

North Somerset Beekeepers



(Draft) Minutes of Committee meeting held on 14th June 2020 at 19:30 via Zoom

Present: A Lewis, D Capon, H Pitch, R Williams, J Moger, E Sortwell,

Apologies: G Packer, T Slater

1.0 Minutes of meeting held on 12th April were approved

2.0 Matters arising: None

3.0 Treasurer: In Tony's absence he had sent the current accounts sheet which showed a balance of just over £4k. Annabel explained payments of £5 for bee health booklets that she had sold to beginners at the apiary meetings. A payment of £10 for extractor hire was queried as the normal rate was £5, it transpired that the person who had made the hire was a lapsed member, Annabel would give an appropriate reminder.

4.0 Membership secretary: Heather reported current membership at 188, including 11 country members. Heather also reported that she was holding a list of 40+ potential takers for the Introductory course, she was also concerned that some queries had not been answered, (see later agenda item). There was discussion about the £5 joining fee previously charged; it was agreed to abolish this and if necessary, increase annual membership fee, or Introductory course fee to make up any shortfall.

5.0 Secretary: David reported that he had been in communication with Martin Smith the developer of the eR2 system after David had complained to Leigh Sidaway at the BBKA about serious limitations in the system. As a result of this modifications had been made to the system that made emailing a random group of members much easier, this was already proving beneficial with the Sunday apiary sessions. David had contacted Chris Morton about Bristol's 'bee cage', Chris was fairly sure it was home made, but had no idea who had done it. David also reported that Portishead show only had outdoor stands left so we probably would not be there even though the show was planned to go ahead (Update, our normal space has been reserved in the Marquee so we will be there, David to circulate details to the membership)

6.0 Apiary Manager: Eric reported that things were going well at the apiary, there were now quite a number of club colonies, some better than others! Spaces had been reserved for the new beekeepers who had ordered nucs. A stand had also been reserved for the bees that had belonged to Jamie Morris, which Fran Frappell had been looking after. It

was hoped to start a project at the apiary to support people suffering from PTSD, more details on this would emerge in time. It was agreed to continue a booking system for the Sunday sessions as it was working well, and to continue it even after restrictions on numbers were removed.

7.0 Programme Manager/ Web-Master: Rob reported that 12 people had expressed interest in the visit to Buckfast, David to contact those people to confirm with Rob. Buckfast could accept a party of 10 so if needed lots would be drawn. There was some general discussion about meetings for the remainder of the year, and for next year, and how we could reach out to the wider membership. There was a view expressed by David that some of the regular meeting attendees used the meetings as much to catch up and chat about bees as to learn new skills and practices. It was agreed that the Zoom talks organised by Rob Francis had attracted top quality speakers and a large audience, but it was felt there was room for both types of meeting. Rob would draw together a small group to discuss this. The President's barbecue was discussed, Rob to approach Garry about this. Also the Christmas meal, the mood of the meeting was that we should ask The George at Backwell as our first option, this way we could give something back to them for their generosity in providing us with a meeting venue, Saturday 4th December would be our preferred date.

8.0 ABKA Rep: Eric reported that Avon had approved up to £600 for new display boards, David to order.

9.0 Chair: Annabel reported our £10 million public liability was adequate for our use of the apiary at Langford.

10.0 Development of skill levels: Heather raised this item as her analysis of the membership showed a relatively low take-up of the module exams. There was also a concern that the lack of qualified and master beekeepers may mean that we do not have sufficient assessors in the near future. There was a general discussion, it was felt that the situation was not helped by the fact that we had been unable to appoint an education co-ordinator onto the committee. It was felt that this was something that could be encouraged more at Avon level, and Annabel would discuss this with Rob Francis.

11.0 Introduction to Beekeeping course: There was discussion of how we manage the 2022 course, as we already had a number of potential applicants. There was some concern expressed at the lack of response from Andy Scarisbrick to some requests. It was proposed that Heather manages the requests we have had so far, Annabel would inform Andy that we were taking this action. There are potentially up to 42 applicants for this course already. It was agreed to increase the cost of the course to £120 and to ask for a £20 deposit. Heather would contact all applicants asking for the deposit by mid-July to secure a place. We will be in a position to see how many people we have by the next meeting.

12.0 AOB Annabel had received an enquiry about the bulk purchase scheme, she would ask John Banks if he wished to take this on again, but Jamie Llewellyn could supply the club with syrup, fondant and jars at a discounted price. David asked Heather to delete our old, recorded Zoom sessions as we had exceeded our storage limit!

13.0 Date of next meeting 7th Sept, probably via Zoom

Meeting closed at 9.02pm

David Capon