

# “You talk about corruption we kill you!”

**Tumelo Waga Dibakwane**

Councillors and employees of eMalahleni Local Municipality (MLM) claim that they are living in fear after rumours of an alleged hit list have surfaced.

It has come to the fore that employees of MLM have signed a petition which was handed to the Executive Mayor, Clr Linah Malatjie, calling for the immediate suspension and investigation of the Executive Director of Corporate Services, Mandla Vilane. (NewsHorn is in possession of the petition documents.)

NewsHorn was told that anyone speaking out against corruption in MLM and especially against Vilane, would be added to the hit list. This list was apparently being circulated in the corridors of the municipality to instil fear in whistle blowers.

One of the issues being addressed in the petition to Malatjie, is alleged inconsistencies in the manner in which sanctions are applied after disciplinary processes. It also raises the issue of nepotism, which is allegedly rife in the municipality and states that relatives of senior managers are appointed in temporary positions and in the Expanded Public Works Programme. Staffs also claim that their travelling allowances are taken away and those who are vocal against corruption, are promised better positions to keep them quiet.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) councillor at the MLM, Naritha Naidoo, says this issue is much bigger than Malatjie and the council and should be addressed by CoGTA's MEC, Speedy Mashilo.

“We also call on the South African Police Services (SAPS) and the HAWKS to investigate the existence of the alleged hit list. Naidoo further said the entire democracy is at stake if councillors and municipal employees are afraid to speak

out against corruption because they're afraid of being killed.

“The DA will not allow this municipality to be governed in a manner that threatens employees and councillors who are working tirelessly to root out corruption in eMalahleni,” said Naidoo.

The spokesperson for the municipality, Kingdom Mabuza, has dismissed and denied all allegations made by the DA. He said this was used to “tarnish other people's names.”

“The mayor has received the petitions, but we do not have the alleged hit list. If they can only send us that list, then we will act, because the petition is an internal matter and has nothing to do with a hit list and we are saying let them bring that hit list to us,” said Mabuza.

He added that because of these so-called hit list, “should anything happen to some of the municipal workers they will accuse Vilane for no reason. The DA statement is not even elaborating on the issue of the hit list, instead they copy and paste what is on the internal petition and it's not fair to put his name in a mud,” he continued.

Despite some employees confirming to NewsHorn that their names are on the hit list, they were not able to produce the physical list.



**Mandla Vilane**