Dear readers,

The past month has been an eventful one – not only did the Municipality receive several accolades, but we also started some exciting new projects.

I am delighted that we will once again be proudly flying our Blue Flags on Buffels Bay and Brenton-on-Sea beaches this summer season. Congratulations to Thesen Islands Harbour Town and Thesen Islands Homeowners Association for receiving their Blue Flag marina status, and to Ocean Odyssey Whale Watching and Eco trips for maintaining their Blue Flag status for the vessels, Odysseus, Oyster Catcher and Sousa.

Blue flag beaches are a definite tourist attraction, and this achievement is a boost for our industry. It also acknowledges an effective coastal ecosystems management plan. Well done to all involved for making sure we maintained our Blue Flag status.

Congratulations to our IT Manager, Graeme Huddy, who received the Tichaona Zorro Excellence Award, the highest honours bestowed on individuals by the Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA) South Africa.

I also want to commend the Economic Development Department whose Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) received an accolade from the Western Cape Department of Public Works for exceeding its EPWP job creation target for 2017/2018! At the same time, I am incredibly proud of the team responsible for spending 100% of our Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) - both achievements show that these teams understand and care for the residents of Greater Knysna.

Our Library Services had a busy year presenting a variety of programmes. These included reading sessions, spelling bees, debates and book reviews and I want to commend the library staff for going the extra mile to improve literacy within Greater Knysna.

Our Technical Services Department is currently upgrading the CBD sewer system – thank you for your patience and understanding with the closure of a portion of Union Road.

As the summer season approaches and temperatures rise, please be mindful that water remains a scarce resource. Please continue to use water wisely and remember, water restrictions are still in place.

Thank you for not celebrating the British tradition of Guy Fawkes the traditional way – keep in mind that setting off fireworks, burning of tyres and building bonfires are prohibited.

Until next month...

Mark Willemse, Executive Mayor
Knysna is proudly flying the Blue Flag following the launch of the 2018/2019 season at Santos Beach in Mossel Bay on Friday, October 12th.

Knysna’s Executive Mayor Mark Willemse said they are delighted with the results. "Buffels Bay and Brenton-on-Sea beaches once again received Blue Flag status.

We also extend our congratulations to Thesen Islands Harbour Town and Thesen Islands Homeowners Associations for their Blue Flag marinas. I also want to commend Ocean Odyssey Whale Watching and Eco trips for maintaining their Blue Flags for their boats Odysseus, Oyster Catcher and Sousa."

The programme offers many benefits including improved tourism facilities, enhanced management of coastal ecosystems, increased awareness of the coast and capacity building of coastal municipalities.

In South Africa, the Wildlife Environmental Society of South Africa (WESSA) implement the programme.

The Knysna Municipality received an accolade for excellence from the Western Cape Department of Public Works for exceeding its EPWP (Expanded Public Works Programme) targets.

Knysna Executive Mayor, Mark Willemse, said during the 2017/18 financial year, Knysna Municipality's target was set at 324, but succeeded to create a total number of almost 500 work opportunities. “The EPWP participants were placed in various projects in the Technical Services and Community Services Directorates. Well done to the Departments, and a special thank you to the Provincial Department for their continuous support of this programme.”

He said the Municipality’s commitment to uplift has ensured that EPWP projects not only give opportunities to those residents who are in need of financial relief but also facilitate the development of practical work experience.

They achieved that by:

- giving unemployed people access to temporary work;
- assisting unemployed people through skills programmes and work experience;
- ensuring that unemployed people receive an allowance for any work they have completed as part of the EPWP;
- enhancing EPWP participants’ chances of finding jobs or starting their businesses.

"By working together with government and the residents of Knysna, we can continue to provide opportunities for those most in need, and in so doing build an inclusive, innovative and inspired Knysna,” concluded Willemse.

The Knysna Municipality received acknowledgement and appreciation from the Department of Corporative Governance for spending 100% of its Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) for the 2017/18 financial year. Knysna Acting Municipal Manager Johnny Douglas said that the Department also indicated that the municipality’s performance in 2017/18 has contributed to the excellent performance of the MIG programme in general.

“Council and Senior Management acknowledge the effort and commitment of the MIG team. Local government is the closest to the people and works directly with communities. You are best positioned to understand their specific needs and apply the funding to where it is most appropriate. Well done!”
Knysna Municipality IT Manager, Graeme Huddy, recently received the Tichaona Zororo Excellence Award during the ISACA South Africa Chapter 2018 Annual Conference. Held at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg the event’s theme was “The Future is Now!”

It is the second year that the ISACA South Africa Chapter hosted its annual awards. These are the highest honours bestowed by the Chapter on individuals in the appreciation of their active roles in the field of technology, information and cybersecurity, governance, risk and innovation in South Africa.

The purpose of the awards is to:

• Recognise and reward excellence and professionalism in these fields;
• Attract and retain high-calibre individuals in the profession; and
• Motivate members towards innovation and continuous improvement.

The municipality’s libraries participated in the 9th Funda Mzantsi Reading Competition held in George from 1 – 5 October 2018 with the theme “Developing creative minds: using 11 official Languages to cultivate the Reading Culture.”

The team, “Knysna Libraries Book Club”, competed in four categories: Spelling Bee, Book Review, Reading and Debate in isiXhosa, English and Afrikaans. They walked away with first prize in the Afrikaans Spelling Bee category and second prize in the IsiXhosa category.

Members of the Knysna Libraries Book Club include Concordia High, Percy Mdala High and Knysna Secondary Schools. It was the Book Club’s second time participating in the competition.

Congratulations to all involved!

The Knysna Municipality ran a variety of programmes to improve skills and understanding of internal staff and business owners. Acting Municipal Manager Johnny Douglas said investing in their staff component is vital. “Improving the skills of staff and councillors leads to better overall supply chain management within the organisation.”

He said they also ran a programme for management. “They attended supply chain management training to keep abreast with new and amended legislation, setting the tone for accountability. The training included the bid committees’ system and contract management in the public sector.”

“The supply chain training was also extended to contractors, service providers and suppliers. A conference presented by Southern Business School with a focus on public sector procurement and compliance took place on 23 October,” said Douglas.

A supply chain management workshop for councillors is scheduled for early November.
The Knysna Municipality recently started an R1.9 million upgrade of the Knysna CBD sewer reticulation system.

Knysna Executive Mayor, Mark Willemse said the project is rolled out in phases and the first phase takes place in Union Street, central Knysna. “It includes the construction of a new pump station, 26 metres deep caisson, laying off 350 metres sewer pipeline and upgrading of the main sewer station in town. The sewer pipeline will also be moved away from main roads to prevent maintenance or repair work affecting the traffic.”

He said the upgrades would relieve the pressure on the existing ageing system. “Due to the population growth and ageing infrastructure, the Council decided to increase the capacity of the main CBD pump station which feeds the Waste Water Treatment Works. The upgrade will also contribute towards keeping the estuary clean as we will have improved management of what flows into the estuary and seeps into groundwater.”

In our previous issue we stated that newly appointed Director for Community Services, Mr Gary Boshoff holds an MBA from the Regenesys Business School. He is still in the process of completing his MBA. Mr Boshoff joined the municipality on 1 October.

Knysna Municipality carried out upgrades of more than R400 000 to the existing water network at The Heads.

The project was rolled out in phases, the first phase has been completed and included the upgrading of the reticulation system and replacing of the existing AC to PVC pipe. This work will enhance the pumping capacity to the reservoir at The Heads and will also address pressure management issues.

The second phase will include installation of a new rising main (110 mm diameter uPVC Class 16 pressure pipes) from the existing pump station adjacent to George Rex Drive up to Emu Crescent.

Knysna Executive Mayor and Ward 9 Councillor, Mark Willemse said that the project is a direct outcome of the municipality’s Integrated Development Plan (IDP). “The municipality has always encouraged its residents to participate in the IDP process actively and to take ownership of their community development. Because of the active involvement of the residents of Ward 9, this project could be implemented.”

Despite the recent rainfall, Greater Knysna’s water restrictions are still in place. Residents and businesses are always encouraged to conserve water continuously.