

MARRC Case study interview reports

Date of interview	12 September 2020	
Name of Resident	Tenant	
Onset of issue	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water consumption too high • Leakage outside property • They were seeking and pleading for assistance since 2017 to date but to no avail • Instalment plan arrangement withdrawn for R9016.99 on 30/11/2019 account – What is this?
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Employed full time/was unemployed during COVID-19 lockdown
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with numerous staff to sort out billing issue • Large debt outstanding • Disconnected twice • Water estimates for 24-month period • Instalment plan arrangement withdrawn for R9016.99 on 30/11/2019 account – What is this? Not reversed

Date of interview	16 September 2020 0209	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	3 May 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requested termination of municipal services and removal of electrical meters. • Electrical meters removed and reinstalled by the municipality without owners consent
Interim	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing emails and visit to AS Chetty to try and resolve issue to no avail
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Employed full time – pharmacist
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with numerous staff to sort out billing issue in person and via emails • Large debt outstanding • Disconnected twice • Backlog on disconnection • Loss of income – closed pharmacy and unable to get tenant at property • Engaging a law firm to solve the issue

Date of interview	16 September 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	

Onset of issue	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No electricity amounts on account. No rates on account and did not pay rates for the past two years
Interim	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing emails and visit to AS Chetty to try and resolve issue to no avail
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unresolved
Employment status		Employed full time – pharmacist
Rating of Municipality’s customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with numerous staff to sort out billing issue in person and via emails Large debt outstanding (R73,921.75) Loss of income – closed pharmacy

Date of interview	16 September 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rates not transferred Electricity amounts are estimates
Interim	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing emails and visit to AS Chetty to try and resolve issue to no avail Made numerous appeals to get actual readings Sent water electricity readings each month – water and electricity reading on account does not tally with submitted monthly readings
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unresolved
Employment status		Employed full time – pharmacist
Rating of Municipality’s customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with numerous staff to sort out billing issue in person and via emails Large debt outstanding (R42,673.21) Disconnected twice Backlog on disconnection Loss of income – closed pharmacy and unable to get tenant at property Engaging a law firm to solve the issue

Date of interview	23 September 2020	
Name of Resident	Tenant	
Account no.	Owner & previous tenant	
Onset of issue	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous tenant incurred arrears of R50,000 and added onto new tenant account.

Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tried to address issue by emails and in person at AS Chetty to rectify account to no avail. • Disconnected numerous times • Indigent since 2015 – rebate on account: Oct, Dec 2019 and July, August and September 2020 no rebate • Applied for 20AMP and approved but charged for 30AMP
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Pensioner
Rating of Municipality's customer service		-1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-responses for account • Large debt outstanding (R50,938.19) • Stressful and can't sleep • Rebate for four months losses

Date of interview	24 September 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed B&B business 1 March 2020 • Requested to transfer from commercial business to residential • Rates reduces but electricity and water still charged as commercial rate
Interim	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email messages of complaints; 10 to 20; no replies; all ignored • October 2019, July, August, September 2020 was not charged indigent rate • Disconnected numerous times
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Pensioner
Rating of Municipality's customer service		2
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with numerous staff to sort out billing issue via emails • Threats of disconnection • Requested for pensioner discount - rejected
Date of interview	25 September 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account increased due to estimates of electricity and water • Unlawful disconnection despite paying on time
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 18 September 2020 was supposed to be disconnected but owner protested despite showing account as current • Receive accounts erratically and pay R4500 monthly • Requested statement to emailed to date not been done

Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unresolved
Employment status		Employed
Rating of Municipality's customer service		2
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with numerous staff to sort out billing issue via emails Threats of disconnection Erratic delivery of account

Date of interview	25 September 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchased property in 2017 and arranged to change property into his name and to date this hasn't been done and account still remains in the name of the previous owner.
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity disconnected in 2019 Increased in water and electricity from 18 March 2020 Ongoing emails to Marlon Hoskins with no response and tried to make arrange to meet him with no success Been to AS Chetty three times and not resolved. Travelled each time from Howick to try resolve the problem which was unsuccessful Rates not added to account since purchase
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unresolved
Employment status		Employed – Conveyor
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with numerous staff to sort out billing issue via emails and in person Large debt outstanding (R76,340.83) Taking time off work to sort out account Long distance travelling from Howick to PMB return numerous time – cost of petrol and time

Name of Resident		Owner
Onset of issue	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilities account was traditionally in the region of R2000/m Single resident of over 60 years Routinely self-reports readings Visited AS Chetty building numerous times
Interim	2018 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service was disconnected; had to borrow money to pay R7000 to have reconnected Service was disconnected

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has sent numerous emails which at times are returned “undeliverable” • Many visits to AS Chetty Building; parks in parkade-pay parking and feels vulnerable • Uses lunch times to attend the buildings; each time she is there for 1-1 ½ hours • Has dealt with “Pinky” several times, but no resolution to issue
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property for sale but unresolved billing issue
Employment status		Employed full time, High risk for COVID infection
Rating of Municipality’s customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time spent in fruitless visits to AS Chetty Building • Unable to deal with 1 person consistently • Unable to sell property as potential buyers are concerned about the unresolved issue

Date of interview	28 September 2020	
Name of Resident		Owner
Onset of issue	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased the property and the transfer process was successfully achieved
Interim	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July-rates amount of R34,994.33 was added to the account that belongs to previous owner • On enquiry was advised to contact Mr M Hoskins who was “exceedingly rude and arrogant” • Email sent to Johan vd Merwe declaring a dispute- this should be billed to the seller of the property. How was the initial transfer done if there are outstanding rates amounts? • No direct reply received, only cc’d in the follow-up emails which were unprofessional in nature

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On driving to the AS Chetty building the queue was out of the building and on to the street with no apparent regard for social distancing
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unresolved
Employment status		Employed full time, High risk for COVID infection
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to deal with 1 person consistently Large debt outstanding

Name of Resident		Owner
Property Account no.		Business Premises in town
Onset of issue	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilities account was traditionally in the region of R2500/m Property was leased to a second party in March Account received from Msunduzi municipality went up to R200 000 Visited AS Chetty building numerous times
Interim	2017 2018 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May/June account was increased to R500 000 with no explanations Advised to consult Mr Marlon Hoskins but was unable to do so. Mr Hoskins was never available. Utilities account was reduced to around R51 000 with no explanations At times the resident paid weekly visits to AS Chetty Building. this proved physically challenging owing to a medical condition at the time involving mobility The stairs at the front of AS Chetty were unable to be navigated. The elevator at the back was difficult to get to and felt unsafe There is no designated parking for elderly or infirm clients and parking is problematic. In this time, the utilities were disconnected several times creating conflict with the tenant. Monthly payments of about R3500 continued Evicted the tenants and asked that all municipal services except for sewage be disconnected Water meter stolen twice and replaced twice Now no water meter Despite request to disconnect services; electricity still not disconnected Self-reported reading not reflected
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged law firm J Leslie Smith August, suing for costs
Employment status		Pensioner

Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time spent in fruitless visits to AS Chetty Building • Physical difficulty accessing AS Chetty • Unable to deal with 1 person consistently • Loss of income from tenant • Engaging a law firm to solve the issue

Date of interview	30 September 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In October and November 2019 was charged disconnection fees R578.65 for both months and yet they were not disconnected. From December 2019 to Jan 2020 were not credited for these amounts. • Erratic delivery of accounts
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounts for following months in 2020 not received despite requesting them via email: February, March, April, June, July, August, September • They pay as much as they can despite been pensioner
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Pensioner
Rating of Municipality's customer service		-1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-responses for account • Account high for pensioner • Stressful

Name of Resident		Owner
Onset of issue	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Husband & daughter left SA and no longer reside in the house, taking the occupancy from 6 people to 4 people • Prior to their departure the average account was R2800-R3200 • After departure the account climbed to R6000/month
Interim		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When enquiries were made about increased readings, she was informed that there must be a leak • Plumber's letter attached to confirm no leak detected on property-the leak is outside the property or the meter is faulty. • Has reported this several times to the AS Chetty staff and been given letters not to disconnect, but disconnections continue to occur. • Uses own transport to AS Chetty building, pays for parking at the Parkade; time taken from working day

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advised to see Mr Marlon Hoskins who she described as “abrupt and unhelpful” • Saw Pinky who advised the amounts would be reversed, some were, but several not reversed. • Pays an average of R4000/month but account continues to climb and is currently at R27325.75
Current status		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Self employed
Rating of Municipality’s customer service		3 at the counter 1 as issue still not resolved
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-employed so has to take time out to go to the AS Chetty Building • Added stress due to disconnections despite “no disconnection” notices

Name of Resident		Owner
Onset of issue	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June account was abnormally low • July account was more than doubled
Interim		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In August queried the fact that reported readings were not reflected. • Phoned continuously x 5 days only answered on 5th day • Emailed “Gugu” • Was advised that as it was financial year end the department charges differently • On one account there are duplicated “domestic charges” for July and August
Current status		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Employed
Rating of Municipality’s customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned about disconnection even though she has paid her areas.

Name of Resident		Owner
Onset of issue	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March received an account for R10 000 • Phoned the department and was assured that the account would be resolved
Interim	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received a letter in post box on 15 September advising of extended hours over 12 & 13 September • Visited AS Chetty Building 17 September • Reception and willingness of staff to assist was exceptional • Enquiry not resolved and advised to email Mr M Hoskins • Emailed Mr Hoskins on 25 September with the following concerns:

		<p>Many reversals from previous statements</p> <p>Many duplicated charges at inflated tariffs e.g. 50.9L charged at 44.51. The account will have already been paid which was charged at a lower tariff</p> <p>What accounts for the increased tariff now?</p> <p>Wants and explanation for the anomalies</p>
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting feedback from Mr Hoskins as account still not resolved
Employment status		Pensioner
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional stress due to outstanding amount owed • Concern over the seemingly random charging of amounts at increased tariffs • Concern over the fact that the owners harvest all of their grey water and rain water yet still are being billed for a relatively high consumption despite the fact that there is no detectable leak • Fear of disconnection and resultant costs

Date of interview	2 October 2020	
Onset of issue	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requested transfer from late father name to mother name, to date this was not done.
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No water and electricity on accounts • July & August 2020 rates amount on accounts only • August & September 2020 accounts are the same • Disconnected on 16 September despite payment made and due date was 30/09/2020. Paid R6000 called for reconnection not done intervention made by Clarendon RRA and ward councillor and reconnected at 6h30pm
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Employed
Rating of Municipality's customer service		-1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-responses for account • Mother travels each month to AS Chetty from Clarendon to collect monthly statement

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother name not transferred to property adversely affects her ownership of property • Inconvenienced from disconnection
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Date of interview	10 October 2020	
Name of Resident		
Onset of issue	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother and son stay together in council house and the house is 40 years old. Mother is 70-year-old pensioner and son became unemployed (retrenched) in March 2020 due to COVID-19 and lockdown. Received an account as of 30 August 2020 for R71,491.38. The only income is mother's old age pension.
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Been to AS Chetty numerous occasions no help! • Son goes to inquiry on behalf of mother who is ill and not able to go with son due to COVID-19
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Unemployed
Rating of Municipality's customer service		-1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-responses for account • No help and stressful for mother and son
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Date of interview	10 October 2020	
Onset of issue	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normally pay between R 16,000 and R 20,000. The July bill, due 31/08/2020, was R 61 000,00 with numerous reversals and additional lines on the sewerage and water sections. They continue to pay the current account on a monthly basis. • The business was locked down completely from 27 March to 3 May 2020. There was an accumulation of R40,000 over 3 months and includes four charges for sewerage whereas they have only one charge. There were eight charges plus the basic and usually only have four charges.
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing email correspondence with no resolution. Municipality says that they do not have the technical staff available to come out to the property to check readings on the meter. • Been to AS Chetty four times
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Employed
Rating of Municipality's customer service		-1

Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-responses for account • Staff member to take time off from work. Cost of fuel to company to travel up and down. Loss of income • Large debt outstanding
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Date of interview	11 October 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner of 3 properties	
Onset of issue	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates doubled • Lodged dispute about rate valuation - unsuccessful • Owns 3 properties • Consulted valuator to value 3 properties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residential property valued by municipality in February 2019 at R710,000 and in August 2020 increased to R930,000. The private valuator valued the property at R865,000. Foundation is moving due to a stream, pool has given way from current position, inside and outside walls are cracking – report from property consultants. - Commercial property 1: valued by municipality in April 2019 at R720,000 and in August 2020 increased to R1,450,000. The private valuator valued the property at R995,000 - Commercial property 1: valued by municipality in May 2019 at R1,100,000 and in August 2020 increased to R2,200,000. The private valuator valued the property at R1,475,000
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still disputes findings of with evaluation committee • Been to AS Chetty over a one year period still not resolved
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Employed

Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treated badly by municipal staff at AS Chetty building, arrogant and poor attitude • Incurred personal cost of R12,000 for private company to valuate properties • Disconnection • Taking time off work to sort out account and parking area not safe for woman

Date of interview	11 October 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Query August 2020 current account R12,876.36 – paid monthly average of R3500 to R4500 • Paying actual for water and electricity then from July 2020 estimate • Water charges for July and August 2020 increases multiple times – reversals are done but added again
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Query via email and no responses
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Employed
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration

Date of interview	11 October 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disputed unknown item on account on September 2020 account – Card variable charge: R58.80 and card fixed charge: R30.04 – what is that? • No explanation what those charges are for
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No response
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Employed

Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		

Date of interview	11 October 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	August 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water meter changed by private company on behalf of the municipality. Received account in November 2018 at R19,000 Continued to pay monthly current amount on account while trying to resolve query Municipal technician checked for water leaks again and found none but replaced second water meter in April 2019 Since August 2018 been engaging with municipal staff to resolve against and to date it has not been resolved and as of September 2020 account the total due is R46,127.57 Submit monthly readings
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing engagement via WhatsApp, visit to AS Chetty and emails still not resolved. Interest on arrears been deducted
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unresolved
Employment status		Employed
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		

Date of interview	11 October 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	

Onset of issue	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced power surge August 2019 which resulted in electronics and appliances destroyed – these included: motor gate, alarm system, PC board, freezer, TV and decoder Submitted claim to municipality September 2019 – claim number: PL44/19 7 September 2019 documents submitted in respect of damaged items Query every month, phoned, visited Havelock Road
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing engagement via WhatsApp, visit to AS Chetty and emails still not resolved. Interest on arrears been deducted
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unresolved
Employment status		Employed
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance doesn't cover power surge and covered repairs to the value of R61,000 from own pocket

Date of interview	30 September 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Son purchased property in 2017 rates not transferred into his name since 2017.
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rates not on account and tried by emails and in person at AS Chetty to rectify account to no avail. Telephoned by just rings no answer, go in person they offline, say backlog in the rates department Ongoing request for account every month not sent – always have to follow up each month
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unresolved
Employment status		Employed
Rating of Municipality's customer service		-1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-responses for account Large debt outstanding (R76,340.83) Taking time off work to sort out account – own business and time wasted to try and sort our account at AS Chetty numerous times. Parking area not safe for woman

Date of interview	16 October 2020	
Name of Resident	Owner	
Onset of issue	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average amount paying every month is between R2500 • July 2020 account amount was R42916,49 which doubled • Contacted plumber to investigate any water leakage none was found • Contacted local ward councillor who advised that a Complaint – High water account form be completed and submitted to the municipality to lodge dispute of high water amount • 16 September 2020 contractors arrived to disconnect but was shown the letter not to disconnect • Contractor hand delivered account and also received same account in the post for the amount of R46,888.88. There was a discrepancy of the water meter reading was given as 6893 and the reading was 6847 • Amount adjusted from R46,888.88 to R11,201.20 which again is disputed
Interim status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing emails and still not resolved.
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Employed
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stressful

Date of interview	16 October 2020	
Onset of issue	<p>2009</p> <p>2011 - 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imbali Unit J 3 and CC problems with high billing, pipes needed services – rotten, underground pipes not visible to meter readers and get estimated readings • Pipes twisted, leaking and old • GERA held a march to city hall On 15 June 2011 to submit a memorandum on rates, high billing, indigent, estimation of accounts. Mayor Chris Ndlela under took to respond in seven days • Mayor Chris Ndlela made a public statement at the march to write off water and rate debts and R57,7 was available for this write off of debt. Refer to media article of 1 July 2011 • A detailed report has been compiled by GERA that includes minutes of meetings between GERA and the municipality, council minutes, report by former city administrator Sibusiso Sithole of the write off of debt and the R57,7 available to write off of debt • Owner received an account of R731,045.89 and the account was reduced to R50,000 • Ongoing meeting with all previous mayors, CFO and municipal management to date
Interim status	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing meetings
Current status	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved
Employment status		Retired
Rating of Municipality's customer service		1
Adverse effects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents receiving high accounts unable to pay • R57,7 funds to write off debt – unresolved and where did the money go to? • Poor water piping and ongoing leaks • Reports from the municipality not implemented