

“Biggest decision... perhaps for a generation.”

More than 200 people attended a public meeting to hear about Council’s proposal to invest in the City Block Development earlier this week.

MEETING Chairman Rex Chapman told the crowd there had been an excellent turn out, which reflected the fact that: “it’s one of the biggest decisions our city has had to make, perhaps for a generation.”

Chief Executive Clare Hadley and Holdco General Manager Andrew Cameron gave those in attendance an overview of the finer points of the consultation and proposal.

Mrs Hadley wanted to ensure the community understood that no decisions had yet been made, and that they fully understood why investment was being consulted on now.

One of the points Mrs Hadley touched on was to clarify the amount Council had been asked to invest.

She clarified that while Council had been asked to invest just \$20million, the Council was asking the community about a possible investment of \$30million – an extra \$5million for contingency, and a further \$5million should the Council request changes in the design.

“I’m sure you can all think of a Council project that has needed a change to its budget. We thought it would be more open and correct to say from the beginning we may need a bit more,” Mrs Hadley told the meeting.

Mrs Hadley also clarified the financial impact the investment may have on ratepayers, and on Council’s budgets and planned works.

It is estimated that the cost of a \$20million investment, funded by loans, would be about 1.2% on the average ratepayer, with servicing costs forecast to be about \$600,000 a year.

The investment would take Council’s debt levels up, however Mrs Hadley said careful management would allow other forecast projects to still be undertaken.

P.T.O



BY THE NUMBERS



More than 200 people attended meeting at Civic Theatre.



The City Block Consultation web page has been visited more than 1,000 times.



Video of meeting viewed more than 400x in 12 hours.



20 people have used our new online form to make a submission.



Posts on the YOUR MONEY FOR CITY BLOCK? Facebook page have reached more than 6,000 people!



There have been more than 2,800 clicks, likes, shares or comments on posts on the YMFCB? Facebook page.

“Biggest decision... perhaps for a generation.” *continued*

“There has been some preliminary modelling done which shows that we can afford to invest in [the] City Block and deliver every other project that is currently in the Long-term Plan, provided we prioritise and stage those [projects] in the 10-20 years ahead,” she said.

Mrs Hadley spoke about Council’s other obligation in relation to the development, which was to provide appropriate roads, footpaths, and other infrastructure or beautification in relation to the cityscape.

“If this development was being done by anybody else ... Council would have been responsible for addressing the cityscape around the development.

“We had put aside \$6million in the Long-term Plan

already – we now estimate that the total budget for that should be in the region of \$20million, so we need to add another \$14million to our Long-term Plan budgets.

“We’re not asking for your views on that because that is part of the investment that we would make as asset owner.”

Mrs Hadley urged everyone to make a submission, and not to wait until it was too late.

“Don’t consider putting it off and thinking ‘I’ll do it tomorrow’,” she said.

“You can always put in an additional comment – put your submission in now.”

DROP IN SESSIONS



Pop along to any drop-in session to learn more, pick up a consultation document and grab a submission form.

- New World, Elles Road - Wednesday, 29 May, 3pm - 6pm
 - Thee Market, Windsor Community Church - Saturday, 1 June, 10am - 12 noon
 - Farmers Market - Sunday, 2 June, 9.30pm - 1pm
 - Pak n Save - Thursday, 6 June, 3pm - 6pm
 - Farmers Market - Sunday, 16 June, 9.30pm - 1pm
- PLUS**, look out for us at various sporting and cultural events.

Remember, you have until 5pm Friday, June 28, to make a submission.

You can find out more and make an online submission at www.icc.govt.nz/cityblockconsultation

Follow our Facebook page for the latest information and events: www.facebook.com/cityblockconsultation

Steady as she goes!

CHECK out this awesome photo Graphic Designer Kelly Braithwaite took on a very wet and very windy Monday morning, as the weighbridge was lifted out at the Invercargill Transfer Station earlier this week!

Ms Braithwaite spotted a few motorists attempting to avoid the traffic management put in place for everyone's safety while work is carried out.

Hopefully people are more observant while the project continues.

It is expected work will be complete by Tuesday, May 28, with normal operations to resume on Wednesday, May 29 – weather dependent, of course.



Change of plan for watermain renewal

WORK on the watermain renewal project has reached the intersection of Spey and Dee Street, with the intersection expected to reopen this week.

The intersection of Yarrow and Dee Street will be closed again for a short time to reinstate the road.

This work is weather dependant.

Unfortunately, due to the container walkway still being required outside the ILT demolition site, work is unable to continue along Dee Street at this time.

Instead, work to renew the watermains along Tay Street will begin at the intersection of Tay Street and Queens Drive/Elles Road from next week.

There will be multiple changes to the road layout to keep road users and contractors safe. Please take care and pay attention to road signs.

You may need to use either Ythan or Conon Street when travelling south as turning lanes at Queens Drive will be affected and diversions in place.

Works will proceed along Tay to Dee Street, then continue north on Dee to link with the section of pipework already laid on Dee.

Updates are being provided on the Word on the Street Facebook page, and on Council's website.



Food and Fun. It's Festival Time!

BY LINDSAY BEER

Bluff Publicity/Promotions Officer

AROUND 20,000 Bluff Oysters will lure thousands of people from all over New Zealand and beyond for the 2019 Bluff Oyster & Food Festival in Bluff this weekend.

As they were last year, tickets were sold out months ago for a day that features the iconic Bluff Oyster and other succulent southern seafood such as blue cod, paua, salmon, kina, muttonbirds, scallops, mussels, seafood chowder and even crayfish cheese rolls. There is also plenty of choice for those not partial to seafood with beer & beef pie, pork belly rolls, roast lamb rolls, Korean fried chicken, venison and bacon burgers, eton mess, escargot, meringue and more. A range of beers and wines, barista and instant coffee plus hot tea are available to accompany the tasty fare.

The gates will open at 10.30am before the traditional Piping in of the Oyster and the reciting of the Ode to the Oyster at 11.00am. Bluff Town Crier Ian Holland will recite the Ode this year after which Festival Chairman John Edminstin will declare the event officially open and the festivities will be underway.

The Bluff School Kapa Haka Group will commence proceedings on the main stage followed by Christchurch based Yurt Party with their East European meets dubby roots sound. Sam Cullen and band follows and with Cullen's career very much in the ascendancy at the moment. A nominee for Southland Entertainer Of The Year Award, Sam will be joined by Chris Chilton of Pretty Wicked Head and Matt Ward. A Polynesian dance-off follows with Kuki-Airani - Mapu while throughout the day there will prizes and giveaways. Band Of Bluffies, consisting of Geoff Williams, Darcy Kerr, Jacob McQuarrie plus Lee and Casey Barris, are next up with some hard rocking music from 3.15pm before the appearance of THE HYPE, featuring former three-time Southland Entertainer Of The Year,



Shannon Cooper Garland to round out the day.

The popular Oyster Competitions take place in Shed 3 with a range of Oyster Opening competitions followed by the Oyster Eating races.

The speed of the Oyster Openers is seriously impressive with races for Men, Ladies, Novices, a Factory Relay, a Boat Crew race and a Blindfold Race.

Vic Pearsey of Bluff will be gunning for her ninth title in succession in the Ladies Open this year. Last year, Pearsey opened her 50 Bluff Oysters in 3 minutes 28 seconds but two years ago managed the feat in 2 minutes 43 seconds. Shane Wixon has been the one to beat in the Men's Open since 2015, his winning time for 50 oysters last year 3 minutes 02 seconds, short of his own personal best of 2 minutes 36 seconds. Ricci Grant of Barnes Oysters has been the runner-up behind Wixon on every one of those years, even equalling his time in 2016 only to lose a tiebreaker to establish a winner with a further 20 oysters.

The popular Oyster Eating competitions follow the Oyster Opening events and participants are chosen from the crowd to down a dozen of Bluff's best in the fastest possible time. Daryl 'Dagwood' MacDonald of Blenheim is heading south to try to take his fourth consecutive Oyster Eating title in his fourth visit to the Festival.

A new event was added to the eating contests last year – the Wasabi Chilli Challenge. The inaugural competition was won by Dave Vaile of Oamaru, who admitted afterwards that he and his workmates frequently have their own chilli eating competitions.

Once again Air New Zealand will bring in two jet loads of passengers from Auckland and Wellington specifically for the event while still more passengers are booked on a special weekend package.

Trustpower no longer administering Community Awards

BY MARY NAPPER

Community Development Manager

FOR twelve years we have been very pleased to work with Trustpower in the delivery of the Trustpower Community Awards. We have seen initiatives driven by teams of volunteers win the Invercargill/Southland awards and represent our region proudly at the Nationals. Koha Kai won the National Supreme Award in 2017 and several initiatives were runner up to the supreme winner including South Alive and the South Catlins Charitable Trust.

Over the last 18 months Trustpower has been reviewing the Trustpower Community Awards to see how they could improve them; both for the communities they operate in, and for Trustpower. This has been a great opportunity to implement some changes and test new things, but after a lot of thought and consideration Trustpower has made the tough decision to discontinue the Trustpower Community and Youth Spirit Awards.

This is a big decision for Trustpower as shining a light on voluntary groups and young volunteers around the country has been a part of their DNA for the last 25 years. Trustpower wishes to acknowledge and thank all our volunteer-driven projects for the support everyone has shown the Trustpower Community Awards over the years – they couldn't have done it without our community.



An evening with Southland Author, Greg Wilson

WEDNESDAY 29 MAY, 6.45PM at the **INVERCARGILL PUBLIC LIBRARY**



GREG Wilson has spent much of his life in New Zealand's remote regions. An experienced outdoorsman who lives and thrives in the wilderness, he has a great love for the birds, wildlife and landscape of Fiordland and enjoys sharing its beauty with others.

Come with him and experience something unforgettable as he shares some poetry and some of his wondrous wilderness experiences. Greg believes in engaging the wilderness with minimal interference from the techno world we live in.

Weekend Storytimes at the Library!

SATURDAYS 11AM AND SUNDAYS 2PM



JOIN us at the Invercargill Public Library every weekend for half-an-hour of storytime. Explore the magic of books and adventure with a series of stories aimed to delight your young children. Children must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver.