OPENING REMARKS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR, CLLR CYRIL XABA, AT THE CONVEYANCERS' BREAKFAST ENGAGEMENT, MOSES MABHIDA STADIUM, 9 JUNE 2026

- Programme Director
- Chief Financial Officer: Dr Sandile Mnguni
- Head of Revenue: Mr Lihle Ndzelu and Senior Management
- Our conveyancing partners, led by Mr S Msomi
- The KZN Legal Practitioners' Council: Savera Maharaj
- Our technology partners E4 and Lexis Nexis,
- All municipal officials present

Good morning

When we met in 2024, shortly after my appointment, I made a commitment that the City would confront Revenue Clearance Certificate delays head-

on. I said then that this was not merely an administrative convenience. Revenue clearance is central to eThekwini's financial sustainability.

Let me be direct about our context.

Like many municipalities, eThekwini faces rising service delivery costs, aging infrastructure, and growing demand for housing, water, electricity, and refuse removal.

Without robust revenue collection, we cannot ensure uninterrupted water and electricity supply, or keep our roads passable. Every rand owed but uncollected is a burst pipe not repaired, a pothole not fixed and a library hour reduced.

Revenue clearance certificates are the final gateway before property transfers. When they are delayed, rates and service charges go unpaid, and the entire revenue cycle breaks down. That is why I view this process as strategic, not technical.

The report that is going to be presented to you shows measurable progress. Average turnaround times have dropped from between 33–50

days to 20–45 days. That is improvement, but not yet acceptable. Our target, once the new Rates Clearance System is fully live, is 15 days.

We have also acted on internal capacity challenges. Manual applications have been discontinued to eliminate fraud and corruption. Renovations at 251 Florence Mkhize Building are nearing completion. And weekly follow-up reports now go from the Revenue Clearance Branch to Water, Electricity, and Real Estate to expedite investigations.

The new Rates Clearance System, which you will see demonstrated today, automates concurrent checks across Real Estate, Water, Electricity, Accounts Management, and Sale in Execution. It will generate application fees and assessments with unique payment references, reducing the delays caused by incorrect references or missing information.

It will also allow direct two-way communication between conveyancers and departments.

But technology alone is not enough. We need your partnership. Please ensure that applications include accurate property rate numbers, municipal account numbers, meter details, seller contact numbers, and

correct physical addresses. Please pay assessments promptly after receiving figures.

I want to urge you to please use the formal escalation pathway – from Manager RCC to Deputy Head Arrears Management, to Head Revenue, to the DCM: Finance Cluster – rather than runners.

I remain deeply grateful for your patience and cooperation since 2024. The challenges of unregistered meters, tampering, valuation appeals, and incomplete sectional title information require both sides to work better.

This engagement is your opportunity to give us frank views on how communication can further improve.

EThekwini must be a city that collects what it is owed, spends what it collects wisely, and serves all residents with dignity.

Revenue clearance certificates are not a hurdle – they are a pillar of that vision.

Thank you for coming and I want to assure you that this is going to be an ongoing engagement.

I look forward to our discussion.