

## **Pretoria News - 26 Jan 2018**

### Sony, ANC clash over EPWP plan

Sony, ANC clash over EPWP plan RAPULA MOATSHE rapula.moatshe@inl.co.za  
MAYOR Solly Msimanga was yesterday criticised for "abusing" the platform for tabling his reports to council by reiterating headway already made by the Gata le Nna expanded public works programme EPWP. During the monthly ordinary Tshwane council sitting yesterday, ANC councillors opposed his elaborative talk about the EPWP Vat Alles under the ANC rule in the city and said Msimanga must table a formal report on the matter and open it for interrogation.

Despite constant interjections by ANC councillors, Msimanga said: "To further demonstrate our transparency and fairness in selecting Gata Le Nna beneficiaries, on December 18 last year and January 22 this year we conducted the first and second digital lottery system respectively to demonstrate that beneficiaries are indeed selected at random, and not on the basis of prejudicial reasons, as in the past." He stressed that none of the politicians could interfere with the selection process for the EPWP beneficiaries.

Msimanga said it was unfortunate that the official opposition party was using "this sensitive matter of bread and butter to advance its political interests". "They don't care about the residents of Tshwane. They are playing with people's livelihoods," he said. "The fact is that EPWP work opportunities are not permanent employment, but a programme that must impart meaningful skills which enable beneficiaries to exit the programme and enter the world of work with better prospects." Lesego Makhubela of the ANC alleged pensioners had been hired into the programme, saying this practice was illegal because the elderly were already receiving social grants from the government. But Msimanga said all unemployed people in Tshwane deserved the opportunity to benefit from these work opportunities. Msimanga said there were 307 Vat Alles participants selected for the programme, which constituted 9.5 % of Gata le Nna. "We closed off 2017 after a successful kickstart to a rigorous process that will lead to the realisation of thousands of work opportunities for our unemployed, destitute and impoverished city residents through the EPWP," he said.

ANC chief whip Aaron Maluleka contested Msimanga's EPWP speech on the grounds that it didn't form part of the council report. He then asked Speaker Katlego Mathebe to give the ANC caucus five minutes to discuss the matter. Addressing Mathebe, he said: "You want to degenerate this council. The executive mayor is provoking debate; you are suffocating it." After the caucus, Msimanga remarked: "There was a clear understanding of why there is this fracas." A section of the house during the Tshwane council monthly sitting at Sammy Marks Chamber yesterday. PICTURE: BONGANI SHILUBANE/AFRICAN NEWS AGENCY ANA