

**Subject:** Re: Communications Problem: Bezuidenhout & Fran Kirsten  
**From:** Love Knysna - Mike <mike@loveknysna.com>  
**Date:** 2016/09/02, 8:08 AM  
**To:** Bevan Ellman <bellman@knysna.gov.za>

Thank you.

On 02/09/2016 07:57, Bevan Ellman wrote:

Morning Mike,

I have sent your email below to the Acting MM for his consideration and instructions. You should receive a response in due course.

Regards,

Bevan

**Mr Bevan R Ellman Director: Corporate Services**

P O Box 21. Knysna. 6570. Western Cape. South Africa  
Tel +27 (0)44 302 6300 (switchboard) or 302 6306 (direct)  
Fax +27 (0)86 533 5005 e-mail [bellman@knysna.gov.za](mailto:bellman@knysna.gov.za)

>>>

**From:** Love Knysna - Mike <[mike@loveknysna.com](mailto:mike@loveknysna.com)>  
**To:** Bevan Ellman <[bellman@knysna.gov.za](mailto:bellman@knysna.gov.za)>, DA - Peter Myers <[pjm@sitegrinder.co.za](mailto:pjm@sitegrinder.co.za)>  
**Date:** 02/09/2016 07:51  
**Subject:** Communications Problem: Bezuidenhout & Fran Kirsten

>

Pettiness, such as banning me on Twitter, takes up unnecessary time from the real work Knysna Municipal staff should be doing.

Bevan, please read the emails below and encourage solution. This nonsense has gone on for years. Surely it takes a simple decision to get to the bottom of it, come clean, punish, and move on. Bezuidenhout must be held responsible for all that has happened under his watch.

Peter, i email you as political oversight and my ward councillor.

Regards the Fran Kirsten matter, my questions sent to her may offer you guidance in your hoped for investigation (a mayor, least of all, doesn't get a free ride from accountability).

1. What is your company name and when did it or you become part of the tender database?
2. What work were you given prior to Sept 1 2016. Please provide examples.
3. What is the nature of your new work and what are the contract stipulations (including

price)?

4. Please provide the quote or tender you submitted to try gain the work.

5. Who interviewed you? Who hired you?

6. What services have you provided Knysna Tourism and Knysna & Partners? Over what period and of what value?

7. What work did you do for the DA prior to Sept 1 2016?

8. Specifically, what work did you do for Eleonore Bouw-Spies (who then became Mayor)?

9. Was Bouw-Spies a director on the Board of Knysna Tourism or Knysna & Partners whilst you received worked from them?

10. How was Bouw-Spies involved in getting you the latest work with Knysna Municipality?

11. How long have you worked for the Knysna-Plett Herald, as permanent staff and as freelancer?

12. During the election campaign, you wrote politically for stated newspaper. How do you respond to the claim that that is a conflict of interest?

Thank you.

----- Forwarded Message -----

**Subject:** Re: Fwd: Urgent: Fran Kirsten (communications)

**Date:** Thu, 1 Sep 2016 18:05:05 +0200

**From:** Love Knysna - Mike <[mike@loveknysna.com](mailto:mike@loveknysna.com)>

**Organization:** Love Knysna!

**To:** Christopher Bezuidenhout <[cbezuidenhout@knysna.gov.za](mailto:cbezuidenhout@knysna.gov.za)>

It is not a rumour when there's obvious involvement.

I repeat: "Additionally, please explain her role for the Democratic Alliance (or individual politicians) prior to the elections."

How can this be seen as anything but payback without tender, temporary or otherwise?

Considering Kirsten's negative involvement, as a Knysna-Plett Herald journalist, in the Knysna Tourism saga, and that she, in conflict of interest, has since received contracted work from Knysna Tourism, how can her role be seen as a creditable addition to the Knysna Municipality?

As she is suddenly become a contracted worker and you are responding, is it correct to believe that you, Christopher Bezuidenhout, are still the manager of our expensive communications

department?

As the department was set up to be an addition, a better communication vehicle, why are public funds being spent on outside contractors?

Specifically, how do you justify Kirsten's contract, what is she being paid to do and for how long, and how much is she being paid?

Why can her work not be accomplished by existing employees?

Please provide proof that you were legally appointed to your post, providing the processes involved and why you were chosen?

How much did your department cost the past financial year and how many press releases were issued?

Note that you have failed to address my queries regards your department for the past 5 months? Why? Will you now?

What is the role of Martin Hatchuel and what work has he undertaken for you?

Same questions regards Ashley Barnes (or the company names she works for)?

Who banned me on KM's Twitter page? Why?

The word "communication" implies honesty and information flow. Please be honest and informative.

On 01/09/2016 17:15, Christopher Bezuidenhout wrote:

Thank you for our query.

Firstly we must stress that we do not respond to rumours.

It has been widely publicised that our Mayor, Eleanore Bouw-Spies intends to change the communication structures within the municipality.

Council's first priority is to finalise its organisational structure and while this is being done it would be fruitless and wasteful to put out a tender before council has determined how they want to move forward.

Out There Communications, being registered on our data base, has been given a short-term contract in the interim.

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**From:** Love Knysna - Mike <[mike@loveknysna.com](mailto:mike@loveknysna.com)>  
DA - Georlene Wolmarans <[gwolmarans@knysna.gov.za](mailto:gwolmarans@knysna.gov.za)>, Bevan Ellman  
**To:** <[bellman@knysna.gov.za](mailto:bellman@knysna.gov.za)>, KM - MM Grant Easton <[geaston@knysna.gov.za](mailto:geaston@knysna.gov.za)>, Mark Willemse <[mwillemse@knysna.gov.za](mailto:mwillemse@knysna.gov.za)>  
**Date:** 30/08/2016 08:31  
**Subject:** Urgent: Fran Kirsten (communications)

>

I'm enquiring about the rumour that Fran Kirsten, Knysna-Plett Herald journalist and Knysna & Partners contractor, is to be given a position in the communications department of the Knysna Municipality.

If this is true, please explain her intended role and what processes were followed.

Additionally, please explain her role for the Democratic Alliance (or individual politicians) prior to the elections.

Once you've provided answers, i may have follow-up input.

If the position begins September 1, then this matter is urgent.

Thank you.

--

Mike Hampton  
Knysna, the Prettiest Town in South Africa  
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On 05/04/2016 11:15, Love Knysna - Mike wrote:

Unfortunately, after reading your response, i'm no nearer to understanding and concerned that i'm being led around a pole. Please assure me that he latter isn't so.

You may not appreciate me as alternative media, a product of our modern times that is evident worldwide, but since you are regularly reacting to me as such in the mainstream media, you cannot deny that i am a news source to many citizens. My Facebook has a greater reach than any newspaper in our town, the Knysna Municipality and Knysna Tourism.

Instead of working with me, you, municipal officials, and politicians have deliberately chosen to be difficult. That antagonism is not conducive to a better Knysna.

If i were querying a not-that-dangerous pothole, you could direct me to your 10-day queue.

BUT I'M ASKING ABOUT NEWS ITEMS and you run a very expensive Communications department. And sometimes there are urgent issues too such as when a DA constituent wanted live bullets used on protestors and one of our white fireman has been accused over a racist incident using a rope and a black man's neck.

You don't hesitate to assist, for example, the Knysna-Plett Herald because, in my opinion, they provide you positive, biased coverage. But i don't give you favour, simply wanting to print the facts which either have to be dragged out of you or never arrive at all. You, more often than not, treat me as if you have something to hide. Surely transparency should be associated with the word "communication"?

Please clarify the statement: "No-one outside the Municipality has access to our social media accounts or our website."

1. Does that mean that only you and the staff appointed to the Communications department have access?
2. Does that mean no director, politicians or any other has access?
3. Or, if "municipality" is meant to be a vague term meaning many people, including those outside your department, please list those people.

You failed to answer my query as to who composed the following two posts. I hope that that was an error and not deliberate.

- [www.facebook.com/knysnamunicipality/posts/939266389523062](http://www.facebook.com/knysnamunicipality/posts/939266389523062)
- [www.knysna.gov.za/weeklynews/municipality-responds-to-questions-around-parliamentary-enquiry](http://www.knysna.gov.za/weeklynews/municipality-responds-to-questions-around-parliamentary-enquiry)

You also ignored:

- Who outside your Communications office is composing press releases and mayoral speeches?

Your claim that all communications must go through Municipal manager Grant Seton would surely mean that he's doing your job instead of his own. If your department was micro-managed, it would be severely handicapped. Or is it that i'm treated differently, unfairly? Please clarify the whole situation so that we save time in future.

It was madly claimed in social media that the Municipality was basically shutting down because of the trip to Parliament, and that enormous costs were involved, Mayor Georlene Wolmarans even complaining about costs, so why have you not cleared the air in a responsible manner, stating how long the delegation was in Cape Town, what else they did whilst they were down there, and exactly how the costs were broken down?

Are you saying that Advocate Julie Seton was or wasn't an observer in the Committee Room whilst the Municipal delegation gave their oral submission? That Advocate Seton never

entered any offices of the DA whilst she was in Cape Town? Please do not say that that is not for you to answer. She accompanied your delegation and it should be honestly clarified how.

Thank you for the spelling of your name. Are you aware, then, that your name is misspelled in your email address?

I look forward to your cooperation.

On 05/04/2016 10:31, Christopher Bezuidenhout wrote:

Mr Hampton,

Our official correspondence portal is [knysna@knysna.gov.za](mailto:knysna@knysna.gov.za) Please direct all future correspondence to the aforesaid address. In terms of the Provincial Archives and Records Service of the Western Cape Act, 3 of 2005, all correspondence must be recorded by the municipality's official records department. They will in turn disseminate the correspondence to the relevant department. The approved service level (response time) for written communications is 10 working days. Your communication will be treated in the same way as that of any other citizen. Your cooperation in this regard is appreciated.

In response to your enquiry, the following:

No-one outside the Municipality has access to our social media accounts or our website.

The photo was taken by a member of the public, who was kind enough to lend us a hand.

Advocate Julie Seton did travel to Cape Town alongside the delegation, but at her own expense and in her personal capacity, accompanying her life-partner. She was not part of the delegation that appeared before the Select Committee.

As part of our communications protocol, which is standard practice, all outgoing communications need to be approved by the Executive Mayor and/or Municipal Manager.

The correct spelling of my surname is as per the signature below.

I trust this is in order and clarifies your questions.

Regards

**Christopher F. Bezuidenhout Manager: Communications & Customer Relations**

P O Box 21. Knysna. 6570. Western Cape. South Africa

Tel +27 (0)44 302 6300 (switchboard) or 302 6381 (direct)

Fax +27 (0)86 536 0981 e-mail [cbezuidenhout@knysna.gov.za](mailto:cbezuidenhout@knysna.gov.za)

>>>

**From:** Love Knysna - Mike <[mike@loveknysna.com](mailto:mike@loveknysna.com)>

**To:** KM Communications - Christopher Bezuidenhout <[cbezuidenhout@knysna.gov.za](mailto:cbezuidenhout@knysna.gov.za)>

**Date:** 05/04/2016 09:45

**Subject:** Re: Att Chris Bezuidenhout: Who is sharing your job?

> Please would you respond.

On 04/04/2016 10:04, Love Knysna - Mike wrote:

Since you're online, my having received an email from you on another matter, please would you respond to this one too.

Thanks.

On 02/04/2016 19:13, Love Knysna - Mike wrote:

Please inform me who composed and distributed the following press releases:

- [www.facebook.com/knysnamunicipality/posts/939266389523062](http://www.facebook.com/knysnamunicipality/posts/939266389523062)
- [www.knysna.gov.za/weeklynews/municipality-responds-to-questions-around-parliamentary-enquiry](http://www.knysna.gov.za/weeklynews/municipality-responds-to-questions-around-parliamentary-enquiry)

Who, outside your office, has been given permission to use the Knysna Municipality's social media accounts and website?

Who outside your Communications office is composing press releases and mayoral speeches?

Who took the photos of the Knysna delegation when they went to Parliament? I have attached an example. Who supplied that photo to your department?

Did advocate Julie Seton accompany the Knysna delegation to Parliament?

Please note that this falls directly under your command. You are the Manager of Communications so there is no need for delay e.g. by sending it onto others for approval.

Is your surname spelt as "Bezuidenhout" or "Bezuidenhout"?

Thank you, in advance, for your hoped for cooperation.

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Mike Hampton

Knysna, the Prettiest Town in South Africa

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