

Members of Priorities and Resources,

As chairman of the Bridge Group of Hotels, a buying/social group of 58 small hotels and guest houses in the Bay, I am astonished at yet another council proposal to perpetuate Gordon Oliver's vendetta against the ERTC by once again cutting their funding.

I am concerned as it is obvious to most, the essential work the ERTC has done in promoting the Bay over the last four years, on a fraction of the money, staff and resources that were enjoyed when it was run by the Council. The proposal to reduce the funding to zero over the next two years. will obviously inhibit the company's ability to market the Bay effectively. Not only against foreign package holidays but against the other resorts and city destinations in this country, who despite being subject to the same statutory pressures as Torbay, continue to recognize the importance of supporting their tourism marketing financially.

A decline in visitors to the Bay as a result of this short sighted proposal will not only affect the front line sectors of the industry, the accommodation, the food outlets and the attractions but also for the many thousands employed locally in the support chain, ie local suppliers Hallams Bakers, Devon Fresh, Fruit and Veg, Bays Brewery, Caterfood ,MJ Bakers etc, and their employees and suppliers who are all taxpayers and voters.

The Council should look at either selling or subcontracting the Riviera Centre to Private operators as the number of events has declined substantially over the last few years. Money should be taken from the reserves until it is sold to minimize the effect of cuts to not only the ERTC but Libraries, Street Wardens, Street Lighting etc

Otherwise raise council tax.