



Meeting 11 March 2021 (Via Zoom) (3.00 – 5.00pm)

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); Lesley Field (LF) Rowena Packer (RP) Annie Wilson (AW) Samantha McQuigg (Treasurer) Susan Francis (IT Consultant)n Student Ambassadors: Grace Mee; Emma Foster; Laura Davies; Stephanie Waller; Ben Erentraut

Apologies: Polly Smith

1. Matters arising

Action points from December 2020 meeting:

Code of Practice for Dog Breeding

EM to contact FECAVA and WSAVA

Key Inherited Health Issues

It was agreed that this topic should be returned to at a future meeting.

2. Recommendations from the Trustees Meeting

It was agreed at the Trustee meeting that the constitution of DBRG will be changed to that of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation from a board of Trustees. It was explained that this is a better fit with the charity which was brought to light when the trade mark ‘A Voice for Dogs’ was registered. The Charity will, once registered, as a CIO have its own legal identity.

KW to draft new constitution including clauses relating to proxy voting and electronic communication approval to be signed off by all Trustees.

Action KW (All Trustees)

3. Membership Policy

Membership in the past has been by invitation from CF or other members. There is currently no clear policy. A two tier membership was suggested and discussed. It was

agreed that there should be a balance within DBRG of dog welfare professionals and pet owners and a more rigorous membership policy. A suggested structure was: a) Trustees b) Advisory Members c) (Associate) Members d) Supporters. The new CIO structure will mean that Trustees are voting members and that a membership policy is an important consideration. A cap on the number of members was discussed, also the benefits to be gained by being a 'supporter'.

A Membership Policy should be priority task to be agreed at June's meeting.

Action CF (All)

4. KC Meeting

The meeting with the Kennel Club was encouraging, and followed up by an action plan sent to Kennel Club. In the KC response, their recollection of parts of the meeting differed from DBRG recollection. However it was agreed to continue to engage with and lobby the Kennel Club, particularly with reference to the Code of Practice for Dog Breeding and Guidelines on Extreme Conformation. It was agreed to focus on actions that can be achieved, but the end goal must be to ensure that every puppy purchased should have a Puppy Contract.

Action CF to draft response and all to approve

5. Website Technical Support

The website technician is taking a sabbatical, and Susan Francis has been drafted in to cover. The most urgent issue is the Symposium and how ticket sales can be managed, and the Symposium promoted.

6. Symposium

CF informed the group that the organisation of the Symposium is on track and CR, CF SMC and SF are communicating regularly.

Sponsorship is agreed, but if there are any other sponsors who do not have a conflict with current ones all encouraged to let EM know so that they can be approached. The best fit would be shampoo/skin care products. Current major sponsors are Purina and CEVA .

7. LA Inspectors Training Module

Marissa Heath (CFSG) is attending the June meeting to update DBRG on the work of the Local Authority Steering Group. DBRG will discuss with Marisa the feasibility of DBRG providing a training module for Schedule 6 (inherited health and welfare) of the England Regulations.

VB has drafted suggestions for an online training module for inspectors, highlighting eight areas with reference to genetic health. The proposal was well received, and it was agreed that the module should be based on recent scientific research.

CR has been invited via Surrey University to advise Surrey CC Trading Standards on what to look for in a good breeder, and what should be red flags for inspectors when visiting premises. It was agreed that councils should be signposted to the Defra 'Petfished' campaign and the Code of Practice for Dog Breeding via the DBRG or CFSG websites, and the AWF Puppy Contract.

8. Sector Issues 2018 Regulations

The Regulations were discussed with reference to Scotland and Wales, and disappointment expressed that Schedule 6 of the English regulations (*'No dog may be kept for breeding if it can reasonably be expected, on the basis of its genotype, phenotype or state of health that breeding from it could have a detrimental effect on its health or welfare or the health or welfare of its offspring'*) is not currently included in the draft Scottish and Welsh regulations. Both are still being discussed and it is more likely to be included in Scotland than Wales.

The Kennel Club are lobbying to have their 'Assured Breeders' exempt from inspection but the DBRG consensus was that this should not be the case. It was also highlighted that the Schedule 6 Regulations do not apply to the myriad of unlicensed breeders. The Kennel Club are keen to point out however that all puppies whether unlicensed or licensed are subject to the protection afforded by the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Again the DBRG consensus was that this is not enough.

This issue is at the core of DBRG and should be followed up at every opportunity. Action points to be discussed again at June's meeting.

9. Student Ambassadors

The student ambassador attendees were welcomed, and thanked for their valuable input. EM is doing a seminar/lecture on the 15th March and students attending via the link are being encouraged to donate 20p to DBRG.

It was suggested that attendance at the symposium could count towards extra mural studies for vet students and could encourage attendance. This is to be investigated.

It was agreed that there would be another brain storm zoom meeting with the student ambassadors as the last one was very successful.

It was agreed that ambassadors would be welcome to join the DBRG meeting in June.

Action CP

AOB

Emily Davies has not attended a meeting since June 2020 has not responded to any emails or been part of any discussions. It was therefore agreed that she would no longer be a member of DBRG

The meeting was shortened because the Trustees had an hour long meeting between 2pm and 3pm therefore time was limited.

Date of Next Meeting 3 June 2021