

KENT BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 277th Council meeting held at the Margaret Calder Pavilion, Kent County Showground on Saturday, 12th March 2016 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: **Vice-Chairman:** David Wood (DW)(in the chair); **Treasurer:** James Cash (JOC); **General Secretary:** Jenny Spon-Smith (JSS);

Branch representatives (directors of the company): **Ashford:** Anthony Keeler (AK); **Bromley:** Bill Monks (BM); **Mid Kent:** David Quigley (DQ); **Canterbury:** David Cockburn (DC), Michael Roberts (MR); **Dartford:** William Mundy (WM), Patrick Letschka (PL); **Gravesend:** Lesley Fancote (LF); **Orpington:** Kit Erhardt (KE), Susan Stansfield (SS); **Sidcup:** Bob Smith (BS); **Weald:** Nick Mengham (NM), John Priestley (JP); **Westerham:** Robert Dudgeon (RD), Nick Withers (NW); **Whitstable and Herne Bay:** Julie Coleman (JC); **Yalding:** Chris Morris (CM)

DW opened the meeting by congratulating JH on his election as President of the BBKA. He also asked those present to introduce themselves.

1. Apologies and proxies and visitors:

Apologies: John Hendrie (Membership Secretary), Sharon Bassey (Exam Secretary); Bob Jackman (Bromley); David Rea (DR)(Sidcup); Roger Jackson (Whitstable); Steve Clarkson (Yalding)

Proxies: David Bragg (DB) for Steve Clarkson (Yalding); Dithema Chiloane (DC) for Bob Jackman (Bromley)

JSS reported that Chris Morris had replaced DB as one of Yalding's representatives and Keith Salmons (Ashford) had resigned.

Executive officers: Charles Posnett (CP) and Lisa Wilson (LW) (both Mid Kent)

2. Minutes of the 276th Council meeting held on 28th November 2015

Approved and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

3. Matters arising:

BS asked whether a decision had been made by the Executive re DR's proposal re funding of lectures. He will ask DR to put together guidelines for branches seeking funding. Any other matters arising are dealt with below.

4. BBKA and ADM:

JSS reported that JH had been elected President and the three candidates Kent had seconded had been elected at the ADM; also, proposition 1 to increase capitation by £2.00 had been rejected. The proposition for a one-off levy of £1.00 per member towards the cost of hosting the 2017 International Meeting of Young Beekeepers was approved although how this was to be collected by BBKA had not been decided. There was discussion as to how this might be done and the suggestion was mooted that Kent should fund the levy. A full report on the ADM will be published in the BBKA Newsletter.

5. Election of Officers:

Officers were elected as follows:

President: Lesley Fancote

Chairman: David Bragg

Vice-Chairman: David wood

Treasurer: Charles Posnett

Assistant Treasurer: James Cash

General Secretary: Jenny Spon-Smith

Membership Secretary: John Hendrie
 Examinations Secretary: Sharon Bassey
 Beecraft: Jenny Spon-Smith
 BDI: Anthony Keeler
 National Honey Show: Peter Bashford, Jenny Spon-Smith, Nick Mengham
 Executive Committee: Michael Wall, Anthony Keeler, Julie Coleman, Steve Clarkson, Lisa Wilson
 Show Committee: Ronnie Eagle, Lesley Fancote, Bob Smith, Michael Wall, John Hendrie, Jackie Tonks, David Wood
 Education Committee: Kit Erhardt, Julie Coleman, John Hendrie, Lesley Fancote, James Cash

The suggestion was raised as to amalgamating the Show and Education committees. LF made the point there was less need for an Education Committee in light of the fact that all branches run their own courses/practical support etc. This will be considered by the Executive

6. Membership:

JSS reported membership so far this year was down 150. Possible reasons for this were mooted. See paragraphs 8 and 11

7. Finance

The balances on the various bank accounts were as follows

CAF Cash current a/c @ 09/03/16	£50	(auto funding to Gold a/c)
CAF Gold deposit a/c @ 09/03/16	£18,571	(Interest rate = 0.20%)
CCLACOIF County Reserve a/c @ 01/03/16	£8,670	estimate (Interest rate = 0.45%)
Total @ 09/03/16	£27,291	

Cash -Flow

On the KBKA Income side, since the last Council Meeting, £50 was received from Flynnes Bee farm in relation to a long overdue (KCS 2014 and 2015) donation/contribution to our Kent County Show accounts. This brought the 2015 KCS final surplus to £808.56.

The above figures for available cash are, as usual, high at this time of year ready for the large main payments of Capitation to BBKA and the main BDI insurance. It is worth noting the fact from the Membership Secretary's report that this year it seems that more members than usual have not yet had their membership renewals processed by Branch Membership Secretaries. This means that KBKA is at serious risk of overpaying the BBKA Capitation charge if the County Membership Secretary is unaware via the BDI website and his own data base of members who will not actually be renewing and should be removed from previous year membership lists. If this were to apply for say 104 people (8 per Branch) KBKA could end up paying out $104 \times (\text{£}19 + \text{£}2) = \text{£}2,184$ in monies that KBKA was never going to receive ! Such a situation should of course be avoided by Branch Treasurers and Branch Membership Secretaries paying full attention to the detailed needs of their Offices.

Cheques have been written for the Branches due their First half year part of M&G Charifund dividend monies which is £500 in total. There were no other particularly significant outgoings since the last November 2015 Council Meeting.

Investments (County)

The valuations of the 'County's' (not including those held by the Branches) investments at 08/09 March 2016 the FTSE100 @ near 6050 were as follows:
 F&C Stewardship International Fund = £7,759 (Cost price £5,000)

BNY Mellon Charity Fund-Newton Growth & Income Fund for Charities
 =£42,821 (Cost price £25,200)
 M&G Charifund (County Accumulation Units) £23,807 (Converted@£15,122)
Total value £74,387 (@ 28/11/15 =£73,656)

2016/2017 Subscriptions

Information about possible increases by BeeCraft and BDI did begin to filter through but details are not yet fully clear e.g. for e-BeeCraft. The first Draft Table for discussion looks like being as follows helped by the ADM vote against an increase in BBKA Capitation:

	£ 2015/16	£ 2016/17 First Draft
BeeCraft	21.00	21.00 tbc
BDI	2.00	2.00 tbc
BBKA Capitation	19.00	19.00
Retained in Branch for Branch use	6.50	6.50
Member levy for BBKA Young Beekeepers Conference		1.00 tbc
Sub-Total	<u>48.50</u>	<u>49.50</u>
Deduct County Subbing	<u>2.50</u>	<u>2.50 subject to draft accounts</u>
Total to be collected by Branches	46.00	for 2016/17 = <u>47.00</u>

The Future of KBKA Gift-Aid claiming and BeeCraft no longer being included in our Subscription.

Many words were written about this towards the end of last year under two headings and against the backdrop of the HMRC changed rules. The Headings were and still are

- A) The method of claiming Gift-Aid and the record keeping that goes with it and
- B) BeeCraft must not be shown anywhere as being part of the KBKA Subscription

Clearly both are very important in the event that KBKA were to be investigated by HMRC and if, as is planned, KBKA use the benefits of being able to claim our Gift-Aid monies electronically via the BDI site system. Council Members will recall that KBKA have not yet elected to use this system but intend to do so from 01 October 2016.

Re A) above : One or two KBKA Branches are already perceived as not to be complying adequately with retaining Branch records (particularly electronic) which should be available for inspection to show adequate proof of members Gift-Aid wishes in a way that could be inspected by HMRC.

Re B) above : Each Branch needs to use a membership form showing clearly what is and is not giftaidable. The Sidcup BDI site example shows exactly what each Branch needs to get in place – I suggest for the 2015/16 Second and Third returns.

I also strongly urge Council to take advantage of our KBKA County Membership Secretary's offer to hold a half day teach-in for Branch people who deal with the entering of data into the BDI system from their membership forms. The suggested time is soon - say mid week in mid-April before the beekeeping season gets truly underway.

There is also the advantage in Branches using electronic membership forms which can automatically fill in a not giftaidable £21 to BeeCraft as soon as a member fills in an e-form showing a Registered Member requirement. It needs to be emphasised again that our 25% reduction in the Beecraft cover price will only continue if all KBKA

Registered members take BeeCraft when it can no longer be shown as within our £46 subscription.

Grant applications from Branches

The KBKA Executive committee were unable to consider further the application for two lots of £500 from Weald Branch at their meeting on 11/02/16 due to the non receipt of 2014/15 Branch accounts

Extract from my Report and part that of the County Membership Secretary's report to Council on 28 November 2015.

The County Membership Secretary's roll has included, for 10 and more years, the reclaiming of gift aid which now provides KBKA with over £5,000 a year from HMRC. We do not claim for the BeeCraft element of our subscription as it is a benefit in kind to members so ineligible for gift-aid.

As a result of HMRC investigating some other organisations akin to KBKA it has come to light that at least one other organisation has been over claiming leading to some claims being completely rejected by HMRC even with backdated disqualifications and Gift-Aid claw back !

*There are important technicalities now introduced by HMRC which dictate how we can describe our subscription and what it includes. Notably mandatory BeeCraft and the 25% discount KBKA thereby enjoy and this is an issue for KBKA to resolve before we settle the 2016/2017 subscription details and membership application and renewal forms. Needless to say perhaps that these issues are also focussing BDI and their e-system which is potentially set to simplify enormously the Gift-Aid claiming process when they have HMRC approval for what **they** are working on. It is our understanding that BDI do now have this approval. KBKA will however continue with gift-aid claiming outside the BDI e-system for 2015/2016. But there is an important need to resolve amongst the Branch Treasurers/County Treasurer and Branch Membership Secretaries/County Membership secretary how exactly members Gift-Aid signatures both manual or electronic are recorded and stored. This is in case KBKA has a visitation from HMRC !*

More discussion and planning by Branches, your Executive committee and Council itself is needed in relation to membership application and renewal forms before next March 2016 /June 2016.

*This has also led to The Membership Secretary and me altering the headings **now** for 2015/16 on the Three Returns. Please draw your Treasurer's attention to this and all comments are of course welcome . I have the forms for 2015/16. These are with me today so please collect the envelope for your Treasurer if you have a 'by hand' route to him/her ! if not I will mail them.*

James Cash

Weald's grant application had not been considered as their accounts had not been received at the time of the last Executive meeting. The treasurer now has these.

Re grants for visiting speakers raised by DR at the last meeting and agreed in principle. DR had offered to prepare details

8. Subscription for 2016-2017

The subscription for 2016-2017 still has to be confirmed. JSS confirmed capitation and Beecraft remain the same but the figure for BDI is not yet available. The draft accounts to 30th September 2015 are not yet available. NM expressed concern that if the subscription was too high it may cause people to wonder whether membership was worthwhile. The BBKA has not yet decided how it will collect the £1.00 levy (see paragraph 4). RD was concerned that if the levy was added to capitation it would remain. JSS confirmed there would be no increase in the cost of Beecraft.

Electronic membership forms were discussed. Whilst it is not necessary for there to be paper copies JOC confirmed it is essential there is a proper audit trail. JH had advised JSS that Yalding's spread sheet is not sufficient. CM disagreed. DB suggested asking a tax expert. NM said a signature for gift aid donations is only required once every three years. The whole question of gift aid clearly needs clarifying and the Executive will discuss. JH had offered to arrange for further training on use of the BDI system which it is essential is used correctly but so far there had been no take-up.

One branch is struggling to produce accounts and LF made the point that the current template was not "user friendly". CP will produce some guidelines. NM had done some work on preparing new/on-line membership forms but had not finalised this. He will continue to work on this to enable a proposal to be put to Council.

9. Health and safety

Nothing to report.

10. Reports

County show – arrangements in hand

Education – no committee meeting has been arranged. All branches undertaking courses of various kinds. It was suggested that the Education and Show Committees be amalgamated (paragraph 5)

Exams – no report

Web – Steve Turner had advised JSS the upgrade is going to take longer than anticipated. He had to abandon the use of Silverstrip CMA as the software did not do what it claimed without using a plug-in that was poorly supported by a third party. He has now installed a commercial package called ExpressionEngine 3. However, the disadvantage of this package is that it is designed for professional developers thus increasing the work for Steve as he will need to develop his own responsive templates/layouts

Beecraft – JSS reported no increase in cost for 2016-2017. The website is being developed with a view to making it more interactive

Newsletter – as ever, JSS asked for input from branches.

BDI – dealt with above.

National Honey Show – this has now moved to Sandown Park

11. Bee health and disease

Nothing to report. JC asked if BDI were still sponsoring disease days

12. Any other business

JSS had circulated an e-mail from Wendy at Beecraft. There is concern from the bee inspector for the Isle of Man that bees may have been brought in from outside. The Isle of Man is varroa and foulbrood free.

DB reminded JSS that only Council minutes for March 2015 were posted on the website. She will supply Steve Turner with those for June, September and November.

DW referred to a survey being undertaken by Pro. Richard Pywell from the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology re testing honey for neonicotinoid pesticides in honey. Full details are in the March 2016 Newsletter

NM referred to the initial work he had undertaken on preparing a form to be used by all branches. Due to the lack of internet connection, he was unable to demonstrate this but on the problems was the system would not add up the figures. There was also the question of security. The BBKA have a form but DB said payments were not secure. NM will continue to work on this

CM put forward the proposal that KBKA should pay members' fees for taking modules.. Fees for the Basic are refunded to candidates and funding modules also may encourage more candidates. The Executive will consider this.

LF presented WM with a certificate celebrating his 80 years of beekeeping.

13. Date of next meeting

Saturday, 4th June followed by the AGM.

Meeting closed at 12.15 p.m.

Signed: D Bragg 4th June 2016