

King Sabata Dalindyebo employees disrupt services

LUVO CAKATA

SERVICES have been brought to a halt at the King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) municipality in Mthatha as municipal workers have embarked on what they call a sit-in, demanding that the acting municipal manager, Mbulelo Sigaba, attend to their grievances.

At the centre of the complaints is what the unions say is a lack of transparency during task grades back pay, as well as subjecting of workers under the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) by the municipality to cheap labour practices.

South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) deputy chairperson in the KSD municipality, Amos Mbotoli, accused senior managers of giving themselves large sums of the R65 million the municipality disbursed as part of task grades back-payment. “As workers of this municipality we want the municipality to be transparent with us and take us into their confidence on how the task grades back-pay were allocated as some received huge amounts of money and some of us got very little,” said Mbotoli.

SAMWU together with Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union (IMATU) have also demanded that workers employed

under EPWP be permanently employed by the municipality saying these workers have been treated as cheap labour since 2009.

KSD spokesperson, Sonwabo Mampoza, said that services such as payment of traffic fines and renewal of licences had been completely shut down since Friday, November 9, as a result of the strike.

He said that the task grades back payment and implementation was done above board while the council had also appointed a task team including representatives from the provincial treasury and South African Local Government Association to address the implementation and realigning of the municipal task grade issue.

On the issue of EPWP workers, Mampoza said the municipality did absorb these workers when vacancies became available, saying they were currently in the process of permanently employing 36 workers from the EPWP.

Meanwhile the Democratic Alliance (DA) in King Sabata Dalindyebo council said it would approach Cogta MEC Fikile Xasa to urgently intervene in the strike action, according to DA councillor, Raymond Knock.

The municipality planned to seek a court interdict against the workers, as it deemed their action unlawful.



← KSD municipality workers affiliated to SAMWU and IMATU protest outside the Munitata building in Mthatha, demanding the acting municipal manager to address them on their grievances. PHOTO:LUVO CAKATA