

CONFERENCING & EXHIBITIONS and ARTS update

Leisure and Cultural Trust for Bournemouth

Bournemouth Council's leisure centres, conferencing and entertainment venues are set to become a charitable trust following a decision by Councillors at a recent Cabinet meeting, that took place earlier this month. Councillors have agreed, that the management of the BIC and Pavilion, Littledown Centre, Stokewood and Pelhams Park and Sir David English Centre should be managed by a Trust in order to secure both future investment and improvements in the town's leisure centres, conferencing and entertainment venues, subject to a Full Business Case. This decision is subject to a more detailed report going to Cabinet in December 2009.

Councillor Stephen MacLoughlin, Council Leader said: "Trust status could deliver significant financial benefits through business rate relief and VAT exemptions. The Council will continue to own the buildings and will be represented on the Board of Trustees. Trust status will also provide greater freedom to both access funding and reinvest profits in improving what the facilities' offer the public. If we do pursue the option of Trust status, the overriding consideration will be value for money, which is especially important during this period of recession and the squeeze on public finances."

Liberal Democrats Conference

From 19th – 23rd Sept the BIC and the town hosted the Liberal Democrats party conference, an estimated 6000 delegates/visitors etc, are expected to have generated an estimated £6.5million for the town's economy. During the conference the BIC also hosted BBC Question Time, which celebrated 30-years having being broadcast for the first time on 25th September 1979, on Thursday 24th September. The programme featured Harriet Harman, Lord Heseltine, David Laws, Lord Digby Jones and Fraser Nelson. Member of the trade that benefited from the conference include Westpoint Restaurant that has never experienced such large numbers of diners and in the end had to turn them away.

Kyran Bracken Lights the BIC's 25th Birthday

Sunday 6th September marked the Bournemouth International Centre's (BIC) 25th birthday! And Saturday saw former England International rugby player Kyran Bracken, who won ITV's Dancing on Ice in 2007, light up the celebrations with a special raffle, where a lucky winner received the top prize of 25 free tickets to BIC shows, worth over £700! Clive Tyers, Head of Conferences, Exhibitions and Events at the BIC and Pavilion, said: "The raffle was a massive success...it was a great way of celebrating the BIC's 25th birthday. Here's to the next 25 years of bringing you the best!"