

**EPWELL PARISH COUNCIL  
MEETING  
Online  
Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 8 pm**

Present:

Cllrs

Chris Hurst (chair)

Paul Neal

Norman White

Gavin Lloyd Thomas

Nicola Rudge

Cllrs George Reynolds (OCC and CDC)

Clerk Jacqui Harris

7 members of public

1/21 Apologies none

2/21 Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 approved and signed

3/21 Registration of Interest – code of conduct. No interests declared

4/21 Formal announcements from the Chair - Thanked Nicola Rudge re Christmas tree and village lights

5/21 Public participation. Concerned planning application 20/03588/F – a new dwelling next to Bay Tree House on Back Lane. Two statements made and summarised in the Notes on item 5.

Available from Chair on request. (chris@churst.org)

- a. Objections by Mrs Hoy
- b. Points in favour made by the applicant, Mr Tustian.

6/21 **Planning.** Current and Future Planning Matters

- a. 20/03243/F Reconfiguring existing lean-to conservatory roof to a pitched roof, extend existing conservatory into courtyard, extend existing stone wall Location: The Forge, Birds Lane, Epwell, OX15 6LQ Epwell. No objection.
- b. 20/03366/F Single storey rear extension. Bay Tree House, Back Lane, Epwell OX15 6LF. No objection
- c. 20/03447/F RETROSPECTIVE - Conversion of barn into one dwelling Epwell Grounds Farm, Field Barn, Shutford Road, Epwell, OX15 6HF. No objection
- d. 20/03588/F A 4-bedroom house next to Bay Tree House, Back Lane. Comments due by 4<sup>th</sup> Feb
- e. Decision 20/02305/F - Rectory Farm Back Lane Epwell OX15 6LG. Permitted

Council discussed planning application e. 20/03588/F **Resolved to object** on grounds of impact on neighbouring dwellings, inappropriate scale and reduction in visual amenity as set out in Paragraph C264 of the Cherwell Local Plan.

7/21 **Correspondence**

Poo bins near Green

20's Plenty for Oxfordshire

Royal Cars Minibus Service Bus stop and routes

Stile repaired by Yarn Hill Cottage. Not replaced by a gate.

8/21 **Finance**. Chair outlined the current position (approx. £10k) and proposed that the Precept increase by £350, which amounts to about £3 per household per year. Extra costs include Christmas Tree, grant for Echo, loss of a CDC annual grant and Clerk rise. **Resolved to accept the proposal.**

Clerk's pay increase. **Resolved to accept the increase discussed by set of emails in November.**

9/21 Cllr Neal proposed a scheme to finance Christmas Tree purchased from Warwickshire Trees. **Resolved to try the scheme in Dec 2021.**

10/21 **Road and highways** update. Excessive number of passing places on Church Lane. No one knew who had made them. Rugmans denied knowledge. Their plan for one on main corner was still the intention. Salt bins. **Resolved to top up from the big bag opposite The Orchard and then move the bag.** Destination to be decided.

#### 11/21 **Footpaths**

- a. Cllr Rudge gave an update on the footpaths in the village. Difficult at this time with the weather. Noted that some are very muddy or sometimes hard to negotiate because of electric fencing. Cllr White will check.
- b. Footpath signs needed for Rectory Farm area. Owners contacted and signs obtained from OCC. Cllr Rudge to take forward.
- c. Should the two tchures running from The Leys to Sibford Rd be official footpaths i.e. added to definitive footpath map? They are not on the definitive map but do link definitive paths with the road. It would protect the existence of these regularly used routes but like any footpath would be the responsibility of the landowners involved. **Resolved to ask the inhabitants either side for their views.**
- d. Stile repair at Yarn Hill Cottage. Landowner did not want a gate. Repair is in wood and much easier to get over than its predecessor. A gate if possible is general policy when a stile needs attention but it is ultimately down to the landowner.

12/21 Helping people with **Census return**, in March 2021. It will be on line primarily. Census team want to know of possible problems and whether council can offer help. Chair has filled in questionnaire for census team.

13/21 **Verges** and areas accessible to public. Volunteers needed to dig out the grips, fill salt bins, and a few other tasks. **Resolved** to set up working parties as in previous years.

14/21 **Wildlife habitats**. AONB and other grants. Suggestions are being developed about areas such as playing field, overflow burial ground and churchyard. Shrubs and trees. Plants good for pollinators are favoured. EPC **resolved** to support.

15/21 **Playing Field** update by Cllr Lloyd Thomas. New bench and goal posts installed. Small goal to be installed somewhere appropriate. A few jobs on the play equipment were left to do, following the advice of the 2020 inspection. Playing Field is open at the moment for exercise.

16/21 **Dog poo bins**. Cllr Lloyd Thomas said the existing two are a success and a third one is proposed for somewhere near the Green. Concerns have been expressed about precise location of bin. **Resolved** to order new bin and consult with local residents when it arrives.

17/21 **EVA** has been reactivated and is ready for action.

#### 18/21 **Village communication**

How should we the Parish Council send out messages to the community. Council might send a note round to all households asking how best to contact villagers. After discussion resolved to set up a EPC email network. Data protection issues would need to be sorted out. **Resolved** to pursue the matter.

Village website would be updated using WordPress. EPC could buy a laptop for website use. Tony Lee to be thanked for his work and given the chance to stop if he so wished. A small team would get this update rolling. Cllrs Lloyd Thomas and Hurst happy to help and there was a recent offer from Amanda Walsh. **Resolved** to get started as soon as possible.

It was noted that Chris Woodcock has taken over Echo. It was **resolved** to thank and publicly congratulate Nicola Rudge on her successful time as Editor.

Chair suggested that an annual grant (£100 perhaps) from EPC to the Echo would reduce the pressure. It was **resolved** to give the grant in the next financial year and see how things went.

19/21 **First Aid in the village.** The defibrillator at the Village Hall should be taken over and maintained by EPC. Formation of small group of volunteers discussed but there were insurance issues. It was suggested we contact James Clarke for advice. **Resolved** that Chair will contact James.

20/21 **Large lorries going through the Square** and down by side of church are still a problem. Council discussed various solutions; signs, road narrowing, fencing. **Resolved** Cllr Lloyd Thomas to discuss with Highways. Chair to talk to Rugmans about their traffic. Post code change might help. There was construction all over the place. For instance work is planned for Rectory Farmhouse (note: separate from Rectory Farm). Chair to ask them about traffic routes.

21/21 Dates of next meetings. Bring forward a week to second Monday in the month to make it easier to submit notes to Echo by the deadline. This means 8<sup>th</sup> March and 10<sup>th</sup> May for next two meetings.

A Village Meeting in April might be possible (on Zoom) but it was not clear if there was much to be gained. Resolved to review before next meeting.

The meeting finished at 9.28 pm