

Strike warning from Samwu

LANGELIHLE CHAGWE

THE South African Municipal Workers Union (Samwu) joined by Cosatu, the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) and the ANC have warned of a full blown strike if authorities fail to address their litany of grievances in the Newcastle municipality within seven working days.

They held a peaceful protest march on Monday demanding, among others, an end to the outsourcing of jobs in Newcastle and the replacement of staff who have retired, died or are on extended leave by the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

The union federation and its affiliates are also unhappy at senior municipal officials employing their wives, siblings, girlfriends, outsiders and children.

Another bone of contestation is the casualisation of workers, Samwu said.

"The municipality is unlawfully using EPWP labour to render services and perform operational work which do not fall under the definition of projects. In this instance, EPWP workers have been exploited through work of a permanent nature and didn't get the salary for permanent people," Newcastle Samwu chairperson Nhlanhla Ngwenya, said.

He added that Samwu also wanted the municipality to refrain from making "unlawful deductions" from the salaries of employees who owed municipal rates.

"The action of the municipality is contrary to the South African KZN conditions of service collective agreement, which states that employers may not

make any deductions from employees' remuneration unless employees agree in writing and the total deductions from remuneration must not be more than 10% of the salary," Ngenwya said.

SAMWU also raised the issue of unauthorised acting appointments, claiming that workers acting in some positions were not getting their allowances.

Ngwenya said the municipality should fill vacant positions to avoid too many acting appointments.

The memorandum was received by the manager in the office of the mayor Andile Masondo.

Spokesperson for the mayor's office, Sphiwe Mazibuko, said the mayor would go through Samwu's demands soon, as he only received it yesterday

provinces@thenewage.co.za



GRIEVANCES: Samwu says the Newcastle municipality is unlawfully using EPWP labour to conduct work of a permanent nature without earning the salary that goes with it. PICTURE: VIRTUAL CONSULTING