

## TOWN CLERK BRIEFING NOTE

**34 Matters Arising***Page 1*

*4 Matters Arising, 24 Destination Management resolution (1066 & RDC tourism expenditure breakdowns) Received - see main agenda item 38(d).*

*9 Cycle Path, Resoution 1 (arranging Member's visit of route) Actioned – see main agenda item 41.*

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*11 Rye Fawkes (asking for the public conveniences to be open longer) Actioned – response awaited. See main agenda item 46.*

*21 Allotments (seeking Council approval for any necessary budget increase) Actioned and approved by Council (up to £2,000). See main agenda item 36.*

*22 Visitor & Information Management Group (Bridge repair delays) Actioned – delays due to unavailability of sub-contractors).*

*Page 3 Kings Avenue Open Space (asking Rother Homes to survey residents) Actioned via RDC which has been informed of local requests for play equipment by a Rother Homes Community Development Officer. Rother is considering some minor improvements to the playground over the autumn-winter. Discussions continuing.*

26.9.07

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Dear Town or Parish Council Chairman,

**De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill on Sea**

Rother District Council are undertaking a scrutiny review of the De La Warr Pavilion Charitable Trust, with whom our current Funding Agreement is due to expire on 1 April 2008. As part of this, we are endeavouring to find out the views of a range of organisations on the current and future contribution of the De La Warr Pavilion to the district and the region in economic, social and cultural terms.

We would therefore like to ask if you could forward to us, at the address above, a response, marked for the attention of Brenda Mason, to the following questions:

1. How and to what extent do you think that the De La Warr Pavilion contributes currently to economic, social and/or cultural life?
2. What is your view of the future value and role of the De La Warr Pavilion?

Attached is a brief note on the history of the relationship between Rother District Council and the De La Warr Pavilion that I hope will contribute to your thinking. Any further comments you feel you'd like to make, outside the scope of the questions, are very welcome. Your response will form part of our public scrutiny and so will be available in the public domain. Responses can be by email or letter at the above address and should be received by **26 October 2007** to be included in Members' consideration.

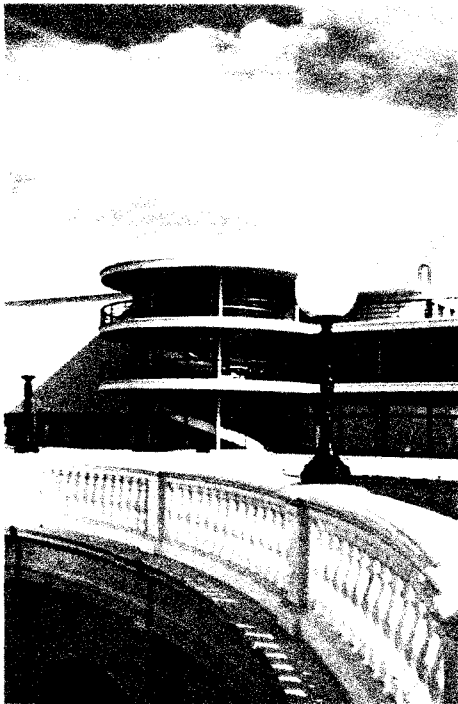
Thank you very much for your time. If all goes to timetable, we hope to publish our scrutiny report in the winter of 2007 and I shall be pleased to send you a copy.

Yours faithfully,

Derek Stevens  
Chief Executive

Designed by architects Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff, the De La Warr Pavilion was opened in 1935 to international acclaim. The Pavilion was inspired by the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl De La Warr, then Mayor of Bexhill, who dreamt of a "Peoples Palace" by the sea. The building remains as one of only a handful of Modernist masterpieces. The De La Warr Pavilion is currently consolidating its reputation as an international architectural icon and as South East England's leading centre for contemporary art. This recent resurgence has been a story of innovation, adventure, creativity, risk and, above all, partnership.

From its inception in 1935, the De La Warr Pavilion has been supported from the public purse. Paid for by Bexhill Corporation and run as a popular seaside venue, the Pavilion was taken over by Rother District Council in 1974. By around this time and certainly by the time of the Great Storm of 1987, the Pavilion was in much need of thoroughgoing structural repair, estimated at many hundreds of thousands of pounds. Spiralling running costs, topping £1.2m per year, also meant that some Rother residents were beginning to question the value for money of the De La Warr Pavilion.



A new strategy was called for to give renewed life to the building at the same time as containing local public subsidy within reasonable limits. The role of the National Lottery was crucial here in providing access to both arts and heritage capital. The process to win Lottery support was however lengthy and arduous, during which time Rother District Council used in excess of £1.1m of its own capital to secure the most urgent repairs. In April 2002 the Council was awarded £4.1m from Arts Council England and £1.9m from the Heritage Lottery Fund, along with significant contributions from other charitable foundations and private donors.

The capital was spent on complex structural repairs and upgrading the heating, mechanical and electrical systems. It was also used to create entirely new spaces within the building for exhibitions, events, refreshment and relaxation. The roof terrace was re-opened (subject to health and safety restrictions) and the sun terrace on the first floor reinstated. A community studio is under construction, along with improvements to restaurant,

office, catering and backstage spaces. The 1,000 seater Auditorium has been upgraded with refurbished seating and audiovisual equipment.

As part of the new strategy and to achieve financial efficiencies as well as a new autonomy for the Pavilion, in April 2003 the Council transferred the operations of the De La Warr to a new Charitable Trust under Chairman, Richard Sykes and Director, Alan Haydon. Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall agreed to become President of the Trust. A five-year Funding Agreement was put in place between the Council and the Trust, looking ahead to the re-opening of the Pavilion and allowing the Trust to build up its market and its programme over the course of its early years. This revenue support, £500,000 per year, RPI linked, continues to be matched by Arts Council England.

The re-opening of the Pavilion took place in the autumn of 2005, since when the Pavilion has welcomed around one million visitors and attracted media coverage on a national scale.

The first annual report of the Trust outlines two challenges that face the Pavilion. The first is to build on the strong foundations of the Trust's early arts and education programmes. The second is to create a financially robust institution with a sustainable balance sheet that at present lacks a strong cash component. Financial pressures, from low government grant settlements and rising service delivery costs, mean that there are inevitable constraints on the District Council's capacity to grant aid the Trust.

Rother District Council's vision for the district, into which its support to the De La Warr Pavilion must fit, encompasses:

- Greater economic prosperity with a skilled workforce gaining greater access to well paid employment.
- Rother to be a place of greater vibrancy with a more youthful demographic profile, supporting economically active lifestyles.
- More leisure and cultural opportunities as a basis for healthy community life.
- The outstanding assets of countryside and coastline valued more highly for their contribution to our quality of life.

The Council's Aims:

- Putting Customers First
- Delivering Value for Money
- Building Stronger and Safer Communities
- Working in Partnership

The De La Warr Pavilion Mission:

'In keeping with the broad philosophy that gave rise to its creation as a flagship to modernism and a symbol of civic aspirations, the De La Warr Pavilion is a centre, committed to cultural and social inclusion, known internationally and owned locally, with access, quality, education and tolerance at its core.'

The De La Warr Pavilion Aims:

- Develop and sustain a unique visitor experience, bridging the arts, architecture and cultural diversity.
- Create opportunities for all levels of artistic development, community and audience engagement and life long learning.
- Deliver high quality and fully accessible services and amenities to all visitors.

**The challenge for Rother District Council and the De La Warr Pavilion Charitable Trust is now to forge a sustainable future partnership on the foundations of the past few years that enables both organisations to serve their publics, carry out their responsibilities and enhance the quality of life in Rother.**