

■ STRIKE

# Poo protest hits KZN council

*uThukela District Municipality locked down*

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EMPLOYEES of a KwaZulu-Natal municipality have had to contend with a foul odour after disgruntled employees threw faeces inside their work space on Monday morning.

The uThukela District Municipality building in Ladysmith was evacuated before noon and locked down on Tuesday, with a private company contracted to clean the reception, corridors and certain offices in the three-storey building.

Employees, who asked not to be named, said operations came to a standstill around 10am on Monday after water and sanitation employees demanded to be addressed by the municipality's management.

"We were going about with our morning routine when the front entrance was blockaded with municipal vans, and some sewer trucks were trailing behind the vans. A short while after they were addressed by management members, we saw them retreating to the vans, opening the tailgates and then the s\*\*t hit the fan. We later realised that there was no escape route as the exit gate was also blocked," said one employee.

Another said the protesters had carried the buckets of sewage in the vans. These were then carted into the building and emptied in the reception, corridors and in some offices.

"They have issues with a senior superintendent and these are accompanied by allegations that proper processes were not followed when he was appointed. It's not the first time these workers have resorted to playing with faeces when they have grievances. Right now we are breathing s\*\*t as its smell is still lingering in the air inside this building," said the employee.

The same department employees threw faeces to get their grievances resolved in June and August 2018.

This led to the disruption of opera-

tions for four working days following the failure by management to address them. At the time, the employees demanded that the Expanded Public Works Programme and contractual employees be appointed permanently.

In one instance, the workers had used tractor-loader-backhoe vehicles to carry the waste.

Last year, the then Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs MEC Nomusa Dube-Ncube put the municipality under administration after poor performance which crippled service delivery.

Abbas Warasally, IFP councillor in uThukela, said they had lost hope and faith in the municipal management.

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Its smell is still lingering in the air inside this building.

Employee  
uThukela District Municipality

"I have received numerous complaints from community (members) who went to the municipal offices to pay their accounts and were turned away at the gate. uThukela District Municipality management did not deem it fit to make the community aware, through SMS, of the crisis taking place there," he said.

DA uThukela constituency head Maliyakhe Shelembe called for a change of leadership at the municipality.

Municipal manager Sifiso Kunene said Jabulani Mkhonza, the municipal spokesperson, would attend to media queries regarding the incident.

However, Mkhonza referred the Daily News back to Kunene, whose phone rang unanswered.