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Ad hoc committee report on EPWP recommends absorption of workers

Ad hoc committee report on EPWP recommends absorption of workers LUVUO CAKATA TRADE unions at King Sabata Dal indyebo KSD Municipality received a boost in their fight for the permanent absorption of workers under the Expanded Public Works Programme EPWP, following the tabling of the long awaited report by a multi party ad hoc committee on the feasibility of their permanent absorption. The report was tabled before the council by ad hoc committee chair person, Councillor Nomamfengu Siyo Sokutu, during a special council meeting held on April 12, following the investigation by the ad hoc committee. The report recommends permanent employment for more than 200 employees under the EPWP, in line with the municipal organogram and further mandated the office of the mayor to ensure appointment of EPWP technical champion as well as fast tracking the review of the 2010 municipal organogram. The issue of permanent absorption of workers employed under the EPWP within the KSD municipality has been at the centre of the dispute between the municipality and trade unions, which had led to the recurring and crippling strikes by workers of the municipality. However, the report also noted serious irregularities during its investigation, including non cooperation from directors, salary discrepancies of workers under EPWP, employees not cooperating with the investigation, as some did not turn up for verification, and non existence of a central EPWP coordinating office within the municipality. The report further reveals that there are more than 90 ghost workers under the EPWP within the municipality, who could not be accounted for and yet drew salaries from the municipality every month. The council has further resolved that salary payments be immediately frozen for those EPWP workers that could not be verified and accounted for.

Trade union leaders within the KSD Municipality were not immediately available for comment at the time of going to press, as the report had not yet been made available to them. The report was tabled without the presence of councillors from opposition parties, who grew impatient after the council seating had to be adjourned twice due to faults with the transcribing device.