

Kewstoke Parish Council
Clerk to the Council: Colin Hill
84 Beach Road, Sand Bay, Kewstoke
Weston Super Mare BS22 9UQ
Tel:01934 624430
Email: colin.hill17@btinternet.com

Chairman: Councillor Nancy Whyte

Report on the Meeting at NSDC
Re: Service Provision

A presentation was given of which slides were available followed by a workshop and question and answer session

This was an invitation for Parishes to work with NSDC in different ways but in essence take over services that are at risk because NSDC have to save £47million pounds over 4 years.

Many Parishes were simply too small, with very small budgets and were only likely to take on services if they joined together and many had different priorities. It is likely that the larger Parishes are the ones to gain or loose. There may be scope for smaller parishes to join forces with a larger Parish for some services. From my reading of the situation some Parishes will opt to do nothing.

The key to this appears to be two fold; Is this an opportunity to do a service better with some grant or will we face a cut in the service or simply a closure.

Looking to a certain extent into a crystal ball and judging where this could affect Kewstoke leads to the obvious: Grass and verges cut less often, dog bin emptying less, no youth service, car park maintenance and possibly part closure of toilets. Less maintenance on roads, more street lights out for longer, rubbish bin emptying less and a whole raft of increased charges.

The Government has frozen Council Tax increases and despite our own views on ways of saving money this is very serious particularly for the Rural Parishes.

Where do we go from here?

It was obvious that Kewstoke were ahead of the game with its grass cutting contract work.

We could talk to NSDC about other options which could involve toilets, car parks, dog bin emptying, street lighting, maintenance and beach cleaning provision. It appears youth provision has gone already.

The other issue is revenue raising.

Apart from putting up the precept to cover costs (seen as double taxation) there are other issues such as the Toll Road and Concessions which could raise the Parish revenue to pay for services.

I would propose that the Council highlight its priorities in a list form and perhaps after discussion a Working Group come up with proposals and talk to NSDC about them.
Alternatively we can do nothing and await the consequences.

I would emphasise that in my opinion this is a very serious state of affairs and we need as a Council to address this carefully and fully.

Colin

