

PARKWOOD

Anger at repeat EPWP contracts

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A group of disgruntled residents walked to the subcouncil 18 offices in Lotus River on Tuesday 9 October in a display of displeasure.

The group handed over a memorandum to subcouncil chairperson Shanen Rossouw and subcouncil manager Fred Monk, detailing their displeasure at how the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is being carried out in their area. According to Parkwood resident Max-John Amensure, they have given the City seven days for a feedback session to be held to discuss and plan the way forward. He says that some residents have continually registered and renewed their details on the database, but still aren't selected for programmes and he alleges that the same people end up being appointed.

"We raised our voice against the corruption and unfairness in the EPWP system whereby the same people get contracts over again. That is where the unfairness comes in and where people get frustrated. You renew your name on the database, but other people are constantly getting the contract or they are working on the contract or the contract is extended," says Amensure.

He says they will continue to engage with subcouncil 18 if their demands are not met, because he would like to know why the same residents are getting contracts.

"It is unfair and that is why we stood up as young people and adults. We were a diverse age group, because we want our voices to be heard. They must give each person who is jobless, or struggling to get a job, a fair chance. I believe that the unemployment is creating what we are sitting with here today. Gangsterism, violence and drug abuse is because of people not having jobs, yet we know that the City cannot accommodate everybody," he says.

He admits that the City may not be able to help every single unemployed resident, but all he asks for is that the City make the process as fair as possible.

"We want fairness. We handed over the memorandum and our hopes are high for positive feedback from them. All these negative activities, the main thing that is the root of these things, because people are sitting at

home doing nothing. While the positive things are silent, the negative things start to give birth. The positive thing has to come alive. By that coming alive, is that the EPWP system has to be looked at to have a positive impact on the community's people and young people," says Amensure.

Amensure says that the march was peaceful and he found it strange that Law Enforcement vans were required to greet them on arrival.

"We came there peacefully and we were escorted away by Law Enforcement, but we need them in our community and not protecting City officials while our people are dying in Parkwood. That was also a bit disrespectful to us as a community."

Community leader in Parkwood, Paul Phillips, is equally frustrated.

"As leaders we are frustrated with the non-cooperation of the councillor as we believe we can, as a community collective, creatively address and alleviate this challenge which greatly contributes toward social ill such as gangsterism and crime. We have a plan, but for such to be introduced and activated we need all the key role-players such as the City and provincial government on board."

Eddie Andrews, Macyo member (South) says the jobseeker database is computerised, with randomisation being carried out in accordance with project numbers and scope of a project to guide the official tasked to do the randomisation to key in the requirements and source candidates in this manner.

He confirms that this is the same for all areas.

"Strict criteria are followed in line with the management of the jobseekers database policy. Randomisation is in accordance with the criteria/scope of a project.

"The project scope determines how the official randomises for job opportunities," says Andrews.

He adds that jobseekers should ensure that when they update their particulars, it lists their experience that they have obtained through the years.

According to Andrews, the City has created 248 job opportunities in the last five months alone and almost 1500 opportunities throughout subcouncil 18's six wards during the same period.