



BYELAWS

REVISION 22 - FEBRUARY 2024

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE CAT FANCY - BYELAWS

The following document was based on the original constitution of The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy and approved by the Council on 23rd February 1972.

This was revised in line with the change in status to a Company Limited by Guarantee in March 2011. The use of the terms Board of Directors & Member Clubs were unified through the document following Council agreement to the change to the Member Clubs requirements on 27 June 2012.

1. NAME

The company is The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy (hereinafter referred to as 'the` Council').

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Council shall be to protect the welfare of cats and the interest of cat owners generally, to improve cat breeding, to provide for the registration of cats and cat pedigrees, to classify cat breeds, to approve cat shows, to exercise disciplinary powers and to procure to be written and printed, published, issued and circulated gratuitously or otherwise any such reports or periodicals, books, pamphlets, leaflets or other documents as may be determined by the Council.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Eligible Members of the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy Ltd shall be the clubs and societies affiliated to GCCF at the time of its incorporation, who made a membership application to the company; and those clubs and societies who have satisfied the requirements for membership subsequently and been approved by Council. Members shall be entitled to appoint representatives (hereinafter called "the delegates") to speak and vote on their behalf at General Meetings of the Company (hereinafter called "Council Meetings"). The National Cat Club shall be entitled to appoint FOUR delegates. Each other Member Club shall be entitled to appoint one delegate, an additional delegate if its membership exceeds 200 members and a further delegate if its membership attains 500 or more. The Council shall grant representation to the following Clubs by virtue of their historical association whatever their membership shall be: - (Amended 27.06.12/effective 27.06.12)

1. Black and White Cat Club
2. Blue Persian Cat Society
3. Chinchilla, Silver Tabby and Smoke Cat Society
4. The Red, Cream, Tortoiseshell, Tortoiseshell and White, Blue Cream and Brown Tabby Society
5. Short-Hair Cat Society (of Great Britain and Manx Club inc.)
6. Abyssinian Cat Club
7. Siamese Cat Club

Note: Any club (other than those listed above) whose membership falls below 60 members (Area Club) or 20 members (Breed and Specialist Clubs) for two consecutive years (in which it has been possible for clubs to hold shows) will be subject to discussion with a panel of Board/FC members to review its viability, so that assistance and support can be provided if the club wishes to continue). (Amended (25.02.23)

4. REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

No Club may be a Member of both the GCCF and any other organisation whose activities include the registration and/or licensing or holding of shows for pedigree cats.

To be eligible to apply for full membership a Club, Association or Society (hereinafter a Club) must:

1. have at least 50 paid up ordinary and life members as verified by the club's last examined accounts, with the exception of a breed club for a new breed which as the sole club for that breed should have at least 20 members, (amended 13.2.19)
2. in its Rules provide that in the event of Membership being granted, the Council shall have disciplinary powers according to its Byelaws over the Club and the members thereof, and,
3. have been in existence for a minimum of 3 years, and,
4. have provided three (3) years of Annual Returns to the GCCF in accordance with Byelaw 5 clauses 3a) to 3c). and,

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5. have completed the application form.

If these requirements are fulfilled to the satisfaction of the GCCF Board it will recommend Membership to Council at the next meeting.

The Board shall, at its sole discretion, confirm the designation of the club as a:

- a. Breed Club,
- b. Area Club or,
- c. Special Interest Club specified.

The Board shall present the application to Council who may, at its discretion, grant Membership to the applicant Club. Once Membership is confirmed, the Club may send a delegate to participate in the next Council Meeting. Prior to Membership, Clubs may send a representative to Council Meetings to observe.

If requirements 1 and 2 are met, but not 3 and 4, the club may apply for Provisional Membership. Having completed an application form for Provisional Membership the application will be processed by the Board and Council in the same manner as Full Membership applications.

Provisional Member clubs are not eligible to send a delegate to Council Meetings but are welcome to attend as observers.

The duties of Member Clubs (Byelaw 5) apply to Provisional Member Clubs with the exception of those pertaining to delegates.

(Amended 27.06.12/effective 27.06.12)

5 DUTIES OF MEMBER CLUBS

- (1) By the first day of May each year (or the first working day thereafter), a Member Club shall remit to the Council Office a membership fee on a per capita basis of membership at a rate from time to time in force. In addition, the Member Clubs shall be required to pay a fee at a rate from time to time in force for each appointed delegate. (Amended 18.2.04, 29.10.22)
- (2) Each club with full membership may elect a delegate or delegates to represent itself the Member Club at Council Meetings. Except in the first year of representation, delegates shall be elected by postal ballot of all members of the Club or at the Annual General Meeting of the Member Club and shall serve one year but shall be eligible for re-election subject to the Rules of the Member Club concerned. A Member Club with one delegate may elect and nominate to the Council a substitute delegate, and a Club with two or more delegates may elect and nominate to the Council a maximum of two substitute delegates. A substitute delegate of a Member Club may attend Council Meetings in the unavoidable absence of an elected delegate of that Club. Paperwork shall be supplied by the Council Office only to the nominated delegates and it is the responsibility of the Club to forward paperwork to substitute delegates if required. If any delegate should die or resign, or otherwise vacate his/her seat at Council Meetings the Club concerned shall be entitled to elect or appoint, in such manner as the Club decides, another delegate to fill the vacancy so caused. (Amended 22.6.05, 29.10.22)

A delegate so elected or appointed shall hold office until the next Electoral meeting.

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 Constitution and wishing to re-join after expiration of the suspension, must apply for re-election to the Club Committee.

- (3) Every Member Club shall send to the Council Office by the 1st May (or the first working day thereafter) in any year: -
 - (a) A copy of the accounts of the Club which have been examined and signed by a suitable independent person for the previous year in the form of an Income and Expenditure Account with a supporting Balance Sheet, including an analysis of the subscription income and a statement of paid-up members including life members. There should be a note to state when, and in what form (paper and/or electronic), the club and show accounts will be made available to the club membership. (Amended 15.06.16, 29.10.22)

(Note: 'Previous year' in this context means the Club financial year completed prior to 1st May.) (Amended 18.2.04)

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- (b) The names of the Officers and Members of the Committee of the Club for the current year, none of whom may be an officer or committee member of any non-member organisation whose activities include the registration and/or licensing or holding of shows for pedigree cats, without the prior consent of the Board. (Amended 23.2.00; 20.6.01)
- (c) An up-to-date copy of the Club's Rules or if no alterations have been made since the last return, a statement to this effect.
- (d) The name of the Club's delegate or delegates and any substitute delegate or delegates for the next Council year which shall run from 1st June each year. Amended 22.6.05/effective 1.1.06)

*If any Member Club fails to submit the returns information listed above (a-d) and/or has not paid its fees the Club shall not send a delegate or delegates to the Council until all paperwork (a-d) and fees have been received. Member Clubs who have a problem completing the returns paperwork for any reason should inform the Board in writing prior to May 1st for an extension. Those that do not and have to be contacted in order to obtain all or part of the listed paperwork will not be entitled to nominate officers or committee members for Council's Electoral meeting and their delegate(s) will not be entitled for nomination to these positions. (Amended 24.02.2016, 29.10.22).

- (4) Every Member Club shall comply with the requirements of the Articles of Association and the Rules and Byelaws; any failure to do so shall make the offending Club liable under the Council's Disciplinary powers to all or any of the appropriate penalties provided for in Byelaw12(2). (Amended 18.2.04)
- (5) Member Clubs whose members agree to close (wind up the affairs of) the club according to the terms stipulated within the club's rules must notify the GCCF Office of the date of the decision. Such notification to be date stamped on receipt. From this date the club ceases to be a Member Club of GCCF and loses all benefits of membership regardless of any pre-paid subscriptions and/or fees. (Added July 2022)

6 DUTIES OF DELEGATES

Subject to Byelaw 12(4) the only official publication of the deliberations and decisions of the Council shall be that issued by the Council Office with the approval of the Chair.

A Delegate may be a Delegate of only one Member Club at a time.

A Delegate may not be an officer or committee member of any unaffiliated/non-member organisation whose activities include the registration and/or licensing or holding of shows for pedigree cats, without the prior consent of the Board of Directors. (Amended 23.02.00, 20.06.01, 18.02.04).

7 POWERS OF THE COUNCIL

The Honorary Officers of Council shall itself or through its Committees properly appointed have the following powers in addition to all other powers vested in it by the Articles of Association, Company Law or by these Byelaws: -

- (1) To deal with the property belonging to and vested in the Council together with the finances of the Council, including full power to mortgage charge or use the property of the Council as a security for the purposes of obtaining any loan or mortgage which the Council shall from time to time authorise.
- (2) To make and amend Rules for the Registration and Exhibition of cats.
- (3) To grant licences for Shows and Exhibitions of cats to be held under the auspices of the Council and to charge such fees therefore as the Council may from time to time decide.
- (4) To make such awards at such Shows and Exhibitions as it shall deem fit.
- (5) To keep a register of the pedigrees of cats and kittens.
- (6) To issue certificates of pedigrees of cats and kittens in its register.
- (7) To issue a Stud Book whenever necessary as ordered by the Council.

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- (8) Upon the motion of the Board of Directors to recognise breeds of cats and allot breed identification names and numbers for registration and show purposes and to approve standards of points by which the various breeds shall be judged.
- (9) To appoint such Committees in addition to those detailed in Byelaw 11 as it thinks fit and to delegate thereto such powers as it considers proper, subject to the provisions of these Byelaws.
- (10) To exercise disciplinary powers in accordance with these Byelaws.
- (11) To disaffiliate any Club not conforming to Articles of Association, Byelaws or to any Rule made by the Council.
- (12) To engage a Solicitor or Solicitors or other person or persons of specialist knowledge, honorary or otherwise.
- (13) To issue to the Press such information and/or notices as it may deem desirable.
- (14) To require any Member Club to amend any of its rules if in the opinion of the Council this is necessary in the interests of the Fancy or its objects.
- (15) To establish and monitor a scheme for judge training through 10 Judge Progression Groups. A single JPG will operate for each of the show sections 1,3, 5 and 6 and there will be three for Sections 2 and 4; one for each of the Section's Grand Groups. These Groups will be responsible for appointing Pupil Judges, overseeing their training and recommending them for promotion on satisfactory completion of the Council approved programme. To ensure consistency throughout all GCCF show sections this will include: constitutional and operational procedures for the committees and groups, a detailed training and monitoring programme for judges, financial regulations, a complaints and appeals process and any other requirements as approved by Council. (Amended 17.06.2015, 23.2.00, 20.6.01, 20.02.02, 13.03.2021, 24.2.24.)
- (16) The list of appointments to Pupil Judge, and promotions to Full Judge, inclusive of extension, time out, reinstatement and Emeritus List transfer proposals will be published on the GCCF website on a weekly basis to include the following information: Judge Progression Group or committee (panel) of judges making the recommendation, the judge's name and list status (Full or Pupil Judge). A full list of these will be provided to delegates at each Council meeting and be recorded in the meeting minutes. (Amended 24.2.24)
- (17) To remove judges on a proper cause being shown by the relevant Judge Progression Group, or when information is received by the GCCF Office of a judge withdrawal by personal choice and/or inability to continue with judging engagements. (Amended 24.2.24)
- (18) To arrange for the hearing by the Appeals Committee of any appeal against a decision of the Disciplinary Committee.
- (18) To set up a committee (panel) of judges to consider the recommendation of candidates to Council for appointment as judges at the request of the Disciplinary Committee or the Appeals Committee. (Amended 24.2.24)

8 OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS OF COUNCIL

Original 1 relating to Trustees deleted

- (1) (a) The Honorary Officers of the Council shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair and such other Honorary Officers (including a President and up to four Vice-Presidents) as the Council may from time to time decide. With the exclusion of the President and Vice-Presidents, the Chair, Vice-Chair and such other honorary officers as Council may decide shall be eligible to be directors and shall be known collectively as the Board of Directors (also referred to as the "Executive Committee").
 - (b) The President and Vice Presidents shall hold office until death or resignation unless removed from office by a resolution of Council.
 - (c) The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected from amongst the delegates or Honorary Officers. On election as Chair or Vice-Chair a delegate shall cease to be a delegate. (Amended 26.02.2014)

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- (d) The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected for a term of three years by a paper or electronic ballot. Should there be more than two candidates for the office of Chair or Vice-Chair a primary ballot shall be held to reduce the number of candidates to the two gaining the greatest number of votes and the final ballot shall be between these two persons. (Amended 26.02.2014, 24.06.23)
- (e) The Chair shall not be entitled to vote except where the votes for or against a proposal are equal when he shall have one vote. The Vice-Chair shall have one vote unless acting as Chair, in which case he or she shall not be entitled to vote except where the votes for or against a proposal are equal when he shall have one vote.
- (f) The Chair and Vice-Chair may resign their term of office at any time and a new election held at the next AGM or under the requirements of a request for an SGM. The new appointment(s) will be for a term of three years. Neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair shall be eligible for re-election if this would result in their remaining in the same office for more than three consecutive years. At the completion of their term of office the Chair and the vice-Chair, if not elected Chair, shall be eligible to remain as an independent delegate for one further year with full voting and electoral rights without having to be a delegate for a member club. (Amended 26.02.2014)
- (g) If the office of Treasurer, if one is appointed, shall at any time become vacant, the accounts of the Council shall be examined immediately. (Amended 1.6.02, 18.2.04; 22.6.05, 26.10.11)
- (2) (a) The Chair and/or Vice-Chair together with one or more members of the Board of Directors may appoint a Manager of the Council Office and a Treasurer, whose responsibilities, remuneration, if applicable, and conditions of service shall be determined by the Board of Directors. The Manager of the Council Office, with the approval of the Chair on behalf of the Board of Directors, may appoint other office staff.
- (b) An officer of Council may not be an officer, committee member, official, judge, show manager or functionary of any unaffiliated organisation in the United Kingdom whose activities include the registration and/or licensing or holding of shows for pedigree cats, without the prior consent of the Board of Directors.

9 MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

- (1) The Council shall meet three times a year or more often if required. The Annual General Meeting shall be held as soon after 1 June each year as is practical and shall be called the "Electoral Meeting". Any meeting may be held by videoconference if it is the wish of the majority of the delegates. All dates to be fixed by the Chair. The Chair shall have powers to direct that a meeting of any Council committee or sub-committee take place within one month. An additional meeting shall be called whenever the number of agenda items outstanding reaches more than six. (Amended 18.2.04, 6.11.21)
- (2) Business to be transacted at the Electoral meeting shall include: -
 - (a) Receipt of the reports of Committees and a statement of independently examined accounts relative to the preceding year. (Amended 13.03.2021).
 - (b) Election of the Honorary Officers
 - (c) Election of the Standing Committees hereinafter mentioned, with the exception of the Appeals Committee which may be elected at the meeting following the Electoral Meeting. (Amended 21.10.2015)
 - (d) Appointment of the Independent Examiner or Examiners for the ensuing year. (Amended 13.03.2021).
 - (e) Any other business specified in the notice convening the meeting or accepted by the Chair as an Emergency.
- (3) Special Meetings of the Council shall be convened by the Council Office on a request in writing made by the Chair or by not less than 15 delegates; such request shall state the business for which the meeting is convened, and no other business shall be transacted at the meeting. (Amended 18.2.04)
- (4) At least twenty-eight days' notice in writing shall be given by the Council Office to the Honorary Officers and to all delegates of all Council Meetings and of the business to be transacted thereat,

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but in the case of Special Meetings called under this Byelaw fourteen days' notice only shall be required. At the discretion of the Chair emergency items may be admitted onto the agenda. Delegates must be notified in advance by electronic circulation and at the meeting must vote to admit the item onto the agenda with a two thirds majority required. Business shall include any proposed substantive amendments (those requiring more than one sentence of addition and/or deletion) to the minutes of the previous Council meeting, or any query on meeting procedure, statements* on any item and/or queries* on previous business that are to be read to the meeting for the consideration of all who attended. Statements* and/or comments* to be read to the meeting on any published agenda item (including candidate presentations) should be sent to the GCCF Office as soon as possible for website publication and circulation to delegates via the supplementary agenda. Note: * these are to be no more than a single A4 sheet in standard print (Arial 11).

(Amended 18.02.2004, 21.02.2018, 26.02.2020, 19.3.2022)

10 PROCEDURE AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

- (1) The quorum at Council Meetings shall be thirty including Officers.
- (2) At all Council Meetings, resolutions shall be decided by a simple majority except in cases where a particular majority is required by the Articles of Association and/or Rule and Byelaws.
- (3) Any Resolution put to the vote at a physical meeting shall be decided by a show of hands of those present and voting, unless a poll, taking the form of a paper ballot is demanded by not fewer than six delegates or called for by the Chair in which case the same shall be taken at such time and in such manner as the Chair may direct. At a videoconference the electronic polling facility should be used unless the Chair directs otherwise. The Chair's declaration that a resolution submitted to a show of hands or on a poll has been carried or lost shall be conclusive evidence of that fact. Scrutineers (When required) shall be appointed by the Chair. (Amended 6.11.21)
- (4) Minutes shall be taken at all Council Meetings and shall be circulated to the delegates.
- (5) Subject to the Articles of Association, Company Law and the Rules and Byelaws, the Chair's decision on the conduct of business at all meetings shall be final.

11 STANDING COMMITTEES

The following Standing Committees shall be set up and shall be responsible to the Council. They shall meet as directed and Minutes shall be kept of all meetings.

- (1) Board of Directors
 - (a) The Chair and Vice-Chair ex-officio, Treasurer and one or more representatives from the Council Office ex-officio together with fifteen delegates elected by the Council at its Electoral Meeting, or by an online process as agreed by Council at its meeting prior to the Electoral Meeting. Board members shall be elected for a three-year term, with one third of their number required to stand for re-election or retire each year. The Board shall meet six times a year or more often if required. The meetings shall be held at places to be decided by the Board of Directors. Nine members (including the Chair and Vice-Chair but excluding the Treasurer and representatives from the GCCF Office) shall constitute a quorum. The Treasurer and GCCF Office representatives shall have no vote. (Amended 6.11.21)

Notes:

1. Any reserve who takes the place of a Board member no longer able to continue to serve for any reason will complete the full term of that member before needing to stand for election.
2. If one or more Board members retire prior to election, without the full term completed, the first five in any election will serve for three years, and any additional members required to complete the Board will serve the term of those they are replacing, with the higher number of votes polled determining the greater length of service if necessary.

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3. If any Board member should cease to be a delegate during the course of he elected period, then their Board position will be vacant at the next Electoral meeting. However, it is not necessary to represent the same club throughout the term of Directorship. (Amended 18.2.04; 22.6.05, 14.06.2017)
 - (b) It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to take executive action on matters which arise in connection with the day to day working of the Council. In all its actions and decisions it shall conform with the Articles of Association and the Rules and Byelaws and shall be governed by the general policies laid down by the Council.
 - (c) If it considers it necessary or desirable to do so it may refer any matter to the Council for decision. The Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors shall be circulated to the Council delegates for information. Since they are records of the proceedings of the Board of Directors they will not be subject to confirmation by the Council, and the Council may rescind, alter or amend any decisions made by the Board of Directors only if it is shown to the satisfaction of the Chair that these have been taken contrary to the provisions of Articles of Association and/or the Rules and Byelaws or contrary to policies laid down by the Council and a resolution to rescind has been duly proposed and seconded and passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.
 - (d) The following, amongst others, are matters which shall be dealt with by the Board of Directors, subject to the provisions above for reference to the Council: -
 - (i) Correspondence
 - (ii) Day to day control of the finances of the Council
 - (iii) Interpretation of and disputes arising from the Rules referred to in Byelaw 7(2) for the registration and exhibition of cats
 - (iv) Show matters including the granting of Show dates
 - (v) Any matters connected with the annual returns of Member Clubs including power to suspend any Club which fails to supply annual returns by the required date, until the necessary information has been received.
 - (vi) Preliminary examination of applications for breed or variety recognition, prior to submission to the Council. In this matter, the Board of Directors may seek the views of the Genetics Committee.
 - (vii) To appoint the staff of the Council Office and any other paid Officials of the Council (Amended 18.2.04)
 - (viii) To select Appeals Committees, as required, from the Council List of Judges). (Amended 22.6.05)
 - (ix) To arrange co-ordination of welfare and rescue services
 - (x) Setting of Byelaws and Rules with the exception of those relating to showing and registration.
- (2) Board of Management (if appointed)
- The Chair and Vice-Chair ex officio, the Treasurer (if appointed) and three members elected by the Council at its Electoral Meeting and one or more representatives from the Council Office ex-officio. Three voting members shall constitute a quorum. The Council Office representatives shall have no vote and the Chair shall not be entitled to vote except where the votes for and against a proposal are equal when he shall have one vote. The Board of Management shall have responsibility for the income and expenditure policy of the Council.
- (3) Finance Committee
- The Chair and Vice-Chair ex officio, Treasurer and one or more representatives from the GCCF Office ex-officio and five delegates elected by the Council at its Electoral Meeting, or by an online process as agreed by Council at its meeting prior to the Electoral Meeting. Four members (including the Chair and Vice-Chair but excluding the Treasurer and representatives from the GCCF Office) shall constitute a quorum. The Treasurer and GCCF Office representatives shall have no vote. The Finance Committee shall administer the income and expenditure policy of the Council. (Amended 18.2.04; 22.6.05,6.11.21))
- (4) Election procedure for the Board and Finance Committee: -
1. Nomination papers for the Board and FC must be circulated with the paperwork for the Electoral Meeting of Council.

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2. Nominations will be made to the GCCF Office either by post or electronically. Only delegates from clubs that have sent examined returns to the GCCF Office may nominate and be nominated. There can be no self-nomination.
3. A list of nominees must be made on the GCCF website as names are received throughout the nomination period. Candidates and nominators are responsible for checking a name is listed. Proof of sending will not provide proof of receipt.
4. Nominations will close 10 days before the Council meeting.
5. Each candidate for the Board and/or FC must provide a nomination statement no longer than 200 words to provide background information on their reasons for becoming a Board and/or FC Committee member and give an indication of how they will contribute to the company in the future in that role. Failure to do so will invalidate the nomination.
6. Statements must be linked to a nominee's name and can be uploaded from the time each name is published. Candidates are responsible for checking their statement is displayed on the GCCF website. Proof of sending will not provide proof of receipt.
7. There will be a deadline set for receipt of statements to allow for printing if paperwork is to be taken to a meeting.
8. Candidates whose names are presented for a GCCF Council ballot will be delegates who have been correctly nominated by another eligible delegate, and who have submitted the required statement before any specified deadline. Enquiries can be made about non-published names or statements in advance of a closing date. None will be considered once a deadline has passed. (Amended 19.3.22)

(5) Disciplinary Committee

Six suitably qualified/experienced people (bound by GCCF rules) elected by Council at its Electoral Meeting, who are not GCCF Officers, or Board, Investigation or Appeals committee members. The Committee shall elect its own Chair and shall meet as required and deliver its findings to Council. Three committee members shall form a quorum. If an impartial quorum cannot be formed from among the elected committee members the Chair shall have the power to appoint to the committee suitably qualified and experienced non-GCCF people to hear that particular case. Committee members shall be elected for a 3-year term with one third of their number retiring each year. (Amended 18.02.2015)

A Barrister or Solicitor appointed by the Council may be present at meetings to advise in matters of breaches of the Articles of Association, Byelaws or Rules or matters within Clause 12 (where admitted) the Committee may issue an advising letter to the persons or Member Club concerned subject to the right of any Member Club or person concerned to have (on demand being made within 14 days of the letter being issued) a formal hearing as provided by Clause 12 paragraph (13) of the Rules and Byelaws.

(6) Investigation Committee

This Committee shall consist of six suitably qualified/experienced people (bound by GCCF rules), not GCCF Officers, nor members of the Board, the Disciplinary, or Appeals Committee as hereinafter constituted, elected by the Council at its Electoral Meeting. Three members shall be a quorum to examine any complaint, and meetings may be actual or electronic. Committee members shall be elected for a 3-year term with one third of their number retiring each year. (Amended 18.02.2015, 19.06.19).

(7) Appeals Committee

This Committee shall consist of six suitably qualified/experienced people (bound by GCCF rules), not GCCF Officers, nor members of the GCCF Board, Investigations or Disciplinary Committees. Appeals against the decisions of the Disciplinary Committee shall be decided by a simple majority. The Committee shall elect its own Chair. Three members shall constitute a quorum. If an impartial quorum cannot be formed from among the elected committee members, the Chair

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shall have the power to appoint to the committee suitably qualified and experienced non-GCCF people to hear that particular case. Committee members shall be elected for a 3-year term with one third of their number retiring each year. (Amended 18.02.2015)

The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final. The Chair of the Disciplinary Committee (or member of that Committee appointed by him) shall be present at all hearings of the Appeals Committee but shall not speak (unless asked so to do) and shall not vote.

If so required, the Disciplinary Committee shall give in writing its findings as to the facts of any complaint heard by it. Such findings shall be presented to the Appeals Committee by the Chair of Disciplinary Committee, or another member of the Disciplinary Committee nominated by the said Chair.

In addition to hearing appeals against the judgement of the Disciplinary Committee, the Appeals Committee shall have the power to act as Arbitrator in disputes between individuals and/or organisations within the Fancy, and shall also be empowered to hear and adjudicate upon Appeals lodged under any permitted section of the Show Rules, its jurisdiction being limited only by the constitutional powers of the Council within the limits of which the decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final and shall be binding upon all the parties concerned. (Amended 26.06.13)

(8) Genetics Committee

Seven members appointed by the Board of Directors, and one invited member of the Veterinary Advisory Committee. Any five members shall constitute a quorum. The Council shall seek the advice of the Genetics Committee in all cases where application is made to the Council to give recognition to a new breed or variety. The Committee shall appoint its own Chair and Secretary and meet as required and report its findings to the Board. It will operate under the terms of reference formulated by the Board of Directors, which may be revised by the Board when necessary.

(9) Veterinary Advisory Committee

Ten members, including the Veterinary Officer(s), appointed by the Board of Directors. Three Veterinary Surgeons and one GC or Board member shall constitute a quorum. The Veterinary Committee shall advise the Council on any matter relating to the health and welfare of cats. The Committee shall appoint its own Chair and Secretary, normally meet once a year and report its findings to the Board. It will operate under the terms of reference formulated by the Board of Directors, which may be revised by the Board when necessary. (Amended 26.06.13)

(10) Substitute Committee Members

Two members of the Council shall be elected by Council as appropriate to each of its Committees as Substitute Members to fill vacancies arising from any cause whatsoever.

In the case of the Disciplinary and Appeals Committees 'vacancies' shall include absence from any meeting as the case may be.

(11) Council Committee of Judges

The Council Committee of Judges shall consist of 9 members, all of whom shall be Full Council judges of at least 3 years standing; the quorum shall be 7 members. The 9 Committee members shall be selected when required from the list of Council Judges by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall select 2 substitute committee members to attend in the case of absences. The nominees may not be members of the Investigation, Disciplinary or Appeals Committees of the Council. (Amended 23.6.04)

(12) Election procedure for the Disciplinary Committee, the Investigation Committee and the Appeals Committee. ("The Disciplinary Committees"). Applications to serve on any of The Disciplinary Committees must be received by April 30th. The details necessary to make an application will be published on the GCCF website and the names of all applicants together with their applications will be published with the agenda of the Electoral Meeting.

Members of all the Disciplinary Committees will be required to sign a code of conduct. If factual evidence is laid before the Board of Directors that a member's competence or behaviour makes them unsuitable to serve on the relevant committee then the Board may recommend to Council that the member is replaced by the first reserve. At all stages the individual will be given the right to make representations in their defence. (Added 18.02.2015)

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12 DISCIPLINARY POWERS

- (1) Any Member Club, any Breed Advisory Committee or any person who is or was, at any time, bound by Byelaws or any Rule made by the Council thereunder shall be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with the Byelaw whether or not in the case of an Member Club it was affiliated or in the case of a person he was so bound at the time of the occurrence giving rise to the liability to disciplinary action. Liability to disciplinary action will arise in respect of any of the following:

- (a) Any breach of Byelaws or of any of the Rules made by the Council thereunder and any breach of the Rules of any Member Club or Member Clubs to which such person belongs.
- (b) Any act, conduct, default or omission arising out of, connected with or relating to the keeping, breeding, exhibiting or judging of cats which is or may be discreditable or prejudicial to the welfare of cats or the interest of cat owners or the breeding or exhibiting of cats.

It shall be discreditable conduct (i) to supply or (ii) to be concerned in the supply of animals with a view to profit or gain for the purposes of scientific or other research, 'to be concerned' to include (a) acting as an agent for such supply or (b) any act leading to a profit or gain being derived from such supply.

(Paragraph 3 re pet shops rescinded 26.6.86)

The Council strongly recommends members of the Cat Fancy not to sell to pet shops because such action may lead to cats being treated in a way that would be prejudicial to the cats' welfare, so rendering themselves liable to be called upon to answer a complaint of discreditable and/or prejudicial conduct brought under Byelaw 12(1)

- (c) Any conviction by a Court of Justice of any offence against any act, statute, by-law or regulation relating to the protection, treatment or welfare of any animal or animals.
 - (d) Any act, conduct, default or omission in any way connected with cats, the Council, any Member Club or any member or members thereof or any other person or Member Club, which is or may be discreditable or prejudicial to the interests of the Council or any Member Club or to any member of any of them.
- (2) (a) It shall be the right of any person, Member Club or any Committee of the Council (hereinafter called 'the complainant') to bring to the attention of the Council Office or the Chair of the Investigation Committee any facts or matters indicating that an Member Club or any person (hereinafter called 'the defendant') may have become liable to disciplinary action as aforesaid and it shall be the duty of the Council Office or the Chair of the Investigation Committee forthwith to lay such facts and matters before the Investigation Committee. (Amended 18.2.04)
- (b) Where any such fact or matters have been laid before it the Investigation Committee shall have power to call for and it shall be the duty of every Member Club or any person mentioned in sub-Bye-Law (1) hereof to provide such further information as the Committee may consider necessary to enable it to carry out its duties under this Bye-Law. The Investigation Committee shall provide the defendant with details of the complaint and then give him an opportunity to make written representations.
 - (c) The Investigation Committee shall thereupon decide whether a prima facie case has been made out against the defendant and, if so, it shall prefer a complaint to the Disciplinary Committee and shall send to such Committee a summary of the facts and matters which were before the Investigation Committee together with a copy or summary of any representations made to it by the defendant.
 - (d) In the event that the Investigation Committee finds that no prima facie case has been made out against a defendant it may at its absolute discretion require the complainant concerned to make a contribution towards to cost of processing the complaint not exceeding £100 (one hundred pounds). Failure without good cause to pay a contribution so required shall be deemed to be discreditable conduct within the meaning of paragraph (1)(d) of this Byelaw.

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- (3) (a) Upon receipt of a formal complaint from the Investigation Committee, the Council Office on behalf of the Disciplinary Committee shall arrange to notify the defendants of the terms of the complaint and as soon as practicable thereafter of the time and place fixed for the hearing. The Disciplinary Committee shall give the defendant the opportunity of being heard before it. (Amended 18.2.04)
- (b) The Investigation Committee shall appoint one of its number or a member of an Member club to present the formal complaint before the Disciplinary Committee or shall allow the complainant to present such complaints, if he so wishes.
- (c) The Disciplinary Committee may instruct a Solicitor or brief Counsel to act or advise it on the hearing of a formal complaint.
- (d) The complainant, if required, shall attend the hearing of the formal complaint together with any witnesses who have agreed to appear to give evidence in support of the complaint. Failure to do so may render the persons concerned liable to a fine of £100 (within the meaning of Byelaw 12(4)(c)(ii)), such fine to be decided by the Disciplinary Committee at that time. (Amended 1.1.02)
- (e) All witnesses required shall be notified not less than fourteen days before the date fixed for the hearing of the formal complaint by the Disciplinary Committee and those witnesses called by the Committee of the Council aforesaid shall be paid their travelling and subsistence expenses and loss of remuneration by the Council.
- (f) If the defendant, or any other person required to do so, fails to attend a hearing the Disciplinary Committee may proceed with the hearing in such a manner as it considers appropriate, including proceeding to make findings and issue orders.
- (g) The Disciplinary Committee and the Appeals Committee may adjourn a hearing for such period and upon such terms as it considers appropriate. (Amended 6.11.21)
- (4) If the Disciplinary Committee is of the opinion that the complaint has been proved in whole or in part it shall make a finding to that effect and in that event it may make one or more of the following orders against the defendant as it considers appropriate:
- (a) If the defendant be a Member Club: Disaffiliation/Disqualification of membership.
- (b) If the defendant be a person at any time bound by these Byelaws and the Rules made thereunder:
- (i) Suspension of the defendant concerned from exhibiting at, taking part in or having connection with any Cat Show.
- (ii) Disqualification from all shows held under the Rules of the Council of all cats owned by the defendant or registered by him or owned or registered by him jointly with another or others or owned or registered in the name or names of a nominee or nominees respectively.
- No cats disqualified in accordance herewith shall be eligible to be shown during the period of such disqualification.
- (iii) Disqualification from holding office in a Member Club.
- (iv) Disqualification from being a member of the Committee of a Member Club.
- (v) Disqualification from being concerned in the management of any Show held under the Rules of the Council.
- (vi) Disqualification from officiating as a Judge at any Show held under the Rules of the Council.
- (vii) Any suspension or disqualification hereunder may be imposed for such a period or periods as the Disciplinary Committee shall order.
- (c) Any suspension or disqualification under this Byelaw 12(4) may be imposed for such a period or periods as the Disciplinary Committee shall order. During any period of suspension under Byelaw 12(4)(b)(i):

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- A) a defendant shall not represent themselves as being in any way affiliated with or connected to the Council;
- B) a defendant shall not be eligible to become a member of any Member Club, but shall nonetheless remain bound by the Rules and Byelaws of the Council;
- C) except where the Disciplinary Committee orders otherwise, the Council shall not:
 - (i) register any cat or the progeny of any cat owned by a defendant.
 - (ii) register the transfer of any cat to or from the ownership of any such defendant; or
 - (iii) register at any time the progeny of any cats that are born or conceived during the period of suspension

Provided always that the Board of Directors may in its absolute discretion allow the registration of any cat or the transfer from the ownership of such defendant where it is satisfied that not to do so would be deleterious to the welfare of the cat or would cause hardship or injury to an innocent third party who had acted at all times in good faith. Should the suspended owner be the breeder of the cat an administrative prefix will be substituted for the registered breeder's prefix, if one such is on record as part of that cat's name; and

D) a defendant shall not:

- (i) be permitted to access their GCCF account.
- (ii) procure a third party to operate a GCCF account on their behalf; or
- (iii) administer, operate or be connected to the GCCF account of any other person bound by the Rules and Byelaws of the Council.

For the avoidance of any doubt, during any period of suspension or disqualification a defendant shall remain bound by the Rules and Byelaws of the Council. (Amended 6.11.21)

d) In the case of any defendant

- (i) That the said defendant be censured and warned.
- (ii) Imposition of a fine not exceeding £1,000 payable in such a manner and at such a time or times as the Committee may order. Failure to comply with any order imposing of fine hereunder shall cause the defendant to be automatically disqualified and suspended under the terms of (b)(i) and (ii) hereof, or disaffiliated/disqualified as a Member as the case may be for so long as the failure to comply continues. (Amended 21.02.2018)

(e) In the case of a Breed Advisory Committee:

- a. The Disciplinary Committee may refer the decision of the Breed Advisory Committee on the appointment/promotion of a judge to the Council Judges' Committee.

- (5) Any order of the Disciplinary Committee may be made upon such terms and condition (if any) as the Committee may deem appropriate, but if notwithstanding its finding that a complaint has been proved the Disciplinary Committee is of the opinion that in all circumstances of the case no such order as aforesaid is appropriate it may make an order that no further action be taken on the complaint.
- (6) An order of the Disciplinary Committee shall take effect from the date of the order. Notice of the order shall be given forthwith to the defendant and the Council.
- (7) Any person knowingly supplying a cat to anyone so suspended in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (4)(b)(i) of this Byelaw shall be liable to disciplinary action hereunder.
- (8) An appeal may be made from any finding of the Disciplinary Committee to the Appeals Committee upon any point of law or procedure or against any order or finding made by the Disciplinary Committee but not a finding of fact. Notice of appeal shall be given to the Council Office within twenty-one days of such finding; any such notice shall set out in reasonable detail the ground or grounds of appeal and such ground or grounds shall not afterwards be varied except with the leave of the Appeals Committee. (Amended 18.2.04)

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- (9) (a) The Appeals Committee through the Council Office shall arrange to notify the parties to the appeal of the time and place fixed for the hearing of the Appeal.
The Appeals Committee shall give the parties the opportunity of being heard.
- (b) The Investigation Committee shall appoint one of its number or a member of a club that is member of Council to appear for it on an Appeal. (Amended 18.2.04)
- (c) The Appeals Committee may instruct a Solicitor or may brief Counsel to advise it on the hearing of any Appeal.
- (10) (a) On any Appeal the Appeals Committee shall take into consideration the record of the evidence given before and the documents produced to the Disciplinary Committee on its hearing of the formal complaint but may in its absolute discretion rehear any witness called before the Disciplinary Committee and may on special grounds (as to which the Appeals Committee shall be the sole judge) admit and receive any fresh evidence which was not capable of being produced to the Disciplinary Committee.
- (b) On any Appeal the Appeals Committee may affirm, vary or rescind any order of the Disciplinary Committee including any order as to costs and may substitute any other order or orders, which the Disciplinary Committee might have made on the original formal complaint. An order of the Appeals Committee shall take effect as from the date thereof. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final.
- (c) Notice of any order of the Appeals Committee shall as soon as practicable be given to the parties and to the Council.
- (11) (a) Where the Disciplinary Committee finds a complaint against a defendant proved wholly or in part it may in addition to any order made under the provisions of this Bye-Law including an order that no further action be taken, direct that the defendant pay a sum not exceeding £1000 by way of costs.
- (b) Any such costs shall be paid within one month of the date of the service upon the defendant of the order save that subject to paragraph (c) below if notice of appeal is given such costs shall not be payable until the determination of the appeal and then subject to any order made by the Appeals Committee thereon.
- (c) Where the appeal is from an order of the Disciplinary Committee that the defendant be suspended or the defendant's cats disqualified, any costs ordered by the Disciplinary Committee shall be paid forthwith and failure so to do shall invalidate any notice of appeal which may thereafter be given.
- (d) No appeal shall lie solely on the question of costs.
- (e) Where the Appeals Committee dismisses wholly or in part any appeal it may in addition to any order made by it under paragraph (10) above against a defendant, direct that the said defendant pay a further sum not exceeding £100 by way of costs of the appeal.
- Any costs ordered by the Appeals Committee together with any costs directed to be paid by the Disciplinary Committee varied if such be the case by the Appeals Committee shall be paid within one month of the date of the order of the Appeals Committee. Failure to do so shall automatically cause a defendant Member Club to be disaffiliated/disqualified from membership and any other defendant to be suspended for such a period as the Appeals Committee shall direct.
- (12) (a) Whenever the Disciplinary Committee finds that a formal complaint has been proved in whole or in part it shall subject to paragraph (d) hereof cause its order to be published as soon as practicable in the official publication of the Council or on the Council website provided that where the Disciplinary Committee has ordered that no further action be taken on the complaint the order shall not be published unless the defendant so requests.
- (b) The Appeals Committee shall likewise cause any order made by it to be published as soon as practicable in the official publication of the Council or on the Council Website provided that if the Appeals Committee has ordered that no further action be taken on the complaint the order shall not be published unless the defendant so requests.

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- (c) Unless the Disciplinary Committee, or as the case may be, the Appeals Committee in its absolute discretion otherwise directs, any such publication shall state the name of the defendant, the substance of the complaint, and the order or orders made against such defendant, but need not include the name of any person concerned in the complaint or appeal.
 - (d) No publication under paragraph (a) hereof shall be made until after the expiry of the appeal period aforesaid and in the event that notice of appeal as aforesaid is received by the Council no publication under paragraph (a) hereof shall take place but publication shall be under paragraph (b) hereof.
- (13) (a) The Board of Directors may make provision for certain breaches falling within Bye-Law 12(1) of this Constitution or the Rules to be dealt with by way of fixed penalty. (Added 25.6.03)
- (b) The breaches in question, the fixed penalty applicable thereto and the consequences of non-payment shall be as published by the Board of Directors from time to time. The maximum level of the first fixed penalty per breach shall not exceed £250. (Added 25.6.03) (Amended 21.10.2015, Amended March 2022)
 - (c) The Investigation Committee shall decide whether a breach or breaches shall be dealt with by way of fixed penalty; such decision may be made by way of a general direction in advance or on a case-by-case basis. (Added 25.6.03)
 - (d) Any defendant upon whom a fixed penalty is imposed may, within 28 days of the date of the fixed penalty letter, request that the case be referred to the Disciplinary Committee whereupon the Investigation Committee shall prefer a complaint to the Disciplinary Committee under Byelaw 12(2)(c). (Added 25.6.03)
- (14) (a) At any hearing before the Disciplinary Committee or the Appeals Committee respectively, any complainant and any defendant may if they or any of them shall so desire, be represented by a member of the Cat Fancy other than a witness to the complaint or by a Solicitor or Counsel and paragraphs (2)(b), (3)(a), (3)(b), (8) and (9)(a) hereof shall be construed accordingly.
- (b) The Investigation Committee may instruct a Solicitor or cause Counsel to be briefed upon its behalf to advise it or to represent it at any hearing before the Disciplinary Committee or the Appeals Committee as the case may be.
- (15) In this Article unless inconsistent with the subject or context:
- (a) The masculine gender where used shall include the feminine.
 - (b) 'Hearing' in relation to a complaint or appeal shall mean a meeting of the relevant Committee for the purposes of considering a complaint or appeal and include the making of an order or finding upon or in connection with the complaint or appeal and also where appropriate include a rehearing.
 - (c) 'Order' includes any finding term or condition in consequence of which the order is made.
 - (d) 'Member Club' shall include any Member Club, Association or Society.
 - (e) 'Cat' and 'Cats' shall include kitten and kittens respectively and shall include neuters and spays respectively.

13. BYE-LAW AND RULE CHANGES

- a. The Council shall have the power to amend these Byelaws by resolution passed by a majority of two-thirds of those present and voting at a meeting of Council, of which not less than twenty-eight days' notice of the intended alteration has been given, setting out the amendments which are to be proposed. At the discretion of the Chair emergency items may be admitted onto the agenda. Delegates must be notified in advance by electronic circulation and at the meeting must vote to admit the item onto the agenda with a two thirds majority required. NB See Byelaw 9(4). Amendments to the Byelaws shall take effect immediately after they are approved. (NB As Byelaw 9(4)) (Amended 26.10.11, 19.03.22)

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- b. The Council shall have the power to amend the Rules by resolution passed by a simple majority of those present and voting at a meeting of Council, of which not less than twenty-eight days' notice of the intended alteration has been given, setting out the amendments which are to be proposed. At the discretion of the Chair emergency items may be admitted onto the agenda. Delegates must be notified in advance by electronic circulation and at the meeting must vote to admit the item onto the agenda with a two thirds majority required. NB See Byelaw 9(4). The effective date of any amendment to the Rules shall be stated as an integral part of the amendments and recorded in the minute of the decision. (Amended 26.10.11, 19.03.22)
- c. The number of those against and those abstaining shall be recorded in the minute of the decision. (Amended 26.10.11, 19.3.22.)

14. WINDING UP

If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Council there remains after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any cash or assets whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of Company, but shall be given or transferred to some other Company or Charity having objects similar to the objects of the Company, and which shall prohibit the distribution of its or their income and property.

15. STANDING ORDERS

The Council shall have powers to make Standing Orders from time to time as it may see fit and to appoint a Standing Orders Committee of which the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be ex-officio members. (Amended 18.2.04)

16. These Byelaws were approved by the Council on 02 March 2011 in substitution for and to the exclusion of the existing Constitution of the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy, except that Honorary Officers, Delegates and Officials in office on that date shall be deemed to have been elected or appointed under these Byelaws.

Amendments since 01 March 2011

26.10.11, 27.06.12, 26.06.13, 18.02.15, 17.06.15, 21.10.15, 24.02.16, 15.06.16, 14.06.17, 04.10.2017, 21.02.2018, 13.02.2019, 20.10.20, 6.11.21, 19.3.22, 17.7.22, 29.10.22, 25.2.23, 24.6.23, 24.2.24.

Most recent amendments since previous edition shown thus: **wording**

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