

**Summary Note of the Bee Health Advisory Forum
25th meeting (WebEx and Teleconference), 7th September 2018**

11:00 – 13:00

Run from: Rm11F16, NAFIC, Sand Hutton, York YO41 1LZ

Present:

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| Richard Watkins (Chair) | Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) – Bee Health Policy |
| Louise Mount ☎ | |
| Frank Petherbridge | |
| Belinda Phillipson ☎ | Defra Plant and Bee Health Evidence & Analysis |
| Laura Stevens ☎ | |
| Nigel Semmence ☎ | Animal & Plant Health Agency, National Bee Unit (NBU) |
| Rebekah Clarkson (BHAF Secretariat) | |
| Julian Parker ☎ | |
| Maureen Wakefield | Fera Science Ltd |
| Margaret Ginman ☎ | Bee Farmers Association (BFA) |
| Margaret Murdin ☎ | British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) |
| Ken Basterfield ☎ | |
| Anna Burrows ☎ | Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) |
| Wally Shaw ☎ | Welsh Beekeepers' Association (WBKA) |
| John Bowles ☎ | |
| Chris Hartfield ☎ | National Farmers Union |
| John Hill ☎ | British Bee Veterinary Association (BBVA) |
| Sam Grant ☎ | Defra Plant and Bee Health Statistician |
| Ian Fenn ☎ | Defra Pollinator strategy |
| Kathleen Carroll ☎ | Welsh Government |
| Diane Stevenson ☎ | DAERA, Northern Ireland Executive |
| Steve Sunderland ☎ | Scottish Government |

Apologies received from:

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|---------------|--|
| Kevin Beattie | Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) – Bee Health Policy |
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The WebEx videoconferencing software was used, in addition to the teleconferencing facilities, to allow forum members to view the presentations that formed part of today's forum.

1. Welcome and introductions

Richard Watkins (Chair) informed the meeting that, after today, he will be on secondment to another project for the next nine months, returning in May 2019. He will continue with his work managing the Asian hornet outbreak.

In Richard's absence, Belinda Phillipson will take over as Head of Defra Bee Health Policy. Belinda commented that she was looking forward to the role and to working with the forum and other stakeholders.

2. Asian hornet outbreak (this replaced the original item 2, to allow discussion of outbreak)

Nigel Semmence provided an update on the Asian hornet outbreak in Cornwall. Last Friday, 31st August, 2 Asian hornets were caught in a monitoring trap in an apiary in Fowey. Inspections have been ongoing since then. The nest was detected on the morning of 6th Sept, and destroyed the same evening

In response to a question on destruction, Nigel advised that Ficam D was used (active ingredient Bendiocarb). Genetic testing will confirm the sex of the hornets and whether they are related to a European population or represent a new incursion from China.

Ken Basterfield stated he would like to discuss the issue further including views on trapping and resources available for the response. The Chair suggested this could be discussed later in the forum. He confirmed that there are sufficient inspectors to deliver the current response plan. He pointed out that over 5000 hornet alerts have been raised with NBU so far this year, through the app and by e-mail. There have been 500 alerts in this first week of September.

Nigel Semmence advised that APHA are continuing to monitor for hornets and triaging lots of other leads. Nigel appealed to forum members to encourage their membership to retain anything that they report. He noted that Asian Hornet Action Teams were also on-site in Cornwall and that APHA had contacted the University of Exeter about the possibility of using tags.

Maureen Wakefield provided an update on the Fera analysis.

Analysis of the Woolacombe (2017) and Tetbury (2016) outbreaks showed that they were unlikely to have come from the same source. They were most likely related to the French population, but were two separate incursions into the UK.

The chair noted that BBKA's Asian Hornet Week was imminent and that Defra would be willing to participate.

BBKA explained that beekeepers were keen to assist by joining AHATs. The meeting discussed ways in which these teams could have a more consistent approach.

| <i>Action no.</i> | <i>Required action</i> | <i>Action owner</i> | <i>Target date</i> |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | <i>Defra and BBKA press offices to liaise</i> | | <i>07/09/18</i> |

| <i>Action no.</i> | <i>Required action</i> | <i>Action owner</i> | <i>Target date</i> |
|-------------------|---|-----------------------|--|
| 2 | <i>Facilitate sharing of lessons learned re. working with AHATs</i> | <i>Nigel Semmence</i> | <i>Asap, following the end of the outbreak</i> |

When the nest from Fowey arrives at Fera, it will be analysed to establish the number of combs, and DNA analysis will be carried out.

3. Agenda item removed to allow for the above discussion about the Asian hornet outbreak

4. Presentation by Sam Grant, Defra statistician – Hive Count

Issues and methodologies

Submitting the number of hives determines the amount of financial aid the Government receives for apiculture work.

A baseline number of hives is obtained from the National Bee Unit at the end of August, and a second tranche of data at the beginning of March.

Quality assurance checks are carried out. Substantial changes in hive numbers are highlighted. There are also checks on beekeepers who are no longer active. Checks are done against the previous year’s data.

One issue is whether there are significant numbers of beekeepers who are not part of BeeBase or registered with any beekeeper association, as these are the sources of information for the hive count.

A discussion ensued on how the hive count process might be improved.

Although the UK is shortly to leave the EU, hive count data will continue to be important, e.g. for biosecurity purposes.

The Chair thanked forum members on behalf of Defra for helping to ensure that so many more people are registered now on BeeBase – currently around 40,000.

| <i>Action no.</i> | <i>Required action</i> | <i>Action owner</i> | <i>Target date</i> |
|-------------------|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 3 | <i>Liaise with forum members to determine WebEx training needs</i> | <i>Rebekah Clarkson</i> | <i>In time for the next forum</i> |

5. Presentation by Ian Fenn, Defra Nature Strategy Team - National Pollinator Strategy (NPS)

The NPS is co-ordinated by Defra but is very much a partnership – many forum members are involved already.

The 10-year strategy began in 2014 following a review of the science and consultation with stakeholders, and progress was reviewed in 2016. The strategy includes training: 9,000 beekeepers have received training in disease recognition and exotic pest awareness.

Diane Stevenson explained that a Northern Ireland strategy for Bee Health and Pollinators has been drafted.

Kathleen Carroll advised that the Welsh Government action plan for pollinators was launched in 2013. Steve Sunderland added that the Scottish Government has produced an equivalent strategy.

| <i>Action no.</i> | <i>Required action</i> | <i>Action owner</i> | <i>Target date</i> |
|-------------------|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 4 | <i>Forward pollinator strategy links to BHAF</i> | <i>Diane, Kathleen, Steve</i> | <i>Asap</i> |

There was agreement that it would be useful to enhance existing collaboration among the UK administrations.

As well as information on the numbers of species observed, it would be interesting to obtain information on the actual biomass of insects.

| <i>Action no.</i> | <i>Required action</i> | <i>Action owner</i> | <i>Target date</i> |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| 5 | <i>Liaise with Defra Evidence Team re. any estimates of pollinator insect biomass</i> | <i>Ian Fenn</i> | <i>Asap</i> |

It was noted that the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) are also doing important work, in connection with the European Pollinator Monitoring Project.

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|-------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| 6 | <i>Send BHAF a link to JNCC's biodiversity indicators</i> | <i>Ian Fenn</i> | <i>Asap</i> |

A discussion on neonicotinoids noted that an EU-wide ban comes into effect on 19/12/18.

6. Louise Mount: EU Exit and Future Farming Policy – consultation update

The UK Government published a series of technical notes last month to cover a no-deal scenario. Animal health was not included in those documents, but will be covered in documents due out later in September. It will be useful for the forum to have a discussion again when this information appears.

An important question is how we will continue to trade in animals if there is no deal. A technical note has been issued regarding Customs, and work is underway to replace TRACES (Trade Control and Expert System).

Future Farming – a Bill is to be published this month and Defra will begin including this topic in discussions with stakeholders.

Consultation is ongoing regarding replacement legislation, in this case Statutory Instruments, for plant and animal health.

In most cases, legislation does not require amendment, but the 2011 regulations on Trade in Animal Related Products (TARP) will have to be replaced.

7. Any other business

There was a brief discussion about forum membership.

It was also agreed that Asian hornet would be discussed again at the next forum.

| <i>Action no.</i> | <i>Action required</i> | <i>Action owner</i> | <i>Target date</i> |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 7 | <i>Include agenda item for next meeting</i> | <i>Rebekah Clarkson</i> | <i>In advance of next meeting</i> |

There being no further matters raised, the Chair closed the meeting at 12:55.

Next meeting: 22nd November at BBKA, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire.

RAG STATUS; **Red: Target date cannot be met, Amber: Target date at risk, Green: On target**

Date Action log reviewed: 19-06-2018

| Date Action Agreed | Action No. | Agenda No. | Required Action | Owner | Target Date | RAG | Progress Review/Action Completed |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|--|---------------|-------------|--------------|--|
| 29/06/2017 | | 2 | Investigate whether the BBKA funded project with Keele university had concluded and send to Marie (or replacement) to circulate an update or final report to the Forum. | MM | ASAP | Red | Awaiting * |
| 21/09/2017 | 21-2 | 3 | Forum members to consider ways to collate Citizen Science data and send ideas to NS. Asian hornet. | All | 31/01/2018 | Amber | Awaiting * reminder to be sent policy) |
| 12/12/2017 | 22-3 | 3.2 | Collate comments, provide a product journey plan and include points relating to Trade raised which were raised at the meeting in June 2017. | LM | | | ongoing |
| 12/12/2017 | 22-10 | 10a | Prepare draft TOR incorporating comments to be discussed in March's meeting. | RC | 28/02/2018 | | Asked to discuss over email ongoing |
| 20/03/2018 | 23-5 | 3 | Request questionnaire data regarding mentoring and passing on skills. Merged with 23-7action 5 request evidence and case studies where HBP impacted on Beekeeping. (As part of HBP review) | RC | | | ongoing |
| 20/03/2018 | 23-6 | 5 | Update HBP Indicators | Fera/ BBKA | | | Not received all yet |
| 20/03/2018 | 23-8 | 5 | Review governance and look at developing sub groups to look focus on areas of the review. | RW | | | Project board action ongoing |
| 19/06/2018 | 24-2 | 2.2 | Amend 23 rd minutes to clearly differentiate between SMART bees and Eurobest | RC | | | Completed but not published |
| 19/06/2018 | 24-4 | 4 | Send out prioritised evidence share and ask for feedback. Seek commitment | RC | 30/06/2018 | | Briefs have been sent |

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| 19/06/2018 | 24-5 | 4 | Discuss BHAF query regarding reviewing/recording BHAF science input with Defra science and evidence team to understand best practice and report back to BHAF | RC | 31/07/2018 | | |
| 19/06/2018 | 24-6 | 5 | Forward further comments to Kevin regarding the options | All | 30/06/2018 | | |
| 19/06/2018 | 24-7 | 5 | Agree queen rearing article for publication. | Kevin Beattie | 31/07/2018 | | |
| 7/09/2018 | 25_2 | 1 | Defra and BBKA press offices to liaise | | 07/09/18 | | |
| 7/09/2018 | 25_2 | 2 | Facilitate sharing of lessons learned re. working with AHATs | NS | | | Meeting arranged 28/11/2018 |
| 7/09/2018 | 25_4 | 3 | Liaise with forum members to determine WebEx training needs | RC | 22/11/2018 | | |
| 7/09/2018 | 25_5 | 4 | Forward pollinator strategy links to BHAF | Diane, Kathleen, Steve | | | |
| 7/09/2018 | 25_5 | 5 | Liaise with Defra Evidence Team re. any estimates of pollinator insect biomass | Ian Fenn | | | |
| 7/09/2018 | 25_5 | 6 | Send BHAF a link to JNCC's biodiversity indicators | Ian Fenn | | | |
| 7/09/2018 | 25_7 | 7 | Include agenda item on Asian Hornet for next meeting | RC | 22/11/2018 | | complete |