

CAPETIMES NEWS

Disgraced Mossel Bay CFO Botha fired



Marius Botha Photo: Mossel Bay Advertiser

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Disgraced Marius Botha has been axed as Mossel Bay chief financial officer (CFO) following his conviction and imprisonment on fraud and money laundering charges.

The charges against Botha related to his spell as CFO of Karoo Hoogland Municipality in Williston in the Northern Cape, before he took employment at Mossel Bay Municipality.

The move by the Mossel Bay council to terminate Botha's contract on September 7 came weeks after he and his two co-accused were sentenced by the Williston Magistrate's Court on August 30.

Cloete was given an additional eight years' imprisonment on a separate fraud charge. All these were said to run concurrently and Botha will effectively serve five years' imprisonment while Cloete will serve eight.

Former Karoo Hoogland Municipality municipal manager Louis Nothnagel was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment with an alternative R5 000 fine for contravention of the Municipal Finance Management Act.

Cloete's bogus company received undue payments for delivery and installation of 600 solar geysers to the Williston community. A Hawks investigation showed the prescribed procurement processes were not followed in appointing the service provider.

Mossel Bay Municipality spokesperson Colin Puren said the position of CFO would be advertised and filled in accordance with the relevant legislative prescripts.

"Acting on the advice received from senior counsel and the municipality's attorneys in this regard, the council resolved at a special council meeting on September 7 to terminate Mr Botha's employment in accordance with the contract he entered into at the time of taking up his employment with the municipality," he said.

Opposition parties in Mossel Bay Municipality say the decision to fire Botha was long overdue.

ANC chief whip in Mossel Bay, Jovan Bruinders, said: "The ANC views this as a major victory because we also believe the appointment of the previous CFO was not in the best interests of Mossel Bay while the then council knew that Mr Botha was under investigation.

"It was a reckless decision of the then council. We are still awaiting a full cost analysis of how much it cost the community. We will then decide which legal route we will follow."