

**BUFFALO CITY MUNICIPALITY  
ACCOUNTING POLICIES TO THE  
ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007**

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**ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1. BASIS OF PRESENTATION**

The annual financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Standards of *Generally Recognised Accounting Practices (GRAP)* and the Standards of *Generally Accepted Municipal Accounting Practices (GAMAP)* prescribed by the Minister of Finance in terms of *General Notice 991 and 992 of 2005*.

These standards are summarised as follows:

GRAP 1	Presentation of financial statements
GRAP 2	Cash flow statements
GRAP 3	Accounting policies, changes in accounting estimates and errors
GAMAP 4	Effects of changes in foreign exchange rates
GAMAP 7	Accounting for investments in associates
GAMAP 8	Financial reporting of interests in joint ventures
GAMAP 9	Revenue
GAMAP 12	Inventories
GAMAP 17	Property, plant and equipment
GAMAP 19	Provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets

Accounting policies for material transactions, events or conditions not covered by the above *GRAP* and/or *GAMAP* Standards have been developed in accordance with paragraphs 7, 11 and 12 of *GRAP 3*. These accounting policies and the applicable disclosures have been based on the South African Statements of *Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (SA GAAP)* including any interpretations of such Statements issued by the Accounting Practices Board.

The Minister of Finance has, in terms of *General Notice 552 of 2007* exempted compliance with certain of the above mentioned standards and aspects or parts of these standards. Details of the exemptions applicable to the municipality have been provided in the notes to the annual financial statements.

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A summary of the significant accounting policies, which have been consistently applied except where an exemption has been granted are disclosed below.

**2. PRESENTATION CURRENCY**

These annual financial statements are presented in South African Rand.

**3. GOING CONCERN ASSUMPTION**

These annual financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

**4. COMPENSATION FOR OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES AND DISEASES (COID)**

This fund has been established in accordance with the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act No 130 of 1993. Buffalo City Municipality has been issued a certificate of exemption from the Compensation Commissioner and has been given permission to administer its own internal COID fund.

Buffalo City Municipality is still bound by the Act and claims are still approved by the Compensation Commissioner. The employee may not be awarded lesser benefits than provided for in the Act.

Buffalo City Municipality has entered into self insurance for COID for the following reasons:

- Reduction of costs;
- To expedite claims and payments to Medical Practitioners;
- More favourable compensation to employees.

Monthly contributions are transferred to the Fund and claims are submitted to the Compensation Commissioner within 14 days after the accident becomes known.

Once confirmation has been received from the Compensation Commissioner the claim is settled by paying employees a full salary for the period not at work and settling all medical accounts as soon as received.

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External insurance cover has been taken out to recoup any differences in payment to employees and amounts paid by the Compensation Commissioner.

## **5. RESERVES**

Buffalo City creates and maintains Reserves in terms of specific requirements.

### **5.1 Capital Replacement Reserve (CRR)**

In order to finance the purchase of items of property, plant and equipment from internal sources, amounts are transferred from accumulated surplus to the Capital Replacement Reserve (CRR) in terms of a Council resolution. A corresponding amount is transferred to a designated CRR investment account. The following conditions are set for the creation and utilisation of the CRR:

- The cash which backs the CRR is invested in a designated CRR investment account until utilised. The cash may only be invested in accordance with the investment policy of BCM.
- Interest earned on the CRR investment is recorded as interest earned in the Statement of Financial Performance and may be appropriated to the CRR.
- The CRR may only be utilised for the purpose of purchasing items of property, plant and equipment for Buffalo City Municipality and may not be used for the maintenance of these items.
- When items of property, plant and equipment are purchased from the CRR, the CRR is reduced by the amount of property, plant and equipment purchased from the CRR and the accumulated surplus is credited by a corresponding amount. The designated CRR investment account is adjusted accordingly.

### **5.2 Capitalisation Reserve**

#### **Policy 2005/06**

The carrying value of property, plant and equipment financed by the former Consolidated Capital Development and Loans Fund (CCDLF) that was not balanced to external loans was transferred to the Capitalisation

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Reserve instead of the accumulated surplus. This transfer is in terms of a directive issued by National Treasury (MFMA circular No. 18 dated 23 June 2005). The purpose of this reserve is to promote community equity by ensuring that the future depreciation expenses that will be incurred over the useful lives of these items of property, plant and equipment are offset by transfers from this reserve to the accumulated surplus.

The balance on this reserve equals the carrying value of the items of property, plant and equipment financed from the former legislative funds. When these items of property, plant and equipment are depreciated, an equivalent amount is transferred from the Capitalisation Reserve to the accumulated surplus.

When an item of property, plant and equipment is disposed of, the balance in the Capitalisation Reserve relating to such item is transferred to the accumulated surplus.

**Policy 2006/07**

The Capitalisation Reserve has been transferred to the accumulated surplus retrospectively from the 2005/06 financial year.

**5.3 Government Grant Reserve**

**Policy 2005/06**

When items of property, plant and equipment are financed from government grants, a transfer is made from the accumulated surplus to the Government Grant Reserve equal to the value of the government grant recorded as revenue in the Statement of Financial Performance. This transfer is in terms of a directive issued by National Treasury (MFMA circular No. 18 dated 23 June 2005). When such items of property, plant and equipment are depreciated, an equivalent amount is transferred from the Government Grant Reserve to the accumulated surplus. The purpose of this policy is to promote community equity by ensuring that the future depreciation expenses that will be incurred over the useful lives of government grant funded items of property, plant and equipment are offset by transfers from this reserve to the accumulated surplus.

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When an item of property, plant and equipment financed from government grants is disposed of, the balance in the *Government Grant Reserve* relating to such item is transferred to the accumulated surplus.

**Policy 2006/07**

The *Government Grant Reserve* has been transferred to accumulated surplus retrospectively from the 2005/06 financial year.

**5.4 Donations and Public Contributions Reserve**

**Policy 2005/06**

When items of property, plant and equipment are financed from public contributions and donations, a transfer is made from the accumulated surplus to the *Donations and Public Contributions Reserve* equal to the value of the donations and public contributions recorded as revenue in the *Statement of Financial Performance*. This transfer is in terms of a directive issued by National Treasury (MFMA circular No. 18 dated 23 June 2005). When such items of property, plant and equipment are depreciated, an equivalent amount is transferred from the *Donations and Public Contributions Reserve* to the accumulated surplus. The purpose of this policy is to promote community equity and facilitate budgetary control by ensuring that sufficient funds are set aside to offset the future depreciation charges that will be incurred over the useful lives of items of property, plant and equipment financed from donations and public contributions.

When an item of property, plant and equipment financed from donations and public contributions is disposed of, the balance in the *Donations and Public Contributions Reserve* relating to such item is transferred to the accumulated surplus.

**Policy 2006/07**

The *Donations and Public Contributions Reserve* has been transferred to the accumulated surplus retrospectively from the 2005/06 financial year.

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**5.5 Self Insurance Reserve**

A Self Insurance Reserve has been established to cover claims that may occur, subject to external insurance policy terms and conditions. Premiums are charged to the respective services taking into account claims history, the insured value of property, plant and equipment and number of fleet vehicles.

- Insurance premiums are paid from the expenditure accounts of the departments.
- Contributions by the departments to the insurance reserve are transferred from the contribution expenditure accounts of the departments to the insurance reserve according to amounts budgeted for in the operating budget. The budgeted contribution amounts relate to insurance claims paid that fall within the aggregate and are based on claims history of departments.
- Claim payments received from external insurers are utilised in the calculation of a gain or loss on the scrapping of damaged assets and are recorded in the Statement of Financial Performance.
- Claim payments received in respect of repairs, damages and/or losses to assets are receipted to the insurance cost centre income account and are then transferred from the insurance cost centre transfer expenditure account to the insurance reserve where it is reflected as income.
- Repair and replacement costs not fully covered by external insurance are paid from the insurance cost centre expenditure account that is then financed/reimbursed by a transfer from the insurance reserve to the insurance cost centre transfer income account. The repair and replacement cost is reflected as an expense in the insurance reserve.

**5.6 Revaluation Reserve**

The surplus arising from the revaluation of land and buildings is credited to the Revaluation Reserve. As revalued buildings are depreciated, the revaluation surplus is realised through a transfer of an equivalent amount from the revaluation reserve to the accumulated surplus. On disposal, the net revaluation surplus is transferred to the accumulated surplus

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while gains or losses on disposal, based on revalued amounts, are credited or charged to the Statement of Financial Performance.

**6. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

Property, plant and equipment is stated at cost, less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses, except land and buildings, which are revalued as indicated in the policy for the revaluation of land and buildings below. Heritage assets, which are culturally significant resources and which are shown at cost, are not depreciated owing to the uncertainty regarding their estimated useful lives. Similarly, land is not depreciated as it is deemed to have an indefinite life.

Where items of property, plant and equipment are acquired in exchange for non-monetary or monetary assets or a combination of both, property, plant and equipment are measured at their fair value.

Subsequent expenditure relating to property, plant and equipment is capitalised if it is probable that future economic benefits or potential service delivery of the asset are enhanced in excess of the originally assessed standard of performance. If expenditure only restores the originally assessed standard of performance, then it is regarded as repairs and maintenance and is expensed. The enhancement of an existing asset so that its use is expanded, or the further development of an asset so that its original life is extended, are examples of subsequent expenditure which should be capitalised.

Buffalo City Municipality has adopted a capitalisation threshold whereby all expenditure below the threshold is expensed when incurred. The threshold is currently R 10 000.

**6.1 Depreciation of Property, Plant and Equipment**

**Policy 2005/06**

Depreciation is calculated on cost, using the straight line method, over the estimated useful lives of the assets. The depreciation rates are based on the following estimated useful lives:

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	<u>Years</u>
<u>Infrastructure</u>	
Electricity	10 - 30
Roads	10 - 30
Water	15 - 20
Sewerage	15 - 20
Pedestrian malls	20
Security	3 - 5
<u>Community</u>	
Buildings	30
Recreational facilities	20
<u>Other</u>	
Buildings	30
Office equipment	3 - 5
Furniture and fittings	7 - 10
Bins and containers	5 - 10
Emergency equipment	5 - 15
Motor vehicles	3 - 20
Plant and equipment	2 - 15
Other	15
Investment Properties	30

Buffalo City Municipality has taken advantage of the transitional provisions set out in GAMAP 17. Buffalo City Municipality is in the process of itemising all infrastructure and community assets and will recalculate accumulated depreciation once this exercise has been completed by 30 June 2009. At present, depreciation on these assets is calculated on an averaging basis whereby an average useful life has been estimated for each category of infrastructure and community assets

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using global historical costs recorded in the accounting records. Furthermore, the Economic entity has not assessed whether items of property, plant and equipment are impaired. It is expected that an assessment of impairments will be done by 30 June 2009.

**Policy 2006/07**

Depreciation is calculated on cost, using the straight line method, over the estimated useful lives of the assets in terms of the exemptions published in Gazette 30013 dated 29 June 2007. Accordingly the Buffalo City Municipality did not review the depreciation method or the estimated useful lives except for Sanitation assets.

The depreciation rates are based on the following estimated useful lives:

	<u>Years</u>
<u>Infrastructure</u>	
Electricity	10 - 30
Roads	10 - 30
Water	15 - 20
Sewerage	15 - 40
Pedestrian facilities	20
Security	3 - 5
<u>Community</u>	
Buildings	30
Landfill Sites	50
Recreational facilities	20
<u>Other</u>	
Buildings	30
Office equipment	3 - 5
Furniture and fittings	7 - 10
Bins and containers	5 - 10
Emergency equipment	5 - 15
Motor vehicles	3 - 20

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Plant and equipment	2 - 15
Other	15
Investment Properties	30

Buffalo City Municipality is in the process of itemising all infrastructure and community assets and will recalculate accumulated depreciation once this exercise has been completed by 30 June 2009. During 2006/07 sanitation assets were identified and taken-on at depreciated replacement value and the sanitation assets that were represented in the financial statements up to 30/06/2006 were adjusted in the statements together with the accumulated depreciation. At present, depreciation on the rest of the infrastructural and community assets is calculated on an averaging basis whereby an average useful life has been estimated for each category of infrastructure and community assets using global historical costs recorded in the accounting records. Furthermore, in terms of the exemptions published in Gazette 30013 dated 29 June 2007, Buffalo City Municipality has not assessed whether items of property, plant and equipment are impaired. It is expected that an assessment of impairments will be done by 30 June 2009.

**6.2 Disposal of Property, Plant and Equipment**

The gain or loss arising on the disposal or retirement of an item of property, plant and equipment is determined as the difference between the sales proceeds and the carrying value and is recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance.

**6.3 Incomplete Construction Work**

Incomplete construction work is stated at historic cost. Depreciation only commences when the asset is commissioned into use.

**6.4 Impairment Losses**

**Policy 2005/06**

Where the carrying amount of an item of property, plant and equipment is greater than the estimated recoverable amount, it will be written down to its recoverable amount and an impairment loss charged to the Statement of Financial Performance.

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**Policy 2006/07**

In terms of the exemptions granted in *Government Gazette No. 30019* dated 29 June 2007 no impairment of assets were tested and accounted for.

**6.5 Investment Properties**

In terms of the exemptions published in *Government Gazette No. 30013* dated 29 June 2007 no investment properties were identified and disclosed separately from property, plant and equipment in the financial statements.

**7. REVALUATION OF LAND AND BUILDINGS**

Land and Buildings are stated at cost or revalued amounts, being the fair value at the date of revaluation less subsequent accumulated depreciation and impairment losses on the buildings. In terms of the exemptions published in *Government Gazette No. 30013* dated 29 June 2007 no testing for impairment was done for the 2006/07 financial year.

**8. INVESTMENTS**

**8.1 Financial Instruments**

Financial Instruments, which may include listed government bonds, unlisted municipal bonds, fixed deposits and short-term deposits invested in registered commercial banks, are stated as at cost.

**8.2 Investment in Associate**

An associate is an entity over which Buffalo City Municipality is in a position to exercise significant influence, through participation in the financial and operating policy decisions of the investee.

The results and assets and liabilities of associates are incorporated in these financial statements using the equity method of accounting.

The carrying value of the investment in associates is adjusted for Buffalo City Municipality's share of operating surpluses/ (deficits) less any dividends received.

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Where Buffalo City Municipality or its Entities transact with an associate, unrealised gains and losses are eliminated to the extent of the Municipality's or its Municipal Entities' interest in the relevant associate, except where unrealised losses provide evidence of an impairment of the asset transferred.

Where Buffalo City Municipality is no longer able to exercise significant influence over the associate, the equity method of accounting will be discontinued.

### **8.3 Investment in Municipal Entities**

Investments in municipal entities under the ownership control of Buffalo City Municipality are carried at cost in Buffalo City Municipality's separate annual financial statements.

Buffalo City Municipality did not make use of the exemption as per *Government Gazette No. 30013* dated 29 June 2007 which exempts municipalities from complying with section 122(2) of the MFMA to prepare consolidated financial statements for the 2006/07 financial year. In terms of the letter dated 15 August 2007, National Treasury has agreed that Buffalo City Municipality can deviate from this exemption and will accordingly present consolidated financial statements for 2006/07.

## **9. INVENTORIES**

Inventories consist of consumables, raw materials, work in progress and finished goods which are valued at the lower of cost or net realisable value.

Unsold properties for the purpose of resale are accounted for in terms of the exemptions published in *Government Gazette No. 30013* dated 29 June 2007 and are accordingly disclosed as property, plant and equipment. Direct costs are accumulated for each separately identifiable development. Cost also includes a portion of overhead costs if the costs occur frequently and are separately identifiable. Buffalo City Municipality did not make use of the exemption relating to the disclosure of water stock as per *Government Gazette No. 30013* dated 29 June 2007. In terms of the letter dated 15 August 2007, National Treasury has agreed that Buffalo City Municipality can deviate from this exemption and will accordingly disclose the full value of water stock as at year end.

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Cost of inventories comprise all costs of purchase, costs of conversion and other costs incurred in bringing the inventories to their present location and condition. Redundant and slow moving inventories are identified and written down from cost to net realisable value with regard to their estimated economic or realisable values. Consumables are written down with regard to their age, condition and utility.

The basis of determining cost is the first-in-first-out method.

#### **10. ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE**

##### **Policy 2005/06**

Accounts receivable are carried at anticipated realisable value. An estimate is made for doubtful receivables based on a review of all outstanding amounts at year end. Bad debts are written off during the year in which they are identified.

Accounts receivable were not discounted to reflect time value of money and the receivables were recognised at cost.

##### **Policy 2006/07**

Accounts receivable are carried at anticipated realisable value and no discounting was done in terms of the exemptions published in Government Gazette No. 30013 dated 29 June 2007. An estimate is made for doubtful receivables based on a review of all outstanding amounts at year end. Bad debts are written off during the year in which they are identified.

#### **11. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE**

##### **Trade and other creditors**

##### **Policy 2005/06**

Trade Creditors are stated at their nominal value.

##### **Policy 2006/07**

Trade and other creditors excluding Leave pay have been accounted for in terms of the exemptions published in Government Gazette No. 30013 dated

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29 June 2007. Accordingly the creditors were stated at nominal value and no discounting was accounted for.

**Leave Pay creditors**

**Policy 2005/06**

There was no separate policy for leave pay in 2005/06 and was deemed to be included in the Trade and other creditor's policy which indicated that leave pay was stated at nominal value.

No discounting was accounted for.

**Policy 2006/07**

Leave pay is stated as a current liability and stated at nominal value. In terms of the exemptions published in *Government Gazette* No. 30013 dated 29 June 2007 no discounting was accounted for.

**12. REVENUE RECOGNITION**

Revenue is derived from a variety of sources which include rates levied, grants from other tiers of government and revenue from trading activities and other services provided.

Revenue is recognised when it is probable that future economic benefits or service potential will flow to Buffalo City Municipality and these benefits can be measured reliably.

**12.1 Revenue from Rates**

Revenue from rates is recognised when the legal entitlement to this revenue arises. Collection charges are recognised when such amounts are legally enforceable. Interest on unpaid rates is recognised on a time proportionate basis.

A composite rating system charging different rate tariffs is employed. Rebates are granted to certain categories of ratepayers.

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### **12.2 Service Charges**

Service charges relating to Electricity and Water are based on consumption. Meters are read on a monthly basis and revenue is recognised in the period when the consumption took place. Provisional estimates of consumption are made monthly when meter readings have not been performed. Adjustments to provisional estimates of consumption are made in the invoicing period when meters have been read. These adjustments are recognised as revenue in the invoicing period.

To include all revenue in the financial period, calculations are made to account for consumption that took place during the last meter reading dates and the financial year end.

Revenue from the sale of electricity prepaid meter cards are recognised at the point of sale.

Service charges relating to refuse removal are recognised on a monthly basis in arrears by applying the approved tariff to each property. The domestic charge is a fixed service charge and the business charge is based on the type of refuse bin and frequency of removal.

Service charges relating to sewerage and sanitation are recognised on a monthly basis by applying the approved tariff to each property. For East London the domestic charge is based on the land size of the property and the business charge is based on the square root of the land size and the number of toilets on the property. For King Williams Town both the domestic and business charges are based on the number of toilets on the property.

### **12.3 Fines**

Income in respect of spot fines and summonses is recognised when received.

### **12.4 Rentals**

Rentals are recognised on a time proportion basis and are not "straight-lined".

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**12.5 Approved Tariff of Charges**

Revenue arising from the approved tariff of charges is recognised when the relative service is rendered by applying the relevant gazetted tariff. This includes the issuing of licenses and permits.

**12.6 Interest on Investments**

Interest earned on investments is recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance on a time proportionate basis that takes into account the effective yield on the investment. Interest may be transferred from the accumulated surplus to the CRR or the Insurance Reserve.

Interest earned on unutilised conditional grants is allocated directly to the Creditor: Unutilised Conditional Grants if the grant conditions indicate that interest is payable to the funder.

**12.7 Sale of Goods**

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when the risk is passed to the consumer.

**12.8 Interest on Outstanding Debtors**

Interest on outstanding debtors is recognised on a time proportionate basis and is charged on all outstanding debtors older than 30 days.

**12.9 Donations and Contributions**

Donations are recognised on a cash receipt basis or where the donation or contribution is in the form of property, plant and equipment, when such items of property, plant and equipment are brought into use.

**12.10 Recovery of Unauthorised, Irregular, Fruitless and Wasteful Expenditure**

Revenue from the recovery of unauthorised, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure is based on legislated procedures, including those set out in the Municipal Finance Management Act (Act No.56 of 2003) and is recognised when the recovery thereof from the responsible councillors or officials is virtually certain.

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**12.11 Deferred cash**

In terms of the exemptions published in Government Gazette No. 30013 dated 29 June 2007 the fair value of the consideration was not discounted and was stated at the nominal amount.

**13. CONDITIONAL GRANTS AND RECEIPTS**

Revenue received from conditional grants, donations and funding is recognised as revenue to the extent that Buffalo City Municipality has complied with all of the criteria, conditions or obligations embodied in the agreement. To the extent that the criteria, conditions or obligations have not been met a liability is recognised.

**14. PROVISIONS**

**Policy 2005/06**

A provision is recognised when Buffalo City Municipality has a present obligation (legal or constructive) as a result of a past event and it is probable (i.e. more likely than not) that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Provisions are reviewed at each Statement of Financial Position date and adjusted to reflect the current best estimate. Contributions are made to or from the provisions to reflect the current best estimate.

Expenditure relating to provisions is charged to the operating account when incurred.

Buffalo City Municipality makes provision for performance bonuses unpaid at year end.

**Policy 2006/07**

A provision is recognised when Buffalo City Municipality has a present obligation (legal or constructive) as a result of a past event and it is probable (i.e. more likely than not) that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

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Provisions are reviewed at each Statement of Financial Position date and adjusted to reflect the current best estimate. Contributions are made to or from the provisions to reflect the current best estimate.

Expenditure relating to provisions is charged to the operating account when incurred.

Buffalo City Municipality makes provision for performance bonuses unpaid at year end and the rehabilitation of landfill sites.

By making use of the exemptions published in *Government Gazette* No.30013 dated 29 June 2007, no provision for Employee Defined benefit plans was created and the current obligation was expensed.

**15. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS**

Cash includes cash on hand and cash with registered banking institutions. Cash equivalents are short-term highly liquid investments that are held with registered banking institutions with maturities of three months or less and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

**16. UNAUTHORISED EXPENDITURE**

Unauthorised expenditure is expenditure that has not been budgeted, expenditure that is not in terms of the conditions of an allocation received from another sphere of government, municipality or organ of state and expenditure in the form of a grant that is not permitted in terms of the *Municipal Finance Management Act (Act No.56 of 2003)*. Unauthorised expenditure is accounted for as an expense in the Statement of Financial Performance and where recovered, it is subsequently accounted for as revenue in the Statement of Financial Performance.

**17. IRREGULAR EXPENDITURE**

Irregular expenditure is expenditure that is contrary to the *Municipal Finance Management Act (Act No.56 of 2003)*, the *Municipal Systems Act (Act No.32 of 2000)*, and the *Public Office Bearers Act (Act No. 20 of 1998)* or is in contravention of Buffalo City Municipality's supply chain management policy. Irregular expenditure excludes unauthorised expenditure. Irregular expenditure is accounted for as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Performance and where recovered, it is subsequently accounted for as revenue in the Statement of Financial Performance.

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**18. FRUITLESS AND WASTEFUL EXPENDITURE**

Fruitless and wasteful expenditure is expenditure that was made in vain and would have been avoided had reasonable care been exercised. Fruitless and wasteful expenditure is accounted for as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Performance and where recovered, it is subsequently accounted for as revenue in the Statement of Financial Performance.

**19. FOREIGN CURRENCY TRANSACTIONS**

Transactions in foreign currencies are initially accounted for at the rate of exchange ruling on the date of the transaction. Trade creditors denominated in foreign currency are reported at Statement of Financial Position date by using the exchange rate at that date. Exchange differences arising on the settlement of creditors or on reporting of creditors at rates different from those at which they were initially recorded during the period are recognised as revenue or as expenses in the period in which they arise.

Where the transaction is covered by a forward exchange contract, the rate specified in the contract is used.

**20. COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

**20.1 Current year comparatives**

Budgeted amounts have been included in the annual financial statements for the current financial year only.

**20.2 Prior year comparatives**

When the presentation or classification of items in the annual financial statements is amended, prior period comparative amounts are reclassified. The nature and reason for the reclassification is disclosed.

**21. LEASES**

Leases are classified as finance leases where substantially all the risks and rewards associated with ownership of an asset are transferred to Buffalo City Municipality.

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Property, plant and equipment subject to finance lease agreements are capitalised at their cash cost equivalent and the corresponding liabilities are raised. The cost of the item of property, plant and equipment is depreciated at appropriate rates on the straight line basis over the estimated useful life.

Lease finance costs are expensed when incurred.

Operating leases are those leases which do not fall within the scope of the above definition. In terms of the exemptions published in Government Gazette No. 30013 dated 29 June 2007 operating leases are not "straight lined" and are expensed as they become due.

**22. VALUE ADDED TAX**

Buffalo City Municipality accounts for Value Added Tax on the payment basis.

**23. GRANTS-IN-AID**

Buffalo City Municipality transfers money to individuals, institutions and organisations. When making these transfers, Buffalo City Municipality does not:

- Receive any goods or services directly in return, as would be expected in a purchase or sale transaction;
- Expect to be repaid in future; or
- Expect a financial return, as would be expected from an investment.

These transfers are recognised in the financial statements as expenses in the period that the events giving rise to the transfer occurred. If these contracts are onerous and extend over more than one financial year they are then treated in accordance with the accounting policy on provisions outlined in paragraph 15 above.

**24. UNUTILISED CONDITIONAL GRANTS**

Unutilised conditional grants are reflected on the Statement of Financial Position as a Creditor - Unutilised Conditional Grants. They represent unspent government grants, subsidies and contributions from the public.

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The following conditions are set for the creation and utilisation of these creditors:

- The cash which backs the creditor is invested until utilised.
- Interest earned on the investment is treated in accordance with grant conditions. If it is payable to the funder it is recorded as part of the creditor. If it is Buffalo City Municipality's interest it is recognised as interest earned in the Statement of Financial Performance.
- Whenever an item of property, plant and equipment is purchased from a *Creditor - Unutilised Conditional Grant*, an amount equal to the purchase price is transferred from the *Creditor - Unutilised Conditional Grant* to the operating account on the Statement of Financial Performance as revenue.
- Whenever a non-asset is purchased from a *Creditor - Unutilised Conditional Grant* an amount equal to the purchase price is transferred from the *Creditor - Unutilised Conditional Grant* to the operating account on the Statement of Financial Performance to offset the expenditure which was expensed through the operating account.

## **25. INTANGIBLE ASSETS**

Intangible assets are initially recorded at their cost price and are subsequently amortised over their expected useful lives. An intangible asset is defined as an identifiable non - monetary asset without physical substance held for use in the production or supply of goods or services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes. The intangible assets under the control of Buffalo City Municipality are amortised according to the straight line method. By making use of the exemptions published in *Government Gazette No. 30013 dated 29 June 2007* Buffalo City Municipality only includes software as intangible assets.

## **26. IMPAIRMENT OF CASH GENERATING ASSETS**

In terms of the exemptions published in *Government Gazette No. 30013 dated 29 June 2007* no impairment of cash generating assets were accounted for.

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**27. CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING STANDARDS**

The Capitalization Reserve, the Donations and Public Contributions Reserve and the Government Grant Reserve were disclosed in the annual financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2006 in terms of guidelines issued by National Treasury (MFMA circular No. 18 dated 23 June 2005). As there are no accounting standards supporting these reserves they were retrospectively transferred to the accumulated surplus as from 1 July 2005.