

Council Meeting/ 23 July

Statement: Emilio Pimentel-Reid

STARTS

Hello I'm Emilio Pimentel-Reid

I speak to you as a Bath resident who is concerned about the council's neglect of our future as a tourist destination worth visiting.

We understand that there are plans to create a new management organization to combine the efforts of Visit Bath and Destination Bristol. In this sort of arrangement does anyone actually believe that Bath will be prioritized?

Bath Echo and Manda Rigby claim on the record that only back office functions will be combined to save money. Who is anyone kidding, when Kathryn Davis the Interim chief executive of Visit Bath is also the Head of Tourism -at destination Bristol. What happens to Bath ?

Residents have already expressed anger at the job losses and closure of the Bath Visitor Information Centre - what else will follow from there?

While we lose our welcoming identity in the tourism landscape, the council seems to lack the vision and direction to protect the independent shops that have made Bath unique, instead choosing to subsidise billionaire-owned businesses like House of Fraser/ Jolly's while local retailers are put to the sword.

To makes matters worse, B&NES seems to lack the understanding that in the immediate future people will travel to shops by car while avoiding public transport. Shockingly B&NES has used this very moment to make parking in some of our shopping streets even more difficult - if not impossible.

Today we hear that the Christmas Market will not be taking place this year and yet no alternative plan is offered. This is really bad PR for our city. Surely B&NES should have announced an exciting & considered alternative initiative first? The council already looks like it is completely out of ideas.

Is there a long-term plan? Does B&NES have a strategy? Is there any joined up thinking and where can we read about it?

To the vast majority of residents who love our city this does not appear to be the case.

ENDS