



## **CONSULTATION POLICY (MARCH 2015)**

### **OVERVIEW**

BFM needs a clear process for consulting relevant Members when the Committee is considering the introduction of new products or new Members. Committee discussions on 11 August 2011 laid the groundwork for documenting the consultation process that the BFM Committee has adopted for some years.

### **CONSULTATION PROCESS**

#### 1 Database Search:

When an application is received from an existing Member to sell a new product – or a new application for Membership with various associated products – the first step is to search the BFM database. This identifies if the product is currently being sold at the market and, if so, which Members are selling that product and how much is being sold.

#### 2 Print relevant Member List:

This list of Members already selling the relevant product becomes the “consultation list”.

#### 3 Consultation:

A list of new products applied for is printed (without naming the applicant). The Administration Manager emails a copy of the product list to each Member identified on the “consultation list” and asks them to indicate any objections they have to the introduction of the new products. These members must reply within 7 days if they wish to have their opinions noted by the Committee. (Members must have an email address if they wish to be consulted – Minutes 05/03/15).

#### 4 Existing Potential:

The Administration Manager also checks whether Members on the consultation list could supply any of the other products applied for – if the existing Members were approved to do so. (This is to ensure existing Members have the first opportunity to fill gaps in the market provided they are already growing the products.)

#### 5 Discussion and Decision:

Information gathered by the Administration Manager – or provided in writing by Members – is presented to a subsequent Committee meeting for discussion. Based on that information, the Committee can then approve, (or not approve), the sale of the new product, and can approve, (or not approve), the new application for Membership. In making that decision, the Committee needs to consider the balance of products in the market to ensure no one product ends up in oversupply.