

GCCF Breeders Scheme review – Terms of Reference (TOR) for discussion, input and feedback at January Board meeting

Background and Context (A problem statement /the exam question to be answered)

GCCF Breeders Scheme (BS) was started in 2013 with the intention of putting the welfare of cats at the forefront as well as giving some confidence to new owners of kittens/ cats that the animals they were getting were from breeders aiming at best practice in all respects, by working with and adhering to an enhanced Code of Ethics.

Since its launch, and even more increasingly over the past 12 months during covid, it is felt that the BS required updating, to ensure the assurances committed to are actually being followed at the outset and throughout the period of membership.

A Working Group to review and propose revisions was given the go ahead in December 2020. This TOR sets out the “who, what, where and how” - high-level objectives, who will be involved and times line to achieve this.

Objectives (A high-level solution statement)

Outline options to bring the BS up to date and recommend a preferred option.

Consideration should be made, amongst others, of :

- Revision to the existing scheme
- A brand-new scheme
- Potential different levels of “breeder” status dependant on experience etc
- A certification method by objective assessment to quality assure what breeders are saying in their application or indeed on an ongoing yearly/ every 2-year basis
- A way to encompass and potentially mentor or advise new breeders to agreed standards of best practice for the health and welfare of cats and kittens.

Inputs:

- Existing scheme and background – BS document, application form etc
- Critique of pros and cons of existing scheme including any feedback – the good, the bad, the ugly
- Research of similar schemes in other Cat registration bodies – TICA , FIFE, WFA ???
- Input from the Kennel Club - similar aims re responsible breeding

Outputs

- Options / proposals and a recommendation for a scheme going forward
- A suggested implementation plan and timescales

Who will be included in the Group:

- GCCF Board Members
 - Peter Williams
 - Hilary Dean
 - Rosemary Fisher
 - Jen Lacey
 - Lisa Robinson-Talboys
- Experienced/ trusted breeders
- The GCCF Veterinary Officer

- Others - open to suggestions and discussion: diversity of background and views will help to think out of the box and challenge ourselves in a good way respecting each other's differences

High-level timescales of the process of the project

- Research phases - 4-8 weeks
- Solution design of a proposal - 4-8 weeks
- Socialisation. review and refinement
- Presentation at Council and before this, updates at Board on a monthly basis just to say if we are on track and test the direction of travel - would it be realistic to present at June Council meeting for input and to finalise by October meeting ? (to be decided by the Working Group)

Governance and reporting

- Working Group meetings - once every 3 weeks / 2 week? – short sharp and well chaired meeting to review progress and key outputs – 30 mins ? to be agreed by the Working Group as how they can work best given other commitments
- High level Status report to Board at each Board meeting
- Progress report at Council meetings and approval of direction of travel and final output

Risks and issues – these will all be worked with mitigation actions, owners and timescales

- Complexity of subject matter and amount of work involved
- Perception that breeders are GCCF endorsed/ recommended and any potential come back
- Finance – large initial outlay and annual upkeep for an accredited scheme, but if this is considered too expensive it could be that dedicated staff time is needed for consistency in organisation, administration and monitoring to improve the in-house scheme.

Next steps

- Agree TOR with Board members involved (not yet completed)
- Sent to rest of Board for comment, input and refinement
- Present at Council meeting in March ? or commence actions below before hand and be proactive and communication before hand to delegates explaining the imperative to commence asap ?
- Recruit / offers of interest from others to be involved
- Start work