

Report of the 57th Annual Delegate Meeting held on 14th January 2017

Laurie Wiseman – Delegate for the Suffolk Beekeepers' Association

(For all papers of the 2017 click and see - http://www.bbka.org.uk/members/events/annual_delegate_meeting_2017)

The President of the BBKA - John Hendrie - opened the 57th ADM welcoming all delegates and guests.

The meeting opened promptly at 10:30am with fifty seven delegates (out of a total of sixty six delegates) representing their associations at the BBKA HQ, Royal Show Ground, Stoneleigh. The President asked the delegates to stand for a short while to mark the passing of several members during the past year. The formalities of the meeting being completed the meeting proceeded. *(It was stated that the minutes of the meeting would be ready by the end of May and would be emailed to delegates.)*

The President then introduced the BBKA's new General Secretary/General Manager - Leigh Sidaway- and the new Income Generation Manager - George Brown. These two new posts replaced the General Secretary/Operations Manager in the reorganisation of BBKA Head Office.

Adoption of Standing Orders – New Guidelines

New Guidelines were approved for the conduct of the meeting. There is a new Standing Orders Officer (I do not have his name) who said that the standing orders are to be completely reviewed to bring them up to date and in line with today's standards.

Adoption of 2016 Minutes

The minutes were adopted after several points were raised about the minutes.

Matters Arising from 2016 Minutes

The proposal 2016/11 regarding vat on beekeeping equipment has not received the support of the BBKA. Some Associations had carried this forward via their MPs. This matter comes under the EU rules on VAT so with 'Brexit' the matter is on hold. It was asked where we go from here? There was a general discussion and it was felt the BBKA should keep its powder dry and until the position of Brexit becomes clear. To clarify the position it was agreed that that proposal should say that VAT on beekeeping equipment be Zero Rated. This new proposal was voted upon.

F - 52 A - 4 Abs - 1

Annual Reports

There was a question about the Research Fund. The delegate thought there appears to be a lack of transparency and there is no clear strategy on what this fund spent on. It was felt that any research papers should be published on the website and that the BBKA News should be used to explain what research money is spent and on what and why this research is being pursued. The chairman - Margaret Murdin - took this on board and asked delegates for their help the executive in this field.

There was a question about the constitution. It was stated that there was a need to review the constitution to bring it in line the Charity Commission's requirements. There is also a need to explain the role of Area Associations and other areas on which the constitution is silent. The executive stated that under the new leadership all these matters are under review and the constitution is to undergo a thorough review. It was pointed out that time scales are long; consultation and getting the approval of the ADM, it will be 2019 before this can be brought about. The executive is taking a positive view and is aware that things need to be brought up to date. The other reports (these can be seen on the BBKA's webpage - see above) were accepted by the delegates.

F - 57 A - 0 Abs - 0

BBKA Financial Report.

Howard Pool - chairman of the Finance Committee - stated that the Chairman and President now sit on DEFRA's Bee Health Advisory Forum which enables the BBKA to keep abreast with the latest health and pest related issues. 2016 was a year of consolidation, improved control and prioritisation. He then said "What have we done". Howard Pool said that much effort by the Finance Committee had gone into the finances and were now in the 'black' for the first time in 5 years. The finances are in surplus of £23,000 despite the freeze on capitation in 2016.

The BBKA has now registered for VAT and this gave cause to reassess our Trading Company – The BBKA Enterprises Ltd. Because of this registration it was decided to not wind up this Trading Company. This Trading Company has now new Directors - Howard Pool, John Hendrie, and Margaret Murdin.

The BBKA have introduced the 'Nest' pension scheme for administrative staff in line with legislation.

Howard Pool said that Ken Basterfield and Margaret Murdin deserved our thanks for the work they done on the Education and Husbandry Committee in obtaining a grant from Defra of £14,000. This funding is for the General and Advanced Husbandry training. It will be spent and accounted for properly. This grant application is a nightmare to obtain with much form filling.

The Head Office staff has done a good job in gathering monies from debtors which greatly helped with the surplus in the accounts.

The newly formed Human Resources committee has re-evaluated and re-structured Head Office. As a consequence the single role of administrator and fund raiser has been split into two to allow greater focus on each function. The Treasurer has very recently resigned from his post. There is now a need for a new Treasurer - are there any takers out there? The report was accepted and voted upon: - **F - 57 A - 0 Abs - 0**

Budget for 2017

There is no increase in capitation for 2018.

The sponsorship target of £30,000 for the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers has amounted to £12,000 date with a possible future £9,000. It was reported that if we do not achieve the £30K figure there is a benefactor in the wings who will pay any deficit. BBKA is asking for Associations to pay £1 per member to by February at the latest to get this project of the ground - £5,000 has been paid in by Area Associations to date. It was reported that fund raising since the referendum vote was extremely difficult with some companies completely closing down their fund raising departments. 23 countries have applied to attend this meeting, as far afield as, Korea and India and the programme of events is well in hand. Lord Stern and the Under Secretary of State for Defra will be attending the meeting. The Spring Convention is not as popular as it was but planning is well underway; tickets are now available on the website. The report was accepted and voted upon: **F - 55 A - 1 Abs - 1**

When Howard Pool concluded his report he was applauded by the delegates. It was a thank you for getting the finances of the BBKA back in order and getting them on a better footing for the future.

Beekeeping Awards

I was surprised to be called up to receive an award for Suffolk's efforts in education other than the Basic examination. A photograph was taken of me receiving the presentation for the BBKA News. The presentation was a cheque for £100.

Certificates were awarded to those members achieving 80/70/60/50 years of beekeeping. One bee keeper received a certificate for 80 years and Barrie Powell, an Ipswich member, received a certificate for 70 years.

Application for membership of the BBKA

The executive stated that they no choice under the constitution but to put these requests for membership forward for the delegates to decide. There were nine new applications for membership. Some delegates worried that by accepting new associations forming breakaway groups from their existing County Associations would present problems in the future. There will be additional costs for the ADM and voting with be on a membership vote (card vote) as the discrepancy in numbers between county and non-county associations. Berkshire County Association's failure to find enough members to form a committee has meant that four branches are now applying for association membership. Eight of these new groups have memberships just over 100 members and one with 40 beekeeping members with a Facebook membership of 100?! It was accepted that if we did not accept them the BBKA would be the loser. All applications were accepted by a vote of delegates except Tyneside Association with the membership of 40.

Elections for the Executive and Examination Board

There were 5 members standing for the Executive for four vacancies of three years and two vacancies of two years. The four vacancies for three years and one position for two years were filled. There were three members standing for election to the Examination Board for three vacancies of three years. The posts were filled.

Propositions for consideration.

(For supporting notes and the EC response see above for link to BBKA website)

Proposition Number 2017/05 (original 07) – Northumberland

It was agreed that this proposal be taken first as the delegate had to leave the meeting.

"The BBKA is a large national membership charity. The Charity Commission best practice encourages charities to engage directly with their members on key issues like trustee appointments. Restricting voting to area association delegates is not fulfilling the spirit of the guideline.

Northumberland BKA requests that the BBKA polls the membership to ascertain their views on moving on this issue."

It was pointed out this poll of members was carried out in the 2015 survey by the BBKA. Another delegate said it appeared that that this proposal made the proposal from Essex void. The President said that this motion was advisory only. A vote was taken and was lost: - **F - 16 A - 37 Abs - 4**

Proposition Number 2017/06 (original 05) – Essex

The President decided that the Essex proposal be taken next.

“That the so-called “one member one vote” proposition presented in the 2015 survey be rejected as inappropriate and potentially as a means of member representation.”

The debate around this proposal said that the ‘one member one vote’ as described in the 2015 survey would undermine the Area Associations. The BBKA is an ‘Association of Associations’ and this new method of voting would overthrow the governance of the BBKA. A vote was taken and was carried: - **F - 39 A - 16 Abs - 1**

Proposition Number 2017/01 - Executive Committee

“That, with effect from April 1st 2017, a joining fee of £10 to be introduced for new members and for lapsed members who are re-joining more after their membership has expired.”

The Chairman stated that it cost over £10 (new members pack and postage) when new members joined. After a big debate it was accepted that the EC to withdraw the proposal and to bring a reworded proposal next year.

F - 50 A - 6 Abs - 0

Proposition Number 2017/02 - Essex

“The Essex Beekeepers’ Association (EBKA) welcomes the efforts to improve governance and financial controls, but is disappointed that the Executive Committee has not indicated how it would like to shape the BBKA for the future. To deliver a more open, efficient and effective organisation to meet the needs of its membership and to continue BBKA’s important work in society, a working party should be established to inform on the appraisal and reorganisation of BBKA. Its remit would be to develop a clear understanding of BBKA’s goals and to propose a viable and cost effective structure to support that organisation.”

It was generally felt that the executive are doing what the proposal says and to accept this proposal would unsettle the job they are now doing. The Surrey delegate said that this proposal was much the same as the proposal 2014/04 which had not been finalised and still in the hands of the executive. The Chairman said that all the turmoil of the changes on the executive and other issues had meant this proposal had ‘slipped’ but she was aware of it and it will be dealt with. There is a lot of work on the executive’s agenda, time is limited and she hoped that delegates recognised this. A vote was taken and the proposal was lost: **F - 5 A - 48 Abs - 3**

Proposition Number 2017/03 - Hertfordshire

“A working party is set up to reappraise and plan the reorganisation of the BBKA; aimed to provide a more efficient, open, effective Association.”

It was felt by the delegates that this was the same as the as the Surrey proposal 2014/04. A vote was taken and the proposal was lost. **F - 2 A - 53 Abs - 1**

Proposition Number 2017/04 - Cleveland

“In the interest of openness, transparency and accountability, the BBKA policy for the reimbursement of expenses, fees or honoraria is sent to Area Associations annually and the amounts paid to Trustees, the Executive and all other members are disclosed with details of the committee and other posts held by the recipient are included in the ADM papers.”

A minority of delegates wanted the expenses broken down rather than just a figure. The delegates voted on this and the proposal was lost.

F - 6 A - 47 Abs - 3

Proposition Number 2017/07 (original 06) - Wiltshire

“That the draft minutes of the previous ADM are always sent to AAMs with the Convening Notice, Guidelines and nomination/proposition forms not later than 21 weeks before the next ADM.”

There was no seconder; the proposal fell.

Proposition Number 2017/10 (original 09) - Devon

“That, with immediate effect, the BBKA reverses its decision to end the payment of ADM and SDM Delegates’ expenses.”

This proposal created a great deal of debate and it was finally agreed to amend the proposal to: *“With immediate effect the BBKA reinstate the policy for paying travel expenses, mileage money and sustenance at the approved rate for delegates to attend ADM or SDM meetings”.*

This amended proposal was voted on and was carried: -

F - 30 A - 23 Abs - 3

This substantive proposal was voted on and accepted: -

F - 35 A - 19 Abs - 2

Proposition Number 2017/08 (original 06a) - Cheshire

“That the BBKA reinstate the policy of paying travel expenses (not accommodation costs) for Delegates to attend the ADM”

There was no seconder; the proposal fell.

Proposition Number 2017/09 (original 08) - Cornwall

“That, commencing with immediate effect, the BBKA pay all delegates mileage expenses at the normal BBKA mileage, irrespective of distance. In addition, delegates travelling for more than 150 miles each way shall be entitled to overnight subsistence at the standard rate for 1 night.”

There was no seconder; the proposal fell.

Proposition Number 2017/11 (original 10) - Buckinghamshire

“That BBKA develop a “Course in the Case” type of training materials aimed at going to talk to schools about bees and beekeeping. Most school visits are for 4 -11year old children, so it is proposed the materials would cover Key Stages 1 and 2.”

This proposal was debated upon and voted upon and was carried: - **F - 32 A - 20 Abs - 2**

Proposition Number 2017/12 (original 11) - Kent

“That the BBKA work with the Chemicals Registration Directorate and Trading Standards Officers to address the risk secondary poisoning caused by the failure of some pest controller to destroy feral colonies in accordance with applicable regulations, particularly when they allow poisoned spaces to be accessed by honey bees from other managed colonies.

Delegates are referred to the July edition of BeeCraft, which contains two articles discussing the problem.”

After debate this proposal was voted upon and was lost: - **F - 22 A - 23 Abs - 8** A membership vote was called for:- **F - 7020 A - 9686 Abs - 2699**

The meeting ended at 5.15pm

Laurie Wiseman - Suffolk Beekeepers' Association ADM Delegate

PS: This meeting was carried out expeditiously by the President, John Hendrie. The atmosphere of the meeting was less 'tense' than has been apparent at meetings in the recent past. The delegates were impressed at the work carried out over the past year by the new team of the executive. The executive's attitude is positive and they seem eager to get the organisation on a modern and proper footing for the future. It was a long day!!

Laurie Wiseman

Ps: George Brown – Income Generation Manager – has opened a just giving page on the web for members and others to donate money to the BBKA. The link is: <https://www.justgiving.com/bbka>