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Media Statement

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JPC WELCOMES ARREST OF PEET VILJOEN IN MULTI-MILLION RAND FRAUD CASE LINKED TO ILLEGAL SALE OF 33 CITY PROPERTIES

The City of Joburg Property Company (JPC) welcomes the arrest of Mr Petrus Jacobus Viljoen in connection with allegations relating to the fraudulent transfer and sale of City of Joburg-owned properties.

The arrest, effected by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (HAWKS), marks a significant development in a matter that has remained under investigation for more than a decade and reflects the continued commitment of law enforcement agencies to ensuring accountability in cases involving public assets.

The matter dates to approximately May 2010, when JPC and the City of Joburg Metropolitan Municipality (CoJ) uncovered alleged fraud and theft involving municipal immovable properties. Investigations revealed that 33 City-owned properties of varying size, zoning classification, municipal value and market value had allegedly been unlawfully transferred and sold without due process.

According to information presented during investigations, some of these properties were transferred to unsuspecting bona fide purchasers, while the City did not receive payment for the transactions, resulting in substantial financial prejudice to the municipality.

JPC Chief Executive Officer, Musah Makhunga, says this development demonstrates that no matter how much time passes, accountability and the protection of public assets remain non-negotiable.

“The City of Joburg Property Company has consistently supported law enforcement authorities in pursuing justice and ensuring that individuals implicated in unlawful conduct are subjected to due legal process,” he said.

He added: “Our responsibility is to safeguard municipal assets and protect the interests of residents who rely on these assets to support service delivery and economic development.”

The matter was reported through criminal channels in both Tshwane and Johannesburg, with JPC and the City of Joburg among the complainants. The HAWKS’ Serious Commercial Crime Investigation Unit subsequently led an extensive investigation into the alleged criminal conduct.

Investigations identified several individuals who allegedly played different roles in the fraudulent transfers. Criminal proceedings were instituted and charges brought against multiple accused

people. One of the accused was a former JPC employee who allegedly formed part of the broader scheme. JPC notes that legal processes remain underway and respect the constitutional rights of all accused people until the courts determine the matter.

In parallel with the criminal process, JPC, supported by legal counsel, successfully pursued civil remedies through the High Court of South Africa, Gauteng Division, Pretoria, to secure court orders that enabled the reversal of fraudulent transfers. Through these legal interventions and cooperation with the Deeds Registries, all affected immovable properties were restored and re-registered in the name of the City of Joburg.

The recovery of these assets represents an important step in preserving public property and maintaining confidence in municipal governance systems.

JPC remains committed to strengthening governance controls, protecting public assets and continuing cooperation with law enforcement agencies to ensure that all outstanding matters related to the case are fully resolved through the judicial process.

As the criminal proceedings continue, JPC will refrain from commenting further on issues that remain before the courts.

Ends

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For all media queries, send an email to mediaqueries@joburg.org.za