

R68m lease deal storm

Senior official claims he was suspended for not sanctioning office space agreement

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A SUSPENDED senior official at the North West social development department and MEC Hoffman Galeng squared off over a R68m lease deal for office space at the department.

Itumeleng Mogorosi said he was suspended because he did not want to sanction the deal while Galeng denied the allegations.

The two appeared in the provincial legislature portfolio committee called North West social development department and Mogorosi to discuss the matters over his suspension and an impression is created that whistle blowers have been subjected to disciplinary procedures. Mogorosi wrote a letter complaining about the maladministration, fraud and corruption at the department. The letter was leaked to the media and that led to Mogorosi suspension pending investigations.

"The Notice of Intention to suspend was issued on January 29. This was as a result of correspondence from the employee's legal representative questioning the notice.

"The suspension letter was only delivered on February 20. The department deals with whistle-blowing in accordance with the Protected Disclosures Act.



'VICTIMISED': Suspended chief director of the North West social development department Itumeleng Mogorosi.

"We also want to put it on record that the public works department advertised bids for the 17 offices at the social development department request. Only four bids were responsive to the specifications and were awarded accordingly. However, 13 bids were unresponsive and a technical team comprising officials from public works and social development departments embarked on a 'search and inspect' exercise for

identification of suitable buildings to accommodate the remaining 13 offices in terms of Treasury Regulations 16A6.4 and Treasury Practice Note 8 2007-2008," Galeng said.

Mogorosi said: "I'm victimised because I refused to sign-off a lease agreement worth R68m for three years for office space in four regions across the province. "I was working within the provision of the law in assisting to

combat corrupt activities as stated on Public Service regulations in 2016, in regulation 13(e) and regulation (22) and Protection Disclosure act.

"I decided to write that letter because I felt victimised as a result of that incident. All the processes took place last year around September when I was acting head of the department. Victimisation in my view was in a result of refusing to implement instructions that I deemed to be unlawful.

"There was a collapsing administration because instructions were coming from MEC to the chief director. This was abnormal and showed that there is no administrative leadership."

He said he raised issues to the MEC that, public works is the custodian of property, so they were expected to procure office space on behalf of tenants.

Mogorosi said it was based on the above reasons that he could not sign-off on the procurement process as it was public works duty.

"I am the accounting officer and I had no file that consists of advert, meetings, minutes of briefing session, evaluation and adjudication report regarding the lease agreement. So, I blatantly refused to sign-off that transaction without a substantiation report." – Newsnote