

## Council walk out against the interests of residents

25 March 2011

Statement by the Chief Whip of the Johannesburg City Council, Clr Prema Naidoo on Council walking out against the interests of residents.

It is a sad day for democracy in Johannesburg to see elected councillors from an opposition party staging a walkout - but why did they do this?

Reports that the DA apparently did not wish to engage on were tabled. These reports dealt with a number of compliance issues. Tabling of reports, by nature, is meant to make information available to Councillors and political parties. They then take the documents away to consult prior to approving the contents. Only on their return at the next meeting that binding approval would be expected from participating parties.

The documents included: the draft annual reports for 2009/10; tariff proposals; company reports, etc.

The excuse for this walk out is wafer thin and without any substance. It should be quite clear to the people of Johannesburg that this was an act of political opportunism with an eye on the coming elections rather than the future of our City.

This short-term opportunism should be condemned by everybody who has the best interests of the City at heart. The council has a full agenda covering the entire spectrum of city activities and this requires input of all elected members.

The salaries of councillors are paid from the pockets of taxpayers who have now been left in the lurch by vanishing representatives. We call on the national leadership of the DA to demonstrate commitment to democracy by taking disciplinary action against its wayward representatives in Johannesburg.

The Council wants to assure the residents of Johannesburg that normal functions continued and relevant decisions were taken to ensure the continuation of good and responsible governance. We further want to thank the majority of councillors who remain dedicated and continue to do their work with diligence.