

■ IN BREACH

WastePreneurs faces eviction

Breach of lease agreement could see loss of jobs and recyclers displaced

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A SPAT has developed between the City of Joburg and WastePreneurs, an NPO currently serving the Parkhurst, Parktown, Greenside and Randburg areas at the Pirates Club in Greenside, recycling rubbish at no extra cost to residents.

WastePreneurs claims it is offering a valuable service to the community, while the Johannesburg Property Company (JPC) says the NPO has no right to sublet the land which belongs to the council.

After removing the waste, the pickers take it to the Newtown central hub, where it is turned into usable materials. The club reaps no financial benefit from the waste pickers.

Sarah Setlaelo from WastePreneurs said City of Joburg Mayor Herman Mashaba was trying to introduce compulsory recycling, yet his council had evicted a successful waste collection NPO.

The livelihood of some 100 waste collectors is now at stake with the eviction order being served.

This programme is effectively separating plastics, glass or non-household rubbish.

"Mashaba himself donned an overall and joined WastePreneurs collectors, among others, during a recycling awareness campaign on May



WASTE pickers are to be evicted from Pirates Club in Parkhurst after the Johannesburg Property Company took action against them for using property without permission.

24. Meanwhile, his council is at loggerheads with an organisation that is pioneering the very programme that he intends to implement," she said.

Furthermore, the managers of WastePreneurs are willing to consult and share information that could see

their successful model replicated in other municipalities. However, the council has embroiled the NPO in red tape. The three-year-old NPO was served with a letter of eviction on May 3. Management was given notification that it could no longer operate on

the property leased to Pirates. The NPO currently utilises available space sponsored by the club.

Setlaelo said Pirates did not receive any financial gain from WastePreneurs' utilisation of leased land and had approved it only because it is

an NPO initiative that benefited the community and was on a small piece of land that was currently unutilised, she said. General manager Godfrey Mokwaphakedi said this had created jobs and a lifeline for the waste collectors. Joburg had only six years' landfill space left, she added, after which there would be an environmental crisis.

WastePreneurs collectors can earn up to R300 a day, which is above South Africa's minimum wage. They are paid a rate per kilogram for the various categories of recyclable materials they collect. To further empower the waste collectors, WastePreneurs has been sponsored a collective 30% stake in Newtown Recycling, ensuring true grassroots empowerment and an opportunity to grow into a sustainable business.

However, JPC chief executive officer Helen Botes said the lease agreement entered into between the Pirates Club and the city did not make provision for sub-letting the property, nor had consent been granted for this.

"The city met with the lessee, Pirates Club, and the sub-lessee, Adreach, in 2018 and advised them of the process to follow regarding the lease of property.

"The city advised the club that the continued use of city-owned property without council approval to sub-let the property would lead to the breach of contract and cancellation thereof.

"The city has initiated a programme to find a workable and sustainable solution for the waste recycling problem which will assist the city in disposing of its waste and take into account the role of the waste recyclers' contribution thereto," added Botes.

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