

Welfare Report for July - September 2021

- The Canine & Feline Sector Group held its “Big Tent” meeting on the 2nd July via Zoom. I attended the event and was part of working group 1 which considered what more we could do to drive breeding standards and genetic health in both dogs and cats. Two documents were published and circulated for the event: Code of Practice for Dog Breeding and CFSG Guidance on Dog Conformation, if anyone wants a copy of either of these, let me know. We have a final draft of the sister document Code of Practice for Cat Breeding which I have helped to write, this is at the point of final sign-off for publication. The sub-group will begin meeting soon to work on Guidance on Cat Conformation (I am part of this group).
- The Cat Group met on 6th July and on 14th September. The July meeting focussed on each member updating the group on the impact of the pandemic on their work, sharing information on changes and any issues that have arisen over the past year. Some have had to suspend services such as neutering for a time or change practices (eg. hands-free rehoming process), and organisations such as PDSA reported a significant increase in demand for their services. All report an increase in demand for cats and in cat ownership, CP estimate that the population of owned cats in the UK has increased by 600,000 between 2020 and 2021. The meeting on 14th September focussed primarily on the work of partners in dealing with feral kittens and kittens from street cats. Issues around socialisation and successes (and failures) in rehoming these kittens.
- GCCF has been involved in helping to alert cat owners of the recent food recall because of safety concerns relating to Pancytopenia in cats. Links to advice from the Foods Standard Agency and Royal Veterinary College have been prominent on the GCCF website and of FB.
- The Canine & Feline Sector Group held its AGM on 17th September via Zoom. The meeting included a review of progress against the group’s work plan for 20/21, which is derived from the priority work streams (see attached papers). The work for late 2021 and 2022 will focus heavily around the large amount of legislative work, which DEFRA have in train and have asked CFSG to advise upon (eg. compulsory microchipping of cats, review of dog microchipping regulations, puppy import ban, ear cropping, worrying of livestock, etc.) There will also be a five year review of the dog and cat breeding licensing regulations, with calls already in for changes to the criteria and action to address the inconsistent way that the current regulations are being applied by some local authorities. The group has agreed to look at additional admin support to take account of the increased workload ahead, we currently have one part-time CFSG administrator.

- The final item on the AGM agenda was the election of a new chair for the group. Chris Laurence, who has chaired CFSG for the past four years is stepping down, and two candidates were nominated to replace him, Daniella Santos (BVA) and Rob Quest. Rob has been elected (by one vote) as the new chair, he has been a member of the group for several years sitting as the representative from the Local Government Association and has advised on all aspects of implementing animal licensing and overseen the training LA inspectors. He is now retiring from LGA and will take on the role of chair forthwith, his expertise will be invaluable as we assist government in undertaking a review of the licensing regulations.
- The Genetics Committee has recently begun work on reviewing and updating the information on the GCCF website on genetics and cat health and welfare. We have agreed to both revise and expand this and also to review and update the General Breeding Policy. We hope to have this completed by December.
- A meeting of the Veterinary Advisory Committee is planned for 7th October.
- The next meeting of CFSG is scheduled to take place on 22nd October.

SC 5th October 2021

Attachments:

CFSG Work-streams 2021

CFSG Report on 20/21