

**Final Minutes of the Healthy Bees Plan
Project Management Board
18th Meeting, 16 May 2012
By teleconference**

Present:

Helen Crews (HC)	Food & Environment Research Agency [Fera] (Chair)
Liz McIntosh (LMc)	Food & Environment Research Agency (Project Manager)
Jane Sharkey (JS)	Food & Environment Research Agency (Secretary)
Mike Brown (MB)	Food & Environment Research Agency (NBU)
Andy Wattam (AW)	Food & Environment Research Agency (NBU)
Tim Lovett (TL)	British Beekeepers' Association [BBKA]
Martin Tovey (MTo)	British Beekeepers' Association
David Aston (DA)	British Beekeepers' Association
Dinah Sweet (DS)	Welsh Beekeepers' Association [WBKA]
Margaret Ginman (MG)	Bee Farmers' Association [BFA]
Bob Smith (BS)	National Diploma in Beekeeping (NDB)
Steve Sunderland (SS)	Scottish Executive
Huw Jones (HJ)	Welsh Assembly (via telephone)
Mark Tatchell (MTa)	Chair of SEAG
Chris Hartfield (CH)	National Farmers' Union (via telephone)
Nigel Robins (NR)	Beekeeping representative (education and training expertise)
Carl Reynolds (CR)	Chair of CWG

Apologies:

Wally Shaw (WS)	Welsh Beekeepers' Association
Ken Edwards (KE)	Chair of HEG

1. Welcome and introduction

The Chair (HC) welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that 2 hours have been allocated if needed.

Update on governance

Most people have replied to HC letter about future governance of the Board, still awaiting formal response from BBKA, responses received so far agreed for HC to continue as chair for next 6-9 months.

Most members agree to reducing numbers around the table at PMB meetings but not ruling out additional members receiving papers.

DA commented that BBKA had discussed the issue at their Exec meeting last week but not sure as to whether PMB is a project board or an advisory board as current board functions do both.

Action LMc and HC to think about what the key remit is distinction between project and advisory boards.

It was agreed to defer further discussion on this matter until the next face to face meeting (agreed date of 25 July 2012 at Sand Hutton, 10:30 for 11:00 start) BBKA agreed with this and MG added that the size of the board needs to be effective but not too big. Revision of Terms of Reference also to be considered at July meeting. LMc added that 2010 review team commented that the board was doing both but not making a distinction, hence the split agenda to deal with this.

TL added that when the board was set up BBKA had difficulties with the set up and now a decision needs to be made as to which way to go.

It was agreed that at the July meeting MB would take members of the board through BeeBase and its developments and a refresh/ revision of the key Terms of Reference and membership, HC added that she will aim to speak with individuals regarding their responses.

TL asked if natural beekeepers were being brought onto the board. LMc replied that they had been invited to meetings on the back of the bee summit, MTo added that they would need to be represented by a true representative, some BBKA members see themselves as 'natural beekeepers'. HC agreed that there is a need to bring them on board, could

be a pest risk involved and if they are formally represented need to sound out their views. All thought 'National Beekeeping Trust' may be a point of contact.

Action LMc and HC to look at Terms of Reference and produce paper for discussion at July meeting.

Board members to note both HC and LM on annual leave 11 – 22 June 2012, Marie Holmes and colleagues within NBU as points of contact.

2. Draft notes from 17th meeting

LM pointed out that some notes from previous board meetings are missing from BeeBase and this would be rectified.

Action Look at COLOSS survey – LMc to check with Selwyn Wilkins at NBU about this data – this action not done, MB will give an update at July meeting and send a link to LMc for forwarding to PMB.

Action BBKA to keep PMB informed of their plans to investigate churn. HC to ask inspectors for input on churn. BBKA reported that they have data but don't know why members leave, survey conducted in Autumn and hopefully these results can be collated, MTO agreed to speak with HC and feedback. MB added that there could be route through BeeBase as to when beekeepers sign up and activity recorded. BS added that at his local association members records could be interrogated over the last 10 years.

Action TL agreed to send words through to correct statement under point 5 re discussions with VMD regarding loss of Fumidil.

MTa asked for minutes to be sanity checked, concerned that some comments were delivered by MT and this could refer to himself or MTO. JS agreed to go through minutes and correct.

Action Belinda Phillipson to check evidence on whether SHB prefer bumble bees or honey bees and the implications for contingency plan, contingency plan is being developed and should be ready for posting early June.

Action at the July meeting LMc would brief PMB about the options and recommendations for future disease control policy, after which they would be invited to comment on/ sanity check the draft consultations paper before it was issued. 2/3 more review meetings before PMB July meeting. Consultation at the end of July. Brief from LMc with document to provide sanity check and questions for beekeepers.

Action LMc to check with CRD if they would be willing to make a public statement about their views on recent research on bees and pesticides CRD have posted a public statement on their website, LMc to re-send links to this.

April highlight report PMB 18/1

Risk Register

Gateway recommendation was to make the risk register more dynamic, who managing and what steps taken. LMc added that this is a first draft, partly populated with 2 risks and went on to ask if the format of the risk register is useful in terms of managing risks.

NR commented that he liked it a lot, small number of columns, good English and looks workable.

HJ added that it mirrors what used at Chief Vet office, needs to be reviewed on a regular basis.

BS thought it was useful approach.

TL asked how it fits in with the highlight report – Key milestone delivery (RAG status) and risks may impact on delivery of project.

Action HC and LMc to populate risk register with risks already identified by PMB in advance of July meeting.

Action PMB members invited to send in any potential additional risks to LMc to add to risk register.

3. HBP Work plan for 2012/13 PMB 18/2, Phase 2 budget PMB 17/7

Need to think about what activities to include in the work plan alongside HBP budget document (PMB 17/7).

LMc commented that she has taken last year's work plan and stripped out activities which have been completed, left in those activities which are continuing on for at least next 12 months and need to update the plan annually for next 3

years. Need to identify work for the next 3 years and populate the table. Some things on 17/7 need putting onto 18/2 as priorities.

DA commented that outcomes of Disease Control Review need to be included as some data gaps. LMc replied that the work plan may not be the right place to put these as HBP focuses on education and training with funding from Defra. HC added that maybe the work plan should be divided into project deliverables and stakeholder advice to take things forward.

DA concerned that the work plan may be lopsided, concerned where money spent, science side needs to be bolted on. MG commented that there is no mention of sustainable work since last August.

HC replied that the money had been bid for at least 12 months previous, 17/7 shows a reduced amount of money for HBP. Working with bee farmers and Defra as to how best promote standing and profile of bee farmers, not necessarily following the work plan but working with Defra Rural Development team. Item 10 on 17/7 £20k for sponsorship not just education and training but research also, funding from this to BFA for raising their profile.

P&D review, gaps in knowledge and data noted but parked at the moment, should consider as part of PMB remit and advise as to how these can be taken forward. Possibly when LMc finished review involve SEAG in this.

TL added that PMB was set up to move on these issues, lack of understanding and proper research and need to address these issues.

Action HC to give presentation at July meeting on sources of potential funding (further to changes within Defra, Fera now need to bid into different areas for jointly funded initiatives) and give some understanding as to where money can be sought.

DA asked for clarification as to where other sources available not just Defra.

Agreed to look at areas where bids can be taken through for research ideas to be developed such as gaps in policy review and included in HBP work plan.

HJ added that PMB should come up with projects – defined and costed to look at joint funding, keen for applications from consortium.

MTa commented on the need to discuss outcomes of the P&D review and how this fits into HBP, correct actions and comments need putting into place. Need for research funding associated with honey bee management husbandry, how this can be delivered, prioritise and identify research projects.

CH in reference to 18/2, liked how ties back to benefits realisation plan, issues and benefits differ between commercial beekeepers and hobby beekeepers, need to clarify extent to which activities.

TL looking at the plan, see benefits to beekeepers and this is a useful tool, need to refine to show what benefits who. Education not fundamental to bee farmers.

Action HC and LMc to look at next draft of work plan, prioritise 2/3 key areas, HC may contact 2/3 PMB members as to where funding is available from and circulate to PMB.

Action LMc and NR to revisit Benefits Realisation Plan to include specific benefits to bee farmers.

With reference to work plan activity 3 and 17/7 funding for BBKA and NDB education and training programme, LMc asked what progress had been made.

BBKA responded that they had learnt a lot over the last 2/3 years with a strong message from the association as to how they interact with their members. New appointment of Education Co-ordinator due to commence beginning of June, pilot area set up consulting with membership, see how this works, may engage further co-ordinators. Trying to deliver what members want and by Autumn should have a clearer idea of how to take this forward.

Action BBKA to report back Sept/ Oct to PMB re progress, PMB will then endorse or not, subject to funding (agreed timescale so as not to lose funding).

HEG noted in Feb/ Mar time NDB courses available, PMB to push most relevant courses? Prioritisation discussion re various courses and board role in influencing. BS reported increased level of interaction between BBKA and NDB.

Action BS and LMc to work on NDB proposal for 2012/13 HBP funding, aim to circulate proposal to PMB in advance of July meeting.

In terms of how to deliver the work plan in looking at the Terms of Reference it would be useful to commission chairs of sub groups to produce something as per tasks assigned from work plan, would get through the work this way.

MTa acknowledged that this is a good idea to assign tasks to subgroups but may not be a good idea for them to write proposals.

HJ thought that once tasks are assigned to sub groups it may be appropriate for the sub groups to feedback to PMB for decision making/ approval.

DA commented that a substantial amount of money (as noted on 17/7) is with the Inspectorate and he would like some transparency as to how this money is spent.

Action HC and MB to deliver presentation at July meeting on NBU spend to include training and advisory work.

MTo asked for financial breakdown as well.

HJ added that WG had received a good report from NBU including breakdown of what they do on behalf of WG. This is used as justification for continued funding into NBU.

DS added that the amount of educational input from NBU is appreciated, lots of workshops taking place this year.

4. Progress with ongoing work plan

i. Medicines record card issued by BBKA and VMD

TL reported that the final proof had been sent out to all and progress has been made with VMD. A6 size card which is small enough to be carried in a pocket but has 4 sides so that treatments for several hives can be recorded. Card now in print, copy to be enclosed with BBKA June news and bulk copies sent to various beekeeping suppliers.

HJ suggested Welsh language added for Welsh users.

MTa commented that there is no official way of how to keep records of medicines and this could this be downloaded from BBKA website.

Action HJ and LMc to discuss medicines record card being issued by BBKA and VMD and review any policy implications.

PMB agreed that overall aim should be for card to include HBP logo but that the card may not be long enough for bee farmers to put all hives on one card.

BBKA added that this card is the minimum requirement, need to know that all information is on one card.

ii. BFA progress with sponsorship

Not much to say on this at the moment; will report more at July meeting. LMc and MG having fortnightly telecon to discuss progress.

iii. Recruitment of BeeBase co-ordinator

Several applicants interviewed, awaiting candidate acceptance.

iv. BBKA's education co-ordinator

See previous notes under agenda item 3.

v. Colony losses trend analysis

Conducted survey for last winter, forms being collated report in due course, end May or early June. Not commissioned survey on trends analysis.

5. Any other business

Next meeting will be held at Fera, Sand Hutton, York on Wednesday 25 July 2012, coffee at 10:30 meeting to commence at 11:00 finishing around 16:00.