



# Council asked to reconsider options

BY MATT MALEY

THE Invercargill City Council (ICC) was left with a lot to ponder from its Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) hearing on Tuesday with a number of submitters decrying the proposed multi bin kerbside recycling service.

Following Tuesday's hearing a number of submitters were invited back to join a council workshop yesterday, indicating that further discussion may be entered in to on the subject and a possible decision delayed.

The issue of significant debate on Tuesday was the potential adoption of a three bin or two bin option, with the three bin option offering two 240 litre bins for recycling and organic waste and a further 140 litre bin for rubbish.

Council had publicly stated the three bin proposal is its preferred option, which will require the purchasing of bins at a value of \$3.09 million.

If this option is implemented it will commence from July 1, 2011 within the urban areas of Invercargill and Bluff and the selected rural areas of Moore Rd, Otatara, Woodend, Greenhills and Greenpoint.

Another issue identified was that the status quo – the current wheelie bin and recyclables crate - was not one of the four kerbside recycling options presented to the public during the consultation period, with an ICC objective to ensure that the solid waste collection service it provides

meets, as far as possible, the needs of its communities now and into the future.

Recycling Southland Ltd director Tanea Hawkins asked council at the hearing to keep going with its current services in the short-term and seek more innovative, appropriate and responsible solutions for the future.

Recycling Southland had invested heavily in researching emerging waste solutions in order to seek the best solution for waste in Southland, Mrs Hawkins said, and had discovered waste technology was changing rapidly.

She believes "waste is a resource" and if managed correctly could potentially generate income for the city, whereas committing to a two or three bin system would "commit the city to an expensive dinosaur for 16 years".

Mrs Hawkins showed council examples of emerging technologies and business models that could be considered in the future, including focusing on turning organic waste directly to bioenergy instead of compost.

She had found commercial composting, as being suggested by council, had caused financial and environmental headaches for other local authorities, with collection and processing lines creating a significant carbon footprint that couldn't be ignored.

Mrs Hawkins encouraged council to use the opportunities currently in

place and continue for the next six years, giving it time to fully research better ways for the future.

Sticking with the current process for the time being would save rate-payers over \$3 million over the next six years, she said, compared with the costs of moving to the two bin option (two 240 litre bins for recycling and rubbish) and a saving of over \$8 million compared to the three bin collection scheme.

Mrs Hawkins was one of the submitters invited to yesterday's workshop, after Mayor Tim Shadbolt enquired why the ideas she presented had only come to light so late in the piece. She told *Southland Express* she was pleased with how the hearing went.

"I thought it went really well from our point of view. There were a number of high profile speakers all giving the same message and that was reinforced at the end of the day from a different perspective."

She said the aim of the exercise had been to open council's eyes to other options and believed that had been achieved.

Community Recycling Network of Aotearoa chair Sue Coutts asked council to carefully consider the outcomes of all the alternative systems to the status quo, so an informed decision could be made about what was the most suitable for the community.

Her submission stressed that strong evidence from the United



Kingdom and United States showed well run, separated recycling collections used less energy, created a lower carbon footprint, were cheaper, were more popular with users and reduced total waste arisings.

John Webber, general manager of Glass Packaging Forum Inc, said the forum was extremely concerned that it was intended to collect glass containers in a general recycling bin as it was universally recognised that glass should be kept separate from other materials.

He said if council required all of its recyclables in one container consideration should be given to an SAS bin which had two separate com-

partments, including one specifically for glass.

Dave Marshall, of Joe's Refuse Service, said polls had shown Invercargill's reluctance to change, while there was a general lack of knowledge in the community about the new proposals.

There were also concerns about the increase in cost to the ratepayer, particularly the likes of elderly who he said had no more resources available for such services.

34 submitters spoke to their submissions at Tuesday's hearing with yesterday's workshops to further discuss and decide on the solid waste management strategy as well as a

number of other issues – not least the future of Bluff's swimming pool.

ICC communications manager Eirwen Tulett said following yesterday's workshops a report will be written in the name of his Worship the Mayor, with a further meeting on June 29 to formally adopt the plan.

AT the time of going to print, an outcome from the workshops was not yet known. We look forward to giving readers an update.

Would you like to share your thoughts on the kerbside options being discussed by council?

Email your comments to [feedback@southlandexpress.co.nz](mailto:feedback@southlandexpress.co.nz).



**Tough talking:** Clarie and Tanea Hawkins of Recycling Southland Ltd are watched by employees and members of the public as they present their submission to council at a hearing on Tuesday.

Photo: Robert Landreth



**Dave Marshall, of Joe's Refuse Service**



**Invercargill Mayor Tim Shadbolt and ICC Chief Executive Richard King**



**Community Recycling Network of Aotearoa chair Sue Coutts**