



MINUTES

For the Meeting of the **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** **THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE CAT FANCY**

Friday, 26 February 2021 by videoconference



Present: Mr Sean Farrell - Chair
Dr Peter Collin - Vice-Chair

Mrs Lynda Ashmore	Mr Steve Crow
Mrs Rosemary Fisher	Mr Thomas Goss
Mr John Hansson	Mrs Shelagh Heavens
Mrs Catherine Kaye	Mrs Jen Lacey
Mrs Elaine Robinson	Mrs Lisa Robinson-Talboys
Ms Lyndsey Robinson	Mr Peter Williams

In attendance: The Office Manager, Denise Williams (OM)

BD4055 MEETING INTRODUCTION

- 1. Apologies for absence.**
 - 1.1 Apologies had been received in advance from the Vice-Chair, Dr Peter Collin, Dr Gavin Eyres, and Mr Peter Williams that they could not be present throughout the meeting, but would join in and contribute if possible. Mrs Hilary Dean had sent a message that morning to say she couldn't be present and apologies were received post-meeting from Mrs Heather McRae.
- 2. Chair's opening remarks**
 - 2.1 The meeting began at 11.11 am as the Chair welcomed those present, noting it was good to see everyone and have the chance for some social interaction once again. **INFO**

BD4056 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 1. The Minutes of the Board meeting of 15 January 2021**
 - 1.1 These had been circulated and some amendments inserted.
 - 1.2 A correction was made on the day to the initials in the action list at BD4045.9.4
 - 1.3 The minutes were approved unanimously as proposed by the Chair.
- 2. The minutes of the Board meeting of 6 February 2021**
 - 2.1 This meeting had taken place for the purpose of confirming arrangements for the Council meeting by video-conference scheduled for 13 March 2021 and discussing the arrangements for the electoral process of 2021 as this could not be in June in London as required by the ByeLaws.
 - 2.2 The minutes had been circulated and no comments had been received.
 - 2.3 They were accepted unanimously following a vote taken by the Chair.
Action: the minutes from both meetings to be sent for website publication **JL/RF**
- 3. Matters arising from previous minutes**
 - 3.1 BD4042.2.6 It was queried why the Vice-Chair felt further monitoring of the JRBAC was needed. He could not answer immediately, but responded (once he had joined the meeting) that initially a period of two years had been stipulated and only a few months had passed before meetings ceased due to Covid. He felt that little progress had been made to deal with the problems raised and that the monitoring should proceed for the agreed term. It was noted that a second monitor was now required and that the appointment should be on the agenda of the next Board meeting.
Action: the appointment of a JRBAC monitor to be an agenda item for 21.3.21 **JL**
 - 3.2 BD4045.6.1 SH queried the use of the 2019 Business Plan when the 2020, as produced by Dr Eyres should have been available. PW acknowledged that he had used this as a basis and had also referenced the plan for 2019.
 - 3.3 BD4044.3.2 SH observed that she had not commented at the last meeting, but it should be noted that it was factually not correct that money could be lost on gilts due to inflation. There could be losses if there was a movement in the price of gilts, but inflation would not necessarily be the cause.
 - 3.4 BD4042.2.4 The Chartreux CC UK amendments had been circulated and no objections were received. A proposal for Full Membership of GCCF had been placed on the electronic agenda and was deemed approved on 22.2.21 as there were no delegate queries or objections.
 - 3.5 There were no matters arising on the minutes from the 6 February 2021. **INFO**

BD4057 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

INFO

BD4058 FINANCE

- 1. Minutes of the Finance Meeting of 5.2.21**
 - 1.1 There were no queries from Board members on these minutes.
 - 1.2 They were referenced at times during the course of meeting as matters discussed at FC had been brought forward to this meeting. **INFO**

2. **Management p&l accounts to 31 January 2021**
- 2.1 The profit and loss accounts to the end of 31 January had been provided by the bookkeeper in the middle of the month and also circulated with a comparison sheet showing December and January in this year and the previous one, together with the 2021 budget figures.
- 2.2 There were no queries or observations. It was noted that there had been a good start to the year in respect of core business. **INFO**
3. **Volume figures (core business)**
- 3.1 The OM had circulated the January figures. It had been a good start to the year with an increase in most areas. Imports had risen significantly, but prefix registrations were slightly lower than at the same time in 2020.
- 3.2 The OM observed that increase was carrying forward into February, with overall figures improved to date. **INFO**
4. **Report on investments & statement balances**
- 4.1 Aldermore £76,794.26 with a fixed interest of 1.49% until March 2021.
(signatories SF, SC, RF and the bookkeeper)
- Cambridge & Counties £84,091.62 95 day notice account with 1% interest (dropped from 1.49%)
(signatories SF, SC, RF and the bookkeeper)
- Redwood £70,679.96 95 day notice account with 1.34% interest (dropped from 1.54%)
(online access SF, RF and the OM and bookkeeper)
- Monmouthshire BS £84,000, an easy access account with 0.5% interest
(online access SF, RF, the OM and bookkeeper)
- Lloyds (current) £263,417.29
- Lloyds (Supreme) £993.50 (This was eroded by £7 each month).
- Lloyds (Euro) €15,052.16 = £13,014.40 (exchange rate €1.11 to £1)
(signatories SF, SC, RF, SH the OM and the bookkeeper)
- 4.2 RF reported that the balance on the Aldermore account on 18 March was expected to be £77,012. If this was rolled over, the interest rate for a fixed term of one year would 0.55%; for 6 months 0.52% or easy access at 0.5%. The Hampshire Trust provided 0.7% for a fixed term of term of 2 years and 0.6% for 1 year
- 4.3 On a quick calculation there was only a £167 between the best Hampshire offer and Aldermore and it was simpler not to have to close and open accounts.
- 4.4 It was proposed by JH, 2nd SC that a further fixed term be taken with the Aldernore. This was agreed unanimously.
Action: A 12 month fixed term arrangement to be made with the Aldermore **RF**
- 4.5 RF and the OM reported that the agreement made by the Finance Committee (FC888.3.3) to remove JH from bank accounts, and to add the Chair, had been actioned.
- 4.6 As agreed by the FC (FC888.4.) arrangements to open an additional deposit account with the Shawbrook had been made and the set-up was in process. **INFO**
5. **Finalisation of the budget for 2021**
- 5.1 It was noted that Council would take the decision on whether delegates wanted a physical meeting or have an electoral process organised remotely.
- 5.2 A meeting in London (with room hire, refreshments and staff travel) would cost approximately the same as a election run by Civica, at a little under £5000.
- 5.3 The Chair noted that the webinar process gave an opportunity to hold ballots on line if the process was approved by delegates, so it was possible neither expense would be incurred.
- 5.4 It was agreed unanimously that £5000 should be added to the budget to be used if necessary.
Action: referral to the bookkeeper for the addition to be made **OM**

BD4059 BUSINESS ITEMS

1. **Update on the Council meeting of 13.3.21**
- 1.1 The Chair reported on two very successful practice meetings with delegates. There would be no video links to individuals and all would be on mute unless invited to speak to prevent a number of people talking over each other. A 'hand up' signal indicated a wish to say something.
- 1.2 There would be a question/answer facility. It was hoped that questions would be submitted in advance, but supplementary questions could be taken and either answered immediately or a written answer would be provided from the Board after the meeting.
- 1.3 The voting system was described, with an illustration from the OM, and KK noted that on a trial she had found it extremely easy to participate. The Chair confirmed that it was operated via an authenticated email address and was therefore as secure as possible. There was no indication of how people voted, and numbers/percentages would need to be noted on the day as they would not be recorded.
Action: a check to be made on anonymity setting in the voting feedback report **OM**
- 1.4 It was confirmed that delegate attendance could be reported in the meeting minutes.
- 1.5 SF explained that by indicating the Board would answer questions he was thinking that it would be the Board lead on a topic, but he was happy to take contributions from any of the Board members.
- 1.6 There was some concern about the number of questions, and who would be expected to contribute and the Chair reiterated that the intention was to control the meeting and take questions on agenda items only. Delegates could speak only if invited to do so and could be muted if necessary.
(12.07: PC joined the meeting)
- 1.7 There was also discussion on the security of the meeting and possible publication via a recording. The OM thought it could be possible to block recording and it was also suggested that a disclaimer should be made that unauthorised publication of the meeting, or part of it, would be considered as discreditable conduct that could be subject to disciplinary action.
Action: preparation of disclaimer and check on block **SF/OM**

2. **Finalisation of the Business Plan for 2021**
- 2.1 PW reported that he had received written information from SC and RF on their topics and had an opportunity to speak to KK on show review.
- 2.2 He requested information from the Judge Training Review Group specifically as had not been able to find any written TOR or timescale for completion to follow on from the 'Accelerated Scheme'.
- 2.3 PC stated that he could not lead or participate in the JTRG at present, and KK agreed to take it forward, together with those who had expressed an interest at the end of 2019. They would aim to progress the work that had already been done.
- 2.4 The OM commented that she forwarded a report on HHP registration for information.
- 2.5 LRT reported that information following a meeting was in circulation amongst the newly formulated Show Review Group, but was not ready for publication yet. She had organised the meeting, but did not wish to take the lead. That position was to be decided.
- 2.6 JH queried the employment of a member of staff with responsibility for marketing, with the chair's response that it would depend on recommendations following an HR meeting. It was noted that this would need updating within the BP as it had originally been planned to happen with 2019.
- 2.7 There was comment that there should be a general assessment at an HR meeting of what roles needed to be covered by staff, and this should be determined by what was within the BP, with the conclusion that new ideas should be drawn from clubs and customers. It was suggested that some surveys and focus group meeting could assist in ascertaining priorities and ensuring people felt involved.
- 2.8 LR reported that there was already contact planned with the SRG and SNAP group to benefit from an exchange of ideas and discuss what rule changes would be necessary to implement new show formats.
- 2.8 PW observed that he would put together a holding statement on the BP for Council, to state that it was still under review and additional information would be required.
- Action: preparation of a statement for 13 March to be circulated to the Board in advance** **PW**
3. **News from Business partners and the possibility of future partners**
- 3.1 RF asked if the terms of the Van Cat Litter company would be acceptable. These were confirmed as:
- the GCCF logo on a page of their website
 - the Van Cat logo on an appropriate GCCF page,
 - use of the monthly newsletter to carry discount codes to encourage breeders to try their product.
- This was agreed by a majority, with abstentions from SH & LRT
- (12.50: PW left the meeting)*
- 3.2 There had been no further contact from Anthony of RC, but Cerri Davies had been in touch with the Office. and the Chair had responded to try and arrange an exploratory meeting.
- 3.3 There were no issues in the relationship with Agria and the next meeting was scheduled with Sara White for the end of March.
- 3.4 The Chair reported there had been very recent contact with Lee Cox, to arrange a meeting with Purina. This would be followed up and a report made to the Board.
- Action: discussion with Lee Cox** **SF**
- 3.5 There had been contact from a newly incorporated company, SecuraPet, who hoped to market a product like a microchip that contained a tracking system. Further details would follow when available. **INFO**
4. **Report from the ITG meeting**
- 4.1 As previously reported, there were now regular small updates to Phoenix. These were carried out by IM and tested by CTR. No problems were noted.
- 4.2 CTR had checked through over half of the registration policies to ensure they were correctly implemented. She was now dealing with those that contained anomalies, but hoped to have completed the project by the end of the year. An update had been given in the Council papers.
- 4.3 Any further work on STAR depended on what was required when shows re-started and so was on hold at present. It was expected that the member of staff most familiar with the system would not be available in the summer. The OM reported training was planned for 3 other staff members and a recording of this would be made and retained for future reference.
- 4.4 IM had been asked to make a contingency plan for if he should suddenly become unavailable. It was aimed to make a system recovery process **INFO**
5. **Website upgrade project**
- 5.1 RF noted that the Kennel Club had their website updated by Felinesoft of Bristol and she had made the first contact with them as it would be a similar type project, though not as extensive as KC's.
- 5.2 A first meeting had been arranged with Business Development Manager, Kerry Georgio, for an initial assessment of their ideas and costs. These would be reported back to the April ITG meeting.
- 5.3 SC commented that a successful website project would be an important indication that GCCF was moving forward to modernise and develop services. It was an extremely important asset.
- Action: report to ITG & the Board** **RF**
- 5.4 A follow up to another website contact from JH had proved to be spam. **INFO**
6. **Code of Conduct for use with the GCCF computer system & GCCF email addresses**
- 6.1 SC said that in developing this he had started with section 5 of the staff handbook, and then consulted the ITG to produce a second draft, and then Critchleys before producing the circulated version.
- 6.2 It had come into being for use with GCCF email addresses, but on IM's recommendation had morphed into a Code of Conduct for the use of GCCF IT system by elected members.
- 6.3 LR stated that the code attempted to control usage of a private computer system which was unacceptable. Members of the Board and the other elected committees paid for their own internet access and virus control software. They were not employees working on GCCF machines for the company's business, which meant downloads and social media use could be entirely private.

- 6.4 The Chair commented it would also present him with difficulties as he used unlicensed software and downloaded programs for personal use. He felt it would be unnecessary to report either to the OM
- 6.5 LR summarised that if use of a GCCF email address depended on signing up to the Code, as presented, it made acceptance impossible unless GCCF was providing the computer, internet provision, software and virus control to each elected member, because no one should be told how to use their own property.
- 6.6 SC said the intention was to protect GCCF's system from damage that could occur from private use, rather than dictate how members used their own computers. He invited input to amend the document so that people felt more comfortable with its use.
- 6.7 The Chair gave a reminder that one purpose of using the system and having a code was to ensure compliance with GDPR. He acknowledged there was difficulty with this for home use on private systems.

Action: amendments to the code to be sent to SC **LR/SF**

7. **Customer liaison to establish ideas and priority for additional services**

- 7.1 SC commented that the ITG's view was that they had had more than a year of stabilising the system, and the pandemic with lockdown had shown it was central to business activity. Therefore consideration should be given to what use could be made of it in future business development.
- 7.2 It was thought that knowledge of customer priorities was essential (BD2059.2.7) and the next step had to be discovering what was important to breeders and exhibitors. This could begin at the Council meeting.

Action: liaison with delegates **Chair**

8. **Registration as trademarks for the GCCF logos**

- 8.1 The Disciplinary Committee had reported to the Board that they had found proven three cases where breeders who were not members of the Breeder Scheme had used the Scheme's logo. They recommended that both this and the GCCF logo should be trademarked as a deterrent, as users should understand that anything that is trademarked is company property and copying carries a risk of legal action.
- 8.2 It was established that registering a trademark could be done online at a cost of £170 each.
- 8.3 A vote was taken and this action agreed unanimously.

Action: the GCCF logo to be registered as trademarks **OM**
website notification of trademark status when completed **RF**

9. **Risk Assessment - February 2021**

1. BD4059.1.7 the risk of illicit recordings and publication of Council business had been identified. The OM would look at the possibility of technical prevention and the Chair give notice of possible discreditable conduct.
2. BD4059.4.4 further action had been reported on mitigating the sudden loss of the computer consultant. **INFO**

BD4060 STAFF & OFFICE

1. **2021 salaries for ratification**

- 1.1 The salaries for staff from April 2021 as recommended by FC had been circulated for ratification.
- 1.2 The OM left the meeting after commenting briefly on how well some staff had performed.
- 1.3 There were no comments and the Chair moved to a vote which gave unanimous approval.

Action: implementation of the new salary levels from April 2021 **LP**
(The OM returned)

2. **Staff update**

- 2.1 A training session was planned for 12 March when Becky would be instructing 3 colleagues in aspects of her role, and ensuring there was recording made for future reference.
- 2.2 Becky was working remotely, but was continuing with IC/DC work and could answer queries from staff as necessary.
- 2.3 A new staff member (Sally Buchanan) was starting work on 1 March and a second new CSA would begin after confirmation of a release date from her present employer.
- 2.4 In response to a query the OM would ask staff to provide bank account details for BAC payment by phone.
- 2.5 The OM felt those in the Office were working extremely well as a team. **INFO**

3. **An update on the Office building and equipment**

- 3.1 A fire risk prevention assessment was being carried out on the premises on 22 March.
- 3.2 A recent check had been made on the heating and air-conditioning followed by arrangements made to replace an air filter on the boiler as soon as this was available. **INFO**

BD4061 SHOW MATTERS

1. **Report from the Show Review Group**

- 1.1 The Chair reported that the group had met and noted thoughts and ideas for a TOR were discussed. It was intended that this would be kept simple and give project timescale.
- 1.2 At present various information and input was being gathered for circulation and assessment. Another meeting was planned for March. **INFO**

2. **Input from clubs**

- 2.1 The Committee Secretary noted she had included items for Board information rather than discussion. The documents/noted had been received from clubs and/or individuals giving ideas for changes to shows.
- 2.2 All had been passed to the SRG to inform its discussions. **INFO**
- 2.3 LRT noted that the forms for show management had been revised towards the end of 2019 and hadn't yet been put onto the website after finalisation. It was agreed they should be circulated. Most revisions were deletions of out of date requirements.

Action: Board circulation prior to use **LRT**

3. **New show licence applications/amendments for the 2021-22 show season**
- 3.1 There were no new show licence applications for the 2021-22 season INFO
- 3.2 There was a request from the LH, SLH & AB CC and Southern British, who had show dates in January and September, to hold a combined show on 13 or 14 November 2021. It was noted that there was another British breed club show in conjunction with the Yorkshire & Cumberland on 13 November.
- 3.3 However, it was agreed that these clubs could not change dates or it would set a precedent for all clubs, which could become chaotic if Covid had prevented some summer shows.
- 3.4 It was agreed that no clubs would be able to change their 2021-22 show date and there would need to be an announcement of this.
- 3.5 The outcome of subsequent discussion on venue changes and new licence application (from clubs who were eligible, but had not yet applied) was that there could be some flexibility. Any new venue would need to be in the same locality, and application for a show date that was traditional for that club would be considered in the usual way.
- Action: an announcement on the freezing of show dates to be on the web site** RF
4. **Accelerated Scheme**
- 4.1 No rewording for the Accelerated Scheme had been received for the Council agenda and KK confirmed nothing had been circulated within the JTRG yet.
- 4.2 JL confirmed that discounted time for judges on the AS was on the Council agenda, as it was for PJs, so that no judge was disadvantaged by the lack of shows during the pandemic. INFO
5. **Review of a restart for shows & consideration of an autumn event to celebrate 150 years of shows**
- 5.1 SMs on the Board reported that they could not yet make contact with venue management as leisure centres were closed. They were scheduled to re-open in April and any information gathered would be reported to the Board. It was noted that it wasn't just a question of availability, but costs for extra space and the hygiene measures that would be necessary.
- 5.2 It was considered that breed shows would probably be in a better position than all-breed to begin again, but size to allow spacing would also be a factor and would raise costs.
- 5.3 There was a discussion on dates given that government announcements suggested that the 21 June would be the date when everything would be open again, and it could be anticipated by exhibitors that there would be shows again. However, it was noted that this would be subject to review and for each period and in the past new evidence had emerged that changed plans.
- 5.4 PC's informed opinion, based on epidemiological knowledge, was that cases would be reduced in the summer, but would be followed by a surge in the autumn if there was a virus variant not covered by vaccines given now. There was so much that was still unknown that made it impossible to set definite dates.
- 5.5 It was noted that 1 June date had already been given and so there needed to be a clear statement that shows would continue to be on hold without raising any expectations on when they would begin. It could be noted that government guidelines were being followed and all was subject to review.
- Action: statement to be drafted and circulated to the Board** LR
- 5.6 It was suggested that there could be online celebration of 150 years via pictorial exhibition and videos on the website.
- 5.7 There was then discussion on getting the media involved, possibly with some human interest story, information on Covid and its effects on the hobby, and/or an opportunity for a display of cat photographs. RF
- Action: liaison with media contacts** RF
- (2.50: LRT left the meeting)*

BD4062 REGISTRATION, TRANSFERS & SOP ITEMS

1. **Amendment to the Norwegian Forest Cat registration policy re DNA tests**
- 1.1 The Norwegian Forest Cat BAC wished to introduce compulsory genetic testing for glycogen storage disease (GSD IV) and pyruvate deficiency (PKdef) for kittens to be registered as active from 1 June 2021. It would not be applied retrospectively to cats with active registration.
- 1.2 It had been confirmed with the GCCF Veterinary Officer that it was an acceptable strategy for the breed to eliminate the recessive genes, particularly as once cats had been tested negative they passed on this status to their offspring so there would need to be extensive testing for a relatively short period.
- 1.3 It was noted that the policy no longer needed to mention the experimental register, and the explanation of the genetics behind PKdef and GSDIV would be best included in the breeding policy and/or as a separate note for breeders, rather than as a registration policy section.
- 1.4 A vote was taken on approving the DNA testing inclusions and these were unanimously agreed.
- Action: the BAC to be informed and the revised policy to be placed on the electronic Council agenda. JL**
2. **An amendment to the Persian Longhair registration policy**
- 2.1 The Board was informed that as yet the Persian LH BAC hadn't yet had an opportunity to discuss the changes together, only by email. However, as a videoconference meeting had now been arranged in March it seemed sensible to have more discussion to see if the proposal could be enhanced, possibly by the inclusion of DNA testing, to achieve the same intended results - less restriction in patterns in the background of smokes to ensure there was a sufficiently wide choice of breeding partners to keep the gene pool open.
- 2.2 It was also observed there were some factual inaccuracies within the rationale that needed correction, to ensure the right message was given to new breeders interested in smokes. It needed to be clear that smoke to self or tortie series colours was as acceptable as smoke x smoke breeding. There could be improved wording and presentation with better communication.
- 2.3 It was agreed unanimously that the policy should be referred back to the BAC to revise the wording and to provide a start date for it.
- Action: the Persian LH BAC to be informed** JL

3. **Amendments to the Somali SOP**
 3.1 The Somali BAC had requested approval for an amendment to the SOP that allowed tortie and tortie silver Somalis to have a solid (coloured) foot/feet.
 3.2 Judges of the breed on the Board thought this was a definite improvement.
 3.3 The amended SOP was accepted unanimously.
Action: the BAC to be informed and the revised SOP to be placed on the electronic Council agenda. JL
4. **Kitten for import bred by a suspended breeder**
 4.1 A breeder wished to import a kitten onto the GCCF register from TICA, but it had been bred by a GCCF breeder who was suspended, and this information was published on the GCCF website at the time of purchase.
 4.2 It was thought possible that GCCF rules could need tightening because they covered registration and transfer by a suspended breeder, but did not refer to import. It was agreed that legal advice should be sought before any further action was taken.
**Actions: preparation of an enquiry to the GCCF solicitor JL
 notification to the owner that legal advice would be taken Office**
5. **Name change requests**
 5.1 There was a breeder application to change the names and sex of male kittens who had been thought to female,
 5.2 These were both agreed unanimously.
 5.3 JL made a suggestion for a protocol that would mean such applications did not have to come to the Board unless the criteria were not in place or there were doubts. The Board fee would still be charged to discourage changes without good reason, but no rules would need to be amended.
 5.4 It was agreed that the protocol seemed logical, but as it had not been agenda item it should be presented to the next meeting.
Action: protocol on accepting name changes to be on the March agenda JL
6. **Prefixes for approval**
 6.1 It was asked that the list of names should be printed on A3 for subsequent meetings and the OM agreed.
 6.2 It was asked if the breed could also be listed as it was of interest. It would need adding to the form.
 6.3 The applicant with PGPAWS had requested a change to CATIFY as she had seen her first choice was close to a prefix currently on the website for public review.
 6.4 The list of prefixes was agreed unanimously with CATIFY included.
Action: the prefix applicants to be informed Office
7. **Prefix amendment**
 7.1 There had been a request from a breeder to change a prefix as she no longer liked how it sounded. She had used it for two litters bred in 2020.
 7.2 It was thought the change did not solve the problem, also, that no precedent should be set. As the prefix had been used it had to stand on record and if the applicant was unhappy she could purchase a different prefix for future use. This was agreed unanimously.
Action: the applicant to be informed Office

(15.30 PC left the meeting)

BD4063 HEALTH & WELFARE

1. **Specification for website publicity on kitten buying**
 1.1 RF had filled in the details as requested by NRG Digital so that they could provide a website video advert on responsible kitten buying. The estimate for this was £4-5000.
 1.2 It had been suggested that a cartoon style was used to get the message across, as this was easier than using real people due to Covid. As a voice-over would be required Matt-Chats-The-Cat was suggested as he had been present at the Supreme, and LA had his contact details.
 1.3 It was suggested at the meeting that the possibility of animating the GCCF logo should be explored. If this wasn't doable then a cartoon character that could be associated with GCCF as a brand and mascot was thought to be an idea worth working with. It was hoped for something that would be shared on social media.
(15.44: LRT rejoined the meeting)
 1.4 A vote was taken and the project was approved with 1 abstention (LRT)
Action: development of the project with NRG RF
 1.5 It was thought that alongside the website activity estimates should be obtained for getting adverts into printed publications - magazines and newspapers. Bus stops were also mentioned, but had been used in the past for Supreme advertising and were not thought to give good value for money,
 1.6 It was suggested that it could be possible to share resources with the KC and/or charities to obtain better advertising cover on this theme. SC pointed out that public education re kitten buying was a common goal. Too many buyers were taken in by false adverts and information and paying extremely high prices.
Action: a check on publication circulations and contact with other organisations RF
2. **Website pet sales - contact with site managers**
 2.1 It was agreed this would be discussed with the information from other groups, as several concerns had been raised by other organisations, and responses had been shared.
INFO
(15.48 SH gave the club returns report and left the meeting)
3. **Breeder Scheme membership - applications and appeal**
 3.1 New applicant 1: there were no comments and a majority vote for acceptance with abstentions from: ER, LRT, & LR
 3.2 New applicant 2 there were no comments and a majority vote for acceptance with abstentions from: ER, LRT, & LR

- 3.3 An appeal had been received from the same applicant whose appeal against non-acceptance had been considered in January. It was thought she had not sent much new information.
- 3.4 However, it was noted that there seemed to be an element of hostility within the letter that possibly indicated a misunderstanding. It was to be re-iterated that she had not been rejected from the BS, but was deferred until she had bred a litter. It was noted that other breeders who were novices had been accepted onto the scheme, but some had been deferred for very similar reasons to this applicant. They had a number of cats and had expressed the intention of having several litters per year and/or increasing their adult numbers without gaining additional experience.
- 3.5 A vote was taken and there was unanimous decision to reject the appeal.

Action: the Breeder Scheme Applicants to be informed

Office

4. Updates from DEFRA, the Canine & Feline Sector Group and/or other groups

- 4.1 SC reported that the January C&FSG meeting had been on the same day as the Board meeting, and by coincidence it was the same situation this month. However, he had asked Sue Moreland (Veterinary Officer) to attend and represent GCCF as she could contribute on the two topics to be discussed.
- 4.2 These were the economic impact of Covid 19, and that pets bought during the pandemic were now being rejected because of behavioural issues (particularly dogs).
- 4.3 He had written to bring the commercial breeding of non-pedigrees to the committee's attention and was aware that this was also the concern of several charities and rescue organisations. There were also the scams when a breed name was claimed for cats that from the photographs provided were obviously not of that breed. It was agreed this tied in with the need to educate the public and to collaborate on this with other organisations.
- 4.4 RF described a videoconference meeting of PAAG (pet animal advertising group) that she had attended because the first 30 minutes was a presentation by PETS4HOMES. It had made her feel extremely depressed as she had learned how it had grown rapidly (1.2 million in monthly transaction) and intended expansion into global markets. It also intended to operate payment facilities to attract more customers.
- 4.5 The one positive was that it did not want to gain the reputation of being the place to go for substandard animals and was therefore willing to work with organisations such as the KC to provide links to breed information. This offered an entry point for contact with GCCF.
- 4.6 SC reported that transport times for cats and dogs were under consideration, but this would not impact on shows. There was also discussion on puppies and kittens not being imported or exported before 6 months of age. The Chair gave his personal experience of successful travel once all vaccinations had been completed.
- 4.7 There were problems when travelling between Europe and Ireland because the UK had third country status. It was hoped the government would liaise with the EU to improve this as it meant a long period of planning. This would have a direct impact on Irish shows.
- 4.8 Compulsory microchipping for cats would probably go ahead, but there was no time scale at present. **INFO**

BD4064

CLUB & BAC MATTERS

1. Update on club returns

- 1.1 There were two club returns notified at the FC meeting in February and since then there had been just one more.
- 1.2 SH reported that the Office would be contacting all club secretaries and treasurers on 1 March to give a reminder that the club returns were due by 1 May.
- 1.3 She anticipated that there could be difficulties in obtaining examined show accounts. **INFO**

2. Terms & conditions for the North West CC becoming active again

- 2.1 The Chair reported on the recommendations that had been put together by FC (FC891.3) in order to ensure there was a genuine attempt to restart the club rather than just a group of people looking for funding to hold a show. In addition to the five conditions listed, he reported that there had been a limit of £4000 set initially, with the other half of the money released only after assessment of the club's progress.
- 2.2 A vote was taken on the terms, plus the limited release of funds, and both were agreed unanimously. **INFO**

3. Cancellation of club subscriptions and delegate fees

- 3.1 A proposal that clubs should not pay their delegate fees and subscriptions had been sent for the March Council agenda. The Chair reported that he had not accepted this, and two other club proposals received earlier, as he wanted to keep the agenda of the first meeting as short as possible, and there were several proposals to deal with the electoral process if there could be no June Council meeting in London. Also, he was aware that the documents for the club returns were already in circulation.
- 3.2 There was comment that doubtless it would have some instant appeal to clubs, as any offer of money was always popular, but clubs should be supported by their members if they needed it, rather than GCCF, and if that support wasn't there it put a question mark on their continued existence. It was noted that five clubs had written in support of the proposal.
- 3.3 It was noted that if clubs had suffered financially in 2020 then allowing the non-payment of subs and fees would not provide the most effective relief. The clubs with low membership, who probably did not send a delegate to Council would benefit by just £15, whereas clubs with considerable greater reserves and loyal membership support, with two or three delegates, would retain substantially more to add to their bank account. There had to be a better way of targeting assistance.
- 3.4 Also, at present much was speculation. A comparison needed to be made between the 2019 and 2020 returns to assess losses and where these had occurred. Collectively the clubs held over £1.5million, but there could be a particular reason for support in a few cases.
- 3.5 It was agreed that there would be no action this year, and consideration of what should happen in 2022 should be based on factual evidence.
- 3.6 It was concluded that club finances, membership and continued functionality could be a good topic for a survey and/or focus group webinar. Possibly, special meetings between club officers and the Board could be held.

Action: brief announcement to be drafted to inform clubs

JL/Chair

BD4065 DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

1. **Rules of The Ocicat Club - referral from IC - response from the club**
- 1.1 The club had written to decline taking up the generic rules without further information. However, the Board felt it was not in a position to provide this with any accuracy as it had not been involved in the IC/DC process and had only a general outline. The adoption of the generic rules would have covered any problem.
- 1.2 It was agreed that the letter should be passed to IC to ascertain whether the additional information requested could be provided.
- 1.3 The club would be informed of this and there would be a check to see if they had made changes to their disciplinary rules since 2012 since IC had specified this had not been done, in spite of the recommendation from DC and AC.

Action: letters to IC and TOC

JL

2. **Request from DC to increase fines**
- 2.1 DC had again asked that the level of fines should be increased via a Byelaw change from £1000 to £4000, because of the increase in the price of kittens and to take account of multiple offences.
- 2.2 The Board was reluctant to propose further increases, preferring first that increases should be made to costs. It was thought preferable that people committing multiple offences, particularly in connection with welfare, should be disqualified.
- 2.3 It wasn't thought that the level of fines acted as a deterrent.

Action: a letter DC

JL

3. **Revisions to Fixed Penalties**
- 3.1 Revision had been made to nine fixed penalties.
- 3.2 Three allowed time for breeders/owners to supply information in advance of a fine being imposed, and three others allowed for an official warning in advance of a fine.
- 3.3 There was a deletion in respect of smoking whilst handling cats and the remainder had amended wording.
- 3.4 A vote was taken and all were agreed.

4. **Comment from IC - contract & name changes**

- 4.1 IC had advised that the use of a specimen contract could put GCCF at some financial/legal risk as the GCCF did become involved in contract disputes, and having a sample could be considered an endorsement of this particular contract.
- 4.2 It was observed that it been published for many years, and was thought to have been produced by Sara Coate (previous GCCF solicitor). IC had not made any previous comment nor linked it to any specific problem.
- 4.3 It was thought that a disclaimer would be sufficient, similar to the statement in the rules (Section 1:3e) relating to a stud contract. However, this would be checked with the current solicitor, and IC would also be asked if there was any specific cause for concern.

Action: a letter to IC and the solicitor (via the Office)

JL

- 4.4 IC had also advised that name editing on Phoenix allowed any user to change their name from their online profile. This had recently caused a problem as changes had been made by a user involved in a complaint. As reasons for name changes were rare it was requested that the function of 'edit name' was removed and changes should be made only via a request to the Office.
- 4.5 Ian Macro had been consulted and advised that this was easily done. Input had to be allowed when a new profile was being established, but could then be fixed.

Action: instruction to IM to carry out the request

JL

BD4066 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. The possibility of employing someone suitably qualified with special responsibility for welfare was put forward for future discussion at the next HR meeting.

DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING Friday, 26 March 2021 at 11am

The meeting finished at 4.48pm.