

Minutes of Moray Beekeepers' Association (MBA) Committee Meeting held at Baxters, Fochabers, on Thursday 26th July 2012, commenced 7.30pm.

1. Committee Members Present.

A. Tassell (in Chair), A. Black, D. Clark, R. Clark, G. Thompson, A. Watson & T. Harris. Apologies: D. Vincent

2. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting. The minutes of meeting held on 29.05.12 were accepted as a true record. Proposed G.T. Seconded D.C. CARRIED

3. Matters Arising.

A. T. reported that he hadn't yet invited Les Webster to October's meeting to judge some exhibits and give a talk about judging honey exhibits but he would ASAP. ACTION: A. TASSELL

SBA Communication Pilot – G.T. was now MBA representative.

Stock Control system – A.W. was still working on the system and would inform Committee ASAP. It was important that stock for sale and stock for use at the apiary be kept separate. ACTION: A. WATSON

4. Treasurer's Report.

D.C. circulated a written report that showed a healthy bank balance of £2182.83. She reported that a £300 donation had been received from Britannia and this brought the fundraising for the Moray Leader project up to £500. Membership was currently at just under 100.

5. Moray Leader Funding Application

T.H. stated that the Leader funding application for the 'Bee Aware in Moray' project had been approved at the first stage of the process and a final decision was imminent.

We still await a decision from the Lottery Awards for All Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, William Grant & Tarmac.

T.H. was meeting with Gordon & McPhail, Elgin on 7th August as they had asked for further information.

There is a need to recruit members to assist in the implementation of the project T.H. agreed to arrange a member's meeting to inform them of the project and seek volunteers. ACTION: T. HARRIS

6. Recruitment & Selection of Project Manager

G.T. suggested that a Sub Committee be appointed to arrange the recruitment and selection of the Project Manager for the 'Bee Aware in Moray' project. It was agreed that advice would be sought from David Watson, Moray Leader. Other sources of advice and information were Business Gateway and Council for Voluntary Services, both in Elgin and D.C. was in contact with the latter. ACTION: D. CLARK

7. Donate a Bag of Sugar Project

It had been agreed to run this project again in 2012 for three weeks from Monday 6th to Sunday 26th August. The named committee member will be responsible for contacting the stores and collecting the sugar.

Tesco, Keith – A. Tassell, Tesco, Buckie – T. Harris, Tesco & Asda, Huntly – A. Watson, Tesco, Forres – D. Vincent, Tesco & Asda, Elgin – A. Black who also has other options in Lossiemouth

8. Queen rearing & Bee Improvement Group

G.T. reported that no queen rearing had been possible at Birnie this summer.

He had circulated a written report on the possibility of forming a Moray Bee Improvement Group. A discussion ensued on the pros and cons of different races of honeybees, the selection criteria for breeding queens and the short and long term aims of the Association.

T.H. reminded those present of MBA Policy on sourcing honeybees – *‘Members should be encouraged, if possible, to source bees locally. However, with a general shortage of bees, the Committee realises that this is not always possible, so the following is recommended: If sourcing bees from outside Moray, purchase from a reputable supplier of healthy bees and do not buy from a known previously infected AFB or EFB area. The Committee did not feel that there should be an emphasis on purchasing, or selecting and breeding the ‘dark native bee’, Apis Mellifera Mellifera (AMM). (from Minutes dated 8.6.11)*

It was agreed not to change this policy.

It was however agreed that G.T. be authorised to form a Bee Improvement Group supported by MBA. An isolated mating apiary would be sought for this project and it was accepted that this would be a long-term project, 3 – 5 years.

G.T. would report back to the Committee on any progress and on the possibility of sourcing pure AMM for initial stocking of the isolated apiary. ACTION: G. THOMPSON

For the ‘Bee Aware in Moray’ project, commencing in 2013, it was agreed that stocks at Birnie would be re-queened with Buckfast queens (from Ged Marshall) as it was felt that this would give more docile bees in the short term, vital if we are inviting groups of school children to the apiary.

T.H. stated that he had managed to obtain 4 places on a National Diploma of Beekeeping/Scottish Beekeepers Association 2 day course entitled, ‘Train the Trainers’ that was to take place on Thursday and Friday, 4th, 5th October in Perth. It is a course teaching beekeepers how to teach beekeeping to others. Vacancies will be filled by Committee members and then by suitably inspired members who wish to become trainers. It will be paid for by Leader or MBA and will include an overnight stay. ACTION: T. HARRIS

9. Committee Attendance at Monthly Meetings

Difficulties had arisen this summer with the numbers of Committee members actually in attendance at our monthly meetings. These meetings were considered a showpiece for the Association and it was therefore important that adequate numbers of committee were in attendance otherwise the same Committee members were being overburdened. All Committee members were expected to attend these meetings if at all possible.

It was agreed that for future meetings a system be implemented whereby each Committee member would commit to attend a certain number of meetings and if someone did have to drop out at the last minute there would still be a guaranteed group remaining to run the meeting. ACTION: T. HARRIS

It was also agreed for next summer to start all meetings at 1pm, to avoid key dates such as Mother’s and Father’s Day and to canvass the membership on the possibility of Saturday meeting days.

10. Any Other Business

D.C. had attended the **Moray Community Food Network** (MCFN) meeting of which MBA was a member.

T.H. agreed to represent MBA on the MCFN Steering Group although a deputy would be able to fill in when he was unavailable. ACTION: T. HARRIS

MCFN had asked if a short presentation could be given to a future meeting on the work of MBA. T.H. agreed to do it. ACTION: T. HARRIS

Brodie Castle - D.C. had acquired an apiary site for MBA at Brodie Castle and it was also a possible venue for a summer meeting in 2013, particularly in July as there were several dozen Lime trees in the grounds, a good source of honey.

The **August meeting** was on 19th August and was a combined meal at the Delnashagh hotel with a trip to the nearby heather stance at 2 pm. Pre-booking for the meal was essential as numbers were limited. T.H. agreed to distribute information and collect names. ACTION: T. HARRIS

Thornes Sale, Newburgh. It was agreed to purchase the following:

National Roof	x3	@	£16	=	£48	
National Brood box	x4	@	£15	=	£60	
National O mesh Floor	x3	@	£12	=	£36	
National Crown board	x3	@	£7	=	£21	
SN4 frames	x4 pk	@	£27	=	£108	
DN4 frames	x4 pk	@	£27	=	£108	
S/Steel smokers	x4	@	£12.50	=	£50	
S/steel Trad Hive tool	x8	@	£5	=	£40	Total = £471.00

The Committee wished to place on record their congratulations to the 12 MBA members who had recently been successful in the **SBA Basic Beemaster Assessments**.

Food Hygiene Certificate – It was agreed to run a course for those helping with refreshments at MBA courses and for interested MBA members. T.H. will report back to the Committee with the details. ACTION: T. HARRIS

T.H. would also see if he could arrange a first aid course.

ACTION: T. HARRIS

Under 16's at Birnie - Following an unfortunate incident at Birnie apiary recently when several people had been stung, the following was agreed: Any person under the age of 16 years of age attending Birnie apiary must be accompanied and under the close supervision of a responsible adult at all times.

Members Hives at Birnie – For 2013, the following was agreed. 'Members may move hives of bees temporarily to Birnie apiary with the agreement and discretion of the Apiary Manager or his Deputy for a maximum of 2 months only and they must agree that while they are there they can be used for teaching purposes. T.H. agreed to communicate this policy to members.

ACTION: T. HARRIS

Winter Meetings 2012/13 (to be confirmed) – T.H. to book Elgin Library

ACTION: T. HARRIS

October – 'Judging Honey Products', Les Webster

November – 'Queen Rearing and Moray Bee Improvement Group', Gerry Thompson

January – A.G.M.

February – 'Preparing For The New Season', Tony Harris

March – Working Party, Birnie Apiary

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 21.40 hrs.

Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 28th August, 6.30pm start at Baxters, Fochabers