

EPWP: Over 400 to get jobs

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R9,1 mln allocated for this year's programme

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MORE than 400 unemployed people from across Msunduzi could soon benefit from this year's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) budget allocation, which is in excess of R9,1 million.

The allocation from the Department of Public Works is dependent on its expenditure for the previous financial year.

For 2019/20 it has been given R4,2 million, with the rest of the funds to be sourced elsewhere.

By having a higher expenditure this year, the council hopes to attract an increase in next year's grant from the department as it hopes it will recognise that there is a demand for the programme in the city.

At one stage the municipality was receiving a grant of R8 million, but it decreased following problems with recruitment of the 2016 intake.

This came after former EPWP beneficiaries demanded the municipality give them permanent

jobs as some had been employed under the programme for more than three years — a situation that was found to be irregular.

This year, the City is planning to spend more than R8 million on salaries and the rest on buying uniforms and tools for participants to do their jobs.

According to a report tabled before the executive committee, the new intake for the EPWP will be deployed to several units, including parks, where they will be responsible for the beautification of traffic islands. At least 25 people will work under the infrastructure unit to build sidewalks across Pietermaritzburg.

While the majority of the EPWP beneficiaries will earn R120 a day, working three days a week, those doing construction work will get R150 a day.

Msunduzi intends to get all of them overalls, which will cost around R800 each, R185 for boots and gloves costing R8 a pair.

The team of more than 240 has been allocated just over R400 000 for working tools, including brooms costing R220 each, spades for R150 and grass rakes worth R200 each.

The employment of these temporary workers must be done in accordance with the Department of Labour's employment guidelines, which insists that they must work close to where they live and that only one person can be employed per household.

The report is expected to come before council later this month.

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