



Introduction: Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP

The aim of this meeting is to open up the work of CFSG to wider stakeholders and to enable input into the CFSG Strategy as well as listening to what are considered to be the key priorities. We will hear from the chairman of CFSG, Professor Steve Dean on what the Group's function is, then Michael Seals MBE, Chairman of the Animal Health & Welfare Board England will speak about the Board's role, Finally Claire Horton, Non-Exec Director AHWBE, Chief Executive of Battersea Cats & Dogs Home and Member of CFSG will speak about bringing all the groups together before Professor Dean presents the CFSG Strategy paper. Then the floor will be opened up to all attendees to speak.

Professor Steve Dean: Chairman of the Canine & Feline Sector Group

The purpose of CFSG is to bring together the key stakeholders to respond collectively to Government consultations and provide expert advice to policy makers on all issues relating to dogs and cats whilst ensuring members are kept updated on developments and any changes affecting their work. By developing a united group from across different disciplines in animal welfare, key areas are targeted by the members developing a strong focus and recognisable expertise within one body that can then work with the AHWBE and Defra. CFSG is open to engagement with other organisations and individuals which is why we are meeting today and we intend to do this at least once a year. We also have a website and will send out minutes after our meetings so that people know the issues we are looking at.

Our Terms of Reference are:

- i) To be a functioning sector council that advises AHWBE and Defra Ministers in a coherent and effective way.
- ii) To work together with AHWBE, Defra and other bodies to develop workable policies that properly address the key issues facing the sector.
- iii) To be a reliable provider of expert and informed opinion quickly, for use in Government, media and other environments.
- iv) To contribute directly to the formulation of strategies, solutions and plans for practical delivery of both regulation and informal initiatives (e.g.: charities and the veterinary profession coming together to work operationally on issues of joint interest that may be of pressing importance such as supporting the microchipping of all dogs).
- v) To be able to plan for, and respond to, sector emergencies (disease)
- vi) To act as a sounding board and to advise AHWBE / Defra on sector issues and facilitate and enable open debate on issues of concern.

Michael Seals MBE – Chairman Animal Health & Welfare Board England (AHWBE)

The AHWBE is an integral part of Defra intended to bridge the gap between civil servants, ministers and industry. Its key purpose is to advise Ministers and communicate Government objectives as well as developing and implementing animal health and welfare policy and ensuring value for money, assessing the risk of threats from animal disease, approving the operational plans of the Animal and Plant Health Agency and reviewing contingency plans for dealing with new disease outbreaks.

The appointment of Claire Horton has brought direct companion animal welfare experience to the Board which is very much welcomed. We are keen to engage and work with CFSG to make progress with companion animals where it is needed and agreed by the sector. CFSG is very important in developing a channel of communication with Defra which needs to be two way and we are really pleased to see how much progress is being made with the Group. The future is about small Government and we must remember that Defra is a non-protected Department so the case for industry and sectors developing solutions and working together, supported by Government is the direction we are heading. The successes of the Equine Sector were cited as good examples of industry coming together to drive change in long standing welfare issues.

Claire Horton: Chief Exec Battersea Cats & Dogs Home, Non-Exec AHWBE, Chairman ADCH

Increased partnership working is key to improving the health & welfare of cats and dogs and evidence of that can be seen of how this can work in the securing of Compulsory Micro-chipping which saw lots of groups working together, the Greyhound Forum is currently working to improve the welfare of racing greyhounds, PAAG has done some excellent work in raising awareness of internet sellers to inappropriate adverts and joint awareness campaigns like the current RSPCA led Dogs Die in Hot Cars are all examples of how more can be delivered when organisations and groups work collaboratively. This collective working needs to continue and I feel confident it is moving in the right direction. I would like to thank the AHWBE for driving the setting up of CFSG and supporting it. Within CFSG we have a number of working groups looking at the big issues already and demonstrating positive co-working as a result.

The biggest initiative so far, is juts getting underway, with a large cross-sector group looking at the changing face of supply and demand around puppies. This includes looking at the issues currently being faced with breaches of the Pet Travel Regulations and the illegal importation or smuggling of puppies from Eastern Europe and the incareasing scale of large commercial bredders across the UK and Ireland. The way these animals are kept, bred and the puppies sold pose significant welfare concerns and is being fuelled by the demands of the public who want puppies quickly and will pay large amounts to get one. There is a growing market of people buying via the internet with the result often being huge vet bills or loss of the puppy. As a sector we need to gather the evidence of the scale and extent of this problem and then utilise it to develop solutions and awareness actions.. So we must work out how to accumulate the data, educate the public, work with the websites, pet insurers and work with Government on better enforcement and improving legislation to support the delivery of this sector led initiative.

The CFSG Strategy put before you directly relates to those issues and looks to how we all must start to speak with one voice and one message to ensure impact. I have been greatly heartened by what has been happening in recent months with more coming together and increased partnerships. In the 5 years I have worked in the sector it now feels like we are ready to collaborate.

CFSG Strategy

Professor Steve Dean outlined the strategic aims of CFSG: co-ordination and development of legislation & policy and delivery of an effective review mechanism; effective engagement with relevant stakeholders, effectual consultation and representation of views; trend & risk identification and proposal of measures to mitigate risk.

The CFSG was presented as set out below:

| Co-ordination and Development of Legislation & Policy and Review Mechanism | Action |
|--|---|
| <p>Micro-chipping of Dogs Regulations 2015</p> <p>a. Assist in Guidance/Practitioner's Note (Spring 2015)</p> <p>b. Collect Evidence During Implementation to Review Effectiveness (2016-2017)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter went to Defra from CFSG 1/15 on need for clear Guidance. Input in to Practitioner's Note 2/15 Survey Practitioners 2017 |
| <p>Review of Dog and Cat Welfare Codes of Practice (2009)</p> <p>a. Consider & Propose Amendments (Spring 2015)</p> <p>b. Agreement by CFSG members (Summer 2015)</p> <p>c. Issue to AHWBE/Defra (Summer/Autumn 2015)</p> <p>c. Suggest Ways for More Effective Use (Autumn 2015)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code Working Group set up 1/15 Collection of data started 4/15 Evidence shared and assessed 5/15 Codes re-worked and updated 5/15 Draft framework document agreed 6/15 To be considered at CFSG in July 7/15 |
| <p>Review of Welfare of Racing Greyhound Regulations 2010</p> <p>a. Respond to consultation on Regulations (Spring/Summer 2015)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defra has assured CFSG input will be sought CFSG to work with Greyhound Forum & other relevant groups. |
| <p>Breeding, Dealing & Trading of Dogs and Cats</p> <p>a. Review current legislation (Summer 2015) and seek areas where Defra may move</p> <p>b. Assess failures & provide evidence.</p> <p>c. Propose amendments/improvements to AHWBE</p> <p>d. Consider elements of self-regulation and improved enforcement</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up ACD work on this through CFSG in Autumn 2015 Consider the Standard for Breeding Cat Working Group set up 10.14 APGAW & CFSG collecting data 4.15 Consideration of self-regulation for 7/15 meeting |
| <p>Review and Improve Disease Management and Contingency Planning</p> <p>a. Highlight concerns of rabies risk & Pet Travel Scheme. (current)</p> <p>b. Monitor the Defra Pets and Rabies Core Group & ensure CFSG input (ongoing)</p> <p>c. Zoonotic Disease – robust signposting and management</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group already set up Representative on Defra Core Group Key stakeholders engaged PIF providing basic information on zoonotic disease, information sources to be identified. |
| <p>Improve Standards in Cat and Dog Boarding Facilities</p> <p>a. Set conditions in conjunction with all member organisations & commercial input</p> <p>b. Get conditions used within licensing criteria by local authorities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Group already completed -cat version. Dog conditions are near sign-off. 5/15 |

| Effective Engagement With All Relevant Stakeholders | Action |
|---|---|
| <p>Develop Working Relationships with Relevant Bodies</p> <p>a. i. Local Government/Companion Animal Welfare Forum</p> <p>ii. Police</p> <p>iii. Veterinary profession/Behaviorists/Trainers</p> <p>iv. All Party Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare (APGAW)</p> <p>v. Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH)</p> <p>vi. Companion Animal Welfare Council (CAWC)</p> <p>vii. Pet Advertising Advisory Group (PAAG)</p> <p>viii. The Greyhound Forum</p> <p>b. Keep up to date sector mapping document to understand all different body's work and activity.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Berry (CAWF) Rob Quest (City of London) BSAVA/BVA/RCV engaged ABTC and KC Trainers APGAW rep-MH ADCH – CH & DB PAAG –all members Greyhounds – Peter Laurie & Clarissa Baldwin <p>To be started at Big Tent meeting 6/15</p> |
| <p>Enable Wider Consultation with Interested Parties and Communication with Sector.</p> <p>a. Explanation to non-CFSG members of ongoing work and benefits to avoid splintering of sector and unnecessary discord as well as strong collective working and sharing of information.</p> <p>b. Consultation with identified stakeholders</p> <p>b. Regular updates of work on website</p> <p>c. Proactive discussion of the work of the Group through other forums e.g. APGAW</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big tent meeting 6/6/15 Secretariat with sector contacts appointed 9/14 Database formed 4/15 Website developed 11/14 Potential newsletter |

| Trend & Risk Identification & Proposing Measures to Mitigate Risks | Action |
|--|--------|
| <p>AHWBE and the wider Government must be able to rely on the Group for sensible, practical advice and information. It is critical that all information is up to date scientifically and evidence-based.</p> | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Pull Reliable Data Together and Reach Agreement | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADCH can provide some data on strays, rehoming etc Data collection being done currently via Code Group & APGAW |
| a. Prosecutions, Strays, Rehoming, Neutering, Dog Bites, Cruelty Cases b. Ensure consistent use through any papers presented to AHWBE/Defra | | |
| Identify Data/Knowledge Gaps | | |
| a. Commission studies /working groups to respond to gaps found. | | |
| Annual Trend & Risk Report into Government and Stakeholders | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some initial data being collected through KC, DT, PDSA & RSPCA on trends and public demands. Microchipping will provide data ADCH holds information on strays and abandoned. |
| a. Populations b. Purchases of puppies and kittens from petshops, online, licensed breeders c. Breed registration d. Dog bites/attacks e. Strays/abandoned | | |
| Collate Economic Information Relating to Dogs and Cats | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PiF, PfMA, BVA/BSAVA Petplan, KC. |
| a. Gross output b. Employment c. Petshops d. Breeders e. Pet insurance | | |
| Promotion of the Positive Benefits of Dogs and Cats | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dogs as Therapy, Police, Military, Mars Research |
| a. Ensure awareness of social benefits for dogs and cats | | |

Stakeholder Feedback Session

Carol Fowler (Dog Breeding Reform Group) – Consideration of a specific Code of Practice relating to breeding of puppies. Legislation to enable prosecution of irresponsible breeders who cause health or welfare problems.

David Cavil (Animal Care College) – Explanation of how the effectiveness of any work will be measured? Consistent messaging is needed on dog training as there is a lack of consistency and it would be useful for the Sector Group to bring together training and advice.

Professor Steve Dean- Annual trend and risk reports will enable effectiveness to be measured. However, the data needs to be collected first and certainly micro-chipping will assist with this.

Claire Horton – All of the working Groups will identify KPIs. The data gathering is key if we are to speak with credibility and with authority. Historically ADCH with its 120 members has never collated data but this year, for the first time, we have now undertaken what will become an annual membership survey. Availability of data around the sale and movement of puppies is very limited but we are looking at different ways of collecting this such as working with Pet Plan.

Paula Boyden (Dogs Trust) – Whilst rabies is a significant issue, it is important that CFSG and others recognise there are bigger risks with importation of health problems like tapeworm and this is not limited to puppies but also to adult dogs which are being imported more frequently now owing to different rescue organisations. These diseases pose a risk to humans as well as other animals.

Robin Hargreaves (BVA) – The re-homing of Eastern European street dogs in the UK does present a risk which needs to be looked at. The worry is that the three-week wait for rabies is shorter than the incubation period for the disease. The waiting period should be lengthened for dogs coming from high risk countries and actually this is more of an issue with street adult dogs than puppies as these dogs will have had a wider exposure to other dogs and therefore have more likelihood of carrying, contracting disease. Consideration of self-regulation from these rescue groups of waiting longer than the three weeks could be an option. Also a high priority is the importance of the Puppy Contract which is moving forward and will soon be agreed. We need to get the public asking questions based on this document before they go and see the puppy.

Marc Abraham (PupAid) A priority should be consideration of where the animals are sold from and a focus on public information on the most responsible way to select a puppy or kitten. The sales of puppies and kittens in pet shops should be banned.

Vicki Craighill – (PDSA) The Animal Education Alliance is in place to help educate younger people. There are 25 organisations involved. Government was reluctant to put specifics into the National Curriculum so animal welfare can be embedded into other subjects such as science, geography and citizenship. Support with this work in the education system which delivers key messaging would be helpful.

Richard Hooker - PDSA undertake surveys used to measure young people's understanding as a result of educational messaging and it is shown to be effective.

Maggie Roberts (Cats Protection) – Cat breeding issues are very different to dogs as 70-80% are accidental so education is very important for us and needs to be tackled differently.

Claire Williams (National Animal Welfare Trust) –Legislation will not deal with irresponsible ownership alone, we need to engage and direct people – there is a huge public awareness requirement, so I would want the Sector to work on that.

Steve Goody (Blue Cross) Online advertising is the biggest problem and it is going to continue growing.

Rose Smart (Kennel Club) The supply and demand issue is key. On the KC Find A Puppy site we get 6 million hits a year and the KC only registers one third of the pure bred puppies. There is a huge demand out there which we must understand and then look at how the internet plays a role in that.

Laura Vallance (Dogs Trust) PAAG has been set up since 2002 when we dealt with classified adverts and since then has done a lot of work on internet adverts. There is no chance of Government regulation in this area so we have voluntary standards. When we did some focused work with websites, 100,000 ads were removed in one moderation period which shows the quantity there is. CFSG needs to engage with PAAG to progress this work further.

Steve Goody (Blue Cross) Enforcement of existing legislation and cost to local authorities is a very significant issue for CFSG to consider.

Mark Berry (CAWF) – The spend on companion animal welfare for local government is non-statutory except for stray dogs so it is not a priority. The fundamental issue of laws and responsibilities for Local Government needs to be addressed.

Professor Mike Radford (Aberdeen University) The discretionary powers of local authorities is indeed fundamental. Councillors ultimately decide how money should be spent and thought needs to be given to working with this level as well. After many years in the sector, it does seem that we are in the process of a big change which CFSG is bringing about and organisations are now working together and agreeing united policies. This gives authority.

Michael Seals – Enforcement and resource has always been limited. The sector should look at identifying those who are working well and highlighting those who are not well themselves, as the farming sector have done.

Debbie Matthews (Vets Get Scanning) - The scanning side of micro-chipping still needs to be addressed. If people are not scanning, compulsory micro-chipping is irrelevant. Vets must scan as standard practice.

Robin Hargreaves (BVA) – I think it is reasonable for vets to scan but they then have to interrogate the various databases which is time consuming and this must be the same for other groups.

Professor Steve Dean - I think receptionists at vet practices should scan every dog for microchips coming into the surgery for the first time. It enables good record keeping.

Neil Ewart (Dog Theft Action) - Dog theft is a growing issue in which dogs are classed as good and chattels instead of sentient beings which needs changing. Stronger legislation for dog theft must be considered.

Tom Quinn (League Against Cruel Sports) - We have commissioned leading academics to collate data on status dogs and dog fighting which could be something to look. Also it is estimated 2/3 of animals caught in snares are companion animals, many cats and dogs so CFSG should look at banning or improving the use of snares for their welfare.

Laura Vallance (Dogs Trust) - Evidence has been collected on illegal imports but nothing is being done by Defra with that evidence. There does seem to be an issue in that Defra tell us to provide evidence but does not then do anything with that evidence.

Caroline Kisko (Kennel Club) - Likewise we have produced small guides for port authorities on how to age puppies to try and reduce the number of underage puppies coming through but there has been little take up. We can work as a sector to get this evidence and information but then we need assistance getting take up.

Professor Mike Radford – If Government asks for evidence, it is duty bound to give it due consideration and to give a response.

Professor Steve Dean – CFSG will consider how to represent the illegal importation perhaps though the AHWBE. However, Defra (CVO and CEO APHA) are meeting Dogs Trust and RSPCA in August to discuss this evidence so we will wait to see what comes out of that.