This is not the first time that these allegations have surfaced. The first time this happened was via WhatsApp about three months ago, which WhatsApp is quoted as a preamble of this media enquiry. The City made it clear then and re-iterates the position that we do not entertain allegations made by faceless people.

We further went on to call on members of the public who have information about any form of corruption or fraud relating to any transaction and/or tender in the City to report such to law enforcement agencies for further and thorough investigation. This remains our position and we will fully support such a formal investigation because we believe that anyone who is found to have been involved in any fraud and corruption activity must be brought to book.

The City would like to emphasise that local government is highly regulated by COGTA and SALGA, and to govern effectively and properly, all processes must be undertaken within the ambit of such legislative framework. As a known factor, the IDP and the SDBIP are strategic documents that guide and actually regulate the kinds of decisions that the City may take. Therefore, we have introduced a system of delegations to give effect to separation of powers, enhance and promote administrative efficiency. In light of this, the legislative framework prohibits politicians from taking decisions on the appointment of service providers.

**SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT**

All service providers are appointed following Supply Chain Management (SCM) processes that are highly regulated and transparent. The City runs a transparent SCM process and the Bid Adjudication Committee is open to the public. This process is also subject to scrutiny by City’s internal Audit Department, and the Auditor General of South Africa. During the 2017/18 financial year no audit findings were issued for maladministration and wasteful expenditure. While we undertake a transparent procurement process at all times, however, we do not discuss ongoing procurement processes because such may jeopardize the integrity of the process.

**PRO-POOR AGENDA**

It is worth noting that when the current administration came into office in 2016, this leadership adopted a ‘PRO POOR’ agenda, which is aimed at ensuring among others that our people’s dignity is restored. Following a petition received by legislature demanding more toilets in informal settlements, and continuous requests for such by members of the community during campaigning for the 2016 local government elections, the leadership prioritized sanitation in informal settlements. At the time when the leadership came into office in August 2016, the ratio stood to 1(toilet):10 (per structure), and it was resolved that this must be improved to 1 (toilet):5 (per structure) – an intervention that has been appreciated by the beneficiaries.

Furthermore, the City had to correct an unacceptable abnormally in the supply chain of rendering this service where there was one supplier for rendering the service to all 119 informal settlements in the city. We now have 16
contractors rendering the service after we unbundled the tender to ensure efficiency in the provision of this service, particularly to informal settlements. Following the due process of the City’s Supply Chain Management Policy, the outcome thereof was that 16 bidders qualified and all of them were appointed. This followed an inspection undertaken by the City to determine that they met the specification – and they did. These companies invoice the municipality as per the rates approved in the bid document.

The City notes an attempt to link the current leadership with this process, however, we want to make it clear that the current leadership came into office months after the companies had been appointed.

When it comes to Madelakufa, when the City delivered the new mobile toilets the community resorted to burning all mobile toilets in favour of the old corrugated iron. Following numerous meetings, an agreement was finally reached to accept their choice, but the said toilets still meet the standard for provision of decent sanitation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The City wishes to make it categorically clear that the money spent in the 2017/18 financial year on this project was nowhere near R1.6bn but approximately R800m. It must further be clarified that this cannot only be attributed to the 1 (toilet):5 (per structure) ratio, but also the rollout of toilets in areas that previously did not have such, the unpredictable nature of the mushrooming of informal settlement, and the exponential increase of adverse court findings against local government for provision basic services, including decent sanitation, to residents.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY ON THE TOILET SERVICE

Also of great importance to note is the fact that last year a community satisfaction survey on the quality of service rendered was conducted by an independent NGO, Planat. Generally, the people were satisfied about the service but they also pointed out areas of improvement, which included some of the issues that are mentioned in the media enquiry. We addressed all these, but we do still, from time to time, get complaints which upon investigation we address. (The Planat Report can be made available on request).

STAND ALONE TOILETS

In respect of standalone toilets, the City has a constitutional responsibility to provide basic services to communities such as water and sewer within a formalised township with the intention of building houses later as and when Gauteng Department of Human Settlements allocate budget to the City of Ekurhuleni to build houses. The reason for the toilets to remain standing idle is because the targeted beneficiaries refused to move because they wanted everyone accommodated in the project irrespective whether they are eligible or not for a housing subsidy. The targeted beneficiary community also launched a court order to force the City to also allocate service stands to non-qualifiers which is in contravention of Housing Policy. The court case is still pending hence the stands are still vacant. To date the City has spent R21,3 million.

Further note that local government does not have the authority to build top structures (houses) as the accreditation still remains with the provincial government.

It is the City’s intention to allocate qualifying beneficiaries to the serviced stands. To date we have captured the details of the applicants and we are awaiting the Gauteng Department of Human Settlement’s approval. We anticipate that the City will start with the allocation in the new financial year and subject to the beneficiaries agreeing to being relocated to the serviced stands.

SOLAR GEYSERS

In Mayfield Ext 45, we installed solar geysers to provide warm water into the bathroom structures. The unabated scale of vandalism necessitated the postponement of installation of plumbing.
The City remains committed to a zero tolerance stance on corruption in the City of Ekurhuleni and we would like to urge the public to report acts of corruption to the relevant law enforcement agencies or the City’s dedicated corruption hotline.

The City can only effectively fight the scourge of fraudulent conduct if we report cases to the police.

For more information, media may contact Spokesperson Themba Gadebe on 011 999 1522 / 076 303 7594 or themba.gadebe@ekurhuleni.gov.za

Issued by

Nhlanhla Cebekhulu
Divisional Head: Communication and Media Relations
City of Ekurhuleni
Department; Communications and Brand Management
Address; 47 Van Buuren Road, Bedfordview, 2007
Tel; 011 999 0067
Website; www.ekurhuleni.gov.za
Facebook; City of Ekurhuleni
Twitter; @City_Ekurhuleni