

About the Institution

Polokwane Local Municipality is part of the Capricorn District Municipality in Limpopo. The Municipality is responsible for local service delivery, such as water, electricity, sewage and sanitation, and solid waste services. The Mayor is the political head, and the Municipal Manager is the administrative head and accounting officer. In 2024/25, the Municipality reported expenditure of R5.19bn.¹

Flag Status

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
								
Improper appointments	Co-opting key functions	Climate of fear or favour	Corrupt awards	Financial malpractice	Obstructing accountability	Manipulating perceptions	Private gain	Shadow network

ISS Analysis

- ACTis has raised three flags for the Polokwane Local Municipality and placed four under monitoring.
 - Allegations involving the Municipality's most senior political and administrative office-bearers, Mayor John Mpe and Municipal Manager Thuso Nemugumoni, raise concerns about the integrity of decision-making, oversight and accountability within the Municipality.
 - The fact that the same companies and directors repeatedly appear across procurement allegations, private gain concerns, and corruption investigations suggests these may not be isolated incidents, but rather a pattern of undue influence over municipal decision-making and procurement systems. The alleged involvement of individuals linked to both Mpe and
- Nemugumoni, and the Municipality's continued use of companies implicated in major corruption scandals elsewhere in government, raises concerns that multiple networks may be unduly benefiting from municipal contracts.

 - These concerns are amplified by weak financial controls, procurement irregularities, and allegations that senior leadership withheld information requested by law enforcement and investigators. Such conditions allow misconduct to continue and make it difficult to identify and address wrongdoing.
 - Several infrastructure projects have experienced significant cost increases, delays, incomplete work or procurement irregularities. Delays to projects such as the Polokwane Regional Wastewater Treatment Works may undermine



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Under monitoring

efforts to address existing water and sanitation challenges in the Municipality, prolonging pressures on already strained infrastructure.²

Findings

Flag #1

Improper Appointments



The flag is raised because of concerns about the conduct and integrity of senior political and administrative leadership.

- In 2025, Polokwane Local Municipality Mayor Mosema Makoro John Mpe and Municipal Manager Thuso Nemugumoni were linked to whistleblower reports and media investigations alleging that their associates unduly benefited from municipal tenders (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards).³
- In 2021, Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Water and Sanitation at Polokwane Local Municipality, Alfred Moakamedi, was reportedly charged with assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm after allegedly assaulting a female African National Congress (ANC) party member at a branch meeting. The ANC reportedly sent Moakamedi a letter asking him to step aside voluntarily after the charges.⁴ However, the 2024/25 Annual Report shows he remains MMC for Water and Sanitation.⁵

Flag #4

Corrupt Awards



The flag is raised because of indications of a recurring pattern of procurement irregularities and favourable treatment of multiple contracts and contractors.

- A 2023 forensic investigation found irregularities in the procurement and contract management processes for the Mankweng Stadium and sporting complex project. Investigators alleged that bid specifications were completed only after the tender was advertised in 2014 and that officials inflated the project's estimated cost by millions before awarding the contract to Ditlou Engineering Consultants. Originally budgeted at R38m, project costs reportedly exceeded R126m, with a further R45m required to complete the project as of 2024, bringing the total cost to over R171m. The investigation also found that the contractor used municipal materials and then billed the municipality for them.⁶



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- In 2024, the Polokwane Local Municipality allegedly replaced the original contractor for a softball stadium project with a second contractor under a contract worth more than four times the original award.
 - In 2020, the Municipality reportedly awarded Bo Mamohalala a R41m contract to construct the stadium. Construction stopped after a semi-wetland was discovered near the site. Bo Mamohalala proposed a R16m contract variation to address the issue, but the Municipality reportedly rejected the request because it lacked the additional funds. Three days after paying Bo Mamohalala's final invoice, the Municipality allegedly appointed Brunel Engineering to continue the project under a new R184m contract. Brunel Engineering has reportedly billed the Municipality monthly since April 2024, despite no obvious work taking place on site.⁷
 - According to Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) records, Mudzielwana Marageni is Brunel Engineering's sole director.⁸ Mudzielwana and his brother Londolani Marageni reportedly donated to the Mayor's non-profit foundation (see Flag #8: Private Gain). A municipal document listing bids awarded between June 2022 and July 2023 shows that Brunel Engineering received two other contracts worth R6.5m, related to rotational electricity contracts and work on a substation.⁹
 - In September 2025, months after allegations were made against Mayor Mpe and Municipal Manager Nemugumoni, the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI) raided the Municipality's offices as part of a corruption investigation involving senior officials. The DPCI reportedly tried to access the Mayor's non-profit foundation's financial statements, although it did not disclose the exact focus of the investigation.¹⁰
- In 2025, a whistleblower published municipal procurement documents allegedly showing that a company linked to Municipal Manager Nemugumoni's boyfriend, Kalekale Nengwenani, received municipal tenders worth approximately R62m.¹¹
 - One of the companies identified was Saatchi Civil Engineering, and CIPC records indicate Nengwenani is its sole director.¹² Municipal documents outlining bids awarded in February 2023 show Saatchi Civil Engineering was awarded two electrical and maintenance contracts, one contract worth R56m and another worth R5.9m.¹³
 - The Limpopo Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs, Basikopo Makamu, reportedly wrote to Mayor Mpe on 23 July 2025, asking him to respond to the allegations.¹⁴
 - Mayor Mpe rejected the allegations, claiming they came from elements within the Municipality unhappy with the Municipal Manager's efforts to crack down on corruption. The Municipality's spokesperson reportedly said all contracts awarded to Saatchi Civil Engineering were conducted through a competitive bidding process and that no policy required municipal officials to declare their boyfriends (see Flag #7: Manipulating Perceptions).¹⁵



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- In 2025, the media reported that a forensic investigation, reportedly commissioned by the Municipality, found irregularities in contracts awarded for a 2020 bus depot construction project in Seshego.¹⁶
 - KPMM Roads reportedly submitted a R230m bid, but procurement officials adjusted the scope to fit their available budget and awarded KPMM Roads a R24.2m contract. The investigation found that the project remained incomplete despite contractors being paid and identified losses arising from poor-quality work and overpayments.¹⁷
 - TP Noko Contractors received an R7.1m contract award, but its work was reportedly so poor that the Municipality recognised an impairment loss of R3.5m (see Flag #5: Financial Malpractice).¹⁸
 - AM Consulting Engineers, established by Auswell Mashaba, was hired as a project manager. When their contract was terminated, they reportedly did not hand back project documents (see Flag #:6 Obstructing Accountability). AM Consulting Engineers was linked to allegations of an inflated contract (from R88m to nearly R800m following amendments) on a 2014 City of Tshwane transport project.¹⁹ Mashaba is also the founder of Swifambo Rail Leasing, which was central to the PRASA locomotive procurement scandal, in which PRASA spent R3.5bn on locomotives that were too tall for South Africa's rail network.²⁰ The DPCI and Special Investigating Unit (SIU) continue to investigate the PRASA/Swifambo Rail Leasing contract.²¹
- In 2024/25, the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) found weaknesses in contract and procurement management, with contracts awarded to bidders based on point scoring that contravened supply chain management regulations.²²

Flag #5

Financial Malpractice



The flag is raised because of systemic weaknesses in financial controls.

- In 2024/25, the AGSA identified internal control deficiencies relating to the Municipality's preparation of financial statements and its oversight of daily and monthly transactions. The audit also found that the Municipality lacked adequate monitoring tools to ensure compliance with applicable legislation.²³
- In 2024/25, the AGSA also identified a Material Irregularity relating to the Municipality's payment of R2.2m to a contractor for standing time (when workers or equipment cannot operate because of delays beyond the contractor's control).²⁴
- According to the forensic investigation report commissioned by the Municipality, in the 2020 bus depot construction project, former Chief Financial Officer Naazim Essa reportedly approved five payments totalling R5.1m to TP Noko Contractors before any



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Under monitoring

contract was in place (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards). The forensic investigation report also found that KPMM Roads was overpaid by R660 000 for foundation work.²⁵

Flag #6

Obstructing Accountability



The flag is being monitored to assess whether efforts to resist oversight and scrutiny form part of a broader pattern of avoiding accountability.

- Mayor Mpe and Municipal Manager Nemugumoni have been accused of failing to comply with and obstructing the DPCI's investigation into allegations of corruption at the Municipality (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards), which has been underway since November 2024. In 2024, Mayor Mpe filed a court application seeking to prevent the Municipality from releasing documents investigators requested, including the mayoral gift register and the municipal gift policy. The matter is scheduled for a November 2026 hearing. In 2025, Nemugumoni also reportedly filed papers in the Polokwane High Court to set aside a subpoena compelling her to provide the DPCI with certain municipal records.²⁶
- During the 2020 investigation into the bus depot construction project (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards), the Municipality reportedly failed to secure key project documentation from project manager AM Consulting Engineers after its contract was terminated. The missing records included payment certificates, inspection sheets and quality control tests. Investigators reported that the absence of these documents made it difficult to fully quantify losses and initiate a criminal case (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards).²⁷

Flag #7

Manipulating Perceptions



The flag is being monitored to determine whether there is a pattern of creating narratives to detract from allegations against the Municipality.

- Following whistleblower allegations that R62m in municipal tenders had been awarded to Municipal Manager Nemugumoni's boyfriend in 2025, Mayor Mpe publicly described the whistleblowers as 'fake'. He said they were demanding to 'be allowed to eat', a colloquialism for being given a share of the resources, money or opportunities flowing through tenders, usually implying corruption or patronage. He also claimed that former disgruntled contractors and rival elements within the ANC were attempting to create the impression that the Municipality was facing widespread corruption.²⁸
- In response to allegations that Nemugumoni's boyfriend profited from multiple tenders at the Municipality, the municipal spokesperson told the media that no policy obliges municipal officials to declare boyfriends.²⁹ However, the Municipal Systems Act states that if a municipal official's 'spouse, partner, business associate or close family member'



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stands to benefit from doing business with the municipality, the staff member must disclose this relationship to the council.³⁰

Flag #8

Private Gain



The flag is being monitored because concerns remain that relationships between private actors and municipal decision-makers may create opportunities for undue benefit.

- Businessmen Mudzielwana and Londolani Marageni, who are linked to numerous companies receiving tenders from the Municipality, reportedly donated to Mayor Mpe's non-profit organisation, the Makoro John Mpe Foundation, according to an anonymous source.³¹ These allegations reportedly form part of the DPCI's investigation (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards).³²

Flag #9

Shadow Network



The flag is being monitored to determine whether the repeated appearance of the same individuals across multiple flags reflects a broader pattern of informal influence.

- Mayor Mpe and Mudzielwana Marageni are linked across multiple findings in this report. According to anonymous sources, the Marageni brothers are reportedly close associates of Mpe, linked to at least one company that received multiple municipal contracts (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards), and donated to the Makoro John Mpe Foundation (see Flag #8: Private Gain). Mpe has also been accused of seeking to prevent the release of municipal records and his foundation's financial statements, which were requested as part of corruption investigations involving municipal contracts and allegations involving Mpe and Nemugumoni (see Flag #6: Obstructing Accountability).
- Nemugumoni and Nengwenani are linked across multiple findings in this report. Nengwenani, Nemugumoni's reported boyfriend, allegedly received municipal tenders worth approximately R62m through his company, Saatchi Civil Engineering (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards). The relationship also features in allegations that senior officials have failed to cooperate with ongoing investigations (see Flag #6: Obstructing Accountability) and have made public statements attempting to deflect scrutiny of conflict-of-interest allegations (see Flag #7: Manipulating Perceptions).



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Recommended Actions

	DUTY BEARER	ACTION(S)	ASSOCIATED FLAGS
1.	Polokwane Municipal Council	- Initiate internal investigations into allegations of corruption implicating the Mayor and Municipal Manager. - Consider placing the Municipal Manager on precautionary suspension pending the investigation outcome and institute formal disciplinary action if the investigation confirms wrongdoing. - Call for a motion of no confidence in the Mayor if the investigation confirms wrongdoing. - Implement lifestyle audits for senior public officials and employees in high-risk positions, particularly supply chain management personnel.	Flag #1: Improper Appointments Flag #4: Corrupt Awards Flag #5: Financial Malpractice Flag #6: Obstructing Accountability Flag #8: Private Gain Flag #9: Shadow Network
2.	Limpopo Member of the Executive Council for Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs	- Implement a Section 106 investigation into allegations of corruption and maladministration at Polokwane Local Municipality. - Consider intervening in the Municipality under Section 139(a), 139(b) and 139(c) of the Constitution, depending on investigation findings.	Flag #4: Corrupt Awards Flag #5: Financial Malpractice
3.	Special Investigating Unit	- Advocate for a proclamation to investigate a selection of tenders between 2022 and 2025. - Investigate donations made by municipal suppliers to the Makoro John Mpe Foundation and examine how these funds were subsequently used or distributed.	Flag #1: Improper Appointments Flag #4: Corrupt Awards Flag #8: Private Gain Flag #9: Shadow Network
4.	Limpopo Provincial Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs	- Call Mayor and Municipal Manager to account for allegations of awarding tenders to associates. - Conduct on-site inspections for large infrastructure projects flagged for irregularities.	Flag #1: Improper Appointments Flag #4: Corrupt Awards Flag #6: Obstructing Accountability Flag #7: Manipulating Perceptions



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The 9 Flags

Flag #1

Improper Appointments

Improper appointments, dismissals or failure to remove individuals in senior positions may be used to drive a corrupt agenda.

Flag #2

Co-opting Key Functions

Informal control may be established over critical functions within the institution to abuse them.

Flag #3

Climate of Fear or Favour

The working culture favours loyalty over duty; alignment with a corrupt agenda is rewarded, and resistance is punished.

Flag #4

Corrupt Awards

Contracts, licences, partnerships, loans and/or investments may be awarded irregularly and repeatedly benefit the same actors.

Flag #5

Financial Malpractice

The institution's financial management practices may be abused to advance a corrupt agenda.

Flag #6

Obstructing Accountability

The institution's internal operations might be deliberately obscured to hide potential misconduct.

Flag #7

Manipulating Perceptions

A public narrative that frames misconduct as innocence may be promoted.

Flag #8

Private Gain

Illicit gains may be distributed to benefit the same actors.

Flag #9

Shadow Network

The same public and private actors may collude to gain control over an institution's assets and functions, benefiting repeatedly.

About ACTis

What is ACTis?

The Anti-Corruption Tracker Information System is an initiative of the Anti-Corruption and Accountability Project at the Institute for Security Studies. It provides analysis on corruption and state capture in South Africa, to inform early intervention and enforcement. It utilises a system of indicators and an AI-driven data-collection and analysis tool, validated by human experts. It identifies risks within individual government institutions and produces actionable recommendations to address them, with a view to disrupting patterns of state capture and corruption.

Findings are shared directly with government and other duty-bearers, civil society organisations, the media and the public, empowering authorities to intervene, strengthening accountability, and enabling citizens activism.

Links to ACTis Information:

Further project information may be found at the following links:

[Terms and Definitions](#)

[Project Methodology and Analytical Framework](#)

[About the Anti-Corruption and Accountability project](#)

[About the Institute for Security Studies](#)

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