



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

17th July 2015 2pm-4pm

Location: Battersea Dogs & Cats Home,
4 Battersea Park Road, LONDON SW8 4AA

1. Welcome and introductions

Prof Steve Dean (SD), Richard Hooker (RH), David Bowles (DB), Claire Horton (CB), Maggie Roberts (MR) Rosemary Smart (RS), Nigel Baker (NB), Prof Sheila Crispin (SC) Mike Webb (MW), Jon Hansson (GCCF), Carol Warner (CW), Dee McIntosh (DI), Peter Gorbing (PG), Paul Boyden (PB), Tricia Morris (TM), Marisa Heath (MH)

2. Apologies

Steve Goody (Blue Cross)
Meriel France (PIF)
Linda Cantle (Woodgreen)
Adrian Burder (Dogs Trust)

3. Minutes of previous meeting

Agreed and signed off

4. Officer Elections

i) Election of Chairman

Professor Steve Dean proposed by DB and seconded by CH. Agreed unanimously

ii) Election of Vice-Chairman

Richard Hooker proposed by SD and seconded by MR. Agreed unanimously.

5. Matters arising

i) Zoonotic Disease

To be done by SD and PIF who need some more time to evaluate and to look at what is out there, if there is any discordance and if there are any gaps. The information already exists on cat zoonotic disease on the Cats Protection website which can be shared with the group. It is likely this work could be part of the wider CFSG Strategy.

ii) Micro-chipping

It is believed the draft Welsh Regulations due in September will be very similar to the English Regulations. BSAVA to keep CFSG informed and action to be taken if required. The Regulations will come into force in 2016.

6. Evaluation of Big Tent & Strategy

Members felt that the Big Tent meeting was successful and enabled them to communicate well with the wider stakeholders. Feedback has been very positive with a number of people stating that they found it very useful and understand the CFSG better now. CFSG commits to holding events like this at least once a year. The minutes of that meeting can be found at:

<http://www.cfsg.org.uk/Shared%20Documents/CFSG%20Big%20Tent%20Meeting%20Overview.pdf>

The Strategy document was to get CFSG through the first 12-18 months with a plan of action. The Group now needs to develop a 3-year Strategy. Data is key to working towards this and an understanding of the statistics. CFSG will collate all of its data and will then start analysing this information to ensure it is usable and identify any gaps.

One of the interesting issues arising from the meeting was Robin Hargreaves' (BVA) point on the rabies threat not necessarily being from the illegal trade in puppies but more from the growing trade in street dogs mainly from Eastern Europe but also Thailand and other Asian countries. It was identified that this is also a growing issue with street cats as well. CFSG requested that the matter is pushed at the Defra Core Rabies Group as it is felt that the 3 weeks wait for street dogs on rabies could pose a risk and thought should be given to the 12 week incubation of the disease. Members felt that in the countries where there is a low incidence of rabies the 3 weeks could be sufficient but where endemic rabies exists then the issue of risk increases exponentially and needs to be recognised. It was acknowledged that it is difficult to know from where the dog started its journey as there are different routes they can come in through. Members suggested that it would be useful for the smaller organisations rescuing dogs from overseas to join ADCH to enable information sharing and ensure the best possible disease prevention. Members also pointed out that there are many other diseases which pose a risk aside from rabies and that this should be considered under the 3-year Strategy. CFSG agreed that there needs to be better communication with rescue groups bringing in street dogs to inform them of the disease and welfare risks and ensure they are importing these dogs legally under Ballai and not PETS.

Stakeholders mentioned a few issues that concerned them at the Big Tent and these included use of snares and their impact on cats and dogs, dog theft and dog fighting. Members felt that they needed statistic evidence of the incidents relating to these issues before they could consider them further. Such data should be supplied to CFSG such as the number of cats caught in snares, trends in the use of snare, trends in dog theft and dog fighting. The League Against Cruel Sports and Dog Theft Action may be able to provide this information which would assist the CFSG to make a decision based on evidence as to whether to include these issues in its strategy.

The other areas discussed was about the work of PAAG and online advertising of puppies and kittens. CFSG agreed that they will support PAAGs work and will ensure it is included within the 3-year Strategy. Many of the CFSG members are already involved with PAAG.

7. Dog & Cat Welfare Codes Report - DB (paper attached)

CFSG received formal notice from the Minister requesting that the Group review the Welfare Codes and collectively submit any amendments or additions to the documents as well as stating a position on the statutory nature of the current Codes.

A Working Group had been set up to put the draft together and it had met three times as well as doing a significant proportion of the work online. The final draft of the Review to be sent to the Minister was presented to members. The draft document summarised the effectiveness of the Codes over the last 5 years and then set out the recommendations to change the Codes for Defra. Members agreed the summary document. There was some

discussion about the role of the Codes on giving pre purchase advice such as insurance but members felt that if by not giving pre-purchase advice this would result in adverse impact on the welfare of animals then it should be included in the Codes.

The current Codes of Practice refers to ALL cats and to ALL dogs in all situations. From the guidance given by Defra in 2006 it is clear that their initial intention was for them to apply to all animals in all cases. The majority of members felt that this should continue, however one member highlighted the fact the Model Licence Conditions were being drawn up for boarding and pet shops which may have some conflict with the Codes in areas. It was agreed that this would be noted.

Members agreed that in light of the evidence collected by the Working Group this clearly demonstrated that the Codes had been very useful in prosecutions and educating people that were not meeting the needs of their cats and dogs. In light of this the Group agreed that the Codes should remain statutory. Stakeholders are all aware that this restricts the ease with which they can be amended but feel that the Codes statutory nature ensures the health and welfare of cats and dogs. Finally the Group agreed some amendments to the Codes based on new evidence that has arisen in the past five years.

The draft document was agreed and will be sent to the Minister George Eustice MP by the chairman.

8. **The Puppy Contract update – DB/BL**

DB - Bill Lambert (KC), Robin Hargreaves (BVA) and Lisa Richards (RSPCA) met in June and agreed all of the language. The contract is now with the KC to go to their Board for sign off.

9. **Any other business**

i) Standard for Breeding – SC/MR (paper attached)

CFSG members feel that there is no reason a standard cannot be agreed and that the Advisory Council's draft is good. The Model License Inspection Document that sits with CIEH needs to be considered in relation to the Council's document so a middle ground can be found to get a document that sets an understandable standard that every breeder should follow. Key members of CFSG were identified to look at doing this work over the coming few weeks.

ii) DEFRA Consultation on Licensing –

Defra have sent out a questionnaire on licensing to a number of parties. At this point it is a limited consultation and may be sent out wider in due course. The aim is to try and make local authority licensing easier to operate and it seeks to cover kennel licensing, pet shop licensing and breeding. CFSG members agreed to respond collectively on behalf of the sector.

11. **Date of next meeting**

28th September 2015