



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

11th December 2015 2pm-4pm

Location: The Kennel Club, Clarges Street, London

1. Welcome and introductions

Prof Steve Dean (Chairman), Richard Hooker (PDSA), David Bowles (RSPCS), Claire Horton (Battersea Dogs & Cats Home), Steve Goody (Blue Cross), Meriel France (PIF), Michael Bellingham (PfMA), Peter Gorbing (Cats Protection), Maggie Roberts (Cats Protection) Rosemary Smart (Kennel Club), Mike Webb (Battersea Dogs & Cats Home), Dee McIntosh (Battersea Dogs & Cats Home), Paula Boyden (Dogs Trust), Marisa Heath (CFSG), Sam Gaines (RSPCA), Peter Laurie (Battersea Dogs & Cats Home), Ed Hayes (kennel Club), Sally Everitt (BSAVA), Steve Crow (GCCF), Philippa Robinson (Karlton Index)

2. Apologies

Linda Cantle (Woodgreen)
Trish Coville (BSAVA)
Claire Bessant (ICAT)

3. Minutes of previous meeting

Agreed and signed off

4. Matters arising

a) Membership update

Membership renewal due for January 2016. Invoices to be sent out in December. CFSG recognise that finding the right dog training and behaviouralists is an issue for the public which is hard to get to grip on and representation is need in this area. Applications for membership have been received from this field and therefore the applications will be pursued for the new session in January.

b) CFSG Working Groups Update

Puppy Board

The group will have a window to maximize the opportunity to improve welfare as Government is interested in this area and the Licensing Review will be one key part of the Group's work. The industry will be a part of the review and should not be excluded from any of the discussions. The Puppy Board did not start as a formal sub-

group of CFSG. It came about because of Cariad getting in contact with the charities and asking them to do something about commercial breeders and welfare issues of puppies. Much of its focus will be on the Defra Licensing Review over the coming couple of months.

Zoonotic Disease Working Group

DT and RSPCA attended a meeting with Defra in November. The stakeholder meeting has not happened this side of Christmas but it will be organised for early next year. There was the promise of Border Force being involved but they have enough on their plate so puppies are not such an issue. We have to be realistic. The need for training remains and Dogs Trust will seek to continue their work on this. BVA will seek to do some training for vets as well. There was a Rabies Cores Group meeting at Defra a few weeks ago where there was discussion over how stakeholder groups could be used for communication if there was a disease outbreak as well as providing expertise on welfare of keeping animals contained.

Model Licensing Working Group

The group are now working on the annexes like Body Condition Scoring Charts, extra advice on behaviour, advice on new builds and so forth. A draft on home boarding is being written. It will only cover dog home boarding as the welfare organisations do not agree with cat home boarding.

c) Legislative Reviews or Consultations – Electronic Training Devices (Scotland)

A comment on the low number of responses were received from the Scottish Government regarding the last consultation they did on electronic devices so in this instance it might be better to have both collective and individual responses. CFSG will post their agreed final response on the website. The majority of the members wish to see a ban on electronic devices with a few holding the stance that electric shock collars should be banned but other devices can be used safely with stronger guidelines.

d) Defra Licensing Review

It is likely that Defra will announce the Review formally just before Christmas with a 12-week response time. The group will have a meeting in January to set out how CFSG will respond to the consultation.

e) Response to Cat & Dog Welfare Codes Submission

The Minister has responded by letter to CFSG regarding the review of the Codes. The Equine Sector Council are concerned about the will to move to non-statutory Codes. If that is to be the case then CFSG would like to see a review of how it works and whether the fear that magistrates' courts not treating them so seriously have been realized or not. CFSG will respond to the Minister about additional wording needed in the Codes.

5. CFSG Statistic Collection

Members received a presentation from the Karlton Index on how data can best be collected and used to identify gaps and priorities. CFSG does not want collect data for the sake of it as the group wants to be proactive rather than reactive as well as determining the big issues and where intervention is needed. Such a system would help to structure the data, identify the key issues with evidence and set work priorities. CFSG members agreed to start with a specific issue to design a model in which they can then develop more widely.

Health concerns like Brachycephalia continue to be a big issue for cats and dogs and could benefit from strong evidence so members felt it might be useful to start with this.

PfMA and PDSA collect data on population through market research and questions can be designed to get the information that is missing. There are two papers from the University of Nottingham and University of Bristol on numbers going through rescue organisations. Similar figures came through which would indicate reasonably reliable data. From this year there will be an annual membership survey from ADCH to see numbers, breed trends, front line issues which will provide data as well. Collectively, CFSG is well placed to collect all of the data available from members to start the work in getting a useable and evidence based picture of dog and cat health and welfare.

6. Defra Consultation on Greyhounds

The draft has gone around the group but it needs input from the veterinary profession and it has gone to the industry GBGB for comment. The signed off submission will be on the CFSG website.

7. The Breeding & Sale of Cats Report

The report is coming at a good time with the Licensing Review. The working group focused on neutering and recognised that education is important as well as many recommendations for legislative improvements. CFSG will draw down on elements of it to support Government lead initiatives like the licensing review. Members did not have time to read through the report and comment as it was not issued until two days before the meeting. Members agreed that they should go and the report will then come back in March for a fuller debate about what we do with it. The report was not signed off by CFSG at this point but it was recognised that it was a very useful document for the work CFSG will do on cat health and welfare and hopefully the group will adopt it at the March meeting.

8. AOB:

The Scottish Government has announced a Tail Docking Consultation due in January. Members would not want to see a weakening of the current position.

HMRC has released plans on cracking down on illegal crime so they are looking at illegal trading to improve taxation collection which is relevant to puppy trading and sale. It is worth us keeping CFSG keeping an eye on this and ensuring HMRC is aware of the large sums of money involved in the trade of puppies and kittens.

END