

MEDIA RELEASE

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EMBARGO: Immediate

Mayor's focus on Economic Development

The recent 7 June Knysna fires catapulted Greater Knysna's economic development in to top level priority and for this reason Knysna Executive Mayor, Eleanore Bouw-Spies has requested that the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), Local Economic Development (LED), Tourism, Youth, Disability and Gender (Social Development) departments submit their reports directly to the Mayoral Committee.

In terms of Section 30 of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, the Executive Mayor is responsible for the management of the IDP drafting process and is further responsible for the submission of the draft plan to Council.

In terms of Section 56 of the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, the executive mayor is responsible to identify the needs of the municipality, to review and evaluate those needs and to recommend to the municipal council strategies, programmes and services to address priority needs. Economic development and gender issues lies at the heart of these needs. It is for that reason that these departments will now report directly to the Executive Mayor (Mayoral Committee) and not the various Section 80 Committees.

As all Section 80 Chairs sit on the Mayoral Committee, and all these meetings are open to the public and the agendas thereof appear on the municipal website, this process strengthens cross sector participation and the rebuilding of the Knysna economy.

Section 80 (1) of the Municipal Structures Act further states: "If a municipal council has an executive committee or executive mayor, it may appoint in terms of Section 79, a committee of councillors to assist the executive committee or executive mayor.

The Act further states: "The executive committee or executive mayor

- a. Appoints a chairperson for each committee
- b. May delegate any powers or duties of the Executive Mayor to the committee
- c. Is not divested of the responsibility concerning the exercise of the power or the performance of the duty
- d. May vary or revoke any decision taken by a committee subject to any vested rights"

And lastly states "Such a committee must report to the executive committee or executive mayor."

The Executive Mayor is accountable to the council. Certain delegations to the Executive Mayor can be designated in terms of section 60(3) of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 1998. A designated delegation must be exercised together with the members of the executive mayoral committee. This implies that all members of the executive mayoral committee must concur with the decision of the executive mayor. In the event of any one or more members of the mayoral committee not concurring with the executive mayor, such a matter shall automatically be referred to the council. In all other non-designated matters, the executive mayor shall act on his/her own accord, after receiving a recommendation from the relevant portfolio committee or the municipal manager.

ENDS

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