



### Ombudsman dives into allegations of maladministration

The critical role public swimming pool facilities and recreation centres play in fostering social cohesion and creating a more equitable future for people in previously marginalised communities is often overshadowed by spatial economic challenges, which limit access to such amenities.

Public swimming facilities provide multi-generational benefits, and the City of Johannesburg has 54 pools spread across all seven of its regions, which residents pay tax for them to exist.

It's on that premise that in January 2024 when the Ombudsman received an invitation from the Office of the Speaker to attend an oversight visit in Eldorado Park, Ext 9 and inspect the state of the newly renovated public swimming pool, our office moved swiftly to conduct an inspection in loco.



Image: City of Johannesburg, Eldorado Park Swimming Pool

Allegations of substandard workmanship were raised by community members after a Johannesburg Social Housing Company (JOSHCO) appointed contractor failed to successfully complete the highly awaited refurbishments, resulting in the community demanding answers from the city.

Our investigation revealed that JOSHCO was approached by the City's Community Development Department to act as an implementing agent to help oversee the project of refurbishing the pool in the area, thus it welcomed our involvement as an alternative channel to help resolve the long-standing dispute with disgruntled community members.

After submitting its evidence, the Community Development Department highlighted various administrative challenges which were hampering the progress of this project and the implementation of other projects, which ranged from outstanding compliance documents for the 2023/24 financial year to issues of non-payment, which ultimately caused the delay of the finalisation of the project by the contractor.

While our investigation is still in progress, we wish to express our concern to the halting of these services due to unnecessary payment delays. Residents have the right to enjoy equitable access to municipal resources given that historically, access was denied to many people living within previously marginalised communities such as Eldorado Park etc.

### Residents allege solicitation of bribes to access municipal services

The Office of the Ombudsman was recently made aware of alleged solicitation of bribes by City of Johannesburg officials. These allegations were brought to our attention during one of our regional Outreach activations after an elderly resident reported that she had been requested to pay a fee of R700 to receive free municipal services.

As autonomous institutions, municipalities are mandated to adhere to principles of accountability, democracy and good governance, manifested through providing basic services, which are tied to the realisation of fundamental human rights. Article 21(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that, "Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country".

Unfortunately, some communities predominantly have an older population who often fall prey to these alleged practices. This vulnerable group of citizens are often taken advantage of because of their supposed ignorance of municipal standard operating procedures.



Image source: iStock Photo

The malignant effect such criminal behaviour has on the quantity and quality of public services has profound implications on citizens' well-being and quality of life.

We wish to remind residents that officials are not permitted to ask nor accept any money for gratuity, bribe or any other payment other than payments made directly to the city in return for services rendered.

To report criminal activities of this nature, contact the City of Johannesburg's Group Forensic and Investigation Service (GFIS) Department, immediately.

#### **GFIS Anti-Fraud and Corruption Reporting Channels:**

Walk-ins: SAPPI Building, 48 Ameshoff Street, Braamfontein  
Toll Free Hotline: 0800 002 587  
Email: [whistle@joburg.org.za](mailto:whistle@joburg.org.za)





Tariffs increase for the 2024/25 FY, effective 1 July 2024

APPROVED TARIFFS  
FOR 2024/2025



The City of Johannesburg reviews tariffs annually to implement an increase by a determined percentage in line with budget guidelines. These equitable and affordable increments contribute to the running of the City and ensure continuous service provision to all the customers of the City. Understanding your tariffs helps you know what you pay for and how it is calculated.

The City is mandated by law to determine tariffs as a guide to levy municipal services such as property rates, waste removal, electricity, water, and sewer. Tariffs are therefore in place to ensure a coordinated and well structured manner through which municipal services are levied.

It is important to understand the relevance of levying municipal services and overall role of tariffs in the process. Often, property owners ask why they should pay for municipal services. Paying for municipal services ensures consistent delivery of municipal services to the residents of Johannesburg.

The tax you pay for property rates is legislated property tax levied based on the value of the property. Water and electricity are charged based on sliding scale; meaning the more the customer consumes is the more they will pay. It should be noted that there are additional charges which are structured to secure a stable and well looked after infrastructure of the City, enabling routine maintenance for smooth flow of service supply. Based on the size of the customer's stand, sewer charges are also levied, while each household receives a bin at a fixed rate for waste removal.

The City's financial year 2024/2025 will see yet another tariff increase. These increases are carefully considered for a minimal impact, considering financial strain property owners have been enduring resulting from the stagnant economic growth.

**Did you know?** Tariffs are a structure that is used to determine what different property categories customers will be charged. This is to help customers pay in line with their usage and lifestyle, as well as property categorisation.

Written: Group Finance

To help you understand how tariffs are structured, below are tables giving an illustration of different categories and important aspects of tariffs depicting how charges are levied.

**APPROVED TARIFFS FOR 2024/2025**

Property Rates: 3,8% | Electricity: 12,7% | Water: 5,9% | Sewer: 7,7% | Waste: 7,7%

**KNOW MORE ABOUT 2024/25 TARIFFS AND UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU PAY FOR**

Council tariffs are reviewed annually and then increased by a determined % in line with budget guidelines. These equitable and affordable increments contribute to the running of the City and ensure continuous service provision to all the customers of the City of Johannesburg. Understanding your tariffs helps you know what you pay for and how it is calculated. Your tariffs are a structure that is used to determine what different property categories customers will be charged, this is to help customers pay in line with their usage and lifestyle, as well as property categorisation.

**Electricity Tariffs**

**Water Tariffs**

**Waste Tariffs**

**Business Tariffs**

**Property Rates 2024/2025**

**Property Rates Retainer 2024/2025**

Image source: iStock Photo

DEVELOPING STORY



Our office recently conducted an Outreach activation in Poortjie, a community in Region G of the City of Johannesburg and our team learned that residents are still subjected to inadequate sanitation services such as pit latrines (long drops) which exposes them to significant public health risks. This not only infringes on the residents' human rights to "an environment which is not harmful to their health or well-being" but also to "have their inherent dignity respected and protected".

Upon learning of this, we reached out to the Regional Director, Mr. Mickey Padiachee and he committed to working together with the respective urban inspectors to investigate and compile a report with their findings. We are fortunate that we are able to collaborate on such efforts, to see how we can all better serve our communities. We will keep you informed on the latest developments.

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