



## **Guidelines for Club Rules**

The **Board** advise that when considering club rules, they are not prepared to accept the use of existing rules from another club as a precedent. This is because such rules may have been altered since being approved by the Committee.

It is recommended that the following be taken into account when preparing or revising club rules.

### **1. GENERAL**

- a) Avoid confusion by being clear, not ambiguous. Keep wording simple, avoid complex sentences.
- b) Rules should be set out clearly, with clear section headings and should be numbered or lettered in appropriate sections for ease of reference.
- c) As Non Profit Making organizations Cat Clubs are exempt from being required to register under the Data Protection Act 1988 – it is recommended that the Club Aims include the fact that it is a non profit making organization. The Club must still comply with the Act with regard to personal information which it may hold.

### **2. RULES WHICH MUST BE INCLUDED**

- a) To comply with the GCCF Byelaws Article 4: Rules must provide that in the event of membership being granted, the Council shall have disciplinary powers according to its Constitution over the Club and members thereof.
- b) To comply with the GCCF Byelaws Article 5: The rules of all Member Clubs shall include a rule requiring that any member (including life and honorary members) suspended under Article 12 of the Byelaws and wishing to rejoin after expiration of the suspension, must apply to the Club Committee for re-instatement

### **3. NAME**

- a) Area breed clubs are not permitted. If a club wishes to be affiliated as a breed club, the Club name may be “area” (eg East Anglia Colourpoint Cat Club) but the rules must not restrict membership, election to committee or venues for meetings to any particular area.

### **4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- a) Breed clubs should include setting of or amending SOP's registration policies, judges etc to be achieved by referring proposals to the relevant BAC or appropriate joint body.
- b) Should include mention of cat welfare and of providing guidance for members.



## **Guidelines for Club Rules - Continued**

### **5. OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE**

- a) President and Vice President state how they are appointed and for how long.
- b) Committee rules must state specific number on committee ("up to" or "not more than" are not acceptable). State whether officers are part of or in addition to this number.
- c) Officers, committee members and BAC representatives (if applicable) state how they are elected. Also clarify which positions constitute the Officers.
- d) Delegate(s) (if applicable) must be elected by postal ballot of all members or at the AGM. Rules should state which procedure is to be adopted.
- e) State terms of office for officers try to avoid them all retiring at the same time. Chairman/Treasurer, Vice-Chairman/Secretary are good pairings if more than one is to retire at a time.
- f) State term of office for committee members or how many to retire each year.
- g) Co-options to fill vacancies are only until the next AGM, when they must stand for election to continue on the committee. Co-opted members filling vacancies have voting rights: "extra" co-options do not.
- h) Define the powers of the committee.

### **6. FINANCE**

- a) Rules should state that funds must be deposited in an account(s) in the name of the club.
- b) Rules should state that cheques, over a certain value, must be signed by two out of three officers, or named people, one of whom will usually be the Treasurer. It is not advisable to specify one must be the Treasurer as difficulties can arise if the treasurer is incapacitated or leaves suddenly. If two officers live at the same address, cheques must be signed by someone from a different address.
- c) It is usually better if the financial year is the same as the calendar year.
- d) Do not use the terms audited or auditor. "Examined by an independent person" is the suggested phrase. Audited and auditor require that a qualified auditor carries out the audit and this can be expensive.
- e) The Rules must state that this independent person is to be appointed by members at the AGM.



## **Guidelines for Club Rules - Continued**

### **7. MEMBERSHIP**

- a) Clubs are strongly recommended not to give reasons for refusal of membership.
- b) State that members expelled from the club have the right of appeal to the membership within a reasonable period of time. Define the appeal procedure. Waiting until the next AGM may be too long. The member expelled must be given a reasonable length of time to prepare their defence and always be given a fair opportunity to attend said meeting.
- c) Include a rule re GCCF suspension and re-election to the club – see GCCF Byelaws Article 5(2).
- d) Specify classes of membership, i.e. Ordinary, Life etc
- e) Specify how subscription rate are set and payment deadlines.
- f) Define re-entry requirements for late payments or lapsed members.
- g) Define election procedure Honorary Members. Make it clear that Honorary Members have no voting rights.

### **8. MEETINGS**

- a) Sufficient notice of meetings must be given – suggested 4 weeks.
- b) AGM – set a specific date for receipt by secretary of nominations, items, etc for AGM agenda. “x” weeks before meeting is not suitable as how will members know when the meeting is to be before they get the agenda? If date of AGM is advised in a notice circulated to members, sufficient time must be given, say minimum of 4 weeks, for the members to respond.
- c) SGM – sufficient notice must be given to all members, stating the business to be conducted. No other business can be dealt with at such a meeting, except defrayment of costs. Include a statement in the Rules that responsibility for defrayment of costs will be decided by the members at the meeting.
- d) AGM quorum should be at least one more than the number of committee members attending, but not too high otherwise it may be difficult to get sufficient members to attend.
- e) Quorum for committee meetings should normally be 50% of voting committee members plus 1, including officers.
- f) State how many officers are required to be present as part of the quorum at meetings.



## **Guidelines for Club Rules - Continued**

### **9. VOTING**

- a) Rules must make clear whether the Chairman has a casting vote or a personal vote only but must not have both.
- b) For voting at meetings, the usual phrase is “members present and voting” e.g. changes to rules require a two-thirds majority of members present and voting”.
- c) State method of voting at AGM; in person or by postal ballot.

### **10. ALTERATION TO RULES**

- a) Proposed new rules or amendments to existing rules must be clearly stated on the AGM agenda, which must be sent to all members.
- b) Notice of rule changes must allow sufficient time for members to consider. It is suggested 4 weeks notice is reasonable.
- c) Traditionally rule changes require a two-thirds majority.

### **11. TROPHIES**

- a) It is preferable to state that ownership of donated trophies passes to the club. This is to avoid dispute if donor wants them back, or club wishes to re-assign them.

### **12. WINDING UP**

- a) Rules to state that this shall be decided by a ballot of all members (preferable) or a Special General Meeting.
- b) Two-thirds majority of the club membership is generally required for dissolution.
- c) Disposal of funds and trophies to be defined in the rules.

End of Guidelines