

NALA SUSPENDS MANAGER

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THE Nala local municipality, part of the Lejweleputswa region in Free State, has suspended its manager after allegations of corruption and financial mismanagement.



HARDLINE: Nala mayor Theko Mogoje

David Shongwe was relieved of his duties on Monday evening after allegations of corruption were levelled at him by the council.

MEC for cooperative governance and traditional affairs Mamiki Qabathe was present when the resolution was taken by the council.

Shongwe was suspended after a damning report compiled by audit firm KPMG. The report accused the council of financial mismanagement and corruption by senior officials, including Shongwe.

Technical services manager Sidwell Nxumalo, who was allegedly also fingered in the report, resigned last month.

There was drama when the media, municipal workers and members of the public were kicked out of the council meeting after it was decided that it would no longer be open to the public.

Municipal workers who had downed tools after accusing Shongwe of misusing funds, chanted slogans.

The workers went on an unprotected strike last Friday after discovering that their pension fund and medical aid deductions had not been paid. They claimed that money meant for their contributions had been deducted from their salaries.

Mayor Theko Mogoje said the decision to suspend Shongwe would afford him an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

"We have written to our provincial government to guide us on how to tackle the report because it involves senior officials," he said.

Qabathe said the report had also been given to speaker Nolizoli Mashiyi, who is allegedly implicated.

"The report is not going to be made public until the disciplinary process had been finalised," Qabathe said.

Meanwhile, both Cope and the DA called for the arrests of all those implicated.

The DA's Toenie Niewehoudt said his party had accepted Shongwe's suspension.

"We would have been happy if all those implicated were suspended. Corruption is rife and needs to be tackled. We are not going to let Nxumalo go away without responding to the allegations," Niewehoudt said.

Cope's Papi Radebe said: "The report was completed in 2010 and council has long known about its contents. All those implicated should have long been dealt with a long time ago."

[Source: <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2012/01/18/nala-suspends-manager>]