FROM THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR’S DESK

We are suffering a high volume of positive Covid-19 cases in Greater Knysna and the number of infected residents is on the rise. Testing positive for this disease can lead to your death. Furthermore, if you are infected, you can easily pass it on to your loved ones, potentially leading to their deaths. Covid-19 has even further reaching consequences, as the isolation, quarantine or death of workers impacts our economy and this Municipality’s ability to continue delivering the services to which you have a right.

I must once again plead with all of Greater Knysna’s residents to take this virus and its associated disease seriously. Please abide by the restrictions imposed by the current lockdown level. Please refrain from illegal activities. Please wash your hands and please wear a mask. These are not punishments; these are minimal, short-lived discomforts we must all endure in order to preserve our lives – and our economy – in the long term.

I remind you that I subscribe to an open door policy. As a resident of Greater Knysna, you are welcome to contact my office telephonically or via email to discuss any issue or concern you may have. I urge you to speak with me rather than resorting to raising your issues on social media. Any issue can be addressed much faster when it is brought to our attention via the correct channels. Turning to social media may delay any response to your issue and there is the very real danger of misinformation and incorrect assumptions creating disingenuous expectations within the community.

The same must be said for any issues a member of the public may have with any member of staff. The blatant victimisation and bullying of our employees will not be tolerated. These type of schoolyard shenanigans are childish and vindictive. Should you have a valid and substantiated allegation you would like to make against any of our employees, please contact me. Should you have evidence of corruption or fraud, please open a case with the South African Police Services. As much as we cannot afford to lose a single responsible staff member during this difficult time, the correct procedures must be followed to act against anyone who may be taking advantage of their position.

On a lighter note, we celebrate the women in our lives on National Women’s Day on 9 August. Thank you to our mothers, grandmothers, aunts, wives, daughters, granddaughters and female friends for being the glue that holds our society together. We owe the birth of great women and men to you, we owe many social and political liberties we now take for granted to you, and we owe the hope and trust we hold in future generations to you. While you may not be able to visit with all the special ladies in your life during this time, make sure that they know how much you love, respect and appreciate them.

Stay at home, and stay safe.

‘til next month,

ELRICK VAN ASWEGEN, EXECUTIVE MAYOR

BUDGET APPROVED FOR TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES

Council approved the 2020/2021 Knysna Municipal Budget during a virtual Council meeting on Thursday 18 June. Executive Mayor Elrick van Aswegen said that the Municipality’s cash flow crunch, combined with the effect of the Covid-19 lockdown, has created one of the most difficult environments to draft a budget in to date.

“There was a number of factors that influenced this budget,” he reported, “The Municipality’s dire financial situation...
and increased pressure on an already depressed economy imposed by the national lockdown had a compounding negative effect and increased the universal challenges experienced by all spheres of government. Knysna is a tourist town and its economy is largely dependent on the tourism and hospitality industries. With the revised Level 3 lockdown regulations, many businesses in Knysna may re-open, but it will take years for our economy to recover from the effect of the lockdown. By default, this will also have a direct effect on our income stream. There is no guarantee of when international and national tourists will return and, when they do, it will be under strict safety regulations restricting the number of people allowed in establishments, etc. These circumstances left us little leeway as we drafted the final budget.”

“The aim of the budget is to achieve specific targets for enhanced liquidity and cash-flow, enabling us to provide uninterrupted basic services. We had to balance revenue with

At the time of going to press, the Garden Route District had amongst the highest COVID-19 infection rates in the Western Cape outside the Cape Metro, with a 50% increase in infections per week!

In the next few weeks, it is imperative that we do everything in our power to slow the rate of infection down.

To protect your health and the health services: stay home if possible, wear a mask in public, maintain social distancing, wash your hands for 20 seconds and keep windows open if travelling in a vehicle with others.

#C-19 #TogetherWeCan #StopTheSpread
establishments. “A reduction in Municipal property rental up to a maximum amount of R50 000 will also be considered. The committee’s appointment runs until the end of September.”

Van Aswegen said that the Municipality is unfortunately not in the position to consider debt relief for ratepayers without negatively affecting service delivery. “Balancing the budget has not been easy. We had to ensure that we maintain service delivery while minimizing tariffs and increases at a time when costs are increasing. After all consultations, which included Provincial Treasury, we were happy with the final product. We believe it will alleviate the pressure and suffering faced by the business sector and community at large in some way.”

Van Aswegen added that the Finance Directorate had various meetings before the final budget was drafted. “They met with the budget steering committee and the business community to understand the impact of Covid-19 on their businesses. It was important to have a clear and common understanding of what we are facing.”

To address the impact of Covid-19 and assist local businesses, employers and employees, the Municipality has appointed a committee to consider ad-hoc applications for delayed rates and services charges from businesses and accommodation establishments. “Spending will be focused on infrastructure assets to attract investment and rebuild the economy. The proposed spending on programmes is outlined in detail in the budget report and will be published in an easy to understand format.”

Van Aswegen concluded by saying that it will take time, but that they had opted for a strategic path towards a healthier fiscal position. “The economic turnaround of Greater Knysna will not happen overnight and needs effective, firm leadership to make it happen. It will require Council to make difficult decisions, but the unpopular decisions of today are necessary to negate the negative impact of tomorrow.”

The full budget is available at www.knysna.gov.za.

2020/2021 % MTREF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PER INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET CLASS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure Asset Class</th>
<th>Amount (in millions)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation Infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water Supply Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Roads Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Electrical Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Storm Water Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Coastal Infrastructure</td>
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2020/21 % MTREF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PER ASSET CLASS

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<th>Asset Class</th>
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<td>Other Assets</td>
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<td>Transport Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>R0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>R126.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE 2020/2021 BUDGET IN A NUTSHEL

The 2020/2021 Capital Budget amounts to R157.9 million and translates to a R444.1 million over the Medium-Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF) period.

The Draft Operating Budget for the 2020/2021 financial year amounts to R1,036 billion, an increase of R62.6 million, or 6.4%, when compared with the last adjusted budget for 2019/2020.

The rates increase will be limited to a maximum of 3%, water services tariff increase to a maximum of 3%, sanitation service tariffs to a maximum of 3%, refuse removal will increase by 12% and electricity will be approved in terms of NERSA approved guidelines.

Financial Turnaround

Council will continue to work closely with the administration to further reduce expenditure and identify unnecessary assets in terms of basic service delivery, which could be sold. “Spending will be focused on infrastructure assets to attract investment and rebuild the economy. The proposed spending on programmes is outlined in detail in the budget report and will be published in an easy to understand format.”

Van Aswegen concluded by saying that it will take time, but that they had opted for a strategic path towards a healthier fiscal position. “The economic turnaround of Greater Knysna will not happen overnight and needs effective, firm leadership to make it happen. It will require Council to make difficult decisions, but the unpopular decisions of today are necessary to negate the negative impact of tomorrow.”

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BEETTER WASTE MANAGEMENT, CLEANER TOWN

The Municipality is in the process of rolling out refuse bins equipped with Radio Frequency Identification tags (RFID) linked to the bin serial number. This will assist the Municipality in recording and linking every bin service provided to respective properties, reconciling billing with actual removals.

Refuse trucks are fitted with an automated mechanism to pick up the bins and empty the refuse into the compactor. Truck scanners detect the quantity, location and time of service.

240 litre wheelie bins to businesses:

- One 770 litre bin will be replaced with three 240 litre wheelie bins. The monthly agreement will be cancelled (please complete cancellation form).
- Purchased 240 litre wheelie bins remain on the business premise and should be used for recycling.

140 litre wheelie bins to residential areas:

The replacement of black bags with wheelie bins started a while ago and we endeavour to roll out more wheelie bins to all Municipal areas. Each erf will receive one wheelie bin. Residents may purchase additional wheelie bins from our office in Main Street, Knysna. Wheelie bins already issued will be micro-chipped – relevant details will be issued in the near future.

The advantages of wheelie bins:

- Cut down on plastic waste, boost efforts by the Municipality and communities to keep Municipal areas clean.
- A daily challenge facing our refuse collectors is the tearing open of black bags by dogs, pigs and other animals. The wheelie bins will help to minimise this and enable a cleaner and healthier environment for our residents.

The bins will also help to reduce injuries to our refuse collectors. The black bags often break when loaded into the compactor trucks and staff can be injured by sharp objects.
- The bins are more durable than black bags and easy to clean.

It is the owners’ responsibility to ensure wheelie bins are kept safe. In case of theft, the owner must replace the stolen bin by purchasing a new micro-chipped bin. Stolen or lost wheelie bins must be reported, with a case number from the South African Police Service, a copy of the Municipal rates account statement and a copy of the owner’s ID, to our Solid Waste office in Clyde Street, Knysna, or our office in Sedgefield.

Only wheelie bins distributed, marked and registered by Knysna Municipality will be serviced. No refuse will be collected from any container/bin not issued by the municipality.

National lockdown and Covid-19 related complications have delayed this process, but it will continue as and when the situation allows.

To enquire about your bin, or in case we missed you during rollout, please contact our offices on 044 302 6405.

WATER RESTRICTIONS

Winter Level 1 water restrictions now apply allowing:

- Watering of gardens for one hour, 3 days a week;
- The use of hosepipes for gardening and other purposes, and the use of irrigation systems from 17h00 to 18h00 during June to November as follows:
  > Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays – residents with even street numbers;
  > Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays – residents with odd street numbers; and
- Residents must still obtain permission from the Director: Technical Services before filling swimming pools and undertaking maintenance.

Please report water leaks and water abuse to 044 302 6331 (o/h) or 060 998 7000.