District Councillors report to 16 February 2019

I am sure those of you who read the Local Paper will have spotted that, yet again, I was the chair on the next Woolpit Application recently refused. All applications are taken on merit and the facts for that case. This one had a defensible underlying highways safety reason for refusal as recommended by the Planning Officer and after strong debate the application was refused. There are many reasons for refusal despite not having yet declared the 5 year land supply situation, nor having the Local Plan in Place. It is a misconception that having a five year land supply is the panacea for all our ills. It is not it is part of the Jigsaw, along with the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans.

The timing for the local Plan has unfortunately slipped and should be early summer. To that end I am on a focus group, working with officers, to keep the timings on track and get this thing through.

I must congratulate The Parish Council and the Team who have doggedly kept on with Debenham’s Neighbourhood Plan (of course I have been to many meetings with them) but most of all congratulate the foresight of the Debenham Electorate for voting in favour of this plan. I do understand those people who may not agree with it for whatever reason, but if we did not have one we would loose control of our lovely village and surrounding countryside and after all the young and the old deserve a chance to stay where they are most happy so any development has to be done in a sympathetic organic manner.

MSDC have a full council meeting this Thursday and it is proposed to increase our share of council tax by 6p per week (2%) on a band D property. You will find the Police and Suffolk CC’s share will go up around 5%. The administration would rather have small, regular increases than none, rather than a massive increase every four years.

Have you noticed our new PCSO? Just like old times and a very welcome sight.

A booklet explaining the achievements over the last four years, and challenges faced by councils will be delivered to every household in Mid Suffolk and should be delivered by the end of the month.

The Tree for life pilot is set to continue into this year. The scheme is open to every family in mid Suffolk to plant a tree, wherever they like to celebrate a new child into the family by birth or adoption (applications to be made by 10th January 2020 https:/www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/tree-for-life/

Just a reminder that the warding allocations have changed and Debenham, Winston and Aspall now includes the Parishes of Kenton, Ashfield-cum-Thorpe and Bedingfield. Your arrangements don’t change just those for the District Councillor.

I have no further news on any appeals.

Councillor Mrs Kathie Guthrie

16/2/2019