



14 April 2026

RESPONSE TO OUDTSHOORN MUNICIPALITY

FOR ATTENTION: Municipal Manager

SUBJECT: Follow-up on Municipal Response – Water Quality Assurance, Infrastructure Planning & Governance Transparency

Dear Municipal Manager

Thank you for your written response dated **13 April 2026** regarding water quality, infrastructure planning, and governance matters. We appreciate the Municipality's acknowledgement of the concerns raised and its stated commitment to transparency and collaboration.

However, several **critical issues remain unaddressed**, and certain points in your response require **clarification and concrete action**.

1. Clarification Required on Point 6: Water Advisory Committee (WAC)

Your response states:

“The proposal for a Water Advisory Committee will be considered within the existing governance and oversight frameworks to ensure alignment with legislative and administrative processes.”
(Municipal response, Point 6)

We request clarity on the following:

1.1 What is the process and timeline for this “consideration”?

Section 18 of the Municipal Systems Act explicitly provides for community participation structures. The Positioning Paper proposes a WAC consisting of:

- Qualified engineers and hydrologists
- Senior municipal technical officials
- Business and agricultural stakeholders
- Independent oversight representatives

This aligns fully with the Act and strengthens governance. We therefore request:

- Confirmation that the Municipality supports the establishment of the WAC
- A timeline for tabling the WAC proposal before Council
- The administrative steps required from our side to initiate the process
- Identification of the municipal official who will serve as liaison for the WAC formation

Given the urgency of the water quality challenges, we propose that the WAC be **formally established by 30 June 2026**, consistent with the petition framework in Annexure D.

2. Omission: No Response to the Maintenance Spending Crisis

The Municipality's response does **not address** the documented failure to meet the National Treasury benchmark for Repairs & Maintenance.



The Positioning Paper cites:

“Oudtshoorn Municipality has consistently failed this benchmark for five consecutive years, averaging only 3.1%.”

(Annexure C)

And further:

“The AGSA report for 2022/23 actually listed the infrastructure maintenance at an alarming 0.4%.”

(Important Rider & Disclaimer)

This is a **material governance issue** directly linked to:

- Turbidity spikes
- Repeated “Boil Water” notices
- Asset deterioration
- Failure of purification infrastructure

We request a **direct response** to the following:

2.1 Does the Municipality acknowledge the 0.4% maintenance ratio reported by AGSA?

2.2 What corrective plan exists to move toward the 8% National Treasury benchmark?

2.3 What portion of the 2026/27 MTREF will be allocated to water infrastructure maintenance?

2.4 Will the Municipality publish quarterly maintenance ratio reports, as recommended?

This matter cannot remain unaddressed, as it is central to the water quality crisis.

3. Unanswered Technical Concerns

Several substantive issues raised in the Positioning Paper remain unanswered:

3.1 Absence of a Water Treatment Works (WTW)

The Positioning Paper notes:

“The Raubenheimer Dam has no sand-filtration system (only chlorination).”

(Annexure B)

Your response confirms only that:

“The current boil-water advisory is a precautionary measure linked to elevated turbidity following recent rainfall events.”

(Municipal response, Point 1)

This does not address:

- The absence of filtration
- The known limitations of chlorination in turbid water
- The long-term risk to public health

- The Municipality’s own previous acknowledgement of the need for a R100m filtration plant

We request a **direct statement** on whether the Municipality agrees that a full-scale WTW is required at Raubenheimer Dam.

3.2 Blossoms Wellfield – Quality vs Quantity

Your response states that Blossoms “plays a critical role in stabilising the system,” but does not address the core issue:

“Blossoms water solves the ‘Drought’ problem but does nothing to solve the ‘Turbidity/Health’ problem.”

(Annexure B)

We request confirmation that:

- Blossoms water is mixed with turbid dam water in the reservoirs
- Blossoms does not mitigate turbidity-related boil-water advisories
- Blossoms cannot replace the need for filtration infrastructure

3.3 IDP Planning Misalignment

The Positioning Paper highlights:

“Pushing for dam expansion without a purification upgrade is a strategic error.”

(Section 2C)

Your response does not address:

- Why the dam expansion remains prioritised without filtration
- Whether the Municipality intends to revise the IDP to reflect purification as the primary priority
- Whether the R320m dam expansion will be deferred until a WTW is funded

We request clarity on whether the Municipality will **reprioritise purification infrastructure** in the 2026/27 IDP.

4. Required Next Steps: Establishing the Water Advisory Committee

To move forward constructively, we propose the following steps:

Step 1: Formal Acknowledgement

Municipality confirms in writing that it supports the establishment of the WAC under Section 18 of the Municipal Systems Act.

Step 2: Joint Scoping Meeting (within 14 days)

Purpose:

- Define mandate
- Confirm composition



Putting People First – Through transparent, inclusive, independent governance

- Establish reporting lines
- Agree on timelines
- Identify municipal liaison officials

Step 3: Drafting of the WAC Charter

We will prepare a draft Charter for municipal review.

Step 4: Council Resolution (by 30 June 2026)

Council formally adopts the WAC Charter and establishes the Committee.

Step 5: Quarterly Reporting

WAC to provide oversight on:

- Water quality compliance
- Maintenance ratios
- Infrastructure planning
- Grant applications
- Risk mitigation

5. Request for a Consolidated Municipal Response

We respectfully request a **comprehensive written response** addressing:

1. Clarification on the WAC process and timelines
2. Direct response to the maintenance spending crisis
3. Confirmation of the need for a Water Treatment Works
4. The role and limitations of Blossoms in addressing water quality
5. IDP reprioritisation toward purification infrastructure
6. Agreement on the next steps for establishing the WAC

Given the urgency of the matter and the Municipality's stated commitment to transparency, we request your response **within 7 days**.

We remain committed to constructive engagement and to working collaboratively toward a sustainable, safe, and compliant water system for all residents of Oudtshoorn.

Kind regards

DV Farrell

Dr Dennis V Farrell

Garden Route First Interim Committee