

The Electoral Meeting of Council, June 26th 2013

The meeting was hectic as is usual with June Council as there are elections to fit around the regular business, as well as information to be passed on from various sources and discussions to give a chance for views to be aired. Busy, but enjoyable is probably a fair summary of the afternoon overall. This wasn't an occasion of heated debate, but reasoned argument interspersed with some good-natured banter; formality combined with friendship.

Therefore the first thing to touch on, I think, is the election results. Helen Marriott-Power stood for her third term as Chairman unopposed, so no change in the top slot. There was a contest for Vice-Chairman. Possibly the outcome reflects that the commitment and hard work the current Vice-Chair has put in over the last two years have been recognised by delegates and appreciated.

Vice-Chairman

Steve Crow 89

John Robinson 30

There wasn't a lot of change to the other committees. There are new people willing to stand, which I hope means there will be keen replacements for stalwarts who have given long term commitment, and obviously have the confidence of delegates, but in the meantime GCCF Ltd has stability. The team as much as the leaders is important.

GCCF Board of Directors

John Hansson did not stand again this year, leaving space for at least one new Board Member. This has been filled by Tommy Goss. The two reserves tied so there was an additional vote to establish Sue Amor as first reserve and Barbara Prowse as second.

Finance Committee

Different reserves, but otherwise the same very experienced committee was re-elected

Investigation Committee

Lynda Ashmore did not stand again for DC, but was proposed from the floor on the day for IC as there were insufficient people standing. She now brings her experience to this committee, and Harry Meekings becomes reserve.

Disciplinary Committee

Sue Amor had already gained a little experience of this committee when John Hansson stood down earlier this year. She was re-elected and Saffi Rabey replaces Lynda Ashmore. Saffi is new and will doubtless bring a fresh outlook.

Appeals Committee

The seven members have previously served on Appeals or have experience from other GCCF Committees. The two reserves, Kate Kaye and Janet Tonkinson are new.

The complete membership of the GCCF Standing Committees following the elections can be found on the GCCF website: <http://www.gccfcats.org/cttee.html>

The tradition of remembering friends and colleagues no longer with us was observed with a minute's silence. Tributes to Colleen, Joan, Joyce, Pat, Rosemary, Alan, David, and Norman who were in our thoughts can be found at <http://www.gccfcats.org/tributes.html>

Breed and Show News

EMS CODE APPROVED

The approval for use of the EMS code must rank as the most significant change of recent times as it will affect every aspect of our hobby. Registrations and transfers, show paperwork and the core computer system itself must be reworked over the coming months. Delegates had shown support for the scheme at the last Council meeting when Sarah Johnson gave a detailed presentation of just how EMS operated. After a vote that indicated overwhelming majority approval (2 against, 1 abstention) Sally Rainbow-Ockwell (IT project leader) said that the idea was to get everyone familiar with using EMS quickly, but it would be phased in stages rather like decimal currency was (with apologies to those who weren't even born then.)

October 2013: Registrations and transfers would be issued showing EMS and the GCCF breed numbering code a translator would be made for the website to enable people to start using EMS for their own pedigrees. If the familiar breed number is typed the EMS equivalent will be displayed. Judges would also be able to look at EMS for breeds regularly judged – thus a period of familiarisation.

January 2014: All show paperwork, including judges' books, to be prepared using EMS.

April 2014: The new computer system would be ready from this month or later, and, when it was, all registrations and transfers would be in EMS only.

It would be acceptable for exhibitors to use their old breed code on show entry forms if there was access only to a paper certificate, and that would happen for some time, but Sally hoped that those who were the most active breeders and exhibitors would get used to using EMS quickly, particularly as it would make the lives of Show Managers easier. A paper spreadsheet showing complete equivalents between the two codes could also be made available for SMs.

Anne Gregory announced there had been one update to the EMS information supplied in February. The code for Pewter Persian would be PER 14 and not PER 10 stated.

In response to a delegate question she explained that the term v would be linked to a cat's breed rather than its appearance, as was standard in GCCF, though agreed it would be sensible to draft a written policy so this was fixed.

It was also queried whether it was sensible to be tied to FIFe as it was thought that delays could ensue, but Anne gave assurance that this had not been her experience in the preparation period and it was sensible to align with an international standard.

The other concern was how those with a pedigree program on their own computer would be able to change. Sally hoped that in the not too distant future pedigree printing would be possible as a GCCF online service so the necessity to translate would not be relevant.

REGISTRATION POLICIES (all approved)

Balinese Variants will in future be on the Supplementary Register to enable them to be shown. There was approval for them to be shown in the equivalent Siamese breed classes.

Manx have a completely revised policy that includes health screening

Persian Tabby policy now includes the Bicolours and Tricolours.

In reply to a query concerning Colourpoints the BAC representative explained that the changes to this section of the policy had been approved in February.

Singapura policy has been revised to allow for outcrossing assisted by DNA testing, and to encourage Genetic Registration for PKD positive cats.

Tonkinese have a complete policy revision to accompany the application for Preliminary Status for the colourpointed and Burmese patterned Tonks, which includes DNA testing.

Bengals have revised registration to include the Blue Bengal at Preliminary Status.

REVISED SOPS (all approved)

The Manx had SOP changes in line with the health principles described in its breeding and registration policies.

The Abyssinian BAC wanted judges to look for a larger body structure and changed the body description and withholding faults to make this point.

The Tonkinese and Bengal standards were revised to include their new pattern and/or colours. Both breeds had Preliminary Status approved, so there can be Assessment Classes for Tonkinese colourpointed and Burmese colour restriction as soon as Show Managers can include them in their schedules.

Council was informed that the Board had granted a breed name to the SOKOKE allowing these cats to be registered with GCCF and shown on exhibition at GCCF shows, again an action that can be put into effect as soon as practical.

The other major change of the day (though not so far reaching as EMS) was the removal of Provisional Status. New breeds will now progress from acquiring a breed name and registration acceptance to Preliminary level and then aim for Championship status. This meant that all breeds currently at Provisional Level were on the agenda for immediate promotion to Championship Status if approved. Approval was unanimous for all listed:

Colourpointed & White British Shorthair
Red Self British Shorthair
Ocicat Classic
Russian Black and White (one class)
Snow Marbled Bengal
Snowshoe
Thai Blue Point and Thai Lilac (one class)
Fawn Point Siamese

The promotion would normally date from 26.10.13. However, several breed clubs with shows in the late summer and early autumn asked for dispensation to allow for breed (rather than provisional) classes for these newly promoted breeds as obviously exhibitors would not want to bring cats to compete for a now worthless Intermediate Certificate. After a fair amount of discussion on precedent being established, it was acknowledged that this promotion en masse was an exceptional circumstance and specialist breed shows should not be disadvantaged. Dispensation was granted to the following shows:

The Bengal Cat Club	3.8.2013
Chocolate Pointed Siamese Cat Club	17.8.2013
Lilac Point Siamese Cat Society	17.8.2013
Tabby Point Siamese & Progressive Breeders CC	5.10.2013
Siamese Cat Club	5.10.2013
Tabby Cat Club	5.10.2013
Ocicat Cat Club	5.10.2013
Russian Blue Breeders Association	5.10.2013
Colourpoint, Rex-Coated and AOV Club	20.10 2013

(NB. Any other breed clubs not represented in Council who cater for one of the new Championship breeds may make a request for dispensation if their show is at this time of year)

JUDGES

All judges listed on the main and supplementary agendas were approved without query. Judge withdrawals were noted without comment.

THE SUPREME (Celia Leighton, Show Manager)

Celia reported that it was a quiet time at present, but schedules were almost ready to go, and they included all the newly promoted breeds. She believed exhibitors would see very little difference at the show, but changes had happened behind the scenes in an effort to save money.

- There would be fewer judges so judge loading would be heavier.
- Club row would have a new look as sponsorship had been obtained for screens and clubs would be able to use these for pictures and promotional information.
- By popular demand the Teddy Competition would be back. Any soft toy could be entered and there would be classes for children and adults.

Rules and Bye-Law Changes

The bye-law amendment was approved that allowed Council to give dispensation to clubs whose numbers had fallen below those required for delegate representation, The delegates from these clubs were given their voting papers once dispensation had been granted.

Breed Clubs (less than 50 members)

Bombay & Asian Cats Breed Club
Central LH & Semi-LH Cat Club
Longhair Cream & Blue Cream Cat Association
Oriental Cinnamon & Fawn Group
Oriental Shaded, Smoke and Tabby Society
Oriental Longhair Cat Club
Smoke Cat Society

Area Clubs (less than 100 members)

Caesarea Cat Club
Durham County Cat Club
Eastern Counties Cat Society
Herts & Middlesex Club
Kensington Cat Club
Northern Counties Cat Club
Wyvern Cat Club

A delegate observed that the Vice Chairman should not be a delegate (BL8.1), but noted that he was listed as representing the Burmese Cat Club. The Chairman remarked that the club would have to find a new delegate!

There was further discussion later in the meeting on the difficulty officers had when retiring from office as they no longer had delegate status and risked exclusion from Council if they couldn't find a club to represent quickly. It was suggested there could be a BL amendment that allowed a retiring officer a year to attend Council as an ex-Chair or Vice-Chair, and delegates seemed sympathetic to this idea.

STANDING COMMITTEES

In an amendment to Bye-Law 11 the veterinary sub-committee lost its somewhat outdated name and became the Veterinary Advisory Committee that more accurately reflects its actual role. Both it and the Genetics Committee were now formally structured and had published terms of reference.

The GCCF's solicitor had advised that the Appeals Committee should be distanced from

the officers and the Board, not being chaired by the officers, and not having members who were also Board Members to avoid any possible conflict of interest. This was approved, and there was a suggestion that the same conditions should also be applied to the other committees of the IC/DC process. The Chairman agreed that it was something the Board could consider, and there was also the possibility of Board Members withdrawing from any case that concerned action initiated or directed by the Board.

OFFICERS

The byelaw change proposed by the Celtic LH & Semi LH Cat Society that would have permitted officers to stand for two consecutive three year terms was withdrawn by the club after discussion. Delegates suggested various amendments to the wording, and several had their own ideas for change, which would have radically altered the actual proposal. The delegate proposing thought it best to put the new ideas to her club committee and submit a revised proposal for the October agenda.

RULE CHANGES

As well as the major rule change that removed provisional status completely there were two smaller ones directed at breeding rather than showing. On the recommendation of the Investigation Committee, with the help and support of the veterinary sub-committee, the restrictions following diagnosis of ringworm were extended to apply to a cattery/household if Ringworm is diagnosed in any cat/kitten exhibiting skin lesions within 7 days of leaving the cattery/household.

Also rule 7gii was revised once again. It had been found difficult to require certificates of entirety for males outside GCCF jurisdiction. It was considered more practical to validate by microchip identity the records of cats imported to the register, or any test certificates accompanying them or obtained subsequently. This would apply to the Certificates of Entirety for unneutered male imports. The change was unanimously agreed.

Reports and Discussions

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman opened the meeting with thanks to the office staff who travelled to Council to assist with paperwork and the all important the vote counting. Then new delegates introduced themselves and apologies were given on behalf of the GCCF President. Christina had sent a message to tell all present she would be thinking of us and hoped it would be an informative, successful and enjoyable occasion.

Helen's report noted the major events of the year, the London Pet Show, the Supreme and the WCC; and the new projects begun such as the Breeders Scheme and IT project, and thanked all who had contributed. The Vice-Chairman, Board, Committees, and volunteers were a team working to promote and develop the organisation with the support of Office Manager and staff.

On the business side she noted it was good to have the goals and objectives of a business plan, to support the company's aims and ensure the development of its services. Overall it was satisfying to report that there was a trading surplus that should contribute to long-term security. The introduction of online services had been very successful and a major move forward, with users very appreciative of all it offered. The Chairman was very grateful for the dedication of the small team who had it possible.

GCCF was active in promoting health and welfare with support from its Veterinary and Genetics Committees. It also reached out successfully to young people via the YES scheme. In conclusion Helen paid tribute to the show management teams who organised some excellent events and those who gave up time to serve on BACs and club committees, not forgetting the delegates whose regular attendance at Council showed commitment to GCCF and cats.

FINANCIAL REPORT (to end of April)

Registration (prefix and non prefix) were down on the 2012 figure so income from this source had fallen.

Transfers were below target but had increased from 2012. Proportionally more cats were being transferred, and possibly since breeders had realised just how many cats stayed in their name they were actively encouraging a new owner to transfer.

Prefix applications were up and above the predicted level - a good sign for future litters. The office building had required maintenance in the first quarter of the year, and replacements computers and updated software were being phased into the office, both of which meant increased expenditure.

However, although there was a deficit it was smaller than at the same period of the previous year and May figures indicated a surplus for the year to date.

BUSINESS PLAN

This had been published on the website at the beginning of the year and the mid-year review had just been added that showed good steady progress in all areas. The Veterinary Advisory Committee and Genetics Committee were both active and the general GCCF Breeding Policy was under review with a revised edition to be published shortly. The 2012 Annual Report had been put together in time for the WCC Congress and was distributed to delegates at this Council meeting.

There was a query on the additional number of meetings held by the Board and the cost imposed on GCCF. In response it was pointed out that this had been factored into the 2013 budget and reported to Council in February (min C1915 3.4)

BREEDER SCHEME UPDATE (Vice-Chairman)

Steve observed that at the launch in March there were 32 breeders, and after the second input in June there were 117, a figure that exceeded his expectations. There had been a promotional magazine feature and there were now banners to advertise the scheme at

GCCF shows and events such as the London Pet Show. At the LPS he had found it rewarding to explain the BS to members of the public thinking of having a pedigree kitten. The scheme was being refined slowly by the volunteers organising it and office staff were now being trained in its administration and checking processes.

A delegate asked how carefully people wanting to join were checked and was assured that breed club membership was vetted and other checks were made. To date three applicants had been rejected. Steve confirmed it would be appreciated if information was supplied to the office by a club who expelled a member over an issue concerned with cat health and welfare. Also, that additional breed listings were £5.

IT PROJECT (Sally Rainbow-Ockwell, Project Manager)

Sally gave information on the introduction of the EMS code, but had additional news.

In a few weeks time certified pedigrees would be available to order online.

From 1st August entries would be taken for the Supreme and for the first time there would be an online entry and payment service.

The HHP registration would begin shortly afterwards to be followed by EMS introduction in the office on October 1st.

April 2014 was the target date for the new computer system, though depending on volunteer time and ease of development it could be later.

Phase 2 of the refresh scheme was now planned in outline with work beginning on the detail.

CLUB NEWS

There was only one club who still had accounts to complete and return. Delegates were asked to pass on thanks to their committees for getting the information required sent in.

The application for Provisional Membership from the Australian Mist Cat Club UK was approved.

The withdrawal of the Norwegian Forest Cat Society from Provisional Membership was noted.

A LIMIT TO THE CLASSES ALLOWED PER EXHIBIT IN BACK TO BACK SHOWS (discussion item lead by Anne Gregory)

Anne explained that she wanted to raise this matter because she'd noticed cats who normally behaved impeccably were evidently stressed towards the end of a back to back show. On one occasion a judge had been badly bitten. She had discussed this with a Duty Vet who shared her concerns. Exhibitors who entered cats in both shows, treating them as separate events, perhaps didn't take into account additional handling for BOB, BIS or tutorials. Delegates agreed and several had instances to report that supported Anne's contention. No fixed number of classes was agreed, and, as one person pointed out, repeats could limit handling if the same judge was involved. However, it was clear that it was an issue meriting further consideration, with perhaps a proposal from the Board in October.

BREEDERS REWARD SCHEME (Lorraine Tannat Nash for Agria)

Lorraine told delegates about the rewards offered to breeders who sent their kittens off to new home with Agria kitten policies.

£1 for each kitten signed up on line, 50 pence if the policy was taken out over the phone.

£7.50 if the new owner took out a full policy for the kitten with Agria.

These payments would be made directly into bank accounts or to nominated charities. Breeders had to sign up now to be sure of earning the rewards for kittens sold since the start of the scheme last year, and it was a matter of simple enrolment on line with bank/charity details supplied.

There were a few questions for Lorraine from delegates. She acknowledged there was no reward if a kitten was kept rather than sold, but promised a good discount if a long-term policy was taken out for it. Efforts to improve communication between GCCF and the company were ongoing to prevent duplication and any mix up in details supplied, and in getting information on joint prefix holders sorted out, but we were all encouraged to contact Agria if there were difficulties so that problems could be dealt with swiftly. Lorraine didn't know whether Agria required kittens to be wormed twice in advance of them going to a new home, but assured the delegate she would find the answer.

HOUSEHOLD PET REGISTRATION SCHEME (presented by Doreen Goadby)

Doreen explained that this was intended to start as a very simple scheme that would be run from the office. Requests were already received from people who liked the idea of registering their HHPs and GCCF currently had no way to enable them to do this. If they supplied their details and those of the cat, together with a picture of the cat, a simple registration certificate could be printed with the photo rather than pedigree detail. For £10 they would receive this together with leaflets on looking after a cat (which GCCF already had) and a link to Agria to receive insurance information. People who showed their HHPs could register them, but it wouldn't be compulsory, though perhaps in future EMS code be added to certificates that would be useful for show entry.

WORLD CAT CONGRESS

Sean Farrell, Show Manager, commented that he thought it was an event that had put GCCF on the cat world map in a favourable position. There had been much appreciation for all of the organised events of the long weekend. They had been able to get both video links and stills onto the internet quickly so that those unable to be there could view and enjoy. Sean thanked his hardworking team who were involved in the preparation and throughout, and all of those who contributed by helping out in any way.

CAT WELFARE TRUST

Keith Scruton, Chairman, confirmed the latest report on the current project was available for download from the website. Research into the genetics of immunity and its impact on breed health was being supported. Earlier he had discussed with the Vice-Chairman the

business plan statement on closer liaison with the Board as he believed good communication existed. He agreed to give information when future projects were being considered though choice was limited to those that were actively seeking support, rather than being any opportunity for initiation by CWT.

A COMBINED REGISTRATION AND TRANSFER (discussion item proposed by the Abyssinian Cat Association)

A change in the pricing structure to enable breeders to purchase combined registration and transfer was the final discussion item on the agenda, proposed by the Abyssinian CA. The chairman offered the opportunity for their delegate to present it, but as it was about one minute to 5pm and delegates were looking at their watches and thinking of the journey home, Steve Parkin wisely withdrew the item. He commented that needed some amendment now, in any case, and it would be good to have the chance to do this before bringing it back to Council in October.

The afternoon finished with Jill Coomer thanking the Board for the work they had done over this year, which was a very pleasant note on which to end!