYANDA MASEKO
A/TOWN PLANNER



NOMATHEMBA MASIKA
PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER



NKOSINGIPHILE HLATSHWAYO
INSPECTOR OF WORKS



THANDEKA MAZIYA
AIDS RESPONSE MANAGER

STATEMENT FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON



The Town Council of Malkerns Municipality has the pleasure to present this high-level report for operations and financial standing of the Local Authority over the 2021/2022 financial year. I have been privileged to join the local authority in the last quarter of the year under review and appreciate all the work my fellow Councilors have done since assuming office in 2017. The report therefore summarizes events of the 2021/2022 financial year and also give a preview of our journey over the last five years. We thank property owners and stakeholders for attending this meeting. I have also noted attendance of routine monthly meetings by Property Owners and Residents. Such practice is highly commended and encouraged. Most Council meetings are open meetings, and residents are welcome, save for instances where the law requires closed sessions on particular matters.

Kindly note residents and stakeholders that the five-year political term of the incumbent Council will come to an end shortly. The normative practice is that the Minister for Housing and Urban Development will appoint an Interim Council that will hold office until the date of the local government elections. We hope Property Owners will support the Interim Council as well.

We also wish to inform Property Owners and Stakeholders that the Minister for Housing and Urban development has upgraded the status of the local authority from a town to a municipality effective 29 July 2022. The governing structure of the municipality will now be a Town Council instead of a Town Board. This will open room for the municipality to run its elections from delineated electoral wards. We encourage residents to engage the intention of delineation of wards that will be issued by the Minister for Housing and Urban Development in terms of the law. It will help to know the extent of your wards ahead of the forth-coming local government elections.

Property Owners and Stakeholders will recall that Malkerns was declared as an agricultural town. In the execution of its mandate, the municipality must never lose sight of this fundamental identity of the town. The incumbent Council conducted its mandate with that view in mind. The mandate of the municipality is centred around spearheading controlled development within the urban area, provision and maintenance of public infrastructure and services, as well as general administration of the town, with the view to ensure order, health, safety, economic growth and progress for all within the urban area. The mandate derives chiefly from the Urban Government Act No.8 of 1969 and other accompanying legislations operational in the urban local government space. The local authority continues to embrace developmental functions, in addition to its primary function of regulating development within the urban area.

The municipality, like the rest of the country, was negatively affected by the crippling effects of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as socio-political riots that erupted in June 2021. These developments caused periodic disruptions on service delivery and implementation of some capital investment programs. However, the municipality is slowly regaining traction in the implementation of all its programs, and there is hope that the vision of the local authority will be achieved within the foreseeable future.

Despite the challenges caused by the disruptions as narrated above, the Council continued with its oversight role using innovative means, including meetings on technological platforms. The local authority still achieved much under very challenging business environment. The Town Clerk will give a preview of our achievements, lest we be viewed as using this meeting as a campaign trail for return to office.

Much as we are happy to report these successes, there are other areas where we have not been able to perform up to your expectations. These include areas include questions on declaration of the town, promulgation of novel regulatory instruments that will be relevant and aligned to operations of an agricultural town, rating of agricultural land and improvement of informal settlements. The Council has expended effort on each of these matters, but much remains to be done. I challenge the next Council to prioritize these matters. We have heard the concerns of Property Owners and Residents on each of these matters. We further applaud you for engaging on official channels to voice your concerns on each of these matters. These channels include meetings you have convened with the Ministers of Agriculture as well as Housing and Urban Development. You have also approached the courts for redress on some of the issues where there seemed to be discontent. This is highly commendable. It shows that you subscribe to the rule of law, and I wish your behaviour could be replicated throughout all municipalities in the event of disputes.

As you are gathered here today, you have a role to play in all these matters. I encourage you to do the following: Give support to the Interim Council just like you support this outgoing Council. When the Minister announces the registration dates for local government elections, turn out in your numbers to register for elections. This will enable you to vote or be voted for. On the date of voting, turn out in numbers to vote for men and women that will carry the baton forward and provide the required oversight towards resolution of the above-cited matters and make Malkerns a livable agricultural town. Continue to attend open Council meetings. And pay your rates when due.

As we are going to place the baton on the next Council, I challenge the incoming men and women to track each of the matters raised above, and ensure that Malkerns remains an agricultural town as originally envisaged. When that is done, the *“innovative high-tech agro-tourist town which is economically friendly and environmentally sustainable in Southern Africa”* will be achieved.

CLLR. M.C DLAMINI
CHAIRMAN TO COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FROM THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK



The Administration of the Municipality appreciates the support and guidance received from the Council over the last five years. This report is the last in the current political term. The Municipality continued with its core mandate over the year under review. The mandate is centred around spearheading controlled development within the urban area, provision and maintenance of public services and amenities, as well as general administration of the town, with the view to ensure order, health, safety, economic growth and progress for all within the urban area. The mandate derives chiefly from the Urban Government Act No.8 of 1969 and other accompanying legislations operational in the urban local government space. The local authority continues to embrace developmental functions, in addition to its primary function of regulating development within the urban area.

During the year under review, the municipality had a total budget of anticipated revenues amounting to E24.2 million and E11.7 million of the anticipated revenues were collected. This translates to 48% performance in terms of revenue collection. This performance is negatively affected by the high rates arears by the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini. The local authority uses these taxes to provide the much-needed infrastructure for business development and general improvement in the quality of life for all. Over the year under review, about E13.5 million of E24.1 million anticipated expenditure, has been employed to install and maintain infrastructure and render general municipal services. This is 55% of the total anticipated expenditure for the year. A significant proportion of the projects and programmes planned for the year have not be executed effectively because of the limited business activities and meetings duly imposed by the COVID-19 lockdowns.

The local authority has continued with infrastructure upgrades over the year under review. The installation of solar streetlights along MR 27 was successfully accomplished in June 2021. The re-gravelling Mphetseni / Eagles Nest Road was successfully completed in September 2021. The purchase of a skip loader was successfully accomplished in November 2021. The purchase of a 2-ha land parcel along D52 was initiated in November 2021. These achievements are a result of the hard work of Council and the Administration in ensuring efficient delivery of capital projects and services. Other programs in public health and environment, physical planning, social services and general administration were also accomplished. Much still remains to be done. We hope the outgoing Council will place the municipal development baton on other capable hands as the political term draws to a close. The commitment of the Administration remains total to achievement of the vision of the municipality.

APPOLO MAPHALALA
TOWN CLERK / CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

1.0 BACKGROUND AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Historical background

Malkerns lies at the heart of Eswatini's middleveld, midway between Ezulwini and Manzini. This large, fertile expanse of farmland, bristling with the spiky grey-green leaves of the pineapple estates, is Eswatini's breadbasket. From the strategic documents of the local authority, little data is available to trace the history of human settlements around Malkerns. But it can be confirmed that the town was inaugurated in 2012 and provisionally covers over 9 036 hectares. A leadership structure was also established in terms of founding legislations of urban local government.

1.2 Governance



The town is governed by a Board of seven Councillors, four elected through a one-ward system from among registered voters, and the other three are appointed by the Minister for Housing and Urban Development from relevant stakeholder institutions and constituencies. Councillors are non-executive, and ordinarily meet once a month for oversight on execution of agreed development strategies

and regulatory plans, under the leadership of an annually elected Chairperson. They are responsible for policy enactment, strategic planning, community liaison and oversight on operations of the Administration in relation to implementation of municipal strategies. Below is a table showing the different types of meetings held by the Council over the reporting period.

Table1: Types and attendance of meetings convened by Council in 2021/2022

Type of meeting	Frequency	Attendance
Ordinary Meetings	12	94%
Special Meetings	3	92%
Finance Committee Meeting	12	100%
Annual General Meeting	1	100%
Inaugural Meeting	1	100%
Retreat	2	92%
Average attendance		96%

1.3 Ministerial oversight and visits

All urban local authorities principally report to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. The Ministry provides technical guidance, operational oversight, and approves all strategic documents, policies, property taxation methodology and bye-laws of the local authority. It may be reported here that the Ministry upgraded the classification of the local authority at the end of the year under review. The local authority is now a municipality and the



governing structure is a Town Council.

The municipality has had four meetings with different departments of the Ministry. The meetings centred on extension of boundaries, town planning scheme finalization, and property tax administration in the COVID-19 era. These meetings help to strengthen inter-governmental relations and lead to faster resolution of some strategic matters.

1.4 Administration and Human Capital Welfare

The Administration is the executive wing of the local authority, and is composed of managers, officers and staff, with such skills mix and numbers as required by the functions of the town. The Town Clerk presides over Administration and assisted by professional managers leading various specialized portfolios. The local authority has been using seconded officers from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development in the position of Town Clerk. But over the year under review, the local



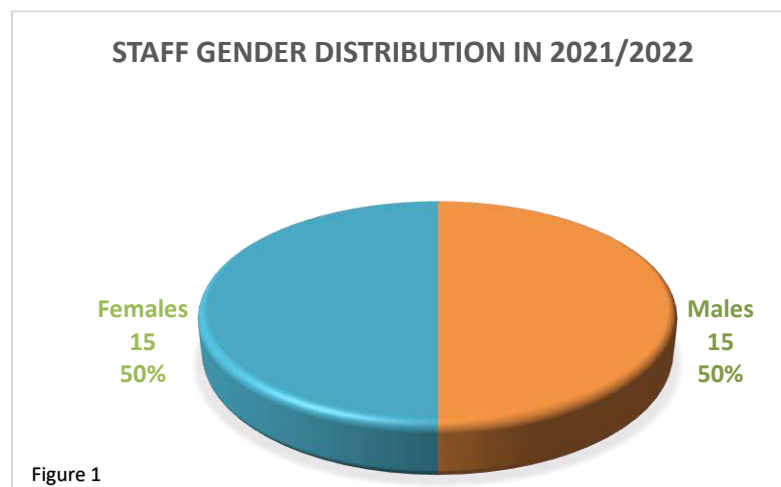
authority secured the services of a substantive Town Clerk, who joined the municipality in July 2021. The local authority also commenced processes for recruitment of a substantive Town Treasurer in the last quarter of the year under review. At the time of compiling this report, the recruitment processes had not been completed.

The National Public Servants and Allied Workers Union (NAPSAWU) is the only recognized union representing almost all the non-managerial staff within the local authority. Industrial relations have been smooth between the parties over the year under review and no incidences of clashes were recorded. The municipality has continued with staff capacitation programmes through periodic training of managerial and ground staff.



Over the period under review, the local authority has exposed staff to such trainings as pot-hole patching, fire awareness and management, occupational health and safety, improving operations to attain ISO certification, construction management, procurement management, and many other topical areas.

Below is a pie chart showing total staff complement and gender distribution over the period



under review. Of the total 30 staff members, 50% are males and 50% are females. The local authority currently achieves the 50:50 gender equity envisaged by many gender activist organizations and government programs to that effect.

At the close of the year under review when many of the COVID-19 restrictions were

lifted, the municipality resumed its wellness hour for employees on Wednesdays afternoon. This initiative is aimed at keeping municipal employees in good health on account of sports. This does not only help employees achieve fitness, but it also help managers to integrate with ground staff and achieve good working relations.

1.5 Business Processes

Stakeholders will recall that the municipality was inaugurated in 2014, an given the challenges that ensued at inception of the institution, it has not been easy to roll-out the business processes and service charter for the local authority. This has further been compounded by disputes over being and not being in town by numerous property owners. In the year under review, and as envisaged in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), the local authority



attempted to streamline portfolio responsibilities and refine the service charter adopted a couple of years ago. The Administration has been working on integration of the ideals of the service charter to the contracts of employment for managerial and ground staff. The intention is to ensure that the service levels envisaged in the service charter are achieved.

1.6 Accountability and stakeholder engagement



The 2020/2021 Annual General Meeting at Princess Pholile Hall

The principal legislation that establishes urban local authorities prescribes engagement mechanisms between local authorities and property owners.

This is mainly through publication of the annual

income and expenditure estimates, audited financial statements, as well as public reporting through the annual general meeting. Over the reporting period, all these statutory engagements were done. The local authority has also gone an extra mile to engage different stakeholders over the year, particularly to help stakeholders appreciate the regulatory environment within which urban local governments operate. These include entrepreneurs, vendors, prospective developers, and many others. We will continue to uphold this practice, and increase the frequency and coverage of the stakeholder engagement activities. It is also pleasing to note that property owners and residents of Malkerns have formed a structure called Malkerns Residents and Ratepayers Association (MRRA). The Administration has had two meetings with the executive committee of MRRA over the year under review.

2.0 PUBLIC WORKS AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

2.1 PREAMBLE

The engineering and technical services department is responsible for the construction and maintenance of infrastructure and building control to ensure compliance of all structures to regulatory instruments within the Urban Area.

Infrastructure that is presently managed by the department includes roads, public lighting systems, buildings, small bridges and recreational facilities.



The Inspector of Works doing office work

2.2 Activities for 2021/2022 Financial Year

The department remained without an incumbent head for a couple of months in the year under review. As a result, implementation of programmes and projects was not as vibrant as anticipated at the beginning of the year.

However, since the recruitment of the incumbent Inspector of Works in the second half of the year under review, the pace of implementation of projects under this department has significantly improved.

2.2.1 Maintenance of roads

The town has five gazetted roads, three of which are Major Roads being MR18 (from Sundowner's junction to Luyengo), MR27 (from Mahlanya Junction to St Andrews junction) and MR103 From Sundowners junction to Mahlanya Junction). All the said roads, totaling 9.3 km are paved. Another partly surfaced road is the D9 road from St. Andrews junction to St. Clemens whilst the D52 to Mhlambanyatsi is a purely gravel road.

All these roads are properties of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. We can confirm that they are all in conditions that require major repair and outright upgrading.

Road maintenance works undertaken include the following:

a) Road carriageway sweeping

Routine maintenance of paved roads was carried out in 19 kilometers on main roads traversing through the town. Works were done on monthly basis which included the scope of sweeping of the carriageway, periodic unblocking of road drainage systems, removal of encroaching vegetation and soil sediments on kerbs and clearing road walkways.

b) Road surface failures maintenance

In October 2021, the local authority engaged Inyatsi Construction for the patching of potholes along MR18 Highway between October 2021 and March 2022 on framework contract basis. About 220m² of potholes were patched during the period from October 2021 to November 2021 from Mabhelengwane to Sundowners Junction. There were disruptions due to consistent rainy weather as well as the second wave of civil unrest which was between October and November 2021.



Replacement of speed humps along MR 27

c) Road reserve maintenance



Road reserve maintenance

Road reserve maintenance was consistently done throughout the summer months whereby about 19 kilometers of road reserve was covered per month from December 2021 to the end of the reporting period in March 2022. About 855 hectares of vegetation overgrowth were cleared and those were mostly on national government roads. As noted, engagements with Ministry of Public Works and Transport are on-going regarding maintenance of state-owned roads.

d) Reshaping of gravel/earth roads profiles

Grading and blading of unpaved roads commenced and was done once in the period under review whereby 35 kilometres out of 60 kilometres was covered. The works were done between September 2021 and March 2022 separately with the assistance of plant hired from Steffanuti Stocks and later, Dalcrue Holdings.

2.2.2 Building control

Building Applications

Ten (10) building applications were approved in the year under review in terms of the Building Act, 1968 (10, 11) and Standard Building Regulations (5 – 12) which aggregated to a construction estimate amount of E 16, 623,150.00. Three (3) permits to occupy and use were issued. The applications are summarized as follows:

Table 2: Building permits processed over 2021/2022 fiscal year

Type of permit approval	Number of approvals	Value of approvals (E)
Building permit New Structure	6	14,044,400.00
Alterations/additions	4	2,578,750.00
Permit to Occupy and Use	3	N/a

2.2.3 Capital Projects

a) Road Re-gravelling,

The municipality commenced re-gravelling of the D52 road in June 2021 and completed in September 2021 of which about 9 kilometers of road was regravelled at a cost of E3 million. The construction activities included renovating existing layer and importing additional new one gravel layer, sub soil drains, culverts and open channel drains. Steffanutti Stocks was the main contractor for the works. The project has been successfully completed.



b) Public Lighting and street illumination



Solar Streetlights on MR 27

The municipality further executed installation of solar street lights from May 2021 to July 2021 whereby 50 streetlights were installed along the MR27 highway at a cost of E2.2 million. The contractor was Mormond Electrical. The works included installation of galvanized steel poles, split type solar panels and luminaires, four cameras and four charging ports. The project has been successfully completed.

c) Installation of speed humps

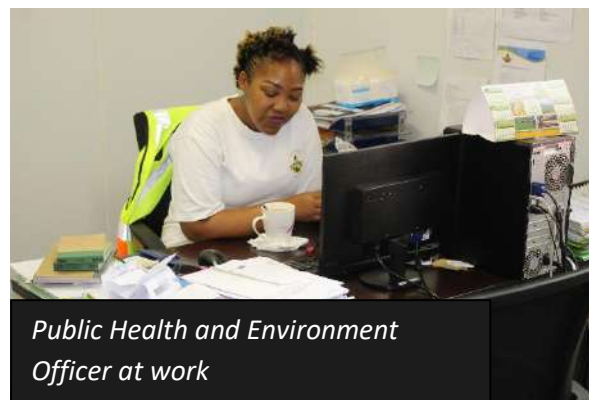
The town replaced steel speed humps in June 2021 with three (3) asphalt speed humps and two (2) raised pedestrian crossings at a project cost of about E165,000. The works were carried out by Inyatsi Construction and the scope was removing steel speed humps and installing of conventional asphalt speed humps with supplementary road markings. The project was completed in June 2021.

Outstanding Capital Projects

The local authority had planned to undertake several other capital projects over the year under review. These include preliminary designs on the civic offices, the public service terminus, the central public market, the public ablution block, amongst others. All these capital projects require land parcels. The local authority is still working with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and all other authorities to secure land for these necessary public amenities. In the year under review, we are pleased to report that the Municipality got approval in terms of section 63 of the Urban Government Act. No8 of 1969 to acquire 2 hectares of land along D52 road. This is part of the initiatives by the local authority to acquire land parcels for the above-stated civic amenities.

3.0 PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

The mandate of the public health and environment department derives from many legislations, including the Urban Government Act of 1969, the Public Health Act of 1968, the Environment Management Act of 2002, *inter alia*. The principal purpose of the department is to ensure safety of all food offered and consumed within the urban area, safety of all trade practices, and environmental health and sustainability in all operations and development programs within the jurisdiction of the local authority.



Public Health and Environment Officer at work

During the 2021/2022 financial year, the department successfully provided the following services.

3.2 Waste Management

3.2.1 Litter Collection



Section 8 of The Waste Regulations of 2002, outlines the functions of the local authority in relation to waste collection. The town collects waste daily, and collected refuse comprises of the normal littering, household waste, and waste produced from commercial outlets. All the waste is safely disposed in Matsapha Landfill, where the Municipality contributes E0.30/tonne for general waste, and E0.50 for

food condemns. Over the year under review, a total of 556 tonnes of waste was collected and disposed. This shows 11% decrease on weight compared to the previous year. The decrease can be attributed to the elementary activities already initiated towards waste recycling. The cooperation received from the business community towards such initiatives is encouraging. There is hope for further reduction of net waste disposals and costs thereof.

3.2.2 Procurement of skip truck

Since the town was established, there has been no vehicle for refuse collection, except for the 2 tonne truck which assists on litter collection and accessing the small private roads for household refuse. Otherwise waste was transported through the use of central government compactor truck and private waste management companies. Over the year under review, the municipality procured a new skip loader truck. This has reduced the cost of transporting waste between Malkerns and the Landfill in Matsapha.



3.2.3 Community Clean Up Campaigns

The local authority partnered with Royal Eswatini Police Services and Bosco Primary School to mobilize local communities to participate in a clean-up campaign. The exercise targeted Mangozeni informal settlement. The



The campaign also involved much sensitization on waste and crime in town. the support of the community was impressive. The department will continue with such collaborations, and recruit more corporates and communities to eventually achieve a litter-free Malkerns.

3.3 Food safety and hygiene



The local authority conducts routine inspections in business premises and food outlets to ensure food safety and hygiene in Malkerns. Thirty-one (31) shop inspections were strategically done, and businesses where food was found to be no longer fit for human consumption, was safely disposed in Matsapha Landfill. We are pleased to note that the rate of compliance and cooperation amongst business operators

is steadily improving. However, there are still pockets of business units that struggle to comply with food safety and hygiene standards. There are few instances where the Municipality had to execute product recall instructions issued by the Ministry of Health. In such instances as well, the level of understanding is on steady rise amongst business operators. The department will continue to engage business operators until all food availed for public consumption can be guaranteed of safety compliance.

3.4 Trainings

3.4.1 Food handlers training

The department conducted two food handlers trainings on food safety and hygiene. Two significant observations were made in the trainings; the structure maintenance and humane handling of carcasses especially with the butcheries. Most of the businesses are operating on leased premises and can only do maintenance to a certain extent. The concerns of the business operators were noted and further engagements are required on the matter. The municipality will continue to lead such initiatives.

3.4.2 ISO Standards

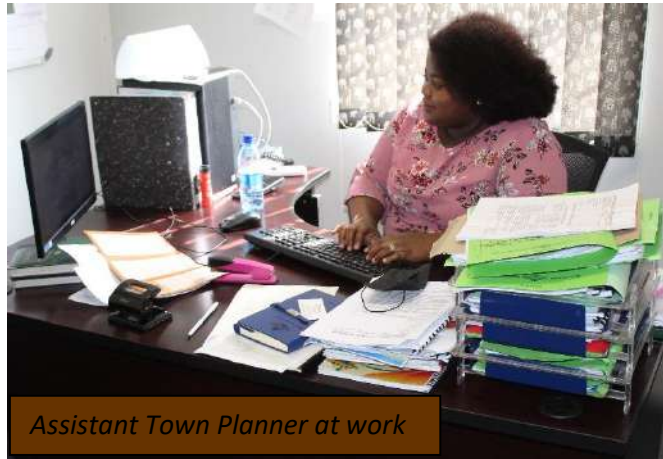
The department underwent a training on Quality Management Systems – Internal Auditing; ISO 9001:2005. Training was offered by Ewatini Standard Authority (SWASA). The intention was to initiate activities towards compliance with the global safety standards to improve the business trustworthiness of the local authority. periodic changes in technology and business processes require that the municipality embraces continuous organizational learning.

3.5 Firefighting training

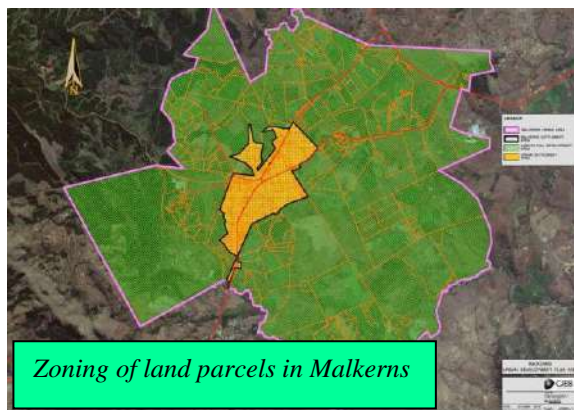
The fire risks in an agricultural town requires extra awareness amongst the municipal officers regarding fire hazards and management. Given that Malkerns is an agricultural town, there are unavoidable open fires that are allowed in such towns, including burning of sugar cane, burning of velds, and similar operations. Five staff members were trained on the firefighting, and can contribute in management of fire outbreaks within town. The training was done by NOSA.

4.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The mandate of the department derives principally from the Town Planning Act of 1961. It aims at achieving a planned, coordinated and harmonious development of the town, promoting health, safety, good order. These ideals are achieved mainly through a universal planning tool known as the Town Planning Scheme. The tool prefers land uses for particular land parcels to achieve synergy and coordinated development of the urban area. The department is also responsible for coordination of local economic development activities. This is a programme that aims to harness the contribution of all stakeholders to grow the local economy.



4.1 The Town Planning Scheme



Over the reporting period, the department coordinated transmission of the draft Town Planning Scheme to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. the Ministry has made comments on the Scheme and the due edits were still being carried out at the time of compiling the report.

4.2 Local Economic Development

In the reporting year the department held five trainings with the aim of implementing two of the projects of the Malkerns Local Economic Strategy 2020-2025 which are project 2: *Malkerns cooperatives empowerment project* and project 6: *Agricultural value-chain expansion project*. This was done in partnership with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of Agriculture. It should be distinguished that this year in review was focusing on the pro-poor category of the strategy.

The beneficiaries are about 42 which consist of informal market traders, women and youth mostly within the low to non-income bracket and lastly micro, medium scale informal crop farming businesses. The micro, medium scale informal crop farming businesses were able to register a cooperative under the name ***Dalingcebo Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited*** which consists of 23 members who predominately produce lettuce, maize, cabbage, maize, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, green beans, green peeper. This initiative will benefit both the members and society at large.

4.3 Contracts management

The department managed three contracts in the year 2021/2022 which are: GIS 3year service framework contract ending 2023; Town Ranging and Security Services 2year contract ending 2023 and Modification of Malkerns Town Planning Scheme that ended in June 22021.

4.4 Special Consent, Re-zoning and Sub-division Applications

The department processed three special consent applications over the year under review. Two of the submitted applications were approved, and intended to change of use from residential to guesthouse and change of use from residential apartments to lodging. The denied application was for use of land for temporary religious purposes. The Local Authority also approved a rezoning application from Crop Farming (CF) to Public Facility (PF). There was one subdivision in the year under review.

4.5 Policy on outdoor advertisement

The department drafted a policy on the regulation of outdoor advertisement in Malkerns which was endorsed by the Council. This policy will protect the towns' aesthetics, safeguarding the safety of motorists and pedestrians by



ensuring a traffic friendly scenario within the town, and that there is orderly, harmonized, controlled and regulated outdoor advertising within the Malkerns Urban Area.

4.6 Trainings

The local authority was able to engage a GIS consultant and capacitated key officers on updating and utilising the GIS system. All departments are now aware of how their specialised data can be captured on site and imported into ArcGIS for development of custom maps which will improve their reporting and proposal to the Council. The department was able to hyperlink the general valuation roll 2020-2025 in the geographic system to enhance billing of rates in the Treasury department. The department also took part in the meetings of the Sectional Title Act 2010 and Regulations 2020, and discussion meetings for the Residential Tenancies Bill conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

4.7 Informal Settlements survey

The department utilised the municipal GIS framework consultancy to collect spatial data for all six informal settlements Ndimbaneni, Khalambazo, Malayinini, Sthomo, Mafini, and Mangozeni located within Land Concession 195 and three private properties Remainder of Portion1A of Farm 76, Portion 60 and 61 of Farm 1270. The department through this survey has developed accurate GIS data for all structures falling within informal settlements and their owners. This data will help in future decision making by Council on matters of upgrading or relocation of the informal settlements.

5.0 SOCIAL SERVICES AND HIV/AIDS RESPONSE

The municipality delivers social welfare services through social services department. The department in most urban local authorities can be traced back to the advent of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and the eventual establishment of a politically-led programme known as the Alliance of Mayors Initiative to Combat AIDS At Local level (AMICAALL). The mandate of the department is to build the capacity



of urban communities and assist the local government to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and other communicable and non-communicable diseases through facilitating prevention and impact mitigation (treatment, care and support) programs, and by making continuous improvements in response management.

As the years went by, HIV/AIDS programming has been evolving. The focus is now on consolidating the gains that the country has made in containing the virus. The emphasis is now on mitigating the impacts of the pandemic and remaining vigilant to avoid resurgence of infections.

5.1 Activities for 2021/2022 fiscal year

5.1.1 Health activities

Malkerns Town Council has one healthcare facility, which continued to operate in the 2021/2022 fiscal year. Services provided and available at the facility include Voluntary Counselling and Testing services, outreach curative services as well as COVID-19 services. There was also 1 mobile clinic outreach which was placed in a strategic place in the town for the provision of clinical services to targeted populations.

Table 3: Number of Clients reached with health services in 2021/2022

Indicator	Achieved
HIV Testing and Counselling	85
Anti-retroviral Relief	791
COVID-19 services	1384

5.1.2 Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

The office facilitated the provision of emergency medical service providers and Malkerns has a fully-operational EMS station with 1 ambulance. It is worth noting that this number only refers to governmental ambulance and excludes all private service providers.

5.1.3 HIV/AIDS, Communicable and Non Communicable Diseases

The number of clients (patients) that remain committed to their antiretroviral treatment (ART) plan in the Malkerns municipal area is slowly increasing by fifteen patients from 776 in the fiscal year 2020/21 to 791 in 2021/22. Activities on other communicable and non-communicable diseases were halted over the reporting period on account of the COVID-19 restrictions.

5.1.4 Condom and IEC Material Distribution

The diagram below illustrates the number of condoms distributed under the AMICAALL program in the 2021/2022 financial year. An increase in the number of male condoms distributed was seen in the month of December 2021, and this was attributed to a campaign conducted in commemoration of **The 16 Days of Activism**. The Royal Eswatini Police Service also disseminated information, education and communication (IEC) material under the **One Billion Rising** on the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act of 2018 and the Rising for the protection of women and girls' bodies" as well as sharing on assistance available in the country respectively.



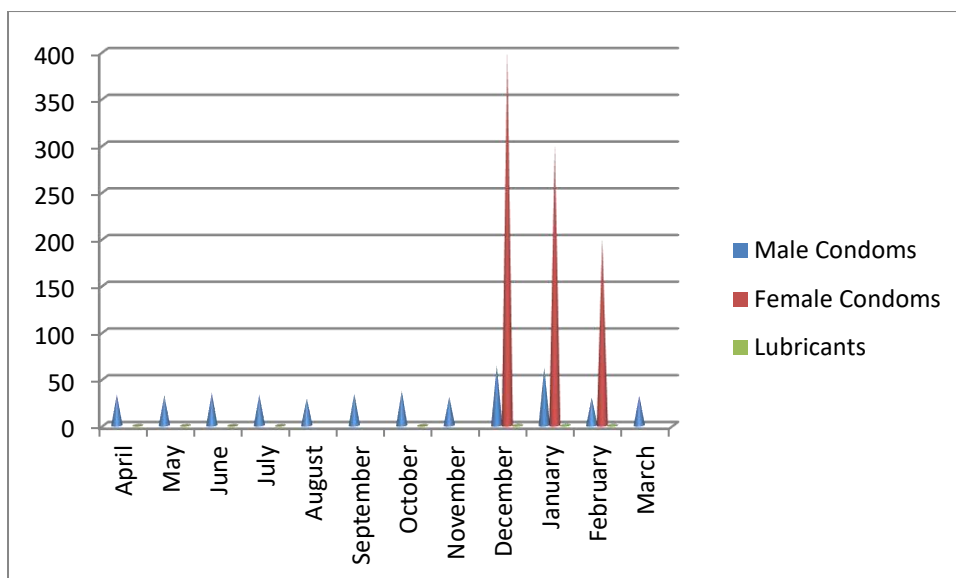


Figure 2. Illustration of condom distribution during the financial year

5.1.5 Community Engagement



The office typically engages the people of Malkerns in sessions where they are educated on various health topics. A total of two (2)



dialogues were conducted in the 2021/2022 financial year, where 163 young people and elders were reached in sessions that covered topics such as Sexual Reproductive Health including HIV/AIDS sexually transmitted infections, behavioral change, Gender based violence as well as communicable diseases.

5.1.6 Home Based Care

The Board continues to support home based care by engaging 14 health caregivers who do door to door healthcare service. Home care can be the key to achieving the highest quality of life possible. It can enable safety, security, and increased independence; it can ease management of an ongoing medical condition; it can help avoid unnecessary hospitalization; it can aid with recovery after an illness, injury, or hospital stay all through care given in the comfort and familiarity of home. Caregivers are volunteers who receive appreciation vouchers at the end of each financial year.



Health Volunteers receiving hampers

5.1.7 Support for Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVCs)

Malkerns Town Board continued to support Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Social Centres. The world has also been fighting a new virus called “Novel Corona Virus/COVID-19”. The pandemic has posed a lot of negative effect to the world at large, effects caused by the virus such as hunger in the community which forced the centres to have faced an escalating number of beneficiaries. Impact mitigation strategies were employed to counter the effects of the virus such as sensitization and donation of food parcels. Food parcels donated by companies and individuals were distributed with sanitary products including sanitizers and masks. This was done in collaboration with various stakeholders like Rhodes Food Group, Parmalat and local farmers



Figure 1. Feeding day in one of the soup kitchens in Mangozeni.



Figure 2 Some of the hampers distributed to children whose soup kitchens were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.2 Economic Empowerment Programmes

The Council also has a mandate of improving entrepreneurship for vulnerable people in the town, and promote inclusive and equitable economic growth in Malkerns to ensure that the poor and vulnerable participate in and benefit from economic growth.

5.2.1 Sunrise Campaign

A total of 25 women were trained in the Sunrise project which aims to empower gender based violence survivors. And 18 men were also introduced in the programme which is still ongoing.



Figure 3 and 7. Males participants in the Men Ending Gender Based Violence in the town. On the left is Women survivors



5.2.2 Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) project

Four women were trained on entrepreneurship skills through a CLGF project which focuses on women's social, economic and political empowerment as well as strengthening civil society capacity for early prediction of identity-based violence. Four young women were also mentored on local government elections.



Figure 8. One of the Malkerns participants awarded funds for her business.

6.0 THE TREASURY

The primary mandate of the Treasury Department derives from the Urban Government Act No.8 of 1969, the Urban Financial Regulations, the Rating Act of 1995, and of late, the Public Finance Management Act of 2017. The department is responsible for planning, collecting, keeping, employing and accounting for revenues of the town in accordance the foregoing statutes.

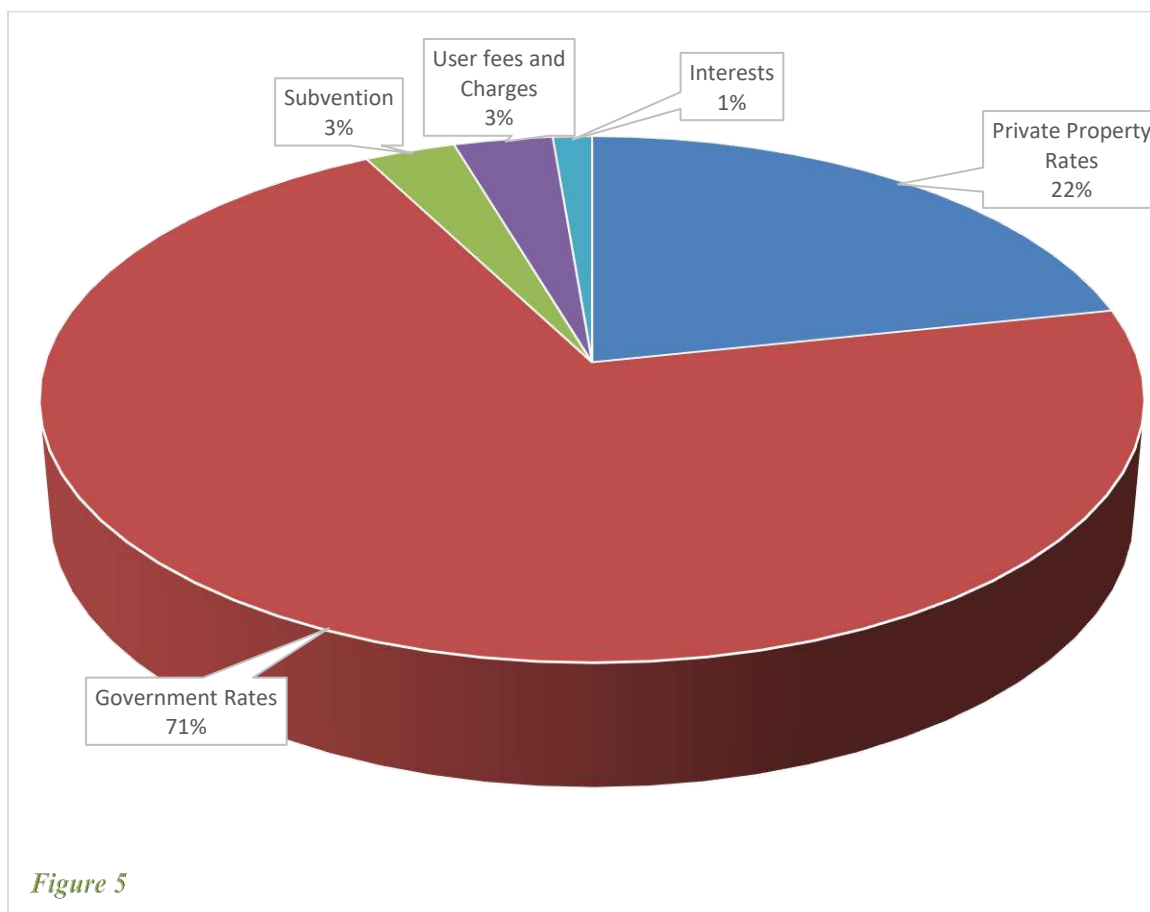


The Town Treasurer, who is Head of the Department, is required to ensure that there are vibrant financial management systems and controls, proper policies and practices, and proper

accounting mechanisms and standards. The treasury is one of the key departments of the local authority, and its performance is of interest to all stakeholders. The department is currently led by a seconded officer from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, but for the longest time in the history of the local authority, the Finance and Administration Officer has held the position of Treasurer on an acting basis.

6.1 Revenues

Section 86 of the Urban Government Act of 1969 gives sources from which urban local authorities can derive revenues. Over the year under review, the local authority had a total revenue budget of E24.2 million. The revenue sources are as depicted in the pie chart below. About 48% of the projected revenue was collected, amounting to E11.7 million. The low collection rates can be attributed largely to the government arrears.



6.2 Expenditure

The total expenditure in the approved estimates was pegged at about E24.17 million, inclusive of recurrent and capital items. As at the close of the 2021/2022 fiscal year, E13.5 million had been employed. This accounts for 55% of the anticipated expenditure for the year under review.

6.4 Tariffs

The Council did not adjust the property tax tariffs over the year under review. We must mention that discussions have still not been concluded regarding the rating of agricultural land.

6.5 Pay and Win Competition

Over the year under review, the Council permitted the Treasury to run



a promotion wherein property owners that had paid their rates as at December 2021. A total amount of E30 000 was made available to incentivize property owners that paid their property tax in good time. Property owners expressed gratitude on this gesture and encouraged the municipality to replicate the initiative.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The Malkerns Council appreciates the cooperation of all stakeholders in the execution of programmes and projects in the 2021/2022 financial year. Much ground was covered. And much remains to be done. The COVID-19 pandemic and political riots between June and October 2021 thwarted the pace and extent of implementation of some of the programmes as envisaged in the strategic documents. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has also attempted to liquidate some of the foundational matters that remained contentious since inception of the town. But more remains to be done. As noted in the previous year, most of the outstanding matters require extensive and determined engagements at levels above the local authority, particularly on matters of land availability for public infrastructure projects. In the 2022/2023 fiscal year, the local authority will continue to prioritize investment in infrastructure, explore diversified revenue sources, reduce expenditure and improve service efficiencies. We believe in the collective energies and cooperation of the stakeholders of the town to take Malkerns to the envisaged *high-tech agro-tourist town that is economically friendly and environmentally sustainable in Southern Africa!*