

Ratepayers to pay for torched home

Mystery surrounds why councillor's insurance forms not submitted

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Buffalo City Metro ratepayers will pay almost R1m to compensate troubled ward 13 councillor Nokulunga Matiwane, whose home was torched in 2017 after angry residents accused her and her husband Mabuto of killing two women in the same year.

The metro's insurer rejected Matiwane's claim, saying she had failed to submit the necessary documents.

Her Reeston house was burnt down by angry residents after two women were shot dead allegedly for failing to pay Matiwane kickbacks for a job.

Matiwane's disabled daughter died in the fire.

In a report tabled before council last week, council speaker Alfred Mtsi recommended that BCM pay Matiwane R500,000 for the damaged house, R300,000 for its contents and R120,000 for one of the two vehicles torched during the

protest. He said it was a "mystery" how her form was not submitted to the insurers.

After requesting to go into caucus, the DA came back divided. Some of its councillors voted against and some for the approval, joining many ANC councillors.

Mtsi said: "For a councillor to be insured under the councillors' Sasria policy, the councillor must complete the BCM Sasria application form and submit it to the speaker's office.

"The insurance cover is only in force once the Sasria application form has been received by BCM's insurers."

All elected councillors were required to sign Sasria application forms, which were then submitted to the directorate of finance, insurance section.

The insurance section then submits these forms to BCM's insurer for councillors to be added to the insurance policy.

"BCM's insurer confirmed that councillor Matiwane was not covered as no application form was submitted.

"On investigation, it was discovered that councillor Matiwane signed the Sasria form however, it was not clear how

her form was not submitted to the insurer with other forms.

"Consequently, councillor Matiwane needs to be compensated for her loss."

DA caucus leader councillor Terence Fritz questioned why it was only Matiwane's form that was not submitted on time.

"Although this is a very sensitive matter, on behalf of the

[We should note] why the form of councillor Matiwane is missing and who is responsible

DA, I want to ask how legal is it for us to take such a decision.

"We need senior counsel's opinion here because we don't want to be involved in fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

"But now we want to find out who did not do her work?"

"What are the consequences for that person because this is going to cost council in any way you look at it."

ANC councillor Zandile

Mhlola said: "As the council, we agree with this report."

Deputy mayor Zoliswa Matana said: "Honesty, this is very sensitive. We are very sympathetic with councillor Matiwane and it took a long time in that as we speak she has no place to stay.

"I'm in agreement that the issue of Sasria needs to be checked.

"I'll request your office, speaker, to check and assure us whether we are captured.

"We should approve this report from the speaker's office noting the investigation on why the form of councillor Matiwane is missing and who is responsible.

"We can't punish councillor Matiwane more than she has been punished from 2017 until today, it's beyond her control.

"She starts crying once you start to discuss her condition. Investigate speaker."

Mtsi was not available to answer questions as to why ratepayers had to pay for the damage, as the protest was not service delivery-related.

Mayor Xola Pakati declined to comment, directing questions to Mtsi.

