



Meeting 4 June 2020, Microsoft Teams (2.00 – 5.00pm)

Notes of Meeting

Members present: Carol Fowler (CF), Fiona Cooke; (FC) Dan O’Neill (DON), Emma Milne (EM); Katharine Williams (KW), Clare Rusbridge (CR), Camilla Pegram (CP), Vicki Betton (VB), Tania Ledger (TL), Andrew Gillon (AG); Emily Davies. Polly Smith (PS) Lesley Field (LF) Rowena Packer (RP)

Part Meeting Steve Tolmie (ST)(IT Consultant to DBRG)

Apologies: Samantha McQuiqq (Finance Officer)

1. Matters arising

Action points from March 2020 meeting:

1.1 New Leaflets

The final electronic pdf version is now available to download from the DBRG website as a resource for Local Authorities, and prospective puppy buyers.

The leaflet needs to be promoted via social media as soon as possible

Action PS

1.2 Annual Return for Charity Commission

The Annual Return has been completed on line for the financial year ending 2018/2019. The income and expenditure account for 2019/2020 is still required from DBRG Finance Officer to be sent to KW for input onto Charity Commission information. KW to then forward to all trustees.

Action SMc (DBRG Treasurer) KW

1.3 Sponsorship and Attendance at Events

It was noted that it is difficult to gain sponsorship during the ongoing Covid crisis, and all events have been put on hold until 2021. This is however an area to be followed up when the country is 'unlocked'.

1.4 Student Ambassadors

The Student Ambassadors have been added to the DBRG website, and it was agreed that they should be forwarded a copy of the minutes.

Action CP

2. Campaign Priorities

A list of priorities had previously been circulated to members to vote on ranking. However it was noted all might not be voting on the same criteria. For example some people might be voting on issues which they believed could be easily managed by DBRG alone or larger goals which would require involvement from third parties. It was therefore discussed at length and issues given priority with a traffic light system. It was agreed that a further short meeting should be arranged via Zoom at the end of July to discuss and finalise the priorities. KW to set up Doodlepoll for meeting date.

Action All KW

3. Healthy Dog

A definition of a Healthy Dog has been drafted by EM and it was agreed that all would read and comment as soon as possible. It is for DBRG reference, so that all working toward the same definition.

Action All

4. Healthy Champions

It was agreed that the criteria for any CH winning dog should be health. However this is patently not the case. It was noted that nothing has really changed for over 10 years and extreme conformation in some breeds is as severe as ever. All were of the opinion that no dog should be a champion without being health tested if there were tests available for their particular breed. It was agreed that the Kennel Club could do more. It was mooted that

DBRG should write a letter asking the KC how dogs can be champions if they have not been health tested.

TL pointed out that she, CF, and Charlotte Mackaness were invited to attend a meeting with the Kennel Club Health Team (2018) regarding the new CKCS Heart Scheme. We requested that the Scheme should be a required test for all Cavaliers used for breeding. However this was rejected. A similar request for the use of the CMSM Scheme for all CKCS dogs used for breeding was also rejected. The reason given was that the KC cannot tell breeders what to do. They didn't want to alienate breeders or send them 'underground.' It was agreed at the KC meeting that Tania would be the first port of call in relation to KC communication on Cavalier Health.

It was agreed that it would be worthwhile writing to the KC again asking for justification for how a dog with obvious health issues can be a champion.

The SPCA Assured Breeders Scheme was held up as an example of how things should be done in England and Wales.

The idea of a sub-group made up of TL CF EM and LF should discuss and draft a letter between them.

Action TL CF EM LF

5. Regulations Guidance

The updated Animal Welfare Act (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 (Updated April 2020) were discussed and it was agreed that DBRG must remain involved with CFSG to ensure that our voice is heard when the regulations are updated. DBRG need to be clear what to expect as an associate member. It is encouraging that DBRG were asked to draft the Code of Practice for Dog Breeding. All agreed that it is an excellent document of which DBRG should be proud. CF and FC should be commended for all their hard work.

6. CAWG Manifesto

All had read the pre circulated CAWG Manifesto for the 2021 Election and agreed that it was a very comprehensive document, encompassing views and recommendations shared by DBRG.

7. Symposium Speakers

Good progress has been made on recruiting speakers for the 2021 Symposium. It was discussed whether there should be four or five speakers. Four would allow more time for questions. Lack of time for a substantive Q & A was raised as an issue after last year's symposium. It was agreed that four would probably be better as the audience would be allowed more time for a Q and A session.

Action CF EM CR

8. Local Authority Animal Welfare Inspectors Training Project

It was noted that during the current COVID crisis there is difficulty in obtaining sponsorship for this project. However AG agreed to approach AWF as they may have sponsorship monies available to fund a project and he has a good relationship with them.

Action AG

9. Overview of Animal Welfare Bodies in the UK

A comprehensive list of animal welfare bodies in the UK was requested so that DBRG, and CF in particular will know who to contact if collaboration is required on an issue that has become a campaign issue for DBRG.

Action VB CF

10. Improving DBRG Social Media Presence

There was much discussion about how this could be achieved, and the difficulty that PS has knowing what is appropriate to post. PS requested more visual/fun items to post to catch a wider audience. It was agreed that EM would liaise with PS via WhatsApp to suggest items. VB also agreed to send a link of items which would be appropriate to post.

CR suggested that she may have items that could be sold via an online auction to raise awareness and funds for DBRG. This has been successful for Cavalier Matters however it was noted that the following for DBRG is probably not large enough to attract enough interest in an auction. Cavalier Matters has a much larger following. It may be more successful raffling items at the symposium.

It was agreed that both social media/web traffic and fund raising are ongoing issues. IT consultant Steve Tolmie gave very helpful advice about the use of social media, and agreed to investigate and suggest how to improve traffic to DBRG website.

It was agreed that this is an ongoing issue and all DBRG members should be suggesting links for PS to use.

Action PS (and All)

AOB – none

End of Meeting

Next Meeting via Zoom to discuss Campaign Priorities – end of July (date to be agreed)

Date of Next Full Meeting September 10th 2020 (at BVA or via Zoom)