



Minutes of the Central Executive Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 6 September 2022

Voting Members:

JR	Jane Ridler	Chair	Present
VW	Vanessa Wilkinson	General Secretary	Present
PA	Pat Allen	Treasurer	Present
MA	Mike Abel	Chelmsford Trustee	Present
GM	Glenn Mayes	Maldon & Dengie Trustee	Present
SN	Simon Nicholson	Epping Forest Trustee (Minutes)	Present
CA	Chris Allen	Southend Trustee	Present
BM	Bridget Mudd	Braintree Trustee	Present
JM	Jim McNeill	Romford Trustee/Honey Show Delegate	Absent
LY	Linda Yeats	Saffron Walden Trustee	Present
AL	Andrew Linley	Colchester Trustee	Present
SB	Steve Broomhead	Harlow Trustee	Absent

Officers / Members:

JS	Jean Smye	President	Present (part)
DI	Dee Inkersole	Editor of Essex Beekeeper	Absent
RR	Richard Ridler	BBKA Delegate	Present
MW	Michael Webb	Secretary of Essex Show	Present
SG	Stephanie Green	Examinations Secretary	Absent
JT	Jan Tutton	Membership Secretary	Present
GMD	Garth Milford	eR2 Implementation Manager	Absent
DG	Dave Garratt	Bee Health Officer	Absent
GC	Graeme Crook	Webmaster	Present
LC	Louise Carr	Guest (proxy for SB, Harlow)	Present
KL	Keith Lomax	Guest (Governance)	Present (part)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies from Jim McNeill, Stephanie Green, Dave Garrett and Steve Broomhead (SB).

PA is acting as Proxy for JM.

2. Conflicts of Interest

None

3. Minutes of CEC meetings held on 2 November 2021

JT noted that she was down as absent on the minutes, when she was very much present.

Action: JR to amend attendees list.

Item 5: PA queried why no vote was shown regarding subs being kept the same. In response it was recognised that no vote had actually been taken, but it had been generally accepted by committee, as noted in para (iv). No action required.

4. Matters arising not on Agenda/action updates

No matters arising

5. Treasurer's Report

i) ER2 Training

PA stated that there was an urgent need within the Divisions for Treasurers and Membership Secretaries to have ER2 training, because some of the people in those roles lacked confidence in using the system. The only person we know capable of giving that training is JT. We have had a lot of new Treasurers over the last year and the handovers have not been great; ideally, Divisions need to have contingency cover for these roles. JT responded that she could not provide formal training. However, by using the manuals and trial + error they should gain confidence. She is happy to support and guide them through this with 1-1s over the phone, and to run a short Zoom session as well.

ii) Signatory

PA wanted the committee to approve MA as a signatory for banking purposes.

Agreed: that MA was a suitable person for this role.

iii) Subscriptions for 2024

There is limited scope for EBKA to reduce subscriptions at County level, having done so last year. It would be inappropriate to reduce it further.

Agree: voted unanimously not to reduce subscriptions at County level.

iv) Calendar Year

It was discussed and agreed at Officers' Day that the EBKA financial year should remain as Jan - Dec, rather than change to match the BBKA year of Oct 1st – Sept 30th. Does the CEC agree with this?

Voted: unanimously agreed that EBKA financial year to remain as Jan - Dec.

6. Essex Beekeeper

JR thanked JS, in her absence, for producing the *Essex Beekeeper* in August, and for promising to do so again in September: VW said that JS had since offered to continue doing this to the end of the year.

JR stated that as Dee is unable to carry on at the moment, we need to find a longer term solution. The current method of producing the magazine is difficult and it's been suggested we use a MailChimp version, which may make it easier to get someone to take on the role.

KL was present for this agenda item and he had investigated MailChimp (a US company that processes the work outside the UK/EU) in order to check that it complied with the requirements of GDPR. He said that there were 3 elements he considered;

i) Does it satisfy the more "customer-centric" focus of EU/UK practices;

ii) That the user needs to consent;

iii) That the user is able to opt-out from using it.

KL was satisfied that MailChimp passes these requirements, and was pleased to see they have a GDPR Officer.

Members were asked their views on using MailChimp, which were positive. JR was happy to take it on initially (with help from Brian Spencer, Chelmsford Chair), but will be asking for a new editor. Is CEC content to move forward on this basis?

Agreed: JR to move forward with producing the *Essex Beekeeper* on the MailChimp platform.

7. BeeBase and Bee Inspector's request

JT explained the outcome regarding a letter from Ian Nichols (a bee inspector) where he had requested that we provide EBKA membership information for him to share with APHA. This was because a lot of beekeepers are still not registered with Bee Base.

VW had asked Ian Nichols to make a formal request, on headed APHA notepaper as required, but he failed to do this. JT had spoken to him on the phone and he rowed back from his initial request, so this is no longer an issue. However he does see a need for us to get as many beekeepers as possible to register with Beebase. The onus for joining Beebase is with the membership, but JT suggested that a form of words could go out on ER2 with a GDPR summary at the time of membership renewal. The wording has already been considered.

8. Officers' Day and Bee Health Day follow-up

i) Officers' Day

JR stated that it was a good day with around 33 officers in attendance, although the number of treasurers and membership secretaries was disappointing. Also disappointing, no members from Maldon or Epping could make it.

There were a lot of ideas and a lot of discussion. Two points, the financial year and use of Mailchimp for a new *Essex Beekeeper*, already taken up at this meeting, and around topics such as: spending on Education and Bee Health;+ on-line expenses, and divisional roles (a later agenda point at this meeting). PA noted that we were running a deficit this year because of the one-off donation to Bees Abroad, but JR said that we need to keep on spending wisely. CA enquired whether it would be possible to set a safe level of funds to be held, to help when deciding on funding projects – Paras Shah, Epping Forest Treasurer, could help as he does that as his job.

ii) Bee Health Day

VW led this as DG had apologised for his absence and provided a report by email. He said it was a successful day and it was a good venue, though they have not received an invoice from Essex CC for the use of Cressing Temple. MA believes that they offered us the use free of charge.

DG believes that there is enough interest to hold two of these days each year. However, he understands that the bee inspectors rotate counties each year so there may be no courses available in 2023. JT believes that if you contact the inspectors directly to arrange a Bee Health Day, then they should come. We would require 2 Bee Health days, but should this be kept at County level or Divisions?

Agreed: unanimous vote that Bee Health days should be kept at County level.

He would also like to form links with other counties regarding AHAT as he thinks BBKA are not co-ordinating very well. His thoughts on the Chelmsford Asian Hornet are that it did not fly in but came by some other route.

PA enquired if we should give a donation to Cressing. MA said that, if we do, then it should go to the "Friends of Cressing Temple" rather than Essex CC. JR stated that, if there was no charge being made, then a donation would be a nice gesture.

Action: MA to follow up with Cressing Temple

9. Divisional AGMs and AGM 2023

A proposal from Officers' Day was that elected Divisional Officers should start in their role on the same day, to co-ordinate Divisional and County administration. It is expected that elections would be held at Divisional

AGMs in January, and Officers start their roles in March at the EBKA AGM. MW stated that there needs to be a quick EGM to approve these changes.

Agreed: Voted unanimously that EGM should be called to approve that elected members should start new roles on a set day each year

VW asked whether the next AGM should be held on-line or at a venue. Views were taken, which were clearly in favour of maintaining the current practice of holding at a venue with a guest speaker. JR also asked if anyone was interested in arranging a speaker for that and the Ted Hooper Lecture.

Agreed: The Essex AGM to be arranged at a venue, as usual.

10. Website

JR stated that the feeling was that the website needed refreshing and that in particular the front page was too wordy. GC agreed, saying that he didn't like the font size and that we needed to make it the same in all formats. JR said that at this stage we should be looking at "livening it up" and that a small sub-group should be set-up to take this forward.

MW suggested that we could also do with a QR code for the front page. At the honey show we gave out 1,000 leaflets, a lot of money could have been saved by simply providing a QR Code. GC agreed and also said that each Division could be set-up with their own QR codes.

JR stated that CEC members should have a look at the website critically and feedback. GC stated that Saffron Walden was a good example of a more modern site as a comparison.

Action: CEC members to look critically at the EBKA website and feedback to JR/GC

11. ADM proposals for BBKA

This was another topic that had been discussed at Officers day: the difficulty with BBKA exams being available in future only on-line. The BBKA Education Committee has proposed to reduce the availability of written exams, eliminating them completely by 2025. They propose that next year there will be 3 centres nationally to take them, reducing to just one at Stoneleigh in 2024. We have until this October to respond.

RR referred to the "ADM Module Motion" paper that he had prepared for the meeting, with the motion he proposed to send to BBKA Education Committee, and this was discussed. The CEC felt that there was not enough trust in the technology, own equipment, etc to be confident of taking an exam online. LY provided her own experience as an example. SN said he took a written exam because he was not confident after having practised on a test paper on-line. It was felt these proposals would discourage people from taking exams.

GC suggested that we could possibly use Pearson Test Centres which operate all over the country. The feeling was that we should respond on the basis that the *status quo* should remain until BBKA members have been properly consulted and are reassured that the on-line system is robust.

Action: RR to send an amended ADM proposal to BBKA Education Committee asking them not to proceed with their proposal.

12. Questions arising from Divisional Reports & Secretaries' Reports

Essex Honey Show: MW said that the show was very successful this year. There were over 300 exhibits from 34 members, and the two judges stated that the standard of exhibits was higher than elsewhere. The Orsett Show Committee were also very happy with our footfall and they want us back next year. There were also a lot of new members who volunteered enthusiastically and sent in entries. He thanked all those involved, particularly those who helped in changing the entry form from paper to on-line.

JR noted that we should aim to make involvement completely county-wide, as some divisions were not as involved in submitting entries or volunteering.

Harlow: LC had circulated a proposal for a contribution to funding of the Harlow's apiary. As it was getting late in the meeting, it was agreed that this be discussed at the next meeting and that LC should provide more information about the proposed budget.

LC had also circulated an inventory of beekeeping items belonging to the Division.

Action: *LC provide more information about proposed apiary spending*

Chelmsford: MA stated that funds are available to promote education and training, and suggested a sub-committee is set up to assess how these should be disbursed. JR said that we need someone to head it up, and that both Brian Spencer and Fiona Cutting at Chelmsford are keen to be involved.

MW said that it is important to have a person from CEC on the sub-committee, as occurs with the Honey Show committee.

Epping Forest: SN gave a Conference update. Information and tickets are on Eventbrite and JT has just sent out details on ER2. There are 55 tickets still available. Everything is in place: venue, catering, stalls, speakers, raffle volunteers, etc, with a few minor adjustments to be finalised. He asked if anyone had advice on the raffle and LY said she would email SN with Saffron Walden's approach.

Action: LY to email SN with details of 2019 conference for raffle, etc.

Southend 1: wanted clarification on the £50 limit on cash payments, particularly in respect of speakers who may insist on cash payment. JR confirmed that the limit was just on cash, as there are no records/receipts kept for that. Any difference must be made up with a recordable source (eg cheque).

Southend 2: CA informed the meeting that normally Southend has its AGM in November (earlier than anyone else) but a Divisional Level rule change cannot be approved in time with the EGM in January. MW said that the EGM should come first (November) and then their AGM in January.

Braintree: JR noted that the DVM report did not mention any disease, but Ian Nichols the bee inspector said there was.

Action: BM to check.

Colchester: JR congratulated Colchester for winning the prize at the Tendring Show for the best Education Tent. AL said that they got a long-hive.

Maldon: No DVM report received.

13. Correspondence

As it was late, VW will send details of correspondence to the committee by email.

Action: VW to send Correspondence to CEC by email.

NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 8 November 2022 at 7.30 pm (via Zoom)

Action date	Owner	Action	Action due date	Update	Status
6/5/21	DG	Send reminders to members to join Beebase	6/7/21		open
3/5/22	GM, SN, BM	to check and forward Apiary details.	12/7/22		open
12/7/22	VW	To ask KL to amend wording of EBKA Rules re charitable donations	1/11/22		open
12/7/22	VW	To alert GC about email addresses that are not working on the CEC group mail.	12/7/22	In progress	open
12/7/22	JR	Updates Leases table and circulate to trustees	1/9/22		open
6/9/22	JR	To amend attendees List in the Minutes	8/11/22		Open
6/9/22	JR	To move forward with producing the <i>Essex Beekeeper</i> on the MailChimp platform.	8/11/22		Open
6/9/22	MA	Check invoicing with Cressing Temple	1/10/22		Open
6/9/22	CEC members	To look critically at the EBKA website and feedback to JR/GC	8/11/22		Open
6/9/22	RR	To send an amended ADM proposal to BBKA Education Committee	1/10/22		Open
6/9/22	LC	Provide more details about funding of Harlow's apiary	8/11/22		Open
6/9/22	LY	Send conference details to SN	13/9/22		Open
6/9/22	BM	Check disease in Braintree area	8/11/22		Open
6/9/22	VW	To send Correspondence info to CEC	16/9/22		Open

Minutes agreed as true record of meeting:

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Jane Ridler - Chair of CEC – 8 November 2022