

11. Propositions

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/01	BBKA Executive Committee	None required

Proposition

That, in view of the budget and projections presented, annual capitation rates per member to be increased with effect from October 1st 2015 (payable in April and September 2016) as follows:

Registered member from £18.00 to £19.00

Partner member from £12.00 to £12.54

Country member from £9.00 to £9.50

Junior Member from £9.00 to £9.50

Individual Members who are resident overseas should note that, because of the very large increase in the cost of overseas postage, they will no longer receive a posted copy of BBKA News but will receive it by email.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/02	Cornwall with Northumberland	

Proposition

That the BBKA Trustees install a whistle blowing policy based on external best practice at the earliest opportunity. (Composite proposition)

Supporting Notes

(Cornwall) The recent correspondence regarding Ken Basterfield’s request for a SDM we believe has highlighted the need for the BBKA to have a whistle blowing policy. Our estimate is that this would require one week to complete the work.

(Northumberland) In Northumberland BKA we have been very concerned about the events that have led to the calling of the Special Delegates Meeting. Several of us are experienced charity trustees and management consultants and have known similar situations. We feel that had such a policy been in place and followed strictly, then there might well have been no need to call an SDM.

It is most important to say that this motion is not intended in any way to criticize the BBKA but, rather, both to help it in finding ways that avoid situations such as the present one and, also, to ensure that it conforms to law and best practice.

Costs

EC response

There were two propositions (Cornwall and Northumberland) calling for the establishment of a “Whistle Blowers’ Policy”. Both AAMs readily agreed to the EC’s suggestion of making them into a composite, and because CBKA had supplied a text, the wording of 2015/01 closely follows that text. The EC would just say two things:

1. “Whistle Blowing” (a term coined in the 1970s by Ralph Nader to avoid the use of the terms ‘informant’ and ‘snitch’) is a procedure designed to protect an employee or subordinate from any adverse consequences of raising allegations of misconduct by a superior or someone who has power over them. (NB. This is *internal* whistle blowing as opposed to external)
2. The BBKA Executive Committee wish to implement a policy on Whistle Blowing and would welcome the confirmation of member associations.

If the Delegates wish to formalise a “Whistle Blowing Policy” it can be done easily enough (at fairly modest cost), but it is not appropriate to put it into the Constitution. The Constitution sets out the structure and objectives for the good governance of the BBKA; it is up to the trustees and membership to devise and implement policies to achieve this.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/03	West Sussex	awaited

Proposition

That the BBKA requests the Examinations Board to review the marking structure and feedback to candidates for the BBKA Basic Assessment, in particular to consider giving candidates graded results (i.e. pass, credit or distinction, as with BBKA Modules) or to give them their achieved mark.

Supporting Notes

To pass the BBKA Basic Assessment requires 50% of marks in each of three sections. Candidates are given no indication as to whether they have scraped through or achieved an exceptionally high mark; with no distinction made between poor and high marks they receive no information as to their level of competence. It is possible to pass with major gaps in knowledge. Assessors write comments on each candidate but these are not passed to candidates unless they fail. A graded result with the Assessor's comments would help candidates to understand better their level of knowledge. Welsh BKA candidates are told their mark and find this helpful.

Costs

There would be some additional administration, which would be minimal if Assessors' marks sheets and comments were returned electronically. The information is already recorded and candidates notified of pass or fail and issued with certificates that would cost the same as currently. Some adjustment would be required to procedures.

EC response

The Examinations Board has considered this question and will continue to do so.

The issues are:

- 1) is it desirable at this level to distinguish further than pass or fail,
- 2) marks vary because assessors vary and because of the subjective nature of this "enabling" assessment,
- 3) providing feedback would require over 700 comments to be typed in. To be meaningful they would need to be quite lengthy.
- 4) electronic returns are not yet feasible as not all assessors use technology,
- 5) results are returned to the local Examinations Secretary and this would require them to pass on the comments in the same way
- 6) if individual comments were posted directly to candidates this would cost in the region of £1000 per annum in postage and would significantly increase the cost of the assessment.

The Examinations Board is not bound by decisions of the ADM for obvious reasons.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/04	BBKA Executive Committee	None required

Proposition

When the findings of the EFSA review of neonicotinoids and the proposed recommendations for the future of neonicotinoids in the UK are known (likely to be late 2015 / possibly even early 2016) the Executive undertakes to hold a meeting(s) open to all BBKA members to consider the results of the review, other documentation and discuss BBKA policy towards neonicotinoids in the light of the findings and proposed course(s) of action regarding the future of neonicotinoids in the UK.

Supporting Notes

During the moratorium on certain uses of three neonicotinoids the EFSA, Industry, the European Commission and Member States are tasked with reviewing existing information and risk assessments and undertaking further work to refine and quantify the risk of these substances to honey bees. A key piece of work concerns the impacts of neonicotinoids on honey bees: a large scale field experiment. This work is due to be delivered in 2015. The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology <http://www.ceh.ac.uk> will provide policy makers and regulators with high quality scientific evidence on the effects of neonicotinoids on honey bees and help inform their decisions. Further details on the work can be found on <http://www.ceh.ac.uk/science/impacts-neonicotinoids-honey-bees-large-scale-field-experiment.html>

The current moratorium expires in 2015 and whether it will be extended is unknown at this point in time. It is hoped that by then the data generation and associated risk assessments and reviews will have been completed and the findings published. In addition we would hope that any proposed changes to the regulatory status of these neonicotinoids would also be known. The potential impacts of these developments would then be best discussed at a BBKA meeting and the implications for BBKA's policy considered.

The subject of neonicotinoids cannot be taken in isolation as it impacts on the use of all pesticides and crop protection chemicals. The widespread use of herbicides is a case in point.

The BBKA is concerned about the use of all pesticides and their potential to harm honey bees whether directly as in a pesticide poisoning situation or in the case of the effects of herbicides in the reduction of forage to honey bees and other pollinators.

Costs

C £7,000 in order to hold regional meetings

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/05	Yorkshire	Essex

Proposition

The BBKA has adopted a neutral position on the controversial topic of neonicotinoids which may differ from many members' expressed views. We therefore request that all BBKA members be polled concerning whether the BBKA should support a ban on neonicotinoid use. If the poll results show that the majority view differs from that of the BBKA executive, BBKA should adjust its public position to reflect the majority view.

Supporting Notes

1. The case for neonicotinoids is unproven. Professor Goulson, quoting multiple studies, (J.Applied Ecology, 2013) found that neonicotinoid-related yield increases are not demonstrated, resistance is developing, and neonicotinoids enter soil with a potential 6000 day half-life. (See also Neonicotinoid Meta-Study, J.EnvSciPollut.Res, 11/6/14; Parliamentary Environmental Audit Committee (EAC), National Pollinator Strategy, July 2014*)
2. Neonicotinoids intensify negative factors in the honey bee environment e.g. Nosema (Pettis et al,2012; Alaux et al, 2010); Viruses: DiPrisco et al,Nat Academy Of Sciences,USA, 2013
3. BBKA supports Integrated Pest management (press release 5/4/13). Neonicotinoids are applied prophylactically regardless of pest levels, negating IPM and contradicting BBKA's stated position.
4. BBKA is the only major nature-related UK organisation not to support banning neonicotinoids
5. EAC stated: "*The 2013 decision to ban three neonicotinoid pesticides.... was the right approach given the requirements of the precautionary principle*", disagreeing with government stress on economic considerations. (see *above)
6. BBKA previously endorsed pyrethroids, subsequently shown as bee-toxic.

COSTS

Cost to BBKA: none

We have based our funding on the use of Survey Monkey which has the capacity for £299 of unlimited questions and unlimited responses and this cost is covered by a sponsor. Methodology Funding will be supplied by a BBKA member, who declares no interest or involvement of any form in the agrichemical/chemical I industry.

Funding will cover extra staff costs and web site work (on line voting facility with capacity of receiving all BBKA members' votes) which we anticipate will take no more than 30 hours.

The BBKA will invite members to answer the poll via an article in the BBKA news. The article will round up the arguments in an even-handed way. The arguments will not be supplied by one individual.

The poll can be taken via the Survey Monkey web site for example. One member one vote. Each member must register with their BBKA membership number. Two questions should be asked to which there will be an opportunity to answer one only. Examples:

As a member of the BBKA do you agree with the organisation's current stance on neonicotinoids?

As a member of the BBKA do you think the BBKA should change its stance and support the ban on neonicotinoids?

The poll should be accessible for 21 days. There should be the facility for those without internet access to register their vote by post. We propose this be done via the area secretaries and collated at BBKA HQ.

EC response.

The proposition asserts the BBKA has adopted a 'neutral' position regarding neonicotinoids. This is a misrepresentation of the BBKA position. The supporting notes do not include many other aspects of neonicotinoid use which members should be encouraged to consider and how this would be addressed in the questionnaire is unclear. The Executive is unable to accept this proposition as it stands.

The Executive offers a proposition (2015/04) which it hopes will incorporate the opportunity for members to express their views.

The EC are concerned that the suggested method of obtaining the views of the membership may be neither adequate nor accurate. When carrying out polling of this nature, if a truly representative sample is to be made then specific members will need to be asked for their opinions (a prerequisite to ensure a representative sample) and data protection can become an issue. Should this motion be passed, the EC consider that the polling should be truly representative and should be carried out by a reputable polling organisation; the motion should therefore be modified to guarantee this independence and address the data protection issues.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/06	Wiltshire	Stratford upon Avon

Proposition

That the BBKA should adopt the “Precautionary Principle” when policy on the use of neonicotinoid pesticides is being considered.

Supporting Notes

The “Precautionary Principle” is a widely accepted means for policy makers to determine the safest course when an action or policy has a suspected risk of causing harm to the public or to the environment. In the absence of scientific consensus that the action or policy is not harmful, the burden of proof that it is not harmful falls on those taking the action. It is also essential that this common sense principle is followed when the future of the current EU moratorium on the use of neonicotinoid pesticides is reviewed, and when the UK Government makes its decisions on the matter.

Costs

The proposition merely seeks to define an aspect of BBKA policy (iaw Clause 5.1.1 of the BBKA Constitution) and does not incur any immediate cost, although the BBKA Executive Committee may decide to commit finance later in pursuit of policy.

EC response

The HSE website contains information and guidance on the application of the precautionary principle in the UK. It refers to the Interdepartmental Liaison Group on Risk Assessments (ILRA) who deal with this matter. It should be noted there is no universally accepted definition of the precautionary principle but advice is given on which policy guidance should be followed. Guidance relevant to the UK understanding of the precautionary principle is important because it informs the regulatory process by which products such as those containing neonicotinoids can be placed on the UK market.

Because the proposed proposition does not include a definition of the precautionary principle which it wishes the BBKA to follow the Executive is unable to agree to this proposition.

The Executive however offers a proposition (2015/04) which will incorporate the opportunity to discuss how the precautionary principle is applied and the BBKA interprets its application of the precautionary principle.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/07	Wiltshire	Stratford upon Avon

Proposition

That, until there is convincing independent scientific evidence that Neonicotinoid pesticides are not harmful to honey bees, the BBKA will support the continuation of the EU moratorium on their use.

Supporting Notes

It is essential that the Precautionary Principle is followed when the future of the present EU moratorium on the use of neonicotinoids is reviewed, especially if the relaxation or termination of the current EU moratorium on their use is under consideration. If the moratorium is not renewed next year, and if that results in the use of neonicotinoid pesticides being resumed, it would probably be extremely difficult to re-impose an effective moratorium later – even if independent research has by then revealed that the worst fears for the effects of neonicotinoids are justified.

Costs

The proposition merely seeks to define an aspect of BBKA policy (iaw Clause 5.1.1 of the BBKA Constitution) and does not incur any immediate cost, although the BBKA Executive Committee may decide to commit finance later in pursuit of policy.

EC response

The proposition is unclear in the context in which the statement ‘not harmful to honey bees’ is made. Does it refer to in absolute terms or in the normal conditions of use and the potential for exposure to honey bees? In the light of this uncertainty the Executive is unable to support this proposition.

However the Executive offers a proposition (2015/04) which will incorporate the opportunity to discuss the findings of the reviews and the current investigative work being undertaken during the moratorium when they are published.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/08	Yorkshire	Awaited

Proposition

That the BBKA conduct a representative (it is suggested 2%) and random poll of BBKA members to determine as to how acceptable a system of compulsory registration of beekeepers and apiaries on the existing NBU BeeBase would be to BBKA members. The results should be published in the BBKA News and reported back to the 2016 ADM.

Supporting Notes

When outbreaks of brood disease occur the bee inspectors are working with one arm tied behind their back, as they are not always aware of the location of hives in an area affected. BBKA needs to consider the merits of compulsory registration of beekeepers on BeeBase and whether it would be acceptable to the membership. Other countries already have such a scheme. Responsible and conscientious beekeepers have nothing to fear from registration and much to gain. Indeed most will have already registered on BeeBase.

Costs

It is thought that, providing the poll is at a moderate level (i.e. 2 to 4% of BBKA members), a budget of £1,000 should be adequate.

EC response

Whilst this motion is only suggesting that members are polled at this stage, it is unclear whether it is polling opinions on compulsory registration (i.e. through legislation) or on BBKA membership being conditional on registration – both views have been expressed in supporting documentation. This would need clarification before any poll is undertaken.

The question of compulsory registration has been addressed previously and, whilst it initially appears an attractive proposition, it will depend heavily on beekeepers maintaining currency of their apiary details, on the responsible government agency continuing to allow free access to maintain the data and on a suitable mechanism being developed to deactivate data when beekeepers cease to keep bees. Whilst there may not be a significant monetary cost to any of these elements it will require a commitment of time and effort from **all** beekeepers to maintain their data (including that of those beekeepers who do not have internet access).

The EC is not in general in favour of conditions being placed on membership of members associations. If the proposition is seeking that registration should be a condition of BBKA membership then the question of enforcement arises. Are we to have sanctions for non-compliance?

Answers to these questions will need to be found so that, if this proposition is passed, the next steps are already actively under consideration. It should also be noted that, resulting from the recent reorganisation of Animal and Plant Health departments within government, legislation in this area is expected within the next few years and this may have an impact upon this matter.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/09	Yorkshire	Awaited

Proposition

That the Examinations Board be instructed to review and revise its education and examination policies and programmes to enhance the value of the qualifications and training to the wider community, allowing the members to benefit through demonstrable knowledge skills and competencies that could be useful in the wider employment and community environments.

Supporting Notes

The demographics of the BBKA has changed significantly over the last 10 years; membership of the BBKA has doubled in this period, indicating that there are over 8000 new beekeepers. The needs and expectations of these beekeepers are different to the traditional beekeeper. Employability and workplace skills take a higher priority. It is suggested that these skills should be highlighted and that consideration be given to mapping the BBKA qualifications to the National Qualifications Framework.

It is suggested that the BBKA conduct research into the needs of new beekeepers through focus groups at, for example, the Spring Convention and that it talks to employers about their requirements and how the BBKA might help deliver them.

It is further suggested that the BBKA retain the services of a professional Educationalist to carry out this research.

Costs

Cost within the BBKA: Nil over the existing education committee costs.
 Cost of retaining an educationalist: £1,000

EC response

The Executive Committee, recognising the changing demographic of its members, are sympathetic to the aims of this motion; indeed the Education and Husbandry Committee have made several attempts to “map” the BBKA examinations and assessments to “National” qualifications. It is clear from this work that this is not an easy task and could, since it requires a detailed analysis of the syllabus for each examination or assessment, take several years and a significant expenditure to achieve it. Based on experience to date, the EC believe that the costs will be many times those proposed.

It is also clear that, should we achieve this objective, the cost to members undertaking assessments and examinations could increase significantly – for example, the current price to the candidate of a City & Guilds certificate is in the order of £35 in addition to the study and examination costs.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/10	Yorkshire	Awaited

Proposition

It is proposed that the technical committee of BBKA investigate whether there are usable regulations, along with the associated enforcement bodies, already in existence which prevent sugar waste being stored so that it is accessible by honey bees and other nectar feeding insects. The outcome should be published in the BBKA News. If no such regulations exist the BBKA should use their good offices with the government, possibly through the Bee Health Plan, to argue that appropriate regulations should be formulated by the government. Regulations already exist for honey waste and storage.

Supporting Notes

Sugar waste improperly stored can pollute the honey stores in hives over a significant area and create a risk of disease transfer. A sugar waste processor near Selby kept sugar waste in leaking skips. An investigation on site found thousands of bees, wasps etc. feeding on the waste. Hundreds of pounds of honey in local hives were contaminated and were inedible. Beekeepers further afield were probably affected to a lesser degree but were not aware. The incident was reported to the local authority and to FERA. Neither felt they had the power to take action. Advice was sort from BBKA but none was forthcoming. This was obviously a serious issue for the beekeepers concerned, both as a financial cost and a threat to the health of their bees. This incident is not an isolated one.

Costs

Estimated cost to consult environmental lawyers as to whether legislation already exists - £3000. No cost for adding to the agenda of Bee Health Forum.

EC response

This is a problem which has occurred in a number of locations around the country over the last twenty or so years and is well known to both the BBKA and the National Bee Unit. In some situations the problem has been caused by empty honey barrels, contaminated with EFB or AFB spores creating an even greater problem for local beekeepers and direct intervention has achieved some improvements in terms of waste management. In this case the concern is primarily contamination of honey in the hive.

It is doubtful as to whether appropriate legislation or regulation exists to enable better management of sugar waste; Yorkshire BKA's discussions with Local Authorities and Fera suggest that there is not. It is most unlikely that government will put in place such legislation given its reluctance to legislate or increase regulatory loads. The EC recognises that this is a major problem for the beekeepers affected but is of the opinion that such legislation would only be achieved through extensive and costly lobbying and that the outcome would be most uncertain. Estimated costs are not adequate to undertake this task.

The EC thus opposes this proposition but, nevertheless, will undertake to raise the matter with the BHAF and with the FSA to gain some leverage. YBKA should continue and redouble their efforts to achieve local remedies in the meantime.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/11	Kent	Buckinghamshire

Proposition

That a clear account be given as to the costs and expenses incurred in producing the BBKA monthly newsletter.

Supporting Notes

The BBKA produces a monthly newsletter which is a significant undertaking and involves input from a number of sources. In the accounts to 30th September 2013, the only reference to BBKA News income/expenses is on page 13 under "6. Other Charitable Income Advertising - BBKA News and other £95,354". Nowhere in the accounts are there figures which show the cost to the BBKA of producing the newsletter; the accounts lack transparency in this regard and should be rectified by a clearly annotated account of the costs incurred in the production of this newsletter, to include postage, printing, honoraria and the like.

Costs

None presented

EC response

In the past the accounts have shown the net figure for the cost of producing and distributing BBKA News. As per the 2014-15 budget the key cost elements including VAT where payable are:

Editorial and Advertising Sales: £31K,

Print: £69K,

Postage: £80K,

Distribution: £22K,

Total Cost: £202K

Advertising Revenue : £110K

Net cost £92K: circa £4.24 per member.

The postage costs have been reduced for 2014-15 through the establishment of a downstream agreement with UK Mail which reduces the VAT-able element and saves up to £1K per issue.

However, Royal Mail will increase their charges by an unknown amount during the year. The net cost is clearly dependent on achieving the advertising sales target.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/12	North Staffs	Awaited

Proposition

The BBKA should offer full and country members the option of receiving BBKA news by email instead of post, and should reduce the capitation fee for those members to reflect the reduced cost, which at a minimum would be by the savings in postage.

Supporting Notes

The change of BBKA news from a simple monochrome newsletter to a full colour monthly magazine has required a large increase in capitation fees.

The 2014-15 budgeted cost is £4.15 per capita for 12 issues delivered by Royal Mail.

Whilst many enjoy reading the paper version, there are others who would be happy with the pdf version, or who do not want to read it at all.

By offering to reduce the capitation by the savings in postage, the BBKA will not suffer financially.

As a pdf version is already prepared for the website, there would be no extra cost here.

It may be argued that advertisers would react negatively to a reduced print run, but they may equally prefer readers to view the online version, which has direct hyperlinks to the advertiser's website.

Costs

None presented

EC response

Through cost containment in production, benefitting from the increase in circulation due to membership growth from 8,500 in 2006 to over 24,000 currently, with attendant economies of scale, the cost of BBKA news has risen from circa £2+ (6 copies p.a.) per member to £4+ (12 copies p.a.) per member. Issue size has grown and as a monthly the publication has increased its appeal as an advertising vehicle, such that around 50% of the cost of production and distribution is recouped through advertising revenue. The costs of BBKA News should be compared with those of BeeCraft, the other monthly magazine at £27, before discounts for bulk subscriptions.

Readership for on-line publications tends to be lower than hard copy versions and many other special interest publications are offering e-magazines in addition to the hard copies, often as a convenience e.g. back numbers can be 'searchable'. Reductions in hard copy numbers can produce savings on postage, though bulk discounts may be affected. Print costs per issue go up with shorter runs but production and many of the distribution costs remain fixed, not reducing with falling print numbers. Advertising revenues would almost certainly fall with reduced circulation. Thus in summary, costs per member might in fact rise if there was a significant take-up of an electronic version. At £4+ per member for 12 issues BBKA News represents exceptional value for money and is a key universal benefit to members provided by capitation. PDF versions of BBKA News are available on the web-site and that service will be enhanced going forward, for those who wish to use it. It should be noted that e-communications with members are currently limited by the fact that we only hold e-mail addresses for a third of members.

The costs of producing BBKA News are under constant review and steps taken such as the downstream agreement recently set-up to ameliorate postage charges, to effect further value for money for members.

The EC thus opposes this proposition.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/13	North Staffs	Awaited

Proposition

That the BBKA Constitution Rule 14.2 is amended in respect to Registered Member Voting from "each Delegate to record one vote for every Registered Member and Partner Member" to" each Delegate to record one vote for every Registered Member, Partner Member and Country Member".

Supporting Notes

Country members, even though they do not keep honey bees are as much a part of the AA/BBKA membership as are the other two classes of members who are included. This is probably an oversight following the introduction of this type of membership and should be rectified.

Costs

The cost to the BBKA is NIL

EC response

The notes for this proposition state that the omission of Country Members from a membership vote at an ADM was an oversight. This is not the case; the intention of the Constitution Drafting Committee was that policy direction for the BBKA should be in the hands of active beekeepers. This point was not made by the EC during the adoption process for the Constitution and neither was it picked up by the membership. If the Delegates are now minded to effect the change, the EC is neutral except to point out that it will make very little difference affecting only membership votes (following a Delegates' vote) at a Delegates' Meeting.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/14	Kent	Buckinghamshire

Proposition

That the tasks performed by recipients of honoraria shall be listed and the sums received by those individuals and their support to the BBKA clearly identified.

Supporting Notes

In the accounts for the year to 30th September 2013 item 30, it was stated there were 11 recipients of honoraria. No details were given as to the tasks performed on behalf of the BBKA to merit such a payment. The largest payment amounted to between £10,000 and £12,000. If one assumes each recipient received the maximum, this equates to £54,400 which is a significant sum. These outgoings should be clearly identified.

Costs

None presented

EC response

The EC feel that it is inappropriate for individuals to be identified by the very small sums which they are paid for particular tasks. One recipient who receives just £600 per annum willingly contributes in excess of 400 hours each year to the BBKA cause. It is possible that some may be less willing to make that contribution if they have to be publically named and identified in the accounts.

It should also be noted that, because of employment and tax legislation, most recipients will, in future, be paid fees rather than honoraria.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/15	Shropshire	Awaited

Proposition

That the BBKA Constitution be amended as follows:

Paragraph 16.2.8 currently reads:

"Meetings of the EC shall be recorded with agreed actions and decisions made".

This paragraph should be amended to read:

"Meetings of the EC and subcommittees shall be properly recorded to show a true record of proceedings with (as a minimum) those present noted, notes on topics discussed, agreed actions and decisions made, and those records made permanently available to members via a suitably secure area of the BBKA website".

Supporting Notes

Recent events clearly demonstrate a significant thirst among Associations and Delegates for more transparency in the management of the BBKA. This proposition would be a significant move in this direction. Since visibility is proposed to be members only, confidentiality issues should only happen very rarely, if at all. With improved transparency, the members would feel more engaged with the BBKA and the EC would have ongoing opportunities to gain valuable feedback from the membership whenever they need that. Delegates could have much more useful discussions with their associations, and make more informed decisions at the ADM. There would be more or less approval and support for the EC from delegates, but the BBKA as a whole would be an easier organisation to be a volunteer in, and a better organisation overall.

Costs

This proposal is zero cost - the distribution method will equally serve the members of the EC and subcommittees.

EC response

The EC is surprised that this proposition should suggest that its proceedings are not "... Properly recorded to show a true record of proceedings with (as a minimum) those present noted, notes on topics discussed, agreed actions and decisions made". Full minutes are produced for every meeting and these are agreed, signed and stored on file for future reference.

The EC wishes to review the whole question of meeting minutes and records and dissemination of the discussions and decisions to members. A referral to the EC, under Standing Orders clause 14c, would be welcomed to enable all aspects of this matter to be explored. It is important that the widespread dissemination of this information should not be allowed to inhibit open and frank discussion in meetings.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/16	West Sussex	Awaited

Proposition

Following the discovery of Small Hive Beetle, *Aethina tumida*, (SHB) in Italy in September 2014 this ADM instructs BBKA to urgently seek a ban on the importation of bees and unprocessed bee products into the UK.

Supporting Notes

SHB was discovered in Italy in September 2014. In a short time it was confirmed in over 30 apiaries, showing how easily it can be spread undetected. Italy exports bees and queens to a large number of countries, including the UK, so the threat can be from anywhere. Attempts to control the spread of SHB have failed in all countries it has reached so far, so we can assume the same will happen in the UK. It is likely to spread in advance of detection.

Although SHB may be spread on fruit the one certain way is on bees. In the USA the spread was through packages and migratory beekeeping, the introduction into Canada in unprocessed beeswax.

Bees are generally imported for commercial gain. Losses can be quickly made up from existing stock and queens reared using simple techniques, so restricting imports will not unduly affect British beekeeping.

Costs

Costs are difficult to evaluate although it should only be the cost of lobbying and the lines of communication are already established.

EC response

It is assumed the proposition refers to *Apis mellifera* and not bumblebee species.

The international trade of honey bees and products of the honey bee is governed by rules and regulations which are intended to prevent the international movements of pests and diseases from one country to another.

These notes were written at the end of October 2014 and the BBKA has already had bilateral discussions with representatives from Defra, the NBU and the Plant and Animal Health Agency as well as raising the issue at the Bee Health Advisory Forum expressing our concerns about the potential for SHB to enter the UK on honey bees or honey bee products. Officials are considering our concerns.

Scientists and risk assessors are currently stress testing the ability of the sentinel apiaries to provide early detection of the presence of SHB in UK honey bee colonies.

An updated risk assessment has been carried out on plant and fruit. The following report was received in October 2014.

Fruit Imports and Small Hive Beetle

Fruit imports (e.g. avocado, grapes, bananas and grapefruit) and soils or composts associated with the plant trade could present risk pathways through which the beetle could be introduced. At the request of the Chief Plant Health Officer, expert Pest Risk Analysts 2015/16 continued have re-considered the potential for SHB to be introduced into the UK

with produce and other plant products currently imported from Italy. Although SHB has been associated with rotten fruit no evidence could be found as to whether the beetle is a primary pest able to attack healthy fruit, or if it is a secondary pest that requires existing damage before it can feed on fruit. While introduction of SHB via fruit has been assessed as a possible pathway, the most likely (i.e. highest risk) route of entry to the UK is still considered to be via movement of honey bees: queens and packaged (worker) bees for the purposes of trade. The Chief Plant Health Officer has provided the following statement regarding the potential for small hive beetle (Aethina tumida) to be associated with produce and other plant products from Italy: The European Commission evaluates plant health risks according to Directive 2000/29/EC. If existing measures to prevent the introduction of a plant pest into the Union are not considered sufficient, the Union will impose stricter measures or a complete ban to improve protection of the Union against the introduction of that organism. Recent examples of this include stricter measures imposed on South Africa for export of citrus to prevent introduction of citrus blackspot and a temporary ban on mangoes from India to prevent introduction of non-European fruit flies. Such measures are usually focused on produce being imported from outside the EU, rather than fruit being traded within the EU Single Market, where routine border checks are not undertaken. Although SHB can be associated with ripe and rotting fruit, this is not sufficient evidence to use plant health legislation to take measures against this insect. However, plant health and seeds inspectors (APHA) and horticultural marketing inspectors have been alerted to the risk of entry on fruit and have been asked to look out for the SHB. We have also liaised with the Fresh Produce Consortium to raise awareness amongst the industry and encourage importers and others to be vigilant. During the course of their plant health inspection duties, the APHA inspectors have intercepted other nitidulid species (the family of beetles to which SHB belongs) on a variety of plant products from Asia, Africa, North and South America, over several years - there has never been any finding of SHB, even from areas where this species is established.

The importation of honey bee queens and bees raises the whole question of the ability of the UK beekeeping industry (both hobbyists and commercial) to provide sufficient queens and colonies to meet demands not only in terms of numbers but also to meet the requirements for early queens and nuclei.

The update received from the authorities also included the following information. *Bee health inspectors across the UK are maintaining heightened inspections in areas where there is a high risk that new (exotic) pests and diseases could enter the UK. In England, Wales and Scotland selected groups of beekeepers have been specifically monitoring their colonies for exotic pest species. These beekeepers provide a valuable additional front-line defence against exotic pest incursion. For example, in England and Wales there are fifteen 'sentinel apiary' (SA) holders in each of eight beekeeping regions (i.e. 120 in total across 2015/16 continued*

England and Wales), which are in both 'at risk' and random areas to maximise the likelihood of detection. Hives within the SAs are regularly examined by the beekeepers, according to specific monitoring protocols. Twice in each season samples of hive debris are submitted to the NBU where they are tested for the presence of SHB. The establishment of SAs marks an increase in the level of surveillance for exotic pests, improving the chances for early interception and successful. Scientists from the NBU, Fera and the Universities of

Warwick and Swansea are working on a collaborative Defra-funded project to “stress test” the existing SA network. The results from this project (due early 2015), will allow the density and configuration of participating apiaries to be refined (if necessary) to optimise chances of early detection of a range of invasive species of honey bee pests, including SHB. The NBU will produce a more complete article on this project for a forthcoming issue of BBKA news.

The importation of bees is also being discussed within CONBA in an attempt to find a way forward.

BBKA policy is to promote the benefits of raising queens and colonies in the UK and to discourage the importation of queens and colonies into the UK.

It is unlikely that seeking a ban would be successful because of the international trade considerations however the issue of UK raised material will be raised again at the BHAF. This forum feeds into assisting Government policy on bee health.

At this point in time the Executive does not consider it appropriate to seek or it be possible to achieve a ban on the importation of honey bees and unprocessed honey bee products and does not support the proposition.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/17	Avon	Awaited

Proposition

We propose the BBKA lead the selection and implementation of a centralised member record system to ensure data consistency and to aggregate sufficient data to make the exercise cost effective.

The potential for standardised records and improved rigor to ensure members' data is secure, that they are correctly BDI covered, and that Gift Aid claims are compliant is clear and although potentially time and money expensive to implement we would see a drop in the burden of record keeping as we remove several levels of data gathering, verification, recording, re-recording in different formats for different outputs, and reconciling.

The proposed approach is in two parts. First is an exercise to identify the optimal solution, and second its implementation.

We propose first the low cost polling of all BBKA affiliates to:

- To agree a common data set required from BBKA affiliates; and
- ascertain if any Association has already implemented a member database system which meets our requirements and can act as referee for its qualities and so provide a proven solution on which to build; or
- ascertain if the recently advised BDI system developments could be considered to offer a BBKA system solution given the BDI's range of customers is broader; or
- decide if a bespoke system is required.

The implementation process can be agree on the basis of the findings of the first part.

Supporting Notes

Near 70 local associations maintain member records for local branch administration, for the BBKA, for BDI, and for Gift Aid returns for approximately 20,000 members. These records are essential to enable branches to conduct their local work, and for the accurate and timely flow of subscriptions, insurance premia, and Gift Aid tax refunds.

Each association can comprise several branches as well as an Executive will result in a large number of copies of members' data held in paper files, on spreadsheets, perhaps on more sophisticated software, and on many laptops and desk computers as well as in email inboxes and Sent boxes of Trustees and Officers. We can be certain that across BBKA there are individuals' changes which "fall between the cracks" despite our best endeavours.

The Data Protection Act of 1988 places obligations on Trustees and Officers to ensure data integrity and security. The Gift Aid process obligates Trustees and Officers to make accurate returns.

There are IT suppliers offering database solutions to charities and some BBKA affiliates may already be using these. The BDI has already started down the route of offering a structured means of storing member data which could extend beyond BDI cover.

2015/17 continued

A centralised approach offers the opportunity to include secure payment technology for members who want to use debit cards. We could consider Direct Debits for members in for the long haul. Trustees and Officers would become both users and operators of the system while members would be free to work directly to such a system to record their own data and undertake financial transactions, or to do this through the local Trustees and Officers.

Costs

We estimate that the first phase of the proposal would incur costs of up to £5,000 and 100 hours of BBKA officer and volunteer time to produce and circulate a questionnaire to all BBKA branches to find the solution of best fit.

We note that the implementation costs of a BBKA wide member database, should that be the preferred option, may be material and would be subject to a proposal to be placed before the BBKA at a subsequent ADM to obtain acceptance of the proposal and allocate a budget.

EC response

The BBKA already has a centralised member record system developed some years ago and maintained for many years by Ivor and Jan Davis. Ivor still provides some technical support for this system. A small group is already considering developing a new membership record system offering online facilities for updating membership records to Membership Secretaries. This is not a simple matter as the BBKA has a number of quasi membership classes which also need better recording, Adopt a Beehive and Friends of the Honey Bee are just two of these.

Most of the activities mentioned in this proposition are already underway or proposed. We have already had discussions with BDI and their system is one we will be considering. Whichever system is adopted will need to be secure, have a guaranteed continuity and be flexible enough for future development. Even if the BDI system was adopted and extended the costs involved are not inconsiderable.

It is necessary to remember that the last time such a move was proposed at an ADM there was a very high level of opposition. Most Associations already operate their own database systems, often using MS Access or Excel which are tailored to their needs. Introducing a centralised system may require considerable change locally.

It is recommended that this is referred to the EC and those sponsoring this proposition offer their services to the Working Party considering a new system. In particular a volunteer Project Manager will be needed.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/18	Lancaster	Awaited

Proposition

That Oldham and District Beekeepers' Association be admitted as an Area Association.

Supporting Notes

Oldham and District Beekeepers' Association has, for some time, been a branch of Manchester and District Beekeepers' Association. Manchester is in the process of becoming a charitable company, limited by guarantee at which point it will no longer be practical for Oldham to be a branch. Oldham has formed itself into a new association and its members wish to retain their membership of BBKA by becoming an Area Association.

Costs

There will be no material costs or time involved in the execution of this proposition.

EC response

There are some potential financial difficulties for the association with their current constitution under which they would propose to operate however, through discussion with the association, they have agreed to align their membership categories with those currently used by the BBKA and most member associations. This will resolve those difficulties.

Given these changes, the EC looks forward to welcoming Oldham & District as a member association.

Number	Nominating Association	Seconding Association
2015/19	Northumberland	Awaited

Proposition

The Northumberland Beekeepers Association welcomes the efforts being made by the BBKA trustees to modernise the way the business of the BBKA is undertaken. This will take time to bed in. When that has happened NBKA would like the trustees to consider introducing a method of selecting trustees that ensures that all the regions of England and Northern Ireland always have representation on the board of trustees.

Supporting Notes

None presented

Costs

None presented.

Draft EC response

The BBKA Constitution, as it is presently written, includes the following “*members shall be elected on grounds of personal merit and shall be deemed not to represent any specific body or organisation of beekeepers including the member’s Area Association, but shall act solely in the interest of the BBKA*” (clause 18.3.4.). The EC is also mindful that the Charities Commission caution against representation of particular interest groups by Trustees.

The EC is committed to total openness and democracy in the work of the Association; it is concerned that, should this proposition be adopted in its present form, it could present insurmountable difficulties in implementation.

The EC would welcome this proposal being referred under S.O. clause 14c in order to provide the opportunity to discuss with Northumberland and other like-minded associations how best the spirit of the proposition could be adopted without placing undue constraints on it.

Member associations are reminded that each association has a nominated link trustee