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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ATTENTION: CHIEF REPORTERS
CIVIC REPORTERS

Civic Theatre, Stadium operational merger proposed

Southlanders are to be consulted over a proposal to merge the operations of the Civic Theatre and Stadium Southland, which is expected to save ratepayers around \$150,000 per annum.

Southland Indoor Leisure Centre Charitable Trust Chairman Acton Smith and Invercargill City Council Director of Finance and Corporate Services Dean Johnston said in a joint statement that talks to merge the operations of these two iconic Invercargill facilities had been underway for much of this year.

Both facilities are beloved by the Southland public, both are financed by the public purse and both use similar equipment and staff resources. In recent years these two funded facilities have competed aggressively against each other to host events which has been detrimental to their profitability.

In combining the management and operation of both event facilities, the aim is to provide high quality services for events, in the appropriate venue and to secure the long-term financial future of the Stadium.

Major costs savings can be achieved by having one staffing structure for both venues and doing away with current duplication.

However, the ownership of the Civic Theatre will still remain with Invercargill City Council and the ownership of the Stadium will remain with the Southland Indoor Leisure Centre Charitable Trust.

Both organisations agreed to form a Working Group, which was chaired by former Awarua MP Jeff Grant. The Working Group has proposed the formation of a joint management company, that will oversee the operations of both venues.

*Manager Communications and Secretarial Services, Eirwen Tulett, 211 1678, (027) 293 8680
Fax: 211 1434 Email: eirwen.tulett@icc.govt.nz*

Or

*Communications Officer, Diane Morris, 211 1601, (027) 231 3939
Fax: 211 1433 Email: diane.morris@icc.govt.nz*

Both the Southland Indoor Leisure Centre Charitable Trust Board and the Invercargill City Council have ratified the Working Group's recommendations. This will now go out to the public for consultation and comment as soon as possible.

ENDS.

Enquiries,
Dean Johnston (027) 2481182

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