District Councillors report to 12 October 2018

As a commemoration of the Centenary of the signing of the Armistice at the end of the Great War in 1918 MSDC have chosen Debenham to be the recipients and caretakers of an avenue of seven or eight oak trees and a commemorative bench. The Bench depicts the soldiers and a sprig of poppies.

The last tree will be planted on the 2nd November which is the day chosen for this event and formal invites will be sent shortly.

I attended one of the Parish Council Liason Meetings last week with the Parish Councillors asking various pertinent questions. One of the presentations was about CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) and how it worked and how the new money is coming out into the community. Funds totalling £156k have been allocated to Stowmarket, Botesdale, Laxfield and Stowupland which include bus stop improvements and enhancements to Stowupland Village Hall and Sports and Social Club.

MSDC Health and Safety team work extremely hard and sadly The Limes Hotel was fined £2600 for food hygiene failures. No one wants to penalise businesses but safety is paramount.

MSDC have acquired the former Aldi building in Stowmarket which includes the car park. The acquisition forms part of the Stowmarket Vision for Prosperity – a wider five year action plan, which aims to revitalise the Town

Lullaby Concerts performed by the City of London Sinfonia and facilitated by Orchestra Live, will be performing in the United Reform Church Stowmarket and is aimed at children 2 – 7 years as well as parents and carers. The young audience will be at the heart of a musical puzzle in an exploration of shapes, puzzles and orchestral music. Tickets and more information from Stuart Bryce on 07831 272123 or stuart@orchestraslive.org.uk.

MSDC is one of the 10 areas across the country to take part in a 2018/19 pilot scheme allowing 100% of business rates growth to be retained by local authorities for use in their district. As a result funds totalling £960k have been divided between six key projects including £300k for the development of the Needham Market Lake/Visitor centre and £240k for redevelopment of the Town Centre in Stowmarket.

Planning and the five year land supply debate. Many of you will have seen in the press the appeal Inspectors decision on the Woolpit Planning Application. I would like to point out I was the chair when that application was refused and it was BEFORE any declaration of any five year land supply and at the time of refusal MSDC had not declared its figures and was still working on the scenario MSDC did not have such. The Committees decision for refusal was nothing to do with the five year land supply. It was based on the Highway and Pedestrian Safety and the perceived harm to the Conservation area and listed buildings. I attended two days of the appeal hearing and on reading the Inspectors decision I was alarmed to read his comments on the pedestrian safety. I will leave it at that as MSDC and others are dealing with the content of the Inspectors report.

So the five year land supply. Where are we. Well at that appeal the NPPF changed the rules on how the Council should count and assess their figures. The Inspector used the new rules and the council had presented them under the old. The Council are working on the figures to assess the exact position.

The application for up to 25 Houses off Little London Hill was refused by the appeal Inspector as was their claim for costs. This decision was not available when the second application for up to 8 houses was in progress. The second application moved the entrance and widened the road higher up Little London Hill and provided a pedestrian access on to the Butts. Road improvements on Little London Hill were requested and the flood attenuation was noted on the application. This is still an outline planning permission. The Committee recommended approval with recommendations and formal permission is yet to be issued.

Councillor Mrs Kathie Guthrie