

Cheshire Beekeepers Association – Mid-Cheshire Branch

Draft Minutes of the AGM held on 10th January 2022 (Zoom Conference Call)

1. Chair's welcome and summary

Lesley Parker welcomed the following members to the meeting: Bob Beards, Karl Colyer, Neil Duncalf, Stuart Forbes, Shaun Gee, Ken Hough, Lesley Jacques, Nick Johnson, Sarah Johnson, Steve Purkis, Ian Turley, Jane Turley, Dave Wright, Jo Zielinski.

She said that the AGM should have been our first F-2-F meeting in our new venue, the Blue Cap, but we were again meeting by Zoom as we had done during the first half of 2021. However, despite the Autumn Convention also being held on-line, it had been good to again hold some branch meetings and the CBKA Honey Show as F-2-F events during the second half of last year.

This was Lesley's final meeting as chair and she expressed her thanks to everyone who had contributed to the continuing success of the branch.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Duncan and Cassie Howsley.

3. Approval of minutes of 2021 AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on 4th January 2021 were approved by Nick Johnson and seconded by Steve Purkis.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the AGM held on 4th January 2021.

5. Secretary's report

Stuart Forbes presented the Secretary's report, a copy of which had been circulated to all members before the meeting. He added that a more comprehensive version of this report can be found in the CBKA 2021 Report and Balance Sheet which is sent to all branch members.

Stuart highlighted a few points from his report including our significant growth in membership in recent years from 41 members at the start of 2020 to 76 members by the end of last year, a trend which he said will hopefully continue. In order to increase our visibility we got the branch website up and running in 2021 and, despite lockdown restrictions, still managed to hold a full programme of monthly meetings. Our on-line beginners meeting in March was very successful and we held four apiary meetings, the latter two of which were F-2-F events, and the September talk on the Asian Hornet was our first indoor F-2-F meeting for 18 months. Cancellation of the branch honey show due to lack of support from members was, without doubt, the low point of 2021. However, the branch was represented at two major external events, the Arley Garden Festival and the Royal Cheshire Show, and Stuart expressed his thanks to all those who were involved with these events and to those members who also gave talks on bees and beekeeping to schools and other groups in the locality.

6. Treasurer's report

Sarah Johnson presented the Treasurer's report and accounts, a copy of which had been circulated to all members before the meeting. The accounts showed a balance of £2,964.34 at the end of 2021

compared with a balance of £2,720.75 at the end of 2020. Sarah commented that owing to lockdown restrictions our outgoings had again been fairly limited in 2021 although we had invested in some BBKA leaflets and Mid-Cheshire Branch flyers which were used as publicity material at the Arley Garden Festival and Royal Cheshire Show. She anticipated that our outgoings will increase during 2022 when we will be spending more money on speakers and room hire.

Shaun Gee asked about the capitation income from CBKA expected in 2022. Sarah explained that the annual capitation payments to branches are paid in arrears and are based on both the number of branch members during a defined qualifying period and on the membership category of these members. Lesley Jacques added that CBKA had always paid £5 capitation per branch member but that they are looking to reduce this in order to save money. Steve Purkis added that the capitation payments are not a major source of income for our branch although it was acknowledged that they would become more significant with our increasing membership.

Lesley Jacques asked about our Zoom subscription because it was recognised that although the return to F-2-F meetings will result in fewer on-line meetings, the ability to hold on-line or hybrid meetings increases both the range of speakers available and the potential audience for our branch events. CBKA has a Zoom account which, subject to availability, can be used by branches. Stuart Forbes had provided his Zoom account free of charge to the branch for many of our meetings during the pandemic and said he is willing to continue doing this. Ian Turley said he has a MS Teams account which we could also use although some felt that Zoom is better than MS Teams for meetings involving many participants.

The Treasurer's report was approved by Stuart Forbes and seconded by Lesley Jacques.

7. Election of Officers and Committee

With the resignation of Lesley Parker as chair and Stuart Forbes as secretary, nominations had been invited for both these positions and for other committee members prior to the meeting. Karl Colyer had expressed his willingness to become both chair and secretary, and Ian Turley and Jo Zielinski had said they would like to join the committee. No other nominations had been received.

Lesley Parker nominated Karl as the new branch chair and secretary, and this was seconded by Dave Wright. Steve Purkis proposed that Ian and Jo join the committee, and this was seconded by Lesley Parker.

Given that Karl was taking on the offices of chair and secretary, Steve Purkis suggested that we appoint a vice-chair who could assist Karl as required. Lesley Jacques offered to become vice-chair and she was nominated to this position by Karl and seconded by Stuart Forbes.

Sarah Johnson said she was willing to continue as Treasurer.

The other committee members said they were willing to remain on the committee following which there was considerable discussion on committee roles and continuing membership of committee. It was agreed that this would be discussed in more detail at the next committee meeting.

The current 2022 branch committee is therefore:

<u>Chair:</u>	Karl Colyer	<u>Vice-chair:</u>	Lesley Jacques
<u>Secretary:</u>	Karl Colyer	<u>Treasurer:</u>	Sarah Johnson

Other committee members: Stuart Forbes; Shaun Gee; Nick Johnson; Lesley Parker; Steve Purkis; John van Suchtelen; Ian Turley; Dave Wright; Jo Zielinski

At this point Karl took over as chair for the remainder of the meeting.

8. Programme of events

Steve Purkis outlined the 2022 branch programme of events adding that most had been planned as F-2-F meetings and with a focus on newer beekeepers. He said that in addition to our regular monthly meetings he had introduced a series of informal monthly meetings (“bee chats”) to encourage prospective and new beekeepers to meet with a few more experienced members and ask questions about beekeeping.

9. Date of next year’s AGM

The next AGM will be held on Monday 9th January 2023.

10. Date of next branch meeting

The next branch meeting will be held on Monday 7th February 2022 at the Blue Cap in Sandiway, which is the new venue for our monthly branch meetings.

“How I got started as a beekeeper” – Emma Buckley (Buckley’s Bees)

11. Any other business

Bob Beards asked whether the Mid-Cheshire Branch has a constitution and, if not, proposed that we should develop one. Lesley Jacques said that CBKA is currently updating its constitution, which is based on the BBKA constitution, and this should be ratified at the AGM which will be held during the Spring Convention on 5th March 2022. Because she was involved in developing the CBKA constitution Lesley suggested that she could prepare a draft constitution for our branch, and this was agreed by those present. Stuart Forbes said that he had previously been in contact with Liz Camm (CBKA Secretary) to ask whether there are any rules about the composition of branch committees. She said there were no rules but added that the South Cheshire Branch has a constitution; Lesley said she would contact them because their constitution might be a template which we could adapt to suit our branch.

Steve Purkis said that he thought our current priorities should be on the forthcoming beginners evening and the branch website. Shaun Gee said he believed that much of the success of our 2021 beginners meeting could be attributed to it being on-line, and suggested we should consider making the 2022 event either a hybrid meeting or record it for later viewing by those unable to participate.

Karl Colyer closed the AGM at 8.30pm.

Stuart Forbes (Mid-Cheshire Branch Secretary)