Dear readers,

The last few weeks have been eventful, yet productive. We have offered positions to three new administrative directors, two of whom have accepted these positions. Interviews for the position of Municipal Manager will commence shortly and, once that is filled, we will again have a strong and stable senior management team. We are also on track with the remodelling of our organisational structure which will add to better efficiency within the municipality.

The death of Cllr Victor Molosi has had a profound effect on the political sphere and the shock and horror of this senseless act will stay with us for a long time to come.

The sabotage of the Knysna water purification plant has once again illustrated how far people will go to cause mayhem and disruption to our town. The water issue was dealt with efficiently by our staff even though it took a few days to stabilize the system.

We cannot deny that tourism is one of our biggest economic drivers. We have struck an agreement with Wesgro to manage the marketing of our destination on our behalf. This new phase for our tourism industry is sure to see Knysna secure her place as a favourite tourism destination on the Garden Route.

With Heritage Day coming up in September I urge us all to work on accepting and celebrating our different cultures, beliefs and traditions. There is a space for everyone in South Africa – that is what makes us unique! How many other countries do you know with 11 official languages? As the late President Nelson Mandela said, “our rich and varied cultural heritage has a profound power to help build our nation.” Let us use our differences as the foundation for a tolerant society, rather than a society that reverts to violence to sort out its differences.

Mark Willemse
Executive Mayor
Almost 400 women from all over the greater Knysna municipal area attended an event at the Brenton Community Hall on 9 August. This event celebrated women’s achievements and their important contributions to building an inclusive, innovative and inspired society.

Executive Mayor Mark Willemse said we should celebrate the women in our lives – all women really – every day. “You are the centre of our universe! Special days like these are important to remind us that there is still a lot to be done in terms of gender equality. South Africa is ranked 19 out of 186 countries in terms of gender equality which, in global terms, can be perceived to be good. However, on the same continent, Rwanda is ranked 4th! We can do so much more.”

“Our contribution to progress is forming the Knysna Women’s Forum to promote women’s interests and help strengthen the positive profile of women through a range of activities. Thank you to those who have made yourself available to serve on this forum. We look forward to working with you on a number of issues and will count on your input and help to make this a successful and meaningful forum.”

“It is not fair to put the burden of fighting gender-based violence on women only. As men, we should join the fight against this sort of abuse and support campaigns aimed at addressing this issue. We must teach our boys how to treat women from an early age,” Willemse concluded.

Hosted by the municipality’s Social Development Department, attendees were treated to lunch, entertainment by local artists, motivational speeches from phenomenal women, presentations from stakeholders including the South African Police Services (SAPS), Provincial Local Government and a keynote address by the Executive Mayor.

Women’s Day marks the anniversary of the great women’s march of 9 August 1956. Approximately 20 000 women marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest the carrying of passbooks and legislation aimed at tightening the apartheid government’s control over the movement of black women in urban areas.

During a meeting on 13 August, Council confirmed that they will enter into an agreement with the official tourism, trade and investment promotion agency for the Western Cape, Wesgro, to manage its constitutional mandate in terms of tourism and destination marketing.

According to Executive Mayor Mark Willemse, this is the right option for Knysna, giving the destination access to Wesgro’s multiple and far-reaching marketing channels. “We believe that by combining our marketing efforts and budgets, we can get so much more bang for our buck.”

He said that overseas marketing, essential to retain market share as an international tourism destination, is expensive. “Costs include international travel and accommodation, trade show bookings and stands. For a small destination like us, it quickly adds up. Sharing these costs with Wesgro means that we can achieve so much more.”

Wesgro indicated they will consult and include local expertise. “The local tourism industry players know the destination and have many years’ experience in marketing it. It is essential that such knowledge is not lost in the process.”
Acting Municipal Manager Johnny Douglas will meet with Wesgro to finalise the SLA and discuss the takeover of the local tourism office. “We will simultaneously undertake a Section 76 & 78 investigation to determine the most cost-effective service delivery option in terms of the tourism function.”

Tim Harris from Wesgro said they are looking forward to working with Knysna. “Wesgro has responded to a request from Knysna Municipality to assist with local tourism promotion and destination marketing of the town. We are encouraged by the opportunity to help grow Knysna’s tourism sector, in partnership with the local tourism industry and the municipality. This work will be delivered on the ground in Greater Knysna, in conjunction with the tourism sector, and will not influence our long-standing mandate to promote tourism across the whole of the Western Cape.”

Key players in the Tourism industry responded well to the decision.

Elmay Bouwer, Chairperson of the Knysna Tourism NPC board said that they and their members are looking forward to working with Wesgro. “All parties are in agreement with the intention that this will be in the best interest of local tourism in the greater Knysna context.”

Colleen Harding, Marketing Co-ordinator of the Knysna Accommodation Association said she believes the overall benefits far outweigh any concerns. “The fact that Wesgro would not proceed without public participation is a huge advantage. They indicated that they will appoint a general manager to be based locally and that indicates that they see us as a main driver within the Garden Route.”

Knysna Hollow’s Clive Battell voiced his support. “Simply put, tourism is the lifeblood of Knysna. If we do not market our town effectively, we will see a reduction in tourist visitors to Knysna, resulting in a negative impact on our community as jobs are lost.”

Mayor Willemse said that they could not agree more: “we realise the importance of this industry to the towns within Greater Knysna. ‘Out of sight, out of mind’ is especially applicable in the tourism industry. We are committed to grow visitor numbers and to stay one of the most popular destinations on the Garden Route.”

Knysna Municipality has expanded its fleet with a R3.6 million fire engine. Executive Mayor Mark Willemse received the keys to this new addition on Wednesday 8 August.

Chairperson: Community Services, Councillor Monwabisi Salaze said, “This is a major investment for Council, but it is worth improving service delivery and saving lives. Our emergency services attend to a wide range of emergencies including fires, road traffic collisions and special cases such as animal rescue, flooding incidents, water rescues and hazardous incidents.”

This state-of-the-art Mercedes Benz 1428 4X4 has a fully enclosed cab and is designed to
carry six firefighters. It is fully equipped and has a tank capacity of 3000l and 300l foam.

“Now we do indeed have some of the best equipment. Fire safety in our communities cannot rest in the hands of our firefighters alone, so we plan to roll out fire education programmes to the communities within the greater Knysna area,” Salaze concluded.

Funded by the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG), with additional funding form the municipality, Sedgefield’s Wastewater Treatment Works has undergone a R19.5 million upgrade.

According to Executive Mayor Mark Willemse, the facility’s nominal capacity of 0.75ML/day has been upgraded to 1.50 ML/day. “These upgrades were completed in two phases, 1A and 1B.1A was completed in April 2017. 1B commenced in March 2017 and was completed in April 2018.”

“The upgrade enables compliance with the special standards for final effluent. The new technology implemented at the WWTW will not only enable the plant to handle projected future volumes but ensures that we comply with the standards set by the Department of Water and Sanitation.”

The upgrade addresses various infrastructure constraints, including treatment capacity needed for growth, sludge handling capacity, automation of major unit processes, safety and reliable phosphate removal. It will enhance the environment and better deal with health and hygiene issues.

According to Willemse, the upgrade of the Sedgefield WWTW was a very specialized process. “This type of work required specific technical and engineering skills. I am delighted to report that the contractors appointed local people, creating employment opportunities to the extent of five labourers per week.”

“We are considering a further phase to upgrade the bulk and reticulation sewer systems in Sedgefield. We are in the process of applying for funding to implement this phase”, Willemse concluded.

### R19.5 MILLION UPGRADES TO SEDGEFIELD’S WASTEWATER TREATMENT WORKS (WWTW)

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### MUNICIPAL MEETINGS 2018

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<td>Mayoral Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>27 Sept</td>
<td>Ordinary Council Meeting</td>
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### SMME TRAINING

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<tr>
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<td>Basic HR Skills (Smutsville)</td>
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<td>18 - 20 Sept</td>
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### COMMEMORATIVE DAYS & EVENTS

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<td>20 - 22 Sept</td>
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<td>24 Sept</td>
<td>Heritage Day</td>
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### REDUCE YOUR WATER USAGE

- closing taps properly
- reducing your shower time to less than 2 minutes
- reducing clothes and towels/linen washing
- reporting water wastage
- using a cup to rinse your mouth and toothbrush
- not flushing unnecessarily
- reboiling the water in your kettle
- learning to & teaching your household to respect water