Taking a firm stance against corruption and fraud in the municipal environment, Council recently approved a recommendation to enter into a partnership with the Eden District Municipality to establish an anti-fraud and corruption hotline.

Executive Mayor Cllr Georlene Wolmarans says the establishment of the hotline gives the general public the opportunity to report their suspicions of fraud, theft and corruption anonymously. “They will be able to communicate openly and without fear of intimidation or victimisation as all cases will be treated confidentially.”

She said the hotline is externally accredited to the forensic audit and investigation firm, KPMG and will be called the KPMG ethics line. Calls to the hotline are free from any Telkom line. “It will be manned by KPMG personnel 24 hours a day, seven days a week and calls are fielded by experienced call centre agents versed in all 11 official languages. All reported information will immediately be captured onto a call sheet and transmitted directly to a designated person appointed by KPMG.”

Wolmarans said that callers should provide as much information as possible for the effective investigation of allegations. “They will be provided with a reference number and will be able to track the progress. We have various measures in place already, including an email address to report suspicious activities, whistle-blower@knysna.gov.za. Adding this independently run hotline once again reiterates our zero tolerance stance in this regard.” CALL 0800 21 47 64

The Pledge Nature Reserve, coined as the “green heart of Knysna” for its proximity to the CBD, is undoubtedly one of Knysna’s biggest eco treasures.

The Reserve is administered by the Pledge Nature Reserve Trust and covers approximately 10ha and is home to some exquisite bird life and a wide variety of plant species.

Municipal Manager Lauren Waring says the reserve is a real asset to Knysna, conservation, education and tourism. “What was once a brickfield and dumping ground is today a world renowned environmental asset dedicated to protecting our forest, fynbos and fauna. A non-profit organisation, the Reserve operates on a very limited budget derived mainly from grants and donations.”

She said that the municipality annually makes a contribution to the Reserve through its own very limited Grant-in-Aid fund, but that more funds are needed. “Internationally, parks in the midst of city life are treasured by residents - this is our very own Central Park and we should all work together to ensure its existence.”

To learn more about the Reserve visit them at Pledge Square or read more on their official website www.pledgenaturereserve.org
The Fire Department in Sedgefield have a new water tanker truck.

Municipal Infrastructure Grant, the town now boasts a library on a building of heritage value into a public asset. Funded mostly by a R4,4-million national grant, the programme has achieved great success to date. To celebrate the successes, we will feature some of the projects in the various Wards, starting with Ward 1 and 2.

Knysna Executive Mayor, Cllr Georlene Wolmarans, said she was happy by the peaceful elections since the death of Madiba and it was a comforting experience to see how the people of our town embraced the power and purpose of his vision. It is the first historic first democratic elections in 1994.

Municipal Manager Lauren Waring said that voting in Knysna were peaceful. “Voting stations within the Knysna municipal area opened promptly at 07h00 and closed at 21h00, and there were no reports of violence or any other incidents.”

Knysna Executive Mayor, Georlene Wolmarans, said she was happy by how smoothly elections went in Knysna and in the Province. “It is the first elections since the death of Madiba and it was a comforting experience to see how the people of our town embraced the power and purpose of his vision.”

Knysna has 37 672 registered voters and 26 913 votes were cast of which 300 were spoilt ballots.

Knysna’s “brand new” town library was officially opened on the 22nd of April by the Provincial Minister for Cultural Affairs & Sport, Dr Ivan Meyer.

He said in his keynote address that he was pleased to see that it is possible to transform a building of heritage value into a public asset. A colourful neon information sign indicates the different levels. Oranges for level two, where you will find the adult fiction, green for the first level for non-fiction and reference books and on the ground floor the children’s section is sunny yellow. With 15 schools served by the library, the children’s section has also been improved and offers a wealth of multi-media and books for our community to take advantage of,” said Wolmarans.

The library is open from Monday to Friday from 09h00 – 17h30, Wednesday’s from 10h00 – 17h30 and on Saturdays from 09h00 – 13h00.

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In Memoriam: Magda Williams

Councillor Madgalena Williams died suddenly on 27 April 2014. Aged 59, she was a Democratic Alliance (DA) councillor representing ward 5 in the Knysna Municipal Council.

Executive Mayor, Georlene Wolmarans describe Councillor Williams as a true friend and confidant. “She was a genuine, hardworking colleague who worked tirelessly for bettering the lives of the people of ward 5. We have lost a pillar of strength, a good friend and a valued colleague who was loved by all members of the Council across political lines.”

Councillor Williams was elected to Council in May 2011 and served on the Mayoral Committee as the Chairperson of the Community Services Portfolio.

Municipal Manager Lauren Waring said that passion and commitment to improving the lives of ordinary people best describe Magda’s drive. “She was well known and hugely popular in her home area Rheenendal for her community service and fight to improve conditions in poorer communities. Magda brought that enthusiasm to her ward areas of Brenton, Belvidere, Buffalo Bay and Rheenendal and she will be sorely missed.”

Since Councillor Williams was a ward councillor a bi-election will be held in July to fill the vacancy left by her passing.

Green Mamba Back

The boxed green radar speed camera has been reinstated on the western side of Knysna after its use was suspended for a few months.

Municipal Manager Lauren Waring announced that the Western Cape Director of Public Prosecutions (WC DPP) and South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) approved the municipality’s application to use the boxed camera for speed law enforcement on the N2 near the Buffalo Bay turnoff (80km/h), the Brenton-on-Sea turnoff (60km/h), and near Groenvlei (100km/h). The fourth point on the N2 east of Knysna near the George Rex Drive turnoff remained operational during this time.

As to legal questions raised in the past the municipality wish to reiterate the Director of Public Prosecutions is satisfied that the box, which is secured, cannot be tampered with and confirmed that its use is not illegal.

Ms Waring said that speed remains one of the biggest factors for fatalities on South African roads. “The Knysna Municipality will continue to enforce those laws that make our roads safe for all road users”.

Upcoming Events:

• Youth Day will be celebrated on 16 June 2014
• The 4th annual RECM Knysna 200 from 6 – 8 June 2014
• The 31st annual Pick ‘n Pay Knysna Oyster Festival from 4 - 13 July 2014.

Contact us:

ALL SECTIONS OFFICE HOURS:
Telephone: +27 (0)44 302 6300 | Facsimile: +27 (0)44 302 6333

EMERGENCIES ALL HOURS:
Telephone: +27 (0)44 302 8911

CUSTOMER SERVICES:
SMS: 44453 | Email: customercare@knysna.gov.za

Email: knysna@knysna.gov.za