

## ESSEX BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION - ROMFORD DIVISION

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023, 7.30 pm

Via Zoom

**Present:** Pat Allen (PA), Roger Honey (RogerH) Rob Hyde (RobH), Angela Mander (AM), Rose McCarthy (RMcC), Norman McDonald (NMCD), Jim McNeill (JMcN), Liz McNeill (LMcN), Sue Richardson (SR), Terry Watson (TW), Paul Wiltshire (PW).

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Dawn Doyland (DD), Julie Mugglestone (JM), Filippo Negri (FN), Lorna Pattle (LP), John Whittard (JW).

2. **Minutes of previous meeting 22.11.22:** Minutes agreed and to be signed.

3. **Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda:**

**Point 4 - 22.11.22 minutes: Hall Hire St Michael's Church:** SR has sent the new hall administrator a list of the dates that we used the hall in 2021 and 2022, after confirming dates with DD and checking any payments previously made with RMcC. There are 4 dates in 2021, and 6 dates in 2022, including November and December 2022, which have already been invoiced and paid for. Leaving 8 dates to be paid for. Hall hire is now £18.00 per hour/£36.00 per evening. Hall administrator is asking for our dates upfront for 2023, but we have not yet finalised these. She has confirmed that WiFi is now available in the hall and has given us the code.

**Point 5.3 – Havering Rates Appeal:** SR has received revised rates bills for the years 2021-2022, and 2022-2023, but not for 2018-2019, or 2019-2020. Presumed missing in the postal disputes. SR has emailed Havering to claim for the 2 years for which revised bills have been received, a total of £174.08, plus asked for refund for the years the paperwork has not been received. PA confirmed that £434.00 had been paid into the bank account by Havering. So it seems they have paid all the refund due. SR to ask Havering for the missing revised bills for our accounts. **Action SR.**

**Point 5.4 - JMcN** has now given RMcC the Honey Show receipts and the monies are now sorted.

**Point 7 – PA** has received the missing invoices from Thames Chase and these have been paid and are included in the 2022 accounts.

**Point 8 – Bulk Buy fondant – PA** has collected all the money in and paid into the bank account.

4. **Correspondence not otherwise on agenda:**

**Havering Apiary Rates Appeal:** Dale Wilkins (Principle Estates Surveyor) from OneSource has contacted us via the website asking about renewal of the licence for Hornchurch apiary asking us to confirm that the last licence ran out in 2016. He says that there was another licence drawn up in 2016 for a rent of £137 for a year, but it was never signed. He suggests that a new licence should be drawn up to start 2016, for a longer period and “with a rent review mechanism to increase the rent annually in line with inflation”. It was decided that we should tell Havering that we were originally asked to put the hives at Hornchurch, and that as bees are important in the environment, since Havering must have an environmental policy, we should either pay no rent at all or a peppercorn rent. Dale Wilkins did not mention Havering apiary, but we should mention this site and get new leases for both. SR suggested we meet in person with him at both sites as it may be better to discuss face to face, and he can actually see the sites himself. PW mentioned that it would be good to know if it was he who had the ability to set the rents or whether it was someone higher up. SR to ring and speak to him and have a chat. **Action SR.**

5. **Regular Reports**

**5.1 Trustee/DVM:** JMcN and RogerH both attended the CEC Zoom meeting last week. An editor is still needed for The Essex Beekeeper, so there has been no magazine. Braintree division have asked for £2000 funds from EBKA towards a compostable toilet at Cressing Barns where they have their apiary. Braintree will pay £500 and the other volunteer groups, including a community garden, on the site will also contribute, the council have also offered to contribute. The apiary is a little way from the toilet facilities at the Barns, and the proposed toilet would be shared by other users of the site. NMCD asked what benefits having the toilet would be to other divisions. JMcN said the site is good for holding bee disease days, as it has the Barn facilities (hall

hire £190.00) and 6 hives for inspection. Who would be responsible for maintenance? Presumably Cressing Temple Barns. Divisions have been asked to put bids in for money for divisional projects, and Harlow have asked for money towards setting up a new divisional apiary. The CEC funds are available for projects which improve beekeeping. PA said that this funding for the compostable toilet had indeed been agreed at the CEC meeting.

**5.2 Chairman:** nothing to report.

**5.3 Secretary:**

**Facebook Page:** Henry Sands an ex- member of Romford has posted that he has had 2 hives stolen from Becontree – Alebo hives. Anne Badenoch, a student from last year, has posted that she is selling her equipment for £250. SR to contact her and offer to send an email to members with the details, if she has not already sold it. **Action SR.**

**5.4 Treasurer:** RMcC reported that she had received some cheques for subs renewal, which are a bit of a nuisance to bank. PA confirmed that the bank balance was £22,700 and that about half of our members had renewed.

**5.5 Show Secretary:** Date for the Honey Show was discussed and set as Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October, the National Honey Show is the weekend after – 26-28<sup>th</sup> October. Discussion as to whether to ask Sue and Bill or Claire O'Brien to judge, they may be busy with the National show. Claire to be contacted. The attendance for the supper and the entries to the honey show are both poor. Do we still want to hold the supper? The hall costs £20 per hour, and is hired from 12.00pm till 10.00pm. We must hold events, otherwise the division will fall apart, it is up to members whether they attend or not, but we need to encourage more members to attend. **Action AM.**

**5.6 Apiary Wardens**

**5.6.1 BT London Road:** Nothing to report as I have not visited the apiary since Xmas – although, nothing much happens during the winter months. I will try to find my “jumper” and visit the apiary in the near future.

**5.6.2 Havering:** TW has visited the apiary and cut some sycamore and laurels back. The water butt is now upright and sorted out.

**5.6.3 Hornchurch:** NMCD has not visited since Christmas, but hopefully everything is OK.

**5.6.4 The Chase and Bee Garden:** RobH visited after the recent high winds and bee hives were all upright but a lot of rubbish had blown into the apiary which took a couple of hours to clear up. Hope that the bees survive this cold snap. Dianne Jupp has lost her bees, her equipment is still in the apiary. She had rung PA to ask about rental due and has renewed with a full subscription. She asked if it was OK to leave her equipment there as she was planning to get another colony in the spring. PA said that we cannot guarantee a place in the apiary, RH confirmed that there probably would be space and has offered to help her in spring.

**5.6.5 Teaching Apiary:** PA visited a week ago and the bees were flying as it was warm. The apiary still needs a clear up, and old combs need to be burnt. There are a lot, really too many for PA to take home and burn. PA asked to buy an incinerator for the site, and JM kindly offered to buy one through her work and use her discount. It should be OK to use an incinerator in the centre of the apiary or maybe in the nursery area adjacent. PA will check with Thames Chase. **Action PA, JM.**

**6. Programme 2023:**

Nothing to report - DD would like suggestions for speakers. WIFI is now available in Chadwick Hall and we have the code. PW will run a trial Zoom meeting in the hall at the February meeting with Ian Nichols. Attendance at our monthly meetings is very poor. We have asked members what topics they would like covered. RogerH suggested that we send out a survey to members asking why they do not attend meetings. PA volunteered to compose one. **Action PA, SR.**

**7. Courses 2023:**

**Dates for Taster Courses:** PA suggested that we hold two sessions in July this year. 8<sup>th</sup> July and 30<sup>th</sup>. We still need an education secretary, to be mentioned at the next monthly meeting.

- 8. Bulk Buys 2022/23:** Frames and wax to be bought from National Bee Supplies. JM has arranged an 18% discount on last year's prices, plus the cost of carriage, which is dependent on weight of order. JM will send out order form, and should have orders by end of February. Decided to ask Ian Nichols at our February meeting about varroa treatment, and then this could be added to the order. PA mentioned that she had bought a copy of "The Hive Guide" book and felt it would be very useful for members to have as it is a comprehensive guide. Available from BBKA at £7.00. PA suggested we could do a bulk buy, hopefully get a discount and offer to all our members at a discount. **Action JM,PA.**

**9. AOB:**

**AGM Attendance and Minutes:** SR emailed the AGM minutes to committee members prior to committee meeting. RH mentioned that it was not clear about equipment secretaries; Point 9 to be amended to read "Pat Allen and Rob Hyde have other equipment. AGM Minutes to be approved and signed at February meeting. Attendance at the AGM was very poor. SR suggested next AGM was held via Zoom as maybe more members would attend, approx 30 at 2022 AGM compared with 19 at this year's. Or maybe we could have a speaker as well at the AGM as Chelmsford do? PW said that it was better to hold the AGM in person as it was easier to get volunteers for the committee if people were asked face to face.

**Keys for Chadwick Hall:** JMcN said that he is the only key holder for the hall and it would be good if we could have another key in case of emergency. There is also a key safe at the hall, so maybe we could be given the code for this instead of another set of keys. **Action SR.**

**Division Microscopes:** TW asked whereabouts of the division's microscopes, concerned that they may go missing. Confirmed that Clare Russell and Annette Friday have one each. PA has a microscope camera and her own microscopes. SR suggested that it might be an idea to have a microscopy evening.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 **Zoom/ in person TBC.**

Meeting finished at 9.34 pm.

**Paul Wiltshire**

**Chairman**