

Minutes of Moray Beekeepers Association (MBA) Committee Meeting held at Elgin Library, on Monday 31st October 2011, commenced at 7.00pm

1. Committee Members Present

A. Tassell (in Chair), D. Clark, R. Clark, A. Watson, A. Black & T. Harris. No Apologies.

Since the last meeting G. Hill had resigned as Vice Chairman and V. Hill & G. Thompson had resigned from the Committee. Anne Black has been co-opted on and the Chairman welcomed her to the Committee.

2. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting 12/8/11

The minutes of meeting held on 12/8/11 were accepted as a true record. Proposed A.W. Seconded R.C.

CARRIED

3. Matters Arising and Actions

Forres Show – the Secretary had been unable to contact anyone from the Forres Show and they had not contacted him. It was unclear if the contact details were up to date.

4. Correspondence - None

5. Treasurer's Report

D.C. reported a bank balance of £1434.03. A variety of equipment for Birnie apiary had been purchased recently, including brood boxes, Queen excluders, feeders, fondant, Thymol, Oxalic Acid and a Burco boiler.

A volunteer (Ms J. Comins) to inspect the Association accounts before submission to the Office of Scottish Charities Regulator had come forward.

£21.81 travelling expenses for the Donate a Bag of Sugar project had been claimed and paid out of Association funds.

6. Birnie Apiary

T. Harris reported that the 8 hives of bees at Birnie were now set up for the winter, having been well fed with sugar syrup and treated with apistan. There was a mixture of double brood boxes, brood and a half and single brood boxes and each management system will be reviewed next spring to see what worked best. Hives had insulation over the crown boards, mouse guards in place over the entrances and large boulders on top to stop the roof blowing off. They will be trickled with oxalic acid in late December and fondant placed on the top bars above the clusters if necessary.

3 supers of honey had been extracted and jarred. Much of this will be given as gifts to Tarmac who own the land, the farmer and others who have helped or donated bees/hives to MBA this season. The remaining honey has been labelled and will be sold at MBA events. 8oz jar Blossom Honey - £3.00, 8oz jar of Heather Honey - £4.00.

7. Membership review

T.H. presented a report on MBA Membership and the way forward. With over 100 paid up members and this number growing he feels there is a need to clarify membership categories and introduce processes to make collection of subscriptions easier. A small increase in subscriptions is proposed to take into account the many additional benefits of membership now available. Many people who are not beekeepers are interested in supporting our conservation projects financially so a new category of membership is proposed to cater for this.

After discussion it was Proposed A.B. Seconded R.C. that the following be proposed for the AGM.

There be 5 classes of membership as follows.

FULL (F) – adult membership, subscription - £12

FULL CONCESSION (FC) – aged over 65 yrs on 1st January of that year, subscription - £7.00

YOUTH (Y) – aged between 12 and 16 years on 1st January of that year, subscription - £7.00

JUNIOR (J) – aged between 6 and 11 years on 1st January of that year, subscription - free

CONSERVATION (C) – a person who wishes to support the Association's conservation projects but is not a beekeeper. They will receive a Honeybee Conservation pack and regular Newsletters. subscription - £10.00

New Full and Full Concession members will also pay a one off joining fee of £5.00.

To encourage early payment of subscriptions a late payment surcharge of £3.00 will apply to Full and Full Concession members, £2.00 for Youth members, if subs are not paid by 1st June.

The Treasurer will take over responsibility for maintaining an up to date membership list.

A new membership form has been designed and will be adopted for 2012

ALL CARRIED

Further recommendations on Corporate membership and sponsorship will be discussed again by the Committee in January 2012

8. A.G.M. Issues

It was agreed that an amended Constitution, to take on board the changes to the membership categories and fees, be proposed by the Committee for voting on at the A.G.M.

The Chairman, A. Tassell, Secretary, T. Harris, Treasurer, D. Clark and Committee member A. Watson agreed to offer themselves for re-election. The Committee will nominate current co-opted Committee members, R. Clark and A. Black for the Committee. There is also a vacancy for the position of Vice Chairman but the Committee will not be nominating anyone.

At the conclusion of the A.G.M. (time permitting) a Beekeepers Question Time will take place.

9. Summer programme (provisional)

Sunday 18th March	Working Party, Birnie Apiary
Sunday 15th April	First Inspections, Birnie Apiary,
Saturday 19th May	Pluscarden Abbey, 'Spring Inspection'. To be confirmed!
Sunday 17th June	General Inspections and Swarm Control, Birnie Apiary
Sunday 15th July	Summer Inspection, location to be confirmed
Sunday 19th August	Trip to the heather and meal at Delnashaugh hotel.
Sunday 16th September	Talk & Demonstration, 'Extracting Honey' Birnie Apiary

10. Beekeeping Courses

It was agreed to hold 3 x Introduction to Beekeeping Courses at £30 (suggested donation) per person and 2 Taster Sessions at £10 (suggested donation) per person in 2012. ACTION T. Harris to make arrangements

The 'Introduction to Beekeeping' courses will take place on one full day (Saturday or Sunday) at Birnie Apiary but a portaloos will be required. A.W. agreed to make enquiries with the 'old' Farquhar site in Huntly and an appeal will also be made to members. ACTION A.Watson

A course to prepare members for the Scottish Beekeepers' Association (SBA) Basic Beemaster Assessment will run from March to June and will include 4 classroom sessions at Elgin Library and 2 practical sessions at Birnie apiary. Numbers will be limited to 12 and a donation of £25 will be suggested to cover room hire, handouts and refreshments. It will initially be aimed at MBA members who have owned bees for at least one season. Secondary consideration will be given to members who have attended one of our 'Introduction to Beekeeping' courses and have acquired a hive with the intention of obtaining bees this season.

11. Queen rearing / Adopt a Nuc Project 2012

It was agreed that T.H. and A.W. would head up the Queen Rearing Programme and a team of volunteers would be recruited to assist. ACTION T.Harris/A.Watson

The 'Adopt a Nucleus' programme will be continued in 2012 aimed at new or novice beekeepers who don't have bees. MBA Members signing up for the Basic Beemaster course will be given priority followed by those who have attended an 'Introduction to Beekeeping' course and those who support MBA events. It will cost £80 per nuc. It was also felt that we should try to provide nucs to members who had lost bees recently

12. Any Other Business

D.C. reported a request by the Women's legion, Lossiemouth, for a talk on Beekeeping in late November. T.H. agreed to contact them and to do the talk. ACTION T. Harris

A.T. stated that Ashworth/Miller type feeders were required for Birnie apiary as this would cut down the requirement to visit the apiary every couple of days to top up the 4 pint rapid feeders. It was agreed to try and get some made in the first instance and if this was not possible we will buy some 'English Feeders' from Thornes. ACTION T.Harris

D.C. has taken the MBA Beesuits home and will wash them in preparation for the new season. ACTION D.Clark

T.H. will contact Rob MacKenzie to arrange handover of the MG heather press. ACTION T. Harris

T.H. will represent MBA at the S.B.A. Local Secretaries Meeting in Perth on 26th November ACTION T. Harris

A.W. has sourced a supply of 'Apisuc' and fondant and it was agreed to canvas members at the AGM to see if it was worth buying the Apisuc in particular in bulk for onward sale to members.

It was agreed that MBA would bulk buy a supply of 8oz, 12oz and 1lb jars for sale to members. ACTION. T.Harris

It was agreed that MBA needed a honey label and T.H. agreed to look at the banner on the website with a view to incorporate it into a label. ACTION T.Harris

It was agreed to cut MBA's ties with the Forres Flower Show. If there was support from the members then MBA could hold our own Honey Show in October or November each year.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20.35 hrs