

Parliament warns DA over Knysna

Carlo Petersen

3-4 minutes

By Carlo Petersen  Jun 20, 2016

Carlo Petersen

PARLIAMENT has warned the DA it will not hesitate to use constitutional provisions to investigate allegations of maladministration and financial irregularities levelled against the Knysna Municipality.

This comes after concerned Knysna residents Mike Hampton and Susan Campbell handed a petition to Parliament's committee on petitions and executive undertakings, levelling a raft of allegations against the DA-run municipality's administration.

Hampton and Campbell alleged that the municipality's tourism department had been involved in irregular funding using taxpayers' money.

They also alleged the municipality was involved in tender irregularities related to Knysna's Integrated Strategic Development Framework (ISDF) project.

Hampton's petition further alleges that the municipal manager had been illegally appointed, and that other irregularities had resulted from this.

Campbell also alleged that an official had "boasted" about how the municipality had blocked Hampton's e-mails.

Parliament spokesperson Temba Gubula said the committee had listened to the pair's petition and resolved to investigate the matter.

"In addition to his allegations, Mr Hampton alleges that his efforts seeking intervention from the Western Cape provincial government were in vain.

"He also claims that the local media has been barred from carrying his articles, but the same media would write stories about him and not give him an opportunity to respond.

"He attributes this to the community media not wanting to lose revenue as they depend on municipal advertising," Gubula said.

Economic Opportunities |MEC Alan Winde and DA provincial chairperson Anton Bredell were also implicated in the |allegations.

When Hampton lodged the complaints in Parliament in |February, Winde's representatives conceded the investigation|into the ISDF tender was under way.

Bredell's representatives refused to comment on the allegedly unlawful appointment of the manager.

"Both provincial representatives were mum on allegations of unlawful appointment of the municipal manager and other matters contained in the petition," Gubula said.

Committee chairperson Kgoshi Thobejane slammed the municipality for failing to appear at the hearing after the executive mayor and the deputy executive mayor were invited to attend.

Knysna executive mayor Georlene Wolmarans said: "Knysna Municipality saw little point in wasting taxpayer and ratepayers' money by attending what appeared to be only a briefing, not a formal hearing.

"Despite the fact that Mr Hampton's allegations against |the municipality are largely unfounded, he nevertheless continues to relentlessly spread his innuendos and rumours."

Gubula said the committee would complete its report on the matter this week.

carlo.petersen@inl.co.za