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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR

Dear Residents,

Right now, we are just over a week into lockdown. These are very strange days indeed and I want to thank all *Swellendammers* for their co-operation thus far. Most people are trying to comply with lockdown regulations even though some are recklessly under-estimating the approaching danger.

I believe that despite massive disruptions it is also an opportunity for us as a municipal community to come together and support of one another. So far, at the time of writing, there is no evidence of the COVID-19 virus in our towns, and for this I am extremely grateful. I also want to thank the municipal manager and his management team, together with provincial support services such as our local health professionals for their endless and determined efforts to safeguard our people whilst delivering essential services to all. It is our mission to continue to adhere closely to national regulations for the lockdown period. Our law enforcement team together with SAPS have played an invaluable role in this regard.

As you are aware Swellendam agriculture forms a very important part of our local economy, and the municipality is trying its best to assist farmers with keeping production running as smoothly as possible. We are also very concerned about nutritional levels, and about our people's immunity against disease in the current context.

We are therefore extremely grateful to our local farmers for their commitment to assist with the nutritional needs of the community. Swellenfruit Packing, Thornlands Pack House, Suider Pak together with Sovereign Farm (Tangelo Citrus Estates and all of the associated producers) have offered to supply at least 100 tons of fruit to households all across our municipality! Citrus is an excellent source of Vitamin C, and can play a vital role to boost immunity ahead of the winter season. The municipality will handle the distribution of this wonderful gift in a way which is both fair and in compliance with lockdown restrictions.

Furthermore, Community Action Partnership (CAP), a local NPO with a proven track record, has also become involved in sourcing supplies for food parcels and will be distributing these to needy families. In this regard SSK and SOILL have also pledged valuable support and we wish to thank them for their ongoing commitment to our local community needs. We are also managing one venue in Railton where the

homeless are being housed during the lockdown period. A second venue is being considered for Barrydale; confirmation will follow should this venue be set up as a temporary housing facility for the homeless. For the venue in Raiton we also ask your support, whether in kind or in cash. We especially thank those who have already so kindly donated items or made monetary contributions.

I encourage anyone who is able to make a donation of dry goods to the less fortunate to please do so. Goods will be collected by CAP from your home. This is a time for social cohesion and co-operation like no other, and I have faith that the communities of Swellendam will whole-heartedly support one another.

Should you wish to make a monetary donation to the Swellendam Relief Fund for the less fortunate you can do so via EFT. I have authorised a municipal donation of R30 000 in order to kick-start donations. Rest assured that there will be an audit and full transparency to ensure that the funds in this account were spent appropriately.

Donation details for the Swellendam Relief Fund are as follows;

SWD Relief Fund

Nedbank

Account No: 113 785 9571

Please contact Herman Smit at 083 788 3365 in order to arrange for the collection of your dry goods donations.

In addition, the SPCA also seek donations for pet food as it has experienced a resurgence of pets being dropped off at the premises. Arrangements for pet food donations can be made at 028 514 2083, which will also be collected from your home.

Lastly, I would encourage everyone not to buy into the hype created by fake news. Instead please report fake news to the Fake News WhatsApp number 067 966 4015 or via fakenewsalert@dtps.gov.za. It is now a criminal offence to distribute fake news.

The municipality has issued a whole range of emergency notices over the past two weeks. These are important, and I urge you to read them carefully. All these lockdown notices are available on the municipal website; www.swellenmun.co.za as well as via the official municipal Facebook page; www.facebook.com/SwellenMun/.

Meanwhile, stay calm, stay at home, practice essential hygiene, keep your distance, and encourage everyone to do the right thing!

Best wishes,



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Nicholas Myburgh'.

Nicholas Myburgh
Executive Mayor/Burgemeester

(02 April 2020)