



# DA wants vagrants off landfill site

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**A** PETITION calling on Tshwane Metro Council to find alternative accommodation for homeless people living on a landfill site in Wingate Park has been submitted by the DA.

The party yesterday picketed outside the site in Delmas Road.

The conditions the people live under were described as “inhumane” by the DA, which submitted the petition to council official Frans Dekker, who promised to forward it to relevant people.

According to DA councillor Rita Aucamp, the situation poses a threat to residents who may want to use the landfill site but whose safety cannot be guaranteed “with desperate people living here”.

“This poses a serious health threat to the homeless people.

“This tragic situation is a result of the Tshwane metro’s inability to put a viable policy in place to cater for homeless people in the city.

“With a complete disregard for the dignity of the poorest of the poor, these people are literally forgotten on a rubbish dump,” she said.

Aucamp said the metro council should take responsibility for the relocation of the homeless people.

In a letter to the member of the mayoral committee responsible for housing, Joshua Ngonyama, Aucamp stated that as the lifespan of the landfill site had expired, the surrounding areas were under threat in the rainy season as it could cause a landslide.

“Residents and users of the landfill site are exposed to criminal activities and terrorised by illegal users.

“The overall situation and conditions are unacceptable to users of

the landfill site and residents of the surrounding areas,” said Aucamp.

DA caucus leader Jan Boshoff said there was an urgent need for the council to find alternative accommodation for the people living on the site.

He said the municipality should also look at the possibility of assisting these people, most of whom recycle and sell goods they salvage from the site.

“Proper control should be implemented by the municipality to assist these people.”

Boshoff said the municipality should not look at the year 2055, but at the current situation.

One of the people on the site, who did not wish to be named, said there were about 300 people – men and women – who visited the area daily.

He said he had been salvaging goods from the site since 1997.

“We pick up stuff such as iron and aluminium, which we sell at scrap metal dealers.

“We first weigh the stuff before selling it,” he said.

He said some of the people slept on the site while others went home after salvaging whatever they could.

Asked if there were ablution facilities, he said there were none and they relieved themselves in the bushes.

“Council has not provided any ablution facilities on the site and we all go to the bush to relieve ourselves.”

● The metro council recently adopted a policy to tackle problems related to homeless people in the city and surrounding areas.

Some safe houses will be established in the municipality’s seven regions to cater for the homeless people.

The policy was developed recently by the Human Sciences Research Council in conjunction with the municipality.