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PROTEST

# Workers march over bonuses

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WORKERS in eThekweni have given the municipality seven days to create a policy where all employees will receive performance bonuses.

The workers, mainly from the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and affiliated to the Municipal and Allied Trade Union of South Africa (Matusa), marched to the Durban City Hall yesterday to hand over a memorandum of their demands.

The union's national deputy secretary, Thulani Ngwenya, said performance bonuses were supposed to be applied across the board, but in the eThekweni Municipality they were reserved for a certain category of employees.

Ngwenya said to give incentives to some employees and not others was discriminatory and amounted to unfair labour practice, adding that should city manager Musa Mbhele fail to respond within seven days, his members would be forced to bring the city to a standstill through a strike.

"The city will leave the union with no choice but to file a mutual interest dispute, which will lead to a protected strike by our members," read the memorandum.

Pressed on how the city will measure the performance of EPWP



MEMBERS of the Municipal and Allied Trade Union of South Africa marched to the Durban City Hall to hand over a memorandum to eThekweni Municipality management. | DOCTOR NGCOBO

that all those workers that had not been paid their bonuses should be paid immediately. Ngwenya said some EPWP staff did not have the proper tools to carry out their jobs.

eThekweni spokesperson Msawakhe Mayisela called the union's demands ridiculous, saying the city had lost a lot of revenue after the calamities that had hit it, therefore it found it irresponsible of Matusa to make such demands.

"We fully understand that they have a responsibility to grow their membership, but they must guard against making such ridiculous demands," said Mayisela.

Other demands put forward by the union concerned the issue of outsourcing of work that was supposed to be done by the city's employees.

The union said that there were hundreds of employees from various departments that were employed by the municipality, but had no work to do because the tasks had been outsourced to different subcontractors.

The union demanded that the municipality end those contracts and give the work back to the city's employees.

Furthermore, the union said it was wrong for mayor Mxolisi Kaunda to call them "lazy", and threaten to dismiss them.

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employees – many of them street sweepers – Ngwenya said it was up to the employer to formulate the criteria, but all they wanted as workers was the performance bonus for all the city employees, regardless of their work

stations. The union also reminded the city that it had not responded to the memorandum of demands handed over by the same members on August 15 last year.

The union regarded the eThekweni

municipality management's conduct as being disrespectful and uncaring.

By not paying bonuses to all employees, the union accused the management of sowing divisions among the workers, and demanded