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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ATTENTION: CHIEF REPORTERS
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Southern mayors present joint publication on shared services

The five southern Mayors have released an informative brochure today that details how their councils have been working together since 2000 to share services, making considerable cost savings for residents and ratepayers from Clutha south.

"Shared Services Southland and Beyond" is an informative brochure jointly produced by Environment Southland, the Invercargill City and Gore, Southland and Clutha districts' councils.

Chairman Jeff Grant said the informative brochure would give people the opportunity to learn more about how southern councils are working together.

"The collaboration between councils has been enhanced significantly over the past three years to the extent where large improvements on projects will have significant benefit to ratepayers," Mr Grant said.

Mr Grant said in 2000 a joint committee was formed called Shared Services which considered what councils were tasked with doing and whether any of these jobs or projects could be jointly managed to improve efficiencies.

The committee is made up of elected members of Clutha District Council, Environment Southland, Gore District Council, Invercargill City Council and Southland District Council, and the independent chair Jeff Grant.

"This committee has been meeting regularly since it was formed and has achieved several successes for all of the partner councils and continues to explore new initiatives."

More than 50 inter-council collaborative projects had been worked on during the past 14 years, he said.

"Some of the benefits of this shared service model include greater efficiencies and effectiveness, cost savings in operating and capital costs, improved levels of customer service and improved professionalism of staff including training, recruitment and retention."

Mr Grant said one of the biggest successes to date was the joining of solid waste services and a regional landfill.

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Other successes included the formation of Emergency Management Southland to manage region-wide civil defence emergencies and the shared IT platform.

"The IT project has been going 12 months and the current work with the single IT platform will enhance future activities like building work and district plan development," Mr Grant said.

Electronic copies of *"Shared Services Southland and Beyond"* are available from the following council websites: www.cluthadc.govt.nz, www.es.govt.nz, www.icc.govt.nz, www.goredc.govt.nz and www.southlanddc.govt.nz.

ENDS.

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