



Publication: Witness, The - Main
Title: City fixes billing sytem
Publish date: 24 Oct 2022
Page: 3

Reach: 11641
AVE:R 32210.64
Author: Londiwe Xulu

City fixes billing sytem

Msunduzi has started auditing certain areas to get its billing sorted out

LONDIWE XULU

Msunduzi Municipality has started auditing all areas that are not billed correctly in an attempt to correct its billing system.

This is part of the municipality's debt recovery plan to recover what they are owed. Since last month they have been disconnecting businesses and government departments who have been owing rates.

At last week's executive committee meeting, CFO Nelisiwe Ngcobo said the finance department has started its own izimbizo, visiting all areas for data cleansing and to correct the

billing system. She also requested councillors to assist the department with areas they know that are having billing issues.

There are numerous residents who have been sending queries to the municipality regarding their bills and not receiving their bills on time.

"We are going to address all the challenges with our billing," said Ngcobo.

She said the municipality is owed about R5,5 billion, of which residential areas are the biggest contributors to the debt followed by businesses and government departments.

She said there has been improve-

ments with government departments, who have started making payments.

Recently the Department of Public Works paid R56 million and were in engagements with the municipality to ensure they were up to date.

Ngcobo said Transnet has also brought down their outstanding debt.

"We are only waiting for the Department of Education, which has assured us they will pay. We have also communicated with the Department of Co-operate Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) to encourage government departments to stop oc-

cupying buildings that are not paying us or are illegally connected. I have received confirmation that they are taking it up with departments," said Ngcobo.

She said since July they have collected 10% more than their normal collection amount. They have collected R479 million this month and R580 million in September.

During the disconnections campaign, Ngcobo said five people were arrested in connection with illegal connections.

She said out of 10 properties they visit a day, about 60% of them are found with illegal connections, which

is a high number.

Ngcobo added that municipal peace officers were being trained to assist with illegal connections in the city and they were also involving their legal team for assistance.

"Once we identify illegal connections, we serve a notice and remove our services," she said.

She said the municipality will only install new meters once those that were found to have been illegally connected and had their meters removed plead their case and pay penalties to the municipality.

There is currently a high demand for new meters, added Ngcobo.