

## THE GENERAL MEETING OF GCCF COUNCIL, FEBRUARY 2018

106 delegates arrived for February Council in the Royal Conway Hall in Holborn on 21 February. The meeting lasted for the full four hours and the agenda was just about completed, although there was a fairly swift skate through on some items. I think though it would be fair to say that all delegates who wished to contribute on any topic had an opportunity to do so and there were some interesting points made in debate. However, it wasn't an event where there were dramatic or outstanding moments, mostly this was GCCF about its business.

### Byelaws .....

The two Byelaw changes were not contentious and gained approval swiftly. The first was to prevent any repeat of the long discussion over minute and meeting procedure, as happened in October Council, as delegates are now required to send in any major changes or queries in advance so that it can be circulated to all and given due consideration. The other raised the maximum rate of the fines to be levied by DC to £1000. It was confirmed there are no set charges for any misdemeanour it was matter for DC members to consider the type of complaint and impose the appropriate fine and/or costs.

### ..... and show rules

An effort was made to tighten up on the rules concerning the **vaccination** of cats and kittens when they leave one home to go to another. Some rather unscrupulous breeders had coerced new owners on a regular basis into signing contracts to say they would undertake vaccinations when it had been the intention to use these in emergency circumstances only. That loophole is now closed so no more get outs. All vaccinations should be completed a week in advance of moving home and if there really are emergency circumstances then the GCCF needs to be informed of them.

The other change that may well please exhibitors is that if a show manager is happy to **accept upgrades after a show is closed** to new entries that's now allowed for in the rules. So, if your cat can move to a Grand or Imperial Class because of a new certificate gained, then it's always worth checking out the possibility. However, it was pointed out that although SM's love to be helpful, if a catalogue has been sent for printing the time to make changes really has passed. They may attempt the challenging, but not the impossible!

As I'm sure will be noticed the standard lists of **names and addresses** will disappear from catalogues. The new General Data Protection Regulations (to be implemented in May) mean that people have to opt in to sharing data not opt out. SMs may offer a listing, but if they do this then exhibitors will have to choose to have any personal details included.

There was some general discussion at this time about the effects on GDPR on clubs, shows and GCCF generally. The Chairman remarked that two general principles had to be applied. The first was the opt in and the other was to be prepared to remove personal data upon request. However, there would be more to be learned and shared as time progressed.

Several amendments were made in the course of rule changes concerned with **cats on the reference register whose grandparents are unregistered**. In fact, it opened the way for BACs to reverse decisions made in 1972, requiring a minimum of three registered generations, as we now have more knowledge available, especially in the field of genetics.

It is important for some breeds to introduce new lines via unregistered cats (because of lack of a registering authority in the country of origin of foundation cats, or the necessity for a domestic cat as an approved outcross). The offspring of such cats if confirmed by three full judges of the breed to be of sufficiently good phenotype, can now be transferred to the supplementary register, shown in competition, and therefore gain awards, making it more likely that the new bloodline will be known about and used by other breeders. It thus gives encouragement to breeders to become involved in breed development. However, it was acknowledged that only some BACs (and breeder groups if working with a new breed) would want to take such action.

The one rule that would have affected all exhibitors did not pass. The Progressive Singapura Cat Club had proposed changes to the '**13 day**' rule, applying it to the cat rather than household. The Veterinary Advisory Committee had not supported the change as it raised the level of risk of infection for all exhibits. Council voted to retain the existing rule by 80-15 so although points were put forcefully for and against change in the debate, opinion was conclusively that any advantages were not worth any additional risk. It was stated in the discussion that GCCF was well respected for its health and welfare measures and there was evidently some pride in this. **We like showing our cats, but want to take care of them too.**

### **Breed News**

There was just the one breed application at this meeting. The British Shorthair Group requested a place for the Golden Colourpointed BSH in the existing AOC Colourpointed BSH class. This was approved and so one of these attractive looking cats may be at a show very soon as with a class available they can be entered at any show not yet closed.

However, there were a number of registration revisions:

**Australian Mists** - there are outcrossing changes, including mandatory DNA testing

**Persian LHs** - there are adjustments to the introductory page and revision to the charts giving the appropriate register for recommended colour and pattern breeding, and added reference to Exotic SHs.

**Russians** - mandatory DNA testing when importing or outcrossing

**Tonkinese** - specification of the mandatory DNA testing required for active males.

Unfortunately, the **Exotic** registration was not approved as further clarification on whether DNA testing was mandatory or recommended was required from the BAC.

**SOP changes** were approved for the **BSH** (in respect of reds and creams) and **Exotic**.

The **Egyptian Mau** and **Oriental** have had SOP changes notified on the website.

Finally, in this section there was another short discussion on breeding from **male torties** and it was asked that any breeder who planned to do this should inform the Board. If there were offspring some special registration programming could be necessary, and the issue of any health tests required by the breed had to be considered. A standard DNA test would not necessarily provide the information required.

## Judges

All judges to be approved had their appointments and promotions confirmed. There were also a much larger number of retirements notified than usual, too. One or two were just the inevitable stepping down at the end of a PJ term, but many more were a farewell from judges no longer physically able to get to shows or and/or commit to the activity of the day. Those who opted for the Emeritus list will perhaps only be gone for a time due to other commitments, or still judge, but much less frequently than previously.

The Chairman gave good wishes for the meeting from GCCF's new President, Shirley Bullock, at the beginning of the meeting, but announced also that she had reluctantly decided to transfer to the Emeritus list. She's been a familiar face for many across most sections so will be very much missed, but judged regularly for over **50 years**. That must surely be a record, and we can only be appreciative of such a commitment and hope she enjoys her quieter Saturdays, but still joins us on occasions. If you're reading this ..... thank you, Shirley.



## Reports

### **Show Structure RG**

Of the reports given the most time was spent on the forthcoming changes to the show structure. There seemed to be an element of relief when in answer to a question it was made clear that the breed shows were not expected to change in any respect. The changes to the number of sections and the Grand groups within these would apply to the All-Breed shows and breed clubs could continue splitting their classes and scheduling their judges in the same way. It was acknowledged that there was a section merge, and in some groups cats would be competing for Grand awards against breeds they hadn't encountered in that class previously, and knowing this could not possibly satisfy all. However, as far as numbers were concerned there had been an attempt to make competition fairer, and those breeds who felt most strongly that they had been disadvantaged (Birman and Suffolk) were encouraged to keep records and present them the following year as support for any change requested. It was emphasised again that nothing remained fixed.

Kate Kaye said that the work of the Show Structure Review Group had now reached a conclusion and there was a hand over to the **Judge Training** and **BAC Review Groups** to arrange for the development and delivery of new judge training programme to begin in June 2019. Peter Collin outlined briefly the three elements the judge training group was working on: stewarding, the accelerated scheme to get existing judges qualified across Grand Groups and sections, and the training programme for new judges. John Hansson stated that a consultation process had begun with BACs.

All paperwork record of this work can be found together on one page of the GCCF website if you wish to read about it in more depth. Look for 'Review Groups' under the Show Management menu, or try the link:

<https://www.gccfcats.org/Show-Information/Review-Groups>

There was disagreement on whether all judges had been given a fair deal. The response was the intention was that absolutely no judge should be disadvantaged. They should all have the same number of Imperials and Grands, and some could even have more, but not all would have exactly the same breeds in their higher certificate classes as previously because of the different class and section splits. This would mean some breeds will lose judges at Grand or Imperial level and gain others, but the retention of the same number of classes was the principle used to be as fair as possible, and judges who would like to catch up with breeds in higher classes they judged previously should be able to do so under the accelerated scheme. (The letters that went out to judges are also on the website in the same place so anyone may read exactly how this was explained if so wished).

### **Supreme News**

Steve Crow explained in some detail the income and expenditure of the draft Supreme Show Accounts. Although income from entries and stalls was down, the gate had been excellent and some costs cut. In fact, if there hadn't been a dog show and the National Pet Show the following week, so that stalls had been maintained at the 2016 level there would have been a rather narrower gap to a break-even position than the almost £17,000 deficit.

There was once again some discussion on the pros and cons of moving to a cheaper venue and changing the time of year. John Hansson said he hadn't done so yet, but was planning to look at the Manchester venue, and consider its transport links. There would also have to be discussions with the Supreme's principle sponsors. Others were very keen on a time of year change, but the weather was disliked by others for the winter and longhaired cats were not at their best in summer so this was not good for their owners. Once again, we reached the point of it not being possible to please all of GCCF Council all of the time.

### **Business and Finance**

Little was said on business or financial matters. Expect more when the accounts are presented in June. There was a reminder that the minimum capitation fee will be £15 if clubs have less than 50 members. Mark Goadby, also invited those who had questions on the finances to send them in if detail on any point in the figures and graphs presented was required. The completion of the Business Plan was also touched upon by the Vice Chairman, and the accompanying list of business achievements the past five years which can be found here: <https://www.gccfcats.org/News?newsID=1035>

Steve Crow gave a brief update on the licensing, with legislation now expected in October, and still no firm definition of 'commercial'. The kitten contract that the Cat Groups had prepared to inform the general public on kitten purchase will be on the GCCF website when finalised. He also gave a reminder to breeders to keep their own personal financial records in order as HMRC were prepared to target and investigate any person they believed could be making a profit from selling kittens.

### **Microchip discussion**

At the end of the afternoon he also led a very short discussion on microchipping female breeding cats with the emphasis on the benefits for the individual cat (if it should escape) and as demonstrating the professionalism in record keeping for breeders (tying in with the previous point re HMRC investigation). Those who spoke against were either not comfortable with the idea of chipping, and/or being obliged to do something by GCCF regulation.

## IT – STAR Shows

Perhaps the most exciting news of the day came from Sally Rainbow-Ockwell with the IT update. More shows were taking up the opportunity to have show paperwork done by the GCCF office via the computer system. It was working smoothly after the initial pilots, the printing had proved cost effective for show managers and (most importantly) it enabled exhibitors to make their show entries on line via their GCCF account by a few clicks as with the Supreme. Even the choice of a class was provided.

Those who had used it liked it and said how easy it was once they realised their own cat's record was the starting point. Everything done via the internet - as befits the 21st century, but retaining the opportunity for a paper entry if preferred. What's not to like? Definitely worth a try, and something that will be costed properly and offered more extensively next year. Look out for the symbol below.

That's the positive ending this time.

[Jen Lacey 22.2.2018](#)

