



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CANINE AND FELINE SECTOR GROUP HELD
AT BATTERSEA DOGS & CATS HOMES
ON MONDAY 28th SEPTEMBER AT 2.00 PM**

PRESENT

Claire Bessant	(CB)	ICC
David Bowles	(DB)	RSPCA
Paula Boyden	(PB)	Dogs Trust
Linda Cantle	(LC)	Woodgreen
Patricia Coville	(PC)	BSAVA
Steve Crow	(SC)	GCCF
Prof Steve Dean	(SD)	Chairman
Meriel France	(MF)	Pet Industry Federation
Steve Goody	(SG)	Blue Cross
Marisa Heath	(MH)	Secretariat
Richard Hooker	(RH)	PDSA
Peter Laurie	(PL)	Battersea Dogs and Cats Home
Maggie Roberts	(JC)	Cats Protection
Rosemary Smart	(RS)	Kennel Club

ITEM 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

ITEM 2. APOLOGIES

Mark Vaudin	Animal Health
James White	Guide Dogs
Claire Horton	Battersea Dogs & Cats Home
Carol Warner	Guide Dogs

ITEM 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved as a correct record with some minor amendments.

ITEM 4. MATTERS ARISING

i) Follow up actions

The discussion on micro-chipping at the last meeting raised concerns over training courses. Defra has clarified that it is not only LANTRA who can provide the training as there are four other courses approved by Defra.

li) Membership and fees

The annual membership subscription will be postponed for 6 months until January. Membership conditions remain the same. There have been a few enquiries about membership and CFSG asks for a submission from applicants on what they could bring to CFSG, who they represent and what new perspectives they can offer.

Members queried whether further Departmental cuts could see the funding being withdrawn from the AHWBE at any point and if so what impact it could have on CFSG. As CFSG funds itself it would up to the members whether it continued if the AHWBE did not exist. The Board's focus has been on farm animals whereas equines have done well because of NEWC which shows sector groups can make a difference. On the whole, members felt that having no board may mean the need for a sector group is even stronger but it was hoped that the AHWBE would continue as is.

iii) Working Groups Update

Breeding and Sale of Cats - The cat group is still gathering data on the issues on cat breeding. There are now two meetings scheduled in November and December. The group has started to write a report which will be looked at in draft form in November and then finalised in December. It can then come to CFSG at the mid December meeting.

Zoonotic Disease – The working group has not met for some time, however the lead member attended the Defra Rabies Group meeting in July where they had a presentation by Public Health England and Rob Quest. Smuggling of animals is now a key issue and all the sorts of things CFSG talk about come up on the list for discussion. Whilst the focus has been predominantly on dogs, people are starting to smuggle cats and it is raising in profile. There needs to be more work on emergency planning if there was an outbreak.

Model Licensing – The group sent its draft core dog boarding standards out for consultation with ten key points where issues needed to be resolved before agreement, however lots of responses on other parts of the document have arisen so it is going to take a bit longer to resolve.

Puppy Breeding and Selling– The group held an initial meeting with 20 stakeholder members and a sub group has been established to develop a strategy to come up with a way forward. The group will formulate some outcomes and objectives and what is in their scope. They will then bring it back to CFSG to review it so there will be input for all members at that point.

v) Defra Consultations

The group noted the covering letter and framework document on the Welfare Codes which had gone to the Minister.

The group noted the CFSG response to the Licensing Questionnaire.

ITEM 5: CFSG 3- YEAR STRATEGY

The Strategy starts at the base level with the stakeholder engagement and ensuring effective working with relevant bodies which members felt CFSG was already starting to achieve. It was agreed that the area that needs some work is the local authority engagement as it is a postcode lottery at the moment in regards to local authority enforcement with some getting it right but many not getting it right.

The part of the Strategy that members felt was key was the data collection as it is lacking in the debates on cat and dog welfare. Until the sector obtains empirical data that is robust it is difficult to provide accurate solutions to issues. At the moment opinions are based on nothing more than perception. The first set of questions are quite simple and that is setting out simple statistics on population, prosecutions on dogs and cats, how many dogs are strays, rehoming numbers, how many dogs are neutered, dog bite cases. Members all sit on various bits of data and say there is data available but it has not been clearly identified what is not known and where the gaps exist. With the information collected a green flag can identify for good data and red flag can be used for not so robust data.

Getting the evidence and statistics in place will then assist CFSG in responding to Government consultations and requests for solutions to improve the health and welfare of dogs and cats which is the ultimate aim of the group. All members agreed to send their statistics to CFSG and for a focused meeting to take place in December to look at this issue in more detail.

ITEM 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

i) Puppy Contract Update

APGAW sub-group MPs want to endorse the Puppy Contract before the end of the year and questioned whether it will be signed off by all key stakeholders by then. The group was informed that it should go to the KC council by November and so should be completed by the end of the year.

Members were informed that there are a very small percentage of puppies sold through petshops and so PIF have devised a contract for this. It sets out how to sell puppies through a petshop to which most of the PIF members adhered and they only lost a couple of retailers who refused to use it. That contract will be shared amongst members and available via the CFSG website.

ii) Greyhound Enquiry

The EFRA Select Committee are holding a one-day enquiry into Greyhounds and have requested written evidence to be submitted by 19th October. Members felt that it would be sensible for CFSG to follow the guidelines of the Greyhound Forum as there was some crossover of members.

ITEM 7: NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be 11th December at the Kennel Club.