

● Only 973 out of proposed 4,000 posts created

Municipality falls way short on jobs target

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The Nelson Mandela Bay municipality created only 973 out of a targeted 4,000 full-time jobs for the 2017/2018 financial year.

The city also failed to meet its employment equity targets for senior management positions, having appointed only six black women and no coloured women against the target of 11.

This is attributed to administrative delays in its recruitment process.

The metro's annual report for the 2017/2018 financial year reveals it did not eradicate illegal electricity connections.

The plan was to eradicate about 1,000 illegal connections.

It claims in the report that there may have been instances where it removed illegal connections but simply did not record it.

For its failure to create full-time jobs, the municipality explains that the targets agreed upon with the department of public works were unrealistic.

Areas where the city excelled and exceeded its targets include the servicing of sites with new water and electricity connections, with 3,009 sites serviced.

Also, it met its target by completing the second phase of the expansion of the Nooitgedacht I water scheme.

Two pedestrian bridges were built and two metro police precincts were established by December 2017, in line with the municipality's targets.

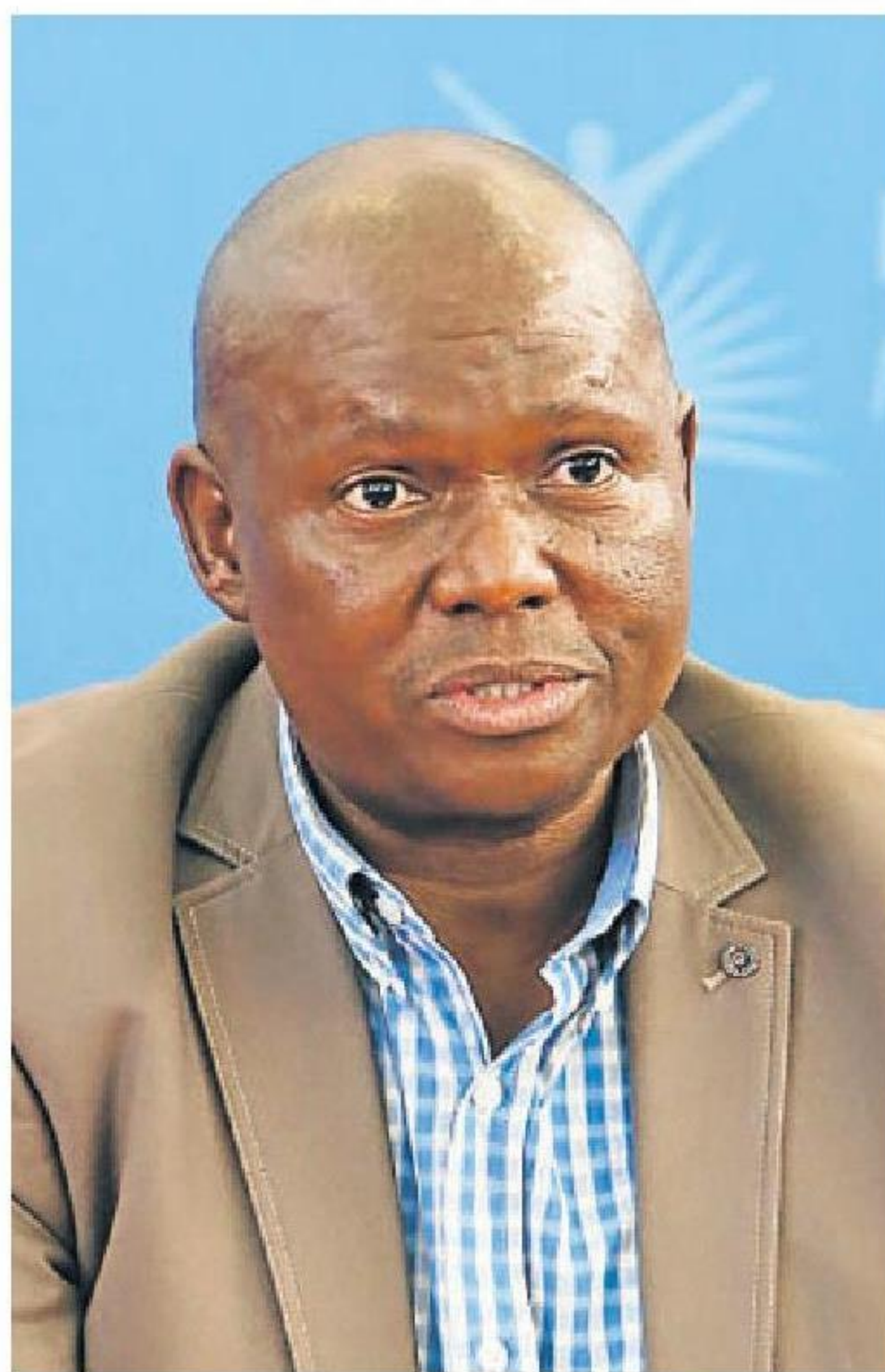
The annual report will be tabled at next week's council meeting before it is referred to the municipal public accounts committee to discuss and formulate recommendations.

On Friday, mayor Mongameli Bobani said the report was a reflection of the promises and actions of the previous administration. "This report

paints a very gloomy picture around the performance of the city with regard to finances and the DA must take the blame," Bobani said.

"We have been saying that as this coalition government we are still fixing the mess of the DA. The AG has put it clearly that the DA has mismanaged the funds of the [ratepayer]."

Bobani was a member of the DA-led coalition for at least half of the financial year under review before he was ousted as



MONGAMELI BOBANI

deputy mayor. He said he, along with his coalition partners, would ensure those implicated in mismanaging municipal funds were held to account.

"As a city we are definitely not happy about the report. It's not a good story but we can assure residents that in this financial year we will make sure that we no longer have a qualified audit," Bobani said.

The municipality received a qualified audit from the auditor-general for 2017/2018.

Bobani vowed they would ensure the city received an unqualified audit for the current financial year.

"We are going to get an unqualified audit because the money of the [ratepayer] is in good hands. We are going to ensure this and follow the AG's

corrective measures," he said.

"We are going to deal with those who are corrupt; we are going to follow them and try to recover the ratepayers' money."

Asked if he took any of the blame for the city's performance, Bobani claimed he had been ousted because he was fighting corruption.

"One of the reasons why I was removed was that I was bringing forth ways to prevent this. In fact I was fighting corruption and that is why the DA removed me.

"I was also coming up with various cleaning programmes for residents to see where their money was going. Had I been there the entire time, the AG would not have found what he found," Bobani said.

DA councillor and former budget and treasury portfolio head Retief Odendaal said all councillors were responsible.

"One of my biggest regrets of losing out on governing is the fact that we hadn't been able to turn around the city and get an unqualified or clean audit, he said.

"We knew it wasn't going to happen within a year or two."

He said most of the AG's findings proved the city was in a better financial position, but was facing issues with the administration.

Tough decisions would have to be made around using the budget for non-service-delivery matters, and rather on necessary items such as the city's accounting system.

"All councillors and political parties must realise their actions in and outside of council can have huge repercussions when it comes to attracting good-quality skills and investments, because who will invest in a city that is not stable?"

"Without pointing fingers, what should be done is we should all sit down and address it together. Forget about the politics and put the interest of the city first."