

■ 'SELECTIVE EMPLOYMENT'

Hundreds of municipal workers protest over favouritism in job appointments

THAMI MAGUBANE
thami.magubane@inl.co.za

MUNICIPAL workers employed by Msunduzi Municipality's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) have accused senior managers of selective employment of general workers in the council.

About 300 disgruntled EPWP employees were joined by unemployed ANC volunteers in a protest march outside the city hall yesterday.

The protesters, who were calling for

the sacking of the acting municipal manager, Nelisiwe Ngcobo, accused the council of using an unfair system to hire general workers, environmental contract workers and municipal security guards.

Yesterday's march was the second protest by the group in as many months. Last month, they delivered a memorandum of demands and gave the council seven days to respond, but they returned yesterday after the municipality failed to respond.

The Mercury has seen a copy of an

unsigned memorandum where the protesters made allegations against Ngcobo, some councillors and council speaker Jabu Ngubo.

The group accused Ngcobo and Ngubo of plunging the municipality into crisis.

They also accused her and her administration of failing to save the city from being put under administration, saying they should go immediately.

The leader of the group, Sandile Ndlovu, said about 300 people took part in the march.

"There are EPWP workers from different wards and ANC volunteers who still need to be employed.

"We are worried because last month we delivered a memorandum calling on the acting municipal manager to step down.

"There were many issues that were highlighted in the memorandum. These included the employment of security guards without informing councillors.

"We also know that she (Ngcobo) only works well with a small group of councillors – about four – to take

decisions," said Ndlovu.

He also accused Ngcobo of appointing people to work in the municipality unilaterally without wide consultation, while overlooking those who were already part of the programme.

Ndlovu said last week scores of waste workers were employed and councillors were not informed. He said there were councillors who "worked well with the municipal manager" and had the power to hire workers.

Municipal spokesperson Thobeka Mafumbatha said the protesters were

municipal employees employed under the EPWP programme and were not happy with the municipality's alleged corruption.

She said the protesters claimed that the city was employing its own people for permanent jobs, such as cleaning the streets and security.

Mafumbatha confirmed that protesters also called for Ngcobo's resignation because they blamed her for the municipality's problems.

Attempts to get comment from Ngcobo yesterday were unsuccessful.