



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **How to apply for a government subsidised home**

It has recently come to light that the application for government subsidised housing processes are not clearly understood by some and the Knysna Acting Municipal manager, Johnny Douglas, explained these processes.

“The Knysna Municipality continuously plans for housing opportunities in the form of housing projects,” said Douglas.

Once these housing projects are identified through public participation meetings/process the so-called, pipeline projects are submitted to the Western Cape Department of Human Settlements for financial/grant approval. If approved, the application becomes part of the Western Cape Provincial Business Plan and funding is then allocated to the Knysna Municipality.

“The planning and implementation of projects takes a while and involves a feasibility study, an environmental impact study, geotechnical studies, integration with local facilities making sure it is close to schools, work and business opportunities and health facilities,” reads the Western Cape Human Settlement’s website.

“It is important to note that the development of approved housing pipeline projects can only start once the project’s conditional application (N4) is approved. This approval includes the tranche payment 1.1 funding allocated by the Western Cape Government for the acquisition of land required, detailed geotechnical studies, environmental impact assessment studies, civil and electrical detail planning servicing and site preparation,” explained Douglas.

Only when this approval is received the municipality apply its selection criteria as set out in its Approved Housing Allocation Policy to preselect a short list of potential beneficiaries for the project. These preliminary selected households' information is then captured from the subsidy application forms into the Western Cape Provincial Housing Subsidy System (HSS). HSS then does several checks against the Population Register, Deeds Office, the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) and other Government systems to ensure that applicants still qualify. Several rounds of beneficiary selection may take place, removing applicants who do not qualify, until all the housing opportunities have been allocated.

Douglas added: “The proposed allocation list will only then be discussed with ward councillors and housing committee members. The reason for this is not to allow committee members or councillor to influence the selection process, but to ensure that the proposed names are people

known to the community and that the process is fair and transparent. The proposed list will be advertised for 30 days to give the beneficiary community time to comment on selected names.”

The Knysna Municipality’s Department Human Settlements will only then make contact with the shortlisted potential beneficiaries to determine whether they are still interested. The beneficiaries will only then be assisted in completing the subsidy application forms (in the event that the project is a Breaking New Ground (BNG) housing subsidy project). “It is therefore very important that applicants keep their details, especially their contact information on the housing database up to date, to ensure that they are easily contactable,” said Douglas

Following these processes the Knysna municipality will publicise the beneficiary list in its local offices for public scrutiny. Once all planning and project approval processes have been successfully completed, construction will take place. “Projects are usually executed in phases where housing opportunities are handed over continuously until the whole project is complete and signed off,” Douglas said.

Once the housing project is complete, beneficiaries will be contacted and informed that they may take occupation of the residential unit. “It is important to note that paperwork, such as title deeds etc. will occur in parallel. If the housing opportunity involves a rental dwelling, the applicants will sign a lease agreement when taking occupation of the rental unit.” Currently the Knysna Municipality has received planning approval (Tranche payment 1.1) for Rheenendal on 08/11/16, and Hornlee Housing project approval on 23/3/15.

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