**Report by a Suspended Municipal Manager**

**(Prepared for the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Corporate Governance and Traditional Affairs)**

**Events leading to my suspension as the Municipal Manager (17 June 2020)**

On the 12 June 2020, I received invoices from the Director for Legislative Services, Ms Tseane. The invoices were for R1, 821 600.00 and R3, 036 000.00, respectively.

Upon receipt of the said invoices I noticed the following concerns which invited my attention:

• The invoices were scantily crafted to be legitimate as they are not made from a letterhead of the invoicing company. In my understanding, given the amounts involved, it would have been prudent to put up some effort in presenting a credible invoice to close gap on any potential fraud.

• The period in which the work was alleged to have been undertaken was during the Lockdown period when the nation was not in movement. Neither District Command Council nor the District Technical Command instructed/ commissioned any such work to be done. I opined that any such work would have constituted violation of the Lockdown regulations.

• The invoices did not appear to have gone past the Treasury Department as is normally the case. For this reason, it would have been administratively imprudent for me to just approve.

• I am the Chairperson of the Technical Command Council and the secretariat of the District Command Council. Owing to this, all activities relating to COVID 19 in the District ran through my desktop and I was consequently perplexed to see invoices of this amount which were unbeknown to either the Technical Command Council nor the District Command Council

• Upon perusal of the attendance registers that purported to support the work done, I observed stark similarities on the handwritings and even signatures, which casted doubt to me on the authenticity of the signatures and ultimately the whole invoicing.

On the strength of the aforesaid observations I asked the Director to submit a report that highlighted a methodology on performing the activities, such as door to door awareness campaigns. I advised her to align the report to COVID-19 regulations. (See here with attached a copy of the said correspondence)

As I was still waiting for a response from the Director, five days down the line (on the 17 June 2020), I was suspended in council that I attended.

The report tabled to Council was presented by the Deputy Executive Mayor, although the Executive Mayor was present, the Executive Mayor was in self-isolation but working virtually, she was denied access in the meeting.

The meeting was held in a municipality hall, against the COVID-19 regulations that prohibit social and physical contact.

The report was presented in my presence and a decision was taken to suspend me. In the afternoon of the 18th June 2020, I received two suspension letters signed by the Acting Executive Mayor. Both letters are attached for your perusal.

One letter was putting me on “immediate precautionary suspension and invitation to make written submissions on why the immediate precautionary suspension should be uplifted”.

The other suspension letter was a notice of intention to suspend yourself as the Municipal Manager of O.R. Tambo District Municipality and the invitation extended to you to make representations showing cause why the council should not suspend you.

On the same day of the 18th, I took the matter to my attorneys, who immediately challenged the matter in labour court. The respondents asked for extension as they were not ready. In their response affidavit, the Deputy Executive Mayor, Acting Municipal Manager and Speaker said, the MM was not in suspension. After reading their response affidavit, I was advised by my attorney to go back to work. On the 8th July 2020 I wrote a letter to the Executive Mayor, informing her that I was coming back to work on the 9th July 2020.

On the same day of the 9th at 17h13, I received a third suspension letter signed by the Deputy Executive Mayor,still, dated 30th June 2020. The heading of the letter was” a notice of your suspension pursuant to council meeting of 30 June 2020. The letter is attached for your easy reference.

This letter showed me the unashamed version of lying under oath by senior leaders of the municipality. I immediately informed my attorneys, who activated the matter in labour court. So in all, the matter is still in court.

The report that was tabled to council by the Deputy Executive Mayor,that led to my suspension has all the explanation. This report has captured responses to all the allegations and I invite the Portfolio Committee to visit the projects. The same report was forwarded by the Executive Mayor to the CoGTA MEC on the 18th June 2020.

The report is attached for your reference.

Other attachments include:

* RBIG Agreement between the DWS and Amatola Water
* RBIG Agreement between ORTDM and Amatola Water Board
* Gcinasonke Letter of Appointment and Engineers Report
* Khwalo Letter of Appointment and Engineers Report