



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 20 March 2015
EMBARGO: Immediate

KNYSNA MUNICIPALITY GIVES R576 000 TO 48 LOCAL CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS

The Knysna Municipality handed over cheques to the value of R576 000 to 48 charities, schools, sport clubs and non-profitable organisations today.

Knysna Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans said the municipality's ongoing Grant in Aid programme has been making a difference for some time. "This is the 11th year and I am proud to be part of the programme. All of the organisations we support render a service to our residents in one way or the other, and supporting them helps to create a better environment on a variety of levels for everyone in the area."

Wolmarans said they are inundated with applications when the advertisements are placed every year. "It is clear that the organisations needing help far exceed those we can support, and more so every year. I also don't know how long we will still be able to run this programme, and these organisations should always investigate other means of raising funds to become sustainable. It is perhaps also an opportunity for private partnership initiatives, a time for successful local companies to "pay it forward" and help the community - an act which in the long run will surely have positive effects for all residents."

The final list of beneficiaries is determined by a committee comprising of the Executive Mayor and three other councillors, and submitted for approval by Council.

She said that in addition to these hand-overs, the Municipality also assists organisations throughout the year on an ad hoc basis. "However even emergency applications are first evaluated by the GIA committee according to the same criteria as annual applications."

Grants to charitable organisations ranged between R2 000 and R40 000, depending on the above-mentioned criteria, and were mostly directed towards specific projects. Funds this year will go towards projects such as crèches, soup kitchens, victim support programmes, care of the elderly and disabled, sports development, cancer awareness, music lessons, pre-school education, sea rescue equipment and training, youth development and more. Sound financial management is key for those organisations that want to continue benefitting from the GIA programme.

Wolmarans said that she notices and appreciates the efforts of those who work effortlessly for the benefit of others, often volunteers. "I think to really appreciate what they do, one should just try and imagine the impact on our area if the organisations did not exist. A bleak picture indeed."

I also want to commend the other organisations in town that assist in times of dire need. "Here I think of Facebook groups like the KGG Community – not a week goes by without one or more projects being initiated to help those in need. Another example is the Rotarians and volunteers of other service organisations who we often see out and about, selflessly raising money for projects in the Knysna area. Thank you to you, and all the contributions by various Knysna residents and organisations. Big or small, each effort makes a difference."

ENDS

Caption:

Knysna Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans with Councillors and recipients of the Grant in Aid.