

**Minutes of the Bee Health Advisory Forum 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting, held at  
Defra, Nobel House, London  
6<sup>th</sup> March 2020, 11:00 – 15:00**

Present (☎ indicates “joined by Webex and telephone”)

Belinda Phillipson (BP)	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) – Bee Health Policy
Louise Mount (LM)	
Kevin Beattie (KB)	
Frank Petherbridge (FP)	
Kirsty Stainton (KS)	Fera Science Ltd
Rebekah Clarkson (BC)	National Bee Unit (NBU) – Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA)
Sandra Gray (SG)	
Julian Parker (JP)	
Kathleen Carroll (KC)	Welsh Government
Luis Molero (LMol) ☎	Scottish Government
Margaret Ginman (MG) ☎	Bee Farmers’ Association (BFA)
Wally Shaw (WS) ☎	Welsh Beekeepers’ Association (WBKA)
John Bowles (JB) ☎	
Pam Hunter (PH)	British Beekeepers’ Association (BBKA)
Anne Rowberry (AR)	
Norman Carreck (NC)	Sussex University - and the National Diploma in Beekeeping
John Hill (JH)	British Bee Veterinary Association (BBVA)
Tom Williamson (TW) ☎	DAERA
Ian Fenn ☎	Defra Wildlife - Pollinator
Tahira Kauser (TK)	Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)
<b>Chris Hartfield</b> ☎ (CH)	National Farmers Union

Apologies received from:

Anna Burrows	Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)
Rob Nickless	Bee Farmers’ Association (BFA)
Adam Leitch (AL)	National Diploma in Beekeeping
Maureen Wakefield	Fera Science Ltd
Fiona Hight MBE	Scottish Government

### **1 Welcome and introductions (BP) 11:00**

The Chair welcomed those attending and confirmed who was attending via teleconference. Tahira Kauser from the VMD joined the meeting for the first time.

### **2 Minutes of 30th meeting Actions and Q3 Highlight report 2019-2020. (RC)**

Minutes issued on 29<sup>th</sup> January were agreed with no comments or amendments.

All actions except one were closed.

<b>ACTION 22-10</b>	Prepare draft TOR incorporating comments –Complete over email
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A new Terms of Reference should be drafted in alignment with the New Healthy Bees Plan. Several Forum members requested that the old Terms of Reference be circulated.

<b>ACTION 31-1</b>	RC circulate original TOR [closed]
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### **3 Healthy Bee Plan Review – key points (KB) – 11:45 Presentation/discussion**

KB gave a presentation updating the forum on the ongoing Healthy Bees Plan Review, including what was left to do prior to publishing the report in May/June. The presentation did not focus on conclusions, except for a few points included to highlight the sort of outcomes being seen. KB reflected that as the review is large – over 100 pages – each reader would have the opportunity to pick out their own key conclusions.

On education, WS noted that at the onset of the HBP there was one metric that everyone agreed, the biggest contribution to bee health would be if bee keepers took the BBKA basic assessment. PH and AR confirmed BBKA have this data and agreed to provide.

KB formally thanked the BHAF and other non-forum members for their support in the review. There will be a full list of acknowledgements in the Healthy Bees Plan Review document.

<b>ACTION 31-2</b>	BBKA and WBKA to provide basic assessment figures for the HBP review
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### **4 NBU update Julian Parker – 12:20 Update**

JP gave a verbal update on the work of the NBU, including winter work and plans for the new season.

The NBU will have 4 inspectors less in 2020 than they would at full capacity. The total this year will be 49, down from 53 last year.

The Forum were made aware of an illegal use of Tylosin by a beekeeper in 2019. The CPS chose to give the Beekeeper a caution.

Discussion took place on the treatment of EFB and, in light of the inspection requirements for imports, and on the importation of bees. The chair requested that a full discussion should take place on imports when all attendees were in the same room and can be briefed appropriately. WS noted

that the WBKA want to make Wales self-sufficient in queens. RC agreed to send around the link to the NBU's published stats on imports.

It was noted that some member states were refusing to export to the UK following Brexit. JP confirmed that he had seen an email on the subject. The decision not to import may be a commercially driven decision, but the UK is currently in a transition phase and there should be no change to import/export rules.

<b>ACTION 31-4</b>	Circulate BeeBase report link [closed] <a href="http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/public/BeeDiseases/diseaseIncidenceMaps.cfm">http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/public/BeeDiseases/diseaseIncidenceMaps.cfm</a>
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### 5 Lunch 12:30

#### 6 Asian Hornet Team Update Anne Rowberry – 11:15 Presentation/ discussion

AR gave an informative presentation summarising key points from the recent 1-day BBKA AHAT conference on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

SG noted that following the conference RBI's were asked to contact their local AHATs, but some email addresses were out of date. AR agreed to investigate this matter and to circulate the slides to her presentation.

<b>ACTION 31-5</b>	AR to check AHAT map
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<b>ACTION 31-6</b>	Circulate AR's slides on Asian hornet to the BHAF.
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#### 7 Draft new Healthy Bees Plan (KC and BP) – 13:15 discussion

BP and KC gave a presentation introducing the new Healthy Bees Plan 2030. The draft had been circulated to the forum prior to the meeting.

The circulated plan was very high level, but it would be followed by an implementation plan with SMART actions. These would be used by the Forum to monitor progress. A discussion would follow at a later forum on indicators/measures of success.

In line with the lessons from the previous HBP, the new plan would be refreshed approximately every three years – this would be factored into implementation.

Once finalised, the Plan will need to be signed off by Defra and Welsh Ministers ahead of publication.

Suggested amendments by the Form were the addition of page numbers and amendment of a typo in Outcome 2 – 'Methods of learning *'are'* required for effective..'. A more explicit reference to the economic value of the honey bee and pollination would also make the plan more robust in the introduction.

A discussion took place on research and the sharing of outcomes. It was agreed that a formal mechanism was needed for how the Forum want to run this in the future. A standing item of R&D on future agendas would be an option.

A proposal to have a rotating chair was put to the Forum but it that the current arrangement of Defra chairing was preferable.

<b>ACTION 31-7</b>	Action MG to send a form of words regarding the economic value of pollination and honey and wax.
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<b>ACTION 31-8</b>	Comments on the new plan by 31/03/2020 (3 weeks).
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<b>ACTION 31-9</b>	Put together a list of questions about who else can be involved, who may be approached and ways in which we can manage it.
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## **8 AOB/comms/news 14:15 Update/ discussion**

### **8a Hive Count Update – Frank Petherbridge**

We had the highest ever response rate, over 9,000 - about 21% of BeeBase which is significantly higher than it used to be when it was around 12-13%. Colony numbers are still being calculated. We plan to continue the hive count even though it will no longer be used as part of the EU apiculture claim.

<b>ACTION 31-10</b>	RC add hive count as an agenda item to the BHAF forward look and plan to have a full discussion (invite Sam Grant - Defra statistician)
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### **8b EU update – LM**

The Forum were reminded of the current position regarding the UK's exit from the EU. What the situation will be after the transition period is unclear. On the Animal Health Law, we have not yet seen the implementing acts regarding registration of beekeepers.

**8c: AR: BBKA planning National hornet week 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> September.**

**8d UN World Bee Day on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.**

MG confirmed Bees for Development are planning a fundraiser at the Mansion House on 21<sup>st</sup> May <http://www.beesfordevelopment.org/events-calendar/mansion-house-bee-banquet/>

**8e Future Meeting Dates – Rebekah Clarkson**

No	Dates/info	Location
32	End Q1 June Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> June	Stoneleigh
33	End Q2 September Thursday <sup>h</sup> 10 <sup>th</sup> September	WebEx
34	End Q3 Early December Thursday, 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	London
35	End Q4 Late Feb/ Early March Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	York/ tbc

MG sent apologies for 18/06 and would see if another BFA attendee is available.

<b>ACTION 31-11</b>	RC to circulate proposed dates for the Forum's consideration. [closed]
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**9 Meeting closed 15:06**