

SE Parishes Meeting: Interim report by Cllr S Clarke

I attended and chaired the SE Parishes meeting on Friday 24 Feb. The notes will be circulated when ready but the following will be of immediate interest.

A) Tourism

Swanage TC have invited other PCs (and the NT) to their tourism meeting on 15 March where we will discuss with partners issues arising from high tourist numbers such as parking, BBQs and fires and remedial issues including better public transport. Also on the agenda is whether there is scope to bid for projects, which enhance the all year round tourism offer. Fellow councillors will have views on this.

B) Second homes

Dorset Council is being recommended on 28 Feb to support the 100% surcharge on Council tax on the 5000 plus second homes in the County if the Levelling Up Bill becomes law soon. If the Bill becomes law by 31 March 2023 the measure could raise about £9m in Council tax for precepting authorities from April 2024.

The national Valuation Office will monitor those buildings, which are deemed holiday lets and qualify for business rates relief. To qualify the properties must be offered for 200 days a year and **must** be let for 70 days a year.

C) Local Government Review

There was a discussion about whether the Parishes and Swanage should review formally the outcome of the reorganisation of four years ago and the impact on services, finance and local democracy. Corfe Castle PC had pressed originally for a committee, which reviewed the impact on services in the Purbeck area. Views varied on this: In Swanage both DC councillors are Town Councillors and communication is automatically very good. Others shared the view that the peninsula has had a lower local government profile since Purbeck DC was abolished.

It is normal that major changes are subject to review but the issue would need to be pressed strongly. Should we consider it as a motion for the next DAPTC AGM?

D) The meeting had a presentation from Dorset Police **on community speed watch** (CSW) and the Corfe Castle scheme is a local model of good practice. There is a lot of interest in the parishes as there is a wish to introduce 20mph limits for which CSW is the precondition.

E) We all expressed interest in a joint DC/PC **community emergency plan**