

Opposition rejects DA's draft budget

ANC says ruling party's focus is suburbs, townships neglected

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OPPPOSITION parties in Tshwane rejected the draft budget for 2017/18 tabled by the Finance MMC Mare-Lise Fou-rie during a monthly council sitting at the Sammy Marks chamber yesterday.

ANC caucus leader Mapiti Matsena said the draft budget had been decreased by 13.5% from the R33 billion budget tabled by the previous administration.

Matsena castigated the DA-led administration for the draft budget, saying it "cancelled some of the gains made by the ANC over the past years".

For the whole of April, the draft budget would be taken out to communities for public participation.

Matsena said the ANC would mobilise communities in ANC-run wards to reject the draft budget.

"The focus of the DA is in the suburbs. They have reduced the budget, particularly for projects in the townships," he said.

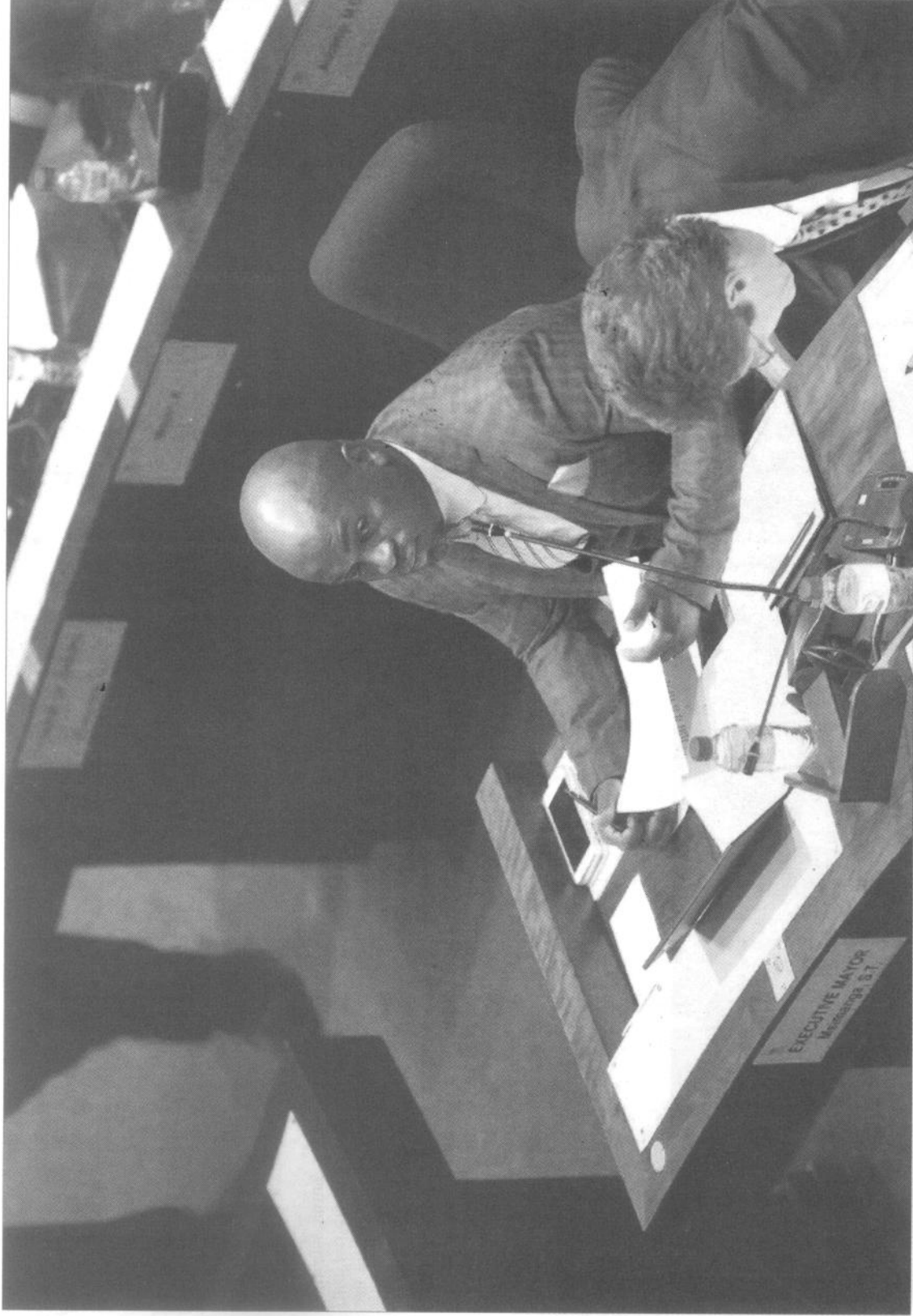
He accused the DA of championing the interests of white people and neglecting poor people.

"The draft budget does not address the needs of our people who are mostly found in the townships," he said.

EFF leader Benjamin Disolokane said the draft budget failed to address issues of insourcing municipal workers. "You have no plans to insource the Expanded Public Works Programme workers as you continue to use apartheid tactics of ensuring Africans remain cheap, easily disposable labourers," he said.

Workers included security guards, cleaners, refuse removal workers, drivers and general workers, he said.

Disolokane called on mayor Solly Msimanga to allocate part of the budget to the development of Odi



Executive mayor Solly Msimanga in the council chamber.

PICTURE: THOBILE MATHONSI

Stadium. "The proposed budget is not talking about the development and maintenance of Odi Stadium, which has been a stadium (of) international standards."

"The EFF would like to propose that such stadium be prioritised," Disolokane said.

He warned the DA against allo-

cating a budget for bicycle lanes, saying that was ANC policy that was rejected by the people who voted them out of power in the City of Joburg.

Disolokane said the EFF would not support the DA draft budget if it would come back to the council unchanged after the public partici-

pation process. "We are proposing that the R29 million budgeted for prevention of illegal land invasion be used to fund the filling of health posts," Disolokane said.

Fourie said: "It is only a draft budget and it will most probably change before the final budget is tabled."

"This is because there are lots of submission that would still come through."

"Some of them would have to be redistributed."

Msimanga said the city would pass the budget which is realistic and not about mega projects not budgeted for.