

29/05/2018

THE MERCURY



DA officials Bheka Ntuli, a PR councillor at uMlazi, DA Shadow Deputy Minister of Human Settlements, Mbulelo Bara, and DA Shadow Minister of Human Settlements, Solly Malatsi, were escorted by police when they visited the Glebelands hostel in uMlazi yesterday.

PICTURE: DOCTOR NGCOBO/AFRICAN NEWS AGENCY (ANA)

DA considers legal action regarding Glebelands

Zimasa Matiwane

THE DA is contemplating legal action against eThekweni municipality for “failing to implement” the public protector’s recommendations at Glebelands hostel.

The DA parliamentary spokesperson on Human Settlements, Solly Malatsi, and spokesperson on police, Zakhele Mbhele, held a meeting with residents yesterday.

Malatsi said the people of Glebelands had been failed by government and the party would put pressure on eThekweni municipality.

“We will be exploring the prospect of laying charges against the eThekweni municipality – the public protector recommendations are binding, any failure to implement them

is the violation of the constitution, which makes people criminally liable,” Malatsi said.

The report, released by advocate Busisiwe Mkhwebane last June, slammed the municipality, saying there was evidence of “tardiness in implementing its own hostel policy” adopted in 1998.

The municipality’s hostel policy states that hostels should offer rental accommodation with a “clean, healthy and secure environment”.

Some of the remedial actions recommended were that the city should compile a database of all people evicted or displaced from the hostels and, in the event these residents could not be returned to their rooms, alternative accommodation should be provided.

It also recommended that

the city implement access control and that municipal services, including refuse removal, improve lighting and maintenance of the grounds, should be extended to the hostel.

Residents said the council had failed to deal with overcrowding and that their living conditions were deteriorating.

Overcrowding

“Some people who were evicted came back and the overcrowding is worse. The roof that was damaged by storms last year has not been restored, refuse has not been collected for the past three months, we are worried about the health of our children who are exposed to these toxins,” resident Simphiwe Duma said.

The public protector also

found against the KZN Department of Social Development, saying it failed to fulfil its responsibility to the victims of the hostel violence. Social Development MEC Weziwe Thusi asked that the department be afforded three months to implement its interventions, including offering a variety of services to victims and survivors of the violence.

Resident Sibusiso Hlushwa said the community felt abandoned by the department.

“These men who have been killed were breadwinners, their widows and children do not get any assistance from social development, not even trauma counselling, the children are growing up with so much pain, it’s heartbreaking,” Hlushwa said.

Department spokesperson

Ncumisa Ndelu denied the allegations.

“We dealt with cases individually as per public protector recommendations, out of about 38, there were only three cases that were not dealt with due to matters of jurisdiction.

“One was referred to the relevant province, international relations, another we could not locate the next of kin of the deceased,” Ndelu explained.

The eThekweni mayoral spokesperson, Mthunzi Gumede, said a team had been put in place to deal with improving living conditions and safety.

“The team is on the ground, the work is ongoing, we will not only be implementing public protector recommendations, but many other programmes to ensure better living conditions,” Gumede said.