



BIG TENT MEETING HELD AT DEFRA ON 22ND NOVEMBER 2016

Speakers: Lord Gardiner (Minister for Animal Welfare), Michael Seals (Chairman of The Animal Health & Welfare Board England), Claire Horton (Non-Exec Director AHWBE), Professor Steve Dean (Chairman of CFSG), Angela Smith MP (Co-Chair APGAW & Member of EFRA Select Committee)

The Minister, Lord Gardiner opened the meeting by speaking about the need for clear sector representation and how Government would consider proposals to improve the welfare of dogs and cats if there was a strong case for doing so. Such cases needed to be evidence based. He felt that the outcome of the licensing consultation would bring about improvements but there would be a need for the sector to continue working on self-regulatory measures. He spoke of his view that CFSG is the appropriate format through which the sector can engage with the Government.

Michael Seals, Chairman of the Animal Health & Welfare Board, explained how the Board works with Defra and that, whilst in the past farm animals had dominated the agenda, companion animal health and welfare was now regularly considered and AHWBE worked well with the relevant sector groups.

Claire Horton, Non-Executive Director AHWBE, set out how having a sector group had helped engage the AHWBE and spoke about her work bringing the cat and dog sector to the Board and raising its profile amongst members, and how the Board has engaged with CFSG as a conduit between companion animal welfare interests and Government. She mentioned some of the projects which CFSG had worked on including the Welfare Codes and the Cat Breeding Group which had all gone to the AHWBE, which directly advises ministers on Government policy and has ensured the issues are brought directly to Government's attention.

Angela Smith MP – Chair of All-Party Group for Animal Welfare and member of EFRA Select Committee spoke about the importance of stakeholders coming together for collective working and strength in numbers. She pointed out that there are many different groups doing the same work or conflicting work which can result in diminished impact and effectiveness and her hope is that this is something CFSG is tackling to save resources and increase effectiveness.

Professor Steve Dean outlined the CFSG strategy for 2017 detailing the key priorities and how CFSG intended to tackle them. He then introduced the main session, which revolved around smaller groups discussing a question relating to the key priorities and working up, then presenting a 3-point action plan. Stakeholders were also invited to put forward any issues or points they felt were missing from the CFSG strategy.

Attendees then broke into 10 working groups, according to their own individual or organisational expertise and also the different perspective they could bring to different issues, to consider a topical issue and come up with a 3-point action plan. The plans are set down in Appendix 1 alongside CFSG's response to them and then those which have been added to the Strategy are shown in red in Appendix 2.

APPENDIX I: BIG TENT WORKING GROUP ACTION PLANS

GROUP 1

How can a proposed ban on third party puppy sales be effectively enforced?

Suggested Action Plan Proposed by Group:

1. For a ban to be effective it must be enforceable and this requires ensuring traceability.
2. This needs to be linked to a stringent licensing/registration scheme, in fact a registration scheme would in a way bring about a 3rd party ban- central database. This can be self-funding from the licence charge
3. There is a need for public awareness and collaboration with key stakeholders on messaging.

Response:

CFSG have committed to returning to the issue of sales under the Puppy Board once Defra has announced and completed its work on licensing as we will understand what we are dealing at that point. CFSG did support the registration system in its submission to the Licensing Consultation.

CFSG recognises that traceability is key, and that there can be some problems with puppies being bought without a microchip. It will work with Local Authority members to identify and propose mutually acceptable methods for tackling the issue and bringing it to AHWBE's attention.

CFSG will look at working with PAAG on a joint public awareness campaign, which can be supported and communicated by the whole sector, and will seek views from stakeholders on this once the new licensing regulations are clear.

GROUP 2

How can we encourage more microchipping of cats & how would this improve their welfare?

Suggested Action Plan Proposed by Group:

1. Microchipping would improve cat welfare by finding their home swiftly if missing, enabling traceability and linking disease testing.
2. The welfare industry should show leadership by microchipping all cats. There should be a united front with clear messaging that is modern, positive and relevant, Vets, catteries and pet shops should all have the same message.
3. For microchipping to work it needs to be an easy process and it needs to be accurate so companies should have an easy system of updating, checking that people have updated their records. If not already doing so, insurers should reduce the premium for microchipped pets.

Response:

CFSG will be considering compulsory microchipping of cats.

GROUP 3

In what ways can CFSG help the greyhound faculty to put together an effective strategy which will improve welfare for greyhounds?

Suggested Action Plan Proposed by Group:

1. There needs to be strong governance with regulatory reform with a unified body covering the licensed and independent tracks.
2. A mechanism needs to be established to secure ring-fenced money that can cover welfare issues.
3. There should be annual reporting and analysis of data including injury data, number of dogs entering and leaving the sport each year etc. That data will help prioritise welfare issues.

Response:

Data reporting should improve from 2018 when GBGB will publish top-line figures. CFSG will support the Greyhound Forum in dialogue with GBGB and Government to ensure transparency around this.

CFSG will review the greyhound data along with the Greyhound Forum once it is published and will determine next steps on consideration of this data.

GROUP 4

In light of CFSG's support of the call to repeal BSL, whilst we push for the Government to address this, what other measures can we take to improve outcomes for dogs affected by this legislation?

Suggested Action Plan Proposed by Group:

1. There needs to be education and accountability of the Criminal Justice System and police with up to date and evidence based training
2. There must be transparency over the treatment of the dog and where they are being held with a view to accrediting kennels.
3. Support should be put in place for owners following the outcome of the case so they understand how to manage their dog in compliance with the Exemption Scheme.

Response:

CFSG members such as the RSPCA already produce material to support owners post outcome of cases so they will re-issue this and make available for all other stakeholders to use.

CFSG has included the need to improve the welfare of dogs whilst they are being held within its strategy under Key Welfare Issues.

Since the Big Tent meeting CFSG has written to the Minister informing him that we would like this work to be recognised as having value and being helpful in tackling some of the problems which can arise around the control of dogs. Though he is reticent to review BSL, CFSG remains committed to the necessity of the Review and will continue to make the case that it is ineffective.

GROUP 5

Are there ways in which we can work better with local government on standards, awareness and prevention strategies and how would we make this happen effectively?

Suggested Action Plan Proposed by Group:

1. There is a need for greater training expertise and sharing best practice across local authorities
2. The job of the Local Authority inspector needs to be made easier with statutory model licensing conditions and clear mechanisms to assessing premises and conditions.
3. Awareness needs to be improved of what local authorities are dealing with as currently there is a lack of data collected centrally. Data collection sets need to be agreed.

Response:

CFSG will be working with the National Companion Animal Focus Group consisting of Local Government officers to develop guidelines on competency, training, fee setting and model conditions which will feed into the new licensing regulations.

CFSG have requested that data be collected centrally and it is believed this will be the case once the new Regulations are in place.

CFSG can make Local Authorities aware of services provided by members such as literature, training, community outreach.

GROUP 6

After the UK leaves the EU what does the appropriate pet travel scheme for the UK look like and what steps need to be taken to deliver it?

Suggested Action Plan Proposed by Group:

1. There needs to be mandatory tick treatment for dogs and cats, reintroduction of tapeworm treatment for cats and a shorter window for treating cats and dogs against tapeworm.
2. Rabies serology to be reintroduced as the vaccination is not 100% accurate. There should be an increase in the wait period of over 3 weeks to reflect the incubation period of rabies. That would then also wipe out the illegal importation of puppies.
3. Consideration should be given to reducing the maximum number of dogs as the working group believe that 95% of dog owners have 1,2 or 3 dogs maximum.

Response:

It is agreed that the mandatory tick treatment for dogs and cats and also tapeworm treatment for cats are required, as well as the need for rabies serology to be reintroduced for both species, and CFSG will push for that via the AHWBE during the process of Brexit.

GROUP 7

What should be the responsibility of breeders under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 for both cats and dogs?

Suggested Action Plan Proposed by Group:

1. As part of an improved licensing scheme there should be formal training for breeders about socialisation, genetic testing etc.
2. There should be an addition to the Animal Welfare Act 2006 to include the protection of embryos and offspring should be "fit for purpose."
3. A large public education campaign to encourage research on the breed, health checks and use of checklists.
- 4.

Response:

Under the proposed new Licensing Regulations, it will be necessary to provide information when selling any animals, whilst there has not been agreement to include training for breeders there will be model conditions which will help to improve the situation. CFSG will be working on these.

CFSG has not previously discussed the possibility of the addition to the AWA or protection of embryos but it is open to receiving work from any group that can present a robust way of progressing this issue.

CFSG agrees that a large public campaign would be good, and the Puppy Working Group has previously considered this around promotion of use of the Puppy Contract. There is also work on a kitten check list and guidance on cat breeding. However, as any awareness campaign needs to cover how to choose the right breeder, it will now need to consider the potential impact of the new Regulations to be clearer. CFSG will look to how it can work to support PAAG on public campaigning.

GROUP 8

CFSG have reviewed the Dog & Cat Welfare Codes this year, how do we raise public awareness of their content and help owners understands the five welfare needs of their cat or dog?

Suggested Action Plan Proposed by Group:

1. Public awareness campaign with consistent messaging which is contemporary and joint branding
2. Seek funding for improved welfare work – perhaps dog licence, petfood levy or retail contribution
3. Engagement with all public touch points: vets, registered home boarders, licenced kennels – use consistent messaging throughout.

Response:

Defra will be progressing the Welfare Codes starting with the Farm Animal ones this year, and so CFSG will be able to put forward the Dog and Cat revised versions in due course. We will keep all interested parties informed as this moves forward.

The revision process has intended to make the Code of Practice leaflets more user-friendly, to enable use of the messages within them across any public touch points.

Once agreed by Defra, CFSG will look at supporting work on delivering the messaging within the Codes on the 5 welfare needs and legal requirements around owning a cat or dog.

GROUP 9

Considering a recent BVA statistic that 98% of vets have been ask to euthanise a healthy dog for a behavioural issue, how do we reduce the number and ensure people are getting professional help of a high standard for both cats and dogs?

Suggested Action Plan Proposed by Group:

1. Consider how to get people to get the right pet/breed in the first place – increase knowledge of what is involved.
2. Ensure that awareness of training does not stop and owners need to take long-term responsibility- training for life. e.g green cross code.
3. When things go wrong the vets need to identify experts and provide direction towards advice.

Response:

CFSG is providing advice to the Minister on reducing dog bites and strikes and the most effective ways that Government can help encourage responsible dog ownership.

Whilst this is not in CFSG current strategy owing to resource constraints and other priorities, work in this area is planned by other groups and CFSG will consider it in the near future.

GROUP 10

How do we ensure we have a robust basis upon which to base our project work and priorities?

Action Plan:

1. The next census should include pets
2. There must be robust and informed data collected between stakeholders that enable the prioritisation of issues – numbers affected, length of disease with further research to look at prevalence and bias in the data.
3. The data needs to be a key part of the priority setting but balanced against the practicality of doing something and the political opportunities.

NB: It needs to be recognised that it is a task which will take several years and take resource without quick paybacks but it must be started.

Response:

CFSG has already started work on amalgamating sector data and intends to pursue it using members who already collect different streams of information. PfMA has offered the assistance of their statistician to help start the work.

Defra has also recognised the need for more data and will seek ways of collecting it from Local Government.

APPENDIX II: Please see below CFSG Strategy where starred items relate to action point from this document



Terms of Reference

- i) To be a functioning sector council that advises the 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, 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.
- v) To be able to plan for, and respond to, sector emergencies (disease)
- vii) To act as a sounding board, facilitate and enable open debate on issues of concern (e.g. dangerous dog legislation, changes to pet travel regulations).
- viii) To work with relevant bodies to set standards aimed at improving the health and welfare of cats & dogs.

STRATEGY 2017-18

The following presents the key areas of focus and associated activities for the group in 2017/2018.

Review & Development of Legislation	
Aim: To provide expert opinion on the review, consultation and development of legislation pertaining to cats and dogs, which is evidence-based, up to date and practical in its approach.	
Activity	Status
<p>Brexit & Government Positioning on Companion Animals</p> <p><i>a. Animal Welfare Legislation – e.g. are there any implications/opportunities from the EU Animal Health Regulation that will impact or could improve on UK legislation as we come out of Europe (one aspect of the AHR that will need to be monitored is the implications of including multi-resistant bacteria as listed diseases).</i></p> <p><i>b. Pet Travel – how will this be affected and is there an opportunity to influence with science – e.g. re-introduction of tick treatment, tapeworm treatment for cats and rabies blood testing? Will we need more quarantine facilities? Does this provide an opportunity to reduce illegal imports? More rigorous border checks/database accessible to animal welfare charities to enable checking of legal entrants and to aim disease control in the face of an outbreak.</i></p> <p><i>c. Balai Directive (commercial movement of animals), Regulation No 576/2013 (non-commercial movement of pet animals) and Regulation No 1/2005 (welfare of animals in transport).</i></p> <p><i>d. Ongoing work on new EU Regulations on Veterinary Medicinal Products and Medicated Feed</i></p>	<p>CFSG is well structured with the relevant expertise to position itself as a key group to assist Government with EU dog & cat legislative issues.</p> <p>CFSG can work with members of the UK charities which link with Eurogroup and the EU Dog & Cat Alliance.</p> <p>A letter to the Minister was sent in October setting out initial views on pet travel. Follow up to go in early 2017 to the AHWBE with more detail on disease prevention and pet travel following evidence gathering.</p> <p>* CFSG's working group on zoonotic disease meets regularly with stakeholders at Defra and will push</p>

	the case for mandatory tick treatment and tapework treatment for pets returning from abroad.
<p style="text-align: center;">Greyhounds</p> <p><i>CFSG responded to the Government consultation in 2016 and the Government is expected to draft regulations which could be in place by April 2017.</i></p> <p><i>CFSG will need to provide views on the draft regulations and suggest any amendments</i></p> <p><i>CFSG will seek to bring groups together and find ways of working cohesively.</i></p>	<p>Defra responded to the consultation in the autumn.</p> <p>Draft legislation is likely in early 2017 - CFSG will respond with Dogs Trust, Battersea & RSPCA leading the work.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Government Response to Licensing Consultation</p> <p><i>Regular liaison with DEFRA to monitor progress towards the goals identified in the consultation.</i></p> <p><i>b. Any input into final recommendations</i></p> <p><i>c. Implementation</i></p>	<p>* CFSG wish to see a requirement for anyone breeding or selling to be registered and for anyone breeding or selling over a certain number of litters to be licensed.</p> <p>CFSG will be working with Defra on an Expert Panel to get model conditions, training, competency, a risk based system in place for new Licensing Regulations</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Review and Improve Disease Management and Contingency</p> <p><i>a. Highlight concerns of rabies risk & Pet Travel Scheme.</i></p> <p><i>b. Monitor the Defra Pets and Rabies Core Group & ensure CFSG input</i></p> <p><i>c. Monitor for emergent diseases & continue work of emerging, zoonotic and exotic disease prevention (linked to Brexit/Pet passport)</i></p>	<p>CFSG working group already set up</p> <p>* Representative of CFSG on Defra Core Group and will continue to raise issues on disease prevention.</p> <p>Disease work will tie into the Brexit Advisory Project group</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Continue Work on Setting Standards</p> <p><i>Standards to be devised and circulated to DEFRA include:</i></p> <p><i>a. Rehoming standards (Dogs) for Local Authorities</i></p> <p><i>b. Behaviourists and Trainers</i></p> <p><i>c. Dog and Cat Groomers</i></p> <p><i>d. Dog Walkers</i></p> <p><i>e. Cat breeding welfare standards (see cat breeding section)</i></p>	<p>The Model Licensing Conditions for boarding establishments for both cats and dogs have already been completed and agreement has been reached with the working group that they will review (and if necessary amend) them annually. Home boarding is in progress.</p> <p>* CFSG are represented on the Defra Expert Panel which will be developing the Model Conditions for the new Regulations.</p> <p>The Kennel Club has an ongoing project developing a code of practice for professional dog walkers which CFSG can consider and potentially endorse.</p> <p>The Cat Group are devising standards for cat breeding.</p>

<p align="center">Key Welfare Issues</p> <p>Aim: To utilise a unique cross sector collaborative position to effectively tackle key welfare issues affecting cats and dog using joint resources and messaging</p>	
<p align="center">Breeding, Dealing & Trading of Puppies</p> <p><i>a. Re-focus Puppy Working Group around the Defra consultation</i> <i>b. Propose amendments/improvements to AHWBE with any proposals (longer term)</i></p>	<p>* This did not progress as set out in the 2015-16 Strategy but will be considered in due course once Defra has completed work on the new licensing regulations.</p>
<p align="center">Cat Breeding</p> <p><i>The Cat Group will follow up to the CFSG draft report on cat breeding including:</i> <i>a. Work on a kitten checklist</i> <i>b. Development of cat breeding welfare guidance</i> <i>c. Research/evidence re breed characteristics/inherited defects</i> <i>d. Consideration of assurance schemes/standards (longer term)</i> <i>e. Ongoing evidence gathering re welfare concerns and breeding</i></p>	<p>The initial outline report was taken To the AHWBE. They supported the proposal to develop: CFSG kitten checklist for Defra CFSG cat breeding welfare standards</p> <p>* CFSG will consider compulsory microchipping of cats.</p>
<p align="center">Dangerous Dogs Act</p> <p><i>To look at the enforcement protocol of Section1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act to improve the welfare of dogs considered to be 'of type' by:</i> <i>a. Working on changing the Defra guidelines on seizing suspected Section 1 dogs</i> <i>b. Using temperament and owner suitability based assessments to decide if the dog should be kennelled or allowed home 'on bail'</i> <i>c. Improving the kennel routine and enrichment for seized dogs to avoid an escalation in their stress and frustration levels prior to full assessment</i> <i>d. Considering temperament and owner suitability in the sanctions required for section 4B dog (muzzling and on lead)</i> <i>e. Allowing rescues to rehome Section 1 dogs through the exemption process with the associated conditions.</i></p>	<p>Potential working group of ABTC/PETBC/ADCH/RSPCA & Battersea to take this issue forward – timescales depend on other priorities</p> <p>* CFSG has formally responded to the Minister's request for advice on reducing dog bites and strikes. In this response we added the need for better welfare in this area and highlighted our plan to bring future views to AHWBE.</p> <p>CFSG has requested that the minister revise his position on reviewing BSL, and will continue to press the case for a formal review.</p>

<p align="center">Authoritative Body for Trend and Risk Identification & Proposing Measures to Mitigate Risks</p> <p>Aim: Start the process of establishing useable data to develop a more rational and evidence based approach to identifying priorities and real issues</p>	
Activity	Status
<p align="center">Effective Collaboration & Data Collection</p> <p><i>CFSG to seek to enhance collaborative working across its membership and the wider group of dog welfare stakeholders by:</i> <i>a. Developing a systemised approach to exploring the welfare issues and establish current trends within them.</i> <i>b. Reviewing the scientific data relating to health and welfare issues.</i></p>	<p>First meeting held in July 16 to agree process and use of data.</p> <p>* Initial agreement to set up working group which can identify what data needs to be collected and then</p>

<p>c. <i>Developing tools that enable CFSG to work with all that information, secure agreement around the evidence and apply it to policy development.</i></p> <p>d. <i>Laying the groundwork for effective collaborative working on challenging issues.</i></p>	<p>commission the data collection. This should include the development of a clear proposal setting out what data is to be collected, for what purpose, and how, before anything is commissioned.</p> <p>* PfMA have offered the assistance of a statistician to help start this work, which has been accepted by CFSG.</p>
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<p>Effective Engagement with all Relevant Stakeholders</p> <p>Aim: In response to Government consultations and CFSG proposals, ensure all stakeholders are represented and united in approach and that knowledge is shared</p>	
Activity	Status
<p>Continue Working Relationships with Relevant Bodies</p> <p>i. <i>Local Government/National Companion Animal Focus Group</i></p> <p>ii. <i>Veterinary profession/Behaviourists/Trainers</i></p> <p>iii. <i>All Party Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare (APGAW)</i></p> <p>iv. <i>Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH)</i></p> <p>v. <i>Pet Advertising Advisory Group (PAAG)</i></p> <p>vi. <i>The Greyhound Forum</i></p> <p>vii. <i>The Cat Group</i></p>	<p>i. Mark Berry & Rob Quest (NCAFG)</p> <p>ii. ABTC, KCAI & PETBC members BSAVA/BVA/SAVSNET.</p> <p>iii. Marisa for APGAW</p> <p>iv. ADCH joined CFSG in June 16</p> <p>v. PAAG – Dogs Trust lead this group and are members of CFSG</p> <p>vi. Greyhounds - Steve Dean (Retired Greyhounds) and Clarissa Baldwin engaged as Chair of Greyhound Forum</p> <p>vii. Claire Bessant chairs Cat Group & is a member of CFSG</p>
<p>Enable Wider Consultation with Interested Parties</p> <p>a. <i>Explanation to non-CFSG members of ongoing work</i></p> <p>b. <i>Regular updates of work on website – minutes and reports</i></p> <p>c. <i>Proactive discussion of the work of the Group through other forums</i></p> <p>d. <i>Engagement of Associate Members when relevant to seek specific advice</i></p>	<p>Big tent meeting November</p> <p>Website developed and updated</p> <p>Marisa - wide sector contacts working and liaising with smaller groups</p> <p>CFSG associate members identified and contacted for advice when necessary.</p> <p>CH & SD attending AHWBE regularly</p>