



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Establishment of Ward Committees in Knysna**

As per Section 73 of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 1998, a municipality must establish ward committees after every local government election for the duration of the new Council's term.

In line with this legislation the Knysna municipality will start with the process of establishing ward committees from 21 September until 25 October in all 11 wards of the Greater Knysna.

Representatives from sectors and/or geographical areas within the Knysna municipal area who wish to represent the needs of their communities are encouraged to partake in this process. Community members should elect representatives from within their ward that they are confident will ensure that their needs are represented in council.

The criteria for membership for ward committee members, as per the Constitution for Ward Committees of the Knysna municipality, are as follows:

- They must represent a sector or geographical area that is involved in some formal activity within the ward;
- They must be elected by community members from within the sector/geographical area in which they will serve. They must further be an upstanding member of that sector/geographical area;
- It is important that the representative is not indebted to the municipality for a period longer than three months, unless he/she can prove that arrangements for the settlement of the account have been made;
- A Ward Committee member may not be an employee of the local or district municipality;
- The committee member must be a person of sound mind who has been declared so by a competent court and
- A police clearance certificate will be required for all nominated Ward Committee members

Knysna Speaker Georlene Wolmarans said, "Local government is mandated by the Constitution of South Africa to provide a democratic and accountable local government. Furthermore, it must also encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government."

Wolmarans explained the significant role ward committees play in communities they serve. “Ward committees are an important channel of communication between the municipality and our people in relation to their needs, preferences, and problems faced. The mandate of ward committees is to ensure grass root participation in the development objectives of the municipality as per the integrated development plan, budget and performance management process.

“We have always encouraged our people to participate in the affairs of local government. I hope that they take this opportunity and participate in electing people who are going to represent the needs in their communities”, she concluded.

The residents of Greater Knysna will be well advised to keep an eye on local media for information pertaining to the upcoming public meetings.

**ENDS**

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