****

**MINUTES OF THE Agility Liaison Council MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 18 JANUARY 2024 AT 10.30AM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**PRESENT**

Ms J Bale South East/East Anglia

Mrs E Bostock South East/East Anglia

Mr A Dornford-Smith Northern Ireland

Mrs J Gardner Midlands

Ms D Tedds Midlands

Mr J Hallam South/South West

Mr M Hallam North West

Mrs S Hawkswell Scotland

Ms T Davies North East

Mrs E Laing-Kay North East

Mrs S Robinson Wales

Miss R Sargent North West

Mr M Tait South/South West

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr M Bermingham Interim Strategy & Implementation Executive (Items 1 & 2 only)

Miss D Deuchar Head of Canine Activities

Miss C McHardy Manager – Education, Training, and

Working Dog Activities Team

Ms R Mansfield Committee Secretary – Working Dog Activities Team

Ms H Byrne-Ingle Administrator – Working Dog Activities

**NOTE: any recommendations made by the Agility Liaison Council are subject to review by the Activities Committee and The Kennel Club Board and will not come into effect unless and until Board approval has been confirmed.**

**IN THE CHAIR MR M HALLAM**

1. Ms Davies and Ms Tedds were welcomed to their first meeting of the Council as newly appointed representatives for the Midlands and North East, respectively. Ms Byrne-Ingle was welcomed as the new secretary for the Council following Ms Mansfield’s change of role to Committee Secretary.

**ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. No apologies for absence had been received.

**ITEM 2. KENNEL CLUB RESEARCH PROJECT**

3. The Council received a presentation from Mr M Bermingham (Interim Strategy & Implementation Executive) which provided an update on the research project into ‘Organisers and Participants of Dog Activities’.

4. It was recognised that there were a number of questions relating to the project, however there was not adequate time to address all of them at this time. It was agreed that the presentation would be circulated to the Council and questions could be asked and answered via email.

*(****Afternote:*** *Subsequent to the meeting it had been decided that a separate meeting relating only to the research project would be arranged for council members from all disciplines to attend.)*

**ITEM 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

5. The minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

**ITEM 4. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

6. The Council noted that the Board, at its meeting on 22 November 2023, approved the following amendments to H Regulations:

Regulation H19.e

**TO:**

Judges at an agility show may not **judge** ~~enter for competition~~ a dog which is recorded in their ownership or part ownership; or handle a dog at the show/competition at which they are judging.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2024)

Regulation H27.a.(7)

**TO:**

Disqualification and forfeit of awards

A dog may be disqualified by the Board from any award whether an objection has been lodged or not, if proved amongst other things to have been;

(7): **Judged by their registered owner** **or** ~~Entered for competition or~~ handled in the ring by a judge at that competition. This shall not apply to dogs owned by a judge appointed in an emergency.

(Deletion struck through. Insertions in bold.)

(Effective dated 1 January 2024)

7. **Note:** The Activities Committee did not consider it feasible for the amendments to regulations H(1)(B)4.(2) and (4) to be effective from 1 January 2024. This was due to competitors with new dogs competing early in the year who could not be made aware of the necessity to get their dogs measured until November due to the meeting date of the Board at which the recommendations would be considered. Therefore, it agreed that a year’s grace be given to allow owners to get their dogs measured and as such the regulation amendments will not come into effect until 1 January 2025.

Regulation H(1)(B)4.(2)

**TO:**

(2) ~~Dogs competing in small, medium, or intermediate height categories~~ **All dogs** must be measured for competition and must be at least 15 months old before their first measurement. Competitors must ensure that their dog is measured prior to their first competition and that the dog's Agility Record Book has been signed and dated by the measuring officials.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2025)

Regulation H(1)(B)4.(4)

**TO:**

(4) ~~Large dogs entered for competition will not require an official Kennel Club measurement. Once a dog has competed in any Class in the Large Height category at a Kennel Club licensed event it may not change to a different height.~~

(Deletion struck through and subsequent paragraphs renumbered)

(Effective 1 January 2025)

Regulation H(1)(B)3.b

**TO:**

Wall – The height of the wall must be 600mm for Large Dogs, 500mm for Intermediate Dogs, 400mm for Medium Dogs and 300mm for Small Dogs. Width: 1.2m minimum. All central units must be easily displaced by the dog and not interlocking with the pillars. Pillars with a minimum height of 900mm must be used. **Central elements should have a uniform depth of 200mm. The wall must be constructed of an impact-absorbing material.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2025 to provide sufficient time for equipment suppliers to replace equipment)

Regulation H13 Removal of Dogs

**TO:**

Following discussion between the show management and/or a veterinary surgeon, a dog shall be prevented from competing and/or removed from an agility show if it is:

1. A bitch which is in season (apart from dogs **attending the show to compete** ~~competing~~ in quarter finals, semi-finals and finals of Kennel Club Prestige Events, other than events held under YKC rules).

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2024)

**Note:** The amendment to the above regulation was made to clarify that a bitch in season would be able to attend the whole show at which it was competing not just the event at which it was competing.

8. The Council noted that Regulation H(1)(B)5.a.(18) had been amended for clarity by the Activities Committee and the Board had approved the following wording:

Regulation H(1)(B)5.a.(18)

**TO:**

**Contact areas**

~~Contact area—5 faults for each failure to make contact.~~

**‘A’ Frame and dog walk: the dog must touch the ascending ramp. Failure to do so – elimination. The dog must touch the down contact with at least one paw or part of a paw. Failure to do so – 5 faults. The dog is considered to have left the obstacle when all four paws are on the ground.**

**See-saw: the dog must touch both the up and down contacts with at least one paw or part of a paw. Failure to do so – 5 faults each time it occurs.**

**The dog is considered to have left the obstacle when all four paws are on the ground.**

(Deletions struck through. Insertions in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2024)

9. Concern was raised that the agility community were still not clear on the correct wording for the change of regulation for marking the ‘A’ Frame and dog walk and it was requested that the wording be published on Facebook for clarity. The office agreed to action this and also noted the correct wording would appear in the minutes of the meeting. It was also noted that due to the timeframe of the change being made, it had not been possible to change the wording in the section at the back of the regulation booklets that detailed the changes made for the year. This would also be clarified in the Facebook post to inform the agility community that the regulation in the main body of the booklet was the correct one.

10. It was also raised that some competitors had not realised the regulation requiring all dogs to be measured would not come into effect until 1 January 2025. It would also only be for dogs new to competing and not currently competing dogs. However, competitors with new dogs were encouraged to get their dogs measured and not wait until the regulation came into effect.

Code of Best Practice for Agility Judges and Stewards and Guide to Agility Equipment

11. At its last meeting the Council had been advised that the document was in the process of being finalised. It noted that the final document had been published on the website at the end of 2023, however, several issues had been identified and the document had been removed from the website.

12. The office, in liaison with agility members of the Activities Committee had been working on finalising the document and it was hoped that the document would be re-instated shortly.

13. A short discussion occurred regarding ways in which situations like this could be avoided in the future and it was agreed that more effective communication was needed between the Council and the office, as well as internally within the Council to ensure comprehensive proof reading of important documents. A number of processes were discussed to ensure changes made to documents were obvious in order to make agreeing changes easier. The Council was also reminded of its collective responsibility on decisions made by the Council.

Competition Manager’s role

14. At its meeting on 21 September 2023, the Activities Committee considered the regulations for the competition manager role to be formalised in the H Regulations that the Council had proposed at its last meeting.

15. The Council noted that on considering the proposal the Committee was of the view that the idea had merit, however it did not agree that the wording sufficiently described the collaborative nature of the role. It was agreed that the agility representatives on the Committee would review the wording which would then be submitted at a future Activities Committee meeting.

Measuring Issues

16. At its meeting on 21 September 2023, the Activities Committee considered the proposed removal of regulation H(1)(B)4.(20) which would remove the opportunity for owners to move a dog into the next higher height category.

17. The Council noted that the Committee considered the regulation and was of the view that it had only recently been introduced and the impact of its implementation had not been seen, and as such it did not support the removal of the regulation.

Introduction of a Micro Height

18. An update on the above matter was provided under item 8 (paragraphs 67 – 70 refer).

Non-slip tunnels

19. An update on the above matter was provided under item 7 (paragraphs 55 – 59 refer).

Course Design

20. An update on the above matter was provided under item 9 (paragraph 82 refers).

Introduction of the yellow/red card system for conduct complaints

21. The Council noted the additional wording below which had been added to regulation H28 to introduce further regulatory support to ensure all those taking part in or attending licensed events behaved in a responsible and respectful manner.

**For complaints of conduct whether at a licensed event or on social media, in addition to a warning issued - a short term fixed period of refusal of entry/attendance at Kennel Club licensed events may also be imposed in accordance with procedures to be published from time to time to implement this regulation.**

22. The implementation of the regulation did not impact competitors or societies directly, as it was an extra penalty imposed by The Kennel Club on incidents reported. Therefore, incidents should continue to be reported in the normal manner via the incident book.

23. A query was raised as to how the new regulation would work in Scotland and whether the Scottish Kennel Club had delegated authority to apply the yellow and red cards. The office endeavoured to check with the Kennel Club Legal Team to clarify.

24. A concern was raised as to how the process for the cards would be managed and how long it would take. There was a concern that due to the timeframe of the usual complaints procedure an incident could occur that warranted a yellow or red card, but the person would not be made aware of the penalty for months.

25. The office confirmed that implementation of the new regulation would follow the standard complaint procedure and conduct matters would be considered by the Disciplinary Committee where it would decide on yellow and red card warnings. The Disciplinary Committee met regularly and were able to have ad hoc meetings, ensuring that there would be as minimal a time between reporting and outcome as possible.

26. It was also confirmed that the normal complaints process would be followed in that statements would be gathered from the complainant and witnesses which would be forwarded to the respondent for a response. Anonymous complaints would not be accepted. A concern was raised as to The Kennel Club’s duty of care to competitors who may fear exposure to repercussions due to reporting bullying or bad behaviour. However, it was explained that a person could not respond to a complaint without knowing the details of the complaint, including the other person involved.

27. The office agreed to circulate additional information which had been published in The Kennel Club Journal which would hopefully answer the Council’s questions as to the reasoning behind the introduction of the new regulation wording.

**ITEM 5. ACCREDITED TRAINERS ANNUAL SEMINAR**

28. The Council noted a written report from Mrs Gardner following the above seminar which took place on 10 October 2023.

29. Five additional accredited trainers for agility had been appointed at an assessment day on 12 September 2023 at The Kennel Club Building, Stoneleigh and were present at the Accredited Trainers Annual Seminar.

30. A number of ideas had been put forward to assist in the accredited trainers being more proactive, including a Facebook page for the trainers. The judges mentoring scheme and the continuing personal development for judges were also discussed as vital projects for progression.

31. It was queried whether any further assessment days for new agility accredited trainers would be planned or whether it was felt there were sufficient accredited trainers at the current time.

32. It was noted that due to the resignation of Mr C Huckle and Mr D Jolly from the list of accredited trainers it may be that additional trainers would be needed. It was agreed that the Activities Judges Sub-Group would be asked to consider the matter at its next meeting.

**ITEM 6. ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP**

33. The Council noted a written report from Mr Tait following the Sub-Group’s meeting on 30 August 2023.

34. There were four topics under discussion relating to agility:

* Studies on the impact of dogs moving onto the A Frame had been started and results would be shared in due course.
* A student had started research on the impact forces on dogs on the see-saw when landing in a two on two off position against a four on position. The student had been contacted to see if any support could be offered.
* Heart rate studies on agility dogs was still ongoing.
* Further studies were being carried out on extreme weather conditions to enable an advice document to be provided for events and competitors.

**ITEM 7. REPORT FROM THE EQUIPMENT PANEL**

35. The Council considered a report from the Equipment Panel. It was noted that there had not been many reports on equipment over the summer and the Equipment Panel wished to encourage people to report equipment incidents.

36. It was raised that there may still be a stigma surrounding reporting in the incident book and that it was felt that anyone reporting in the incident book would be thought of badly. It was clarified that the incident book was the correct means for reporting equipment issues as it would provide data for the office and the Equipment Panel. It was stressed that it was important for issues to be reported and it would not be seen as critical of show organisers.

Collapsible Poles

37. The Council noted that the Equipment Panel had recommended the collapsible poles available from Performance Agility and Galican for approval. A concern was raised, following the issues with the new jump cups, whether there should be a trial period for the collapsible poles to ensure there were no unforeseen issues.

38. A discussion ensued on the robustness of the equipment and what obstacles it should be used on, with the thought that it should only be used for the rising spread jump as opposed to all jumps. It was requested that the new style of pole be tested at shows, but it was clarified that it was not a legal piece of equipment and as such testing would have to be done in training environments.

39. It was agreed that the request for a trial period of the collapsible poles would be the best way forward and subsequently it was recommended to be put forward to the Activities Committee for its views.

*(Mrs Tedds left the meeting at this point.)*

Obstacles fit for purpose

40. The Council was requested to consider whether additional wording was needed to regulation H(1)(B)3 to ensure equipment was being checked regularly by equipment suppliers for degradation from extended use.

41. Feedback had been received asking whether those checks were not already happening, and a comment was made that checks should be expanded to include checking that equipment was fit for purpose with the example of the recent jump cup issue.

42. A question was raised as to who was ultimately responsible for checking the equipment; the supplier, show manager, society or judge. It was noted that the judge was ultimately responsible for their ring, however it was the society that held a contract with the equipment supplier, and that should ensure that the equipment supplier was providing equipment that was fit for purpose.

43. It was noted that there was a system already in place to report equipment issues to the equipment panel for investigation and that this was managed by the judge on the day. However, it was noted that even with repeated communication from the equipment panel to a particular equipment supplier there had been no improvement, and it was questioned how this could be progressed. It was agreed that the panel would liaise with the office to decide on a solution.

44. It was agreed that no change to the regulations was necessary to manage the issue and as such the regulation amendment was not supported.

*(Mrs Laing-Kay left the meeting at this point.)*

Long Jump

45. The Council considered whether additional wording should be added to the long jump regulation in line with the recently amended regulation wording for the wall obstacle to ensure the obstacle was as safe as possible for dogs.

46. The Council voted on whether the introduction of a soft long jump should be approved in principle, before reviewing the wording. It was agreed by a majority that there was support for the soft long jump and accordingly the Council proceeded to discuss the wording.

47. It was agreed that the wording that would be agreed should not preclude existing soft long jump equipment from being used.

48. A discussion followed on the proposed wording and what the definition of ‘impact-absorbing’ was, however it was finally agreed that the wording followed that of the wall regulation wording and that it had been agreed during the consideration of that regulation that the wording covered the intention of the regulation.

49. As such, the Council agreed to bring a formal proposal back to the next meeting.

Rising Spread Jump

50. The Panel had requested the Council discuss amending the rising spread jump regulation to add wording to ensure a consistent format of how the obstacle was set up, with different length poles for the front and back.

51. The proposed wording was as follows:

Regulation H(1)(B)3.c

**TO:**

Rising Spread Jump – A maximum of 2 single jumps as in item a-(Hurdle) placed together to form a double spread, there must be no more than 2 elements to this obstacle. The top bar on the first hurdle must be 400mm for Large Dogs, 300mm for Intermediate Dogs, 300mm for Medium Dogs and 200mm for Small Dogs. The maximum spread to be: Large Dogs – 550mm, Intermediate Dogs – 475mm, Medium Dogs – 400mm, Small Dogs – 300mm. There must be only one pole on each hurdle. The feet of the side supports (wings) should not be interlocking but touching and must not be out of line by more than 75mm.

**The highest pole must be placed at the back and 1.5m in length. The front pole must be 1.4m in length. It is recommended that collapsible/breakaway poles should be used if available.**

52. It was suggested that the last sentence of the proposed wording needed to be removed due to the discussion earlier in the meeting about the collapsible pole. It was agreed that this would be removed.

53. A question was asked as to whether the regulation should specify the dimensions of the wings rather than the pole length as there was concern about the use of ‘half-feet’ which made the jump unstable. It was clarified that the proposed lengths of the poles would remove the need for ‘half-feet’ as the full-size wings would fit comfortably beside each other.

54. The Council agreed with the wording as it stood after removing the last line. Accordingly a vote took place and the following regulation amendment was **recommended**:

Regulation H(1)(B)3.c

**TO:**

Rising Spread Jump – A maximum of 2 single jumps as in item a-(Hurdle) placed together to form a double spread, there must be no more than 2 elements to this obstacle. The top bar on the first hurdle must be 400mm for Large Dogs, 300mm for Intermediate Dogs, 300mm for Medium Dogs and 200mm for Small Dogs. The maximum spread to be: Large Dogs – 550mm, Intermediate Dogs – 475mm, Medium Dogs – 400mm, Small Dogs – 300mm. There must be only one pole on each hurdle. The feet of the side supports (wings) should not be interlocking but touching and must not be out of line by more than 75mm.

**The highest pole must be placed at the back and 1.5m in length. The front pole must be 1.4m in length.**

Pipe Tunnel

55. The Panel had requested the Council discuss changes to the regulations relating to the specification of the pipe tunnel to ensure consistency in the equipment.

56. It was clarified that equipment suppliers had been requested not to use the half non-slip tunnels after the Council’s previous meeting due to concerns about dogs receiving injuries when traversing the obstacle. It was intended that the regulation amendment would help to ensure those styles of tunnel would not be used.

57. A query was made, because there had been no regulation amendment at this point, whether equipment suppliers could still use the ‘half-and-half’ tunnels and it was pointed out that there were no dedicated equipment suppliers in Northern Ireland and as such, the request had not been actioned there.

58. It was clarified that the Northern Ireland representative was responsible for disseminating information from Council meetings, but it was agreed that the situation had been unclear as it was not a regulation. It was clarified that the ‘half-and-half’ tunnels could not be used and if there were queries, then an email should be sent to The Kennel Club.

59. The Council subsequently **recommended** amended wording of the proposal:

Regulation H(1)(B)3.i

**TO:**

Pipe Tunnel – This obstacle should have a diameter ~~of a minimum~~ of 600mm and should be a minimum of 3m in length. The tunnel may only curve in a single direction. **The inner surface of the tunnel should have the same finish throughout.**

Weaving Pole Material

60. The Panel requested the Council discuss additional wording to the weaving pole regulation to specify the construction of the equipment.

61. A query was raised whether weaving pole bases were required to have feet if the equipment could be stabilised another way, such as burying the bases. The regulation stated that the base must have support bars at the bottom of each pole and as such any alternative stabilisation was not permitted.

62. The Council was mostly in agreement with the proposed wording however queried whether it was appropriate to specify a specific material such as PVC and whether including ‘semi-flexible’ was too broad and could result in having weaving poles that were too flimsy.

63. An amendment to the proposed wording was suggested as follows:

Regulation H(1)(B)3.j

**TO:**

Weaving Poles – The number of poles should be six or twelve. The maximum number of weaves in a standard class is 12. They should be in a continuous line, as straight as possible and should be 600mm apart (between the poles). The poles must be of rigid construction and with a minimum height of 762mm and a diameter of 35mm. The base must have support bars at the bottom of each pole and they must be positioned away from the side a dog would normally negotiate each pole.

**The base must be of a rigid construction and poles must be made from a plastic pipe.**

64. A query was raised as to whether it was necessary to specify that the poles should be made from pipe, and it was agreed that this would specify that the poles should be hollow.

65. Subsequently the Council voted and **recommended** the regulation amendment for approval.

**ITEM 8.** **REPORT FROM THE AGILITY GOVERNANCE PANEL**

66. The Council considered a report from the Agility Governance Panel.

67. At the last meeting of the Council, it had been decided that the governance panel would begin to consider how a ‘micro’ height might be introduced. It was noted that the panel had considered the current situation for small dogs and looked back at the process that was followed for the introduction of intermediate height. The plan was to enter a period of data collection to establish an idea of the number of dogs that would be classed as ‘micro’ height. This would take place across currently competing dogs but also training clubs to include dogs that may not compete due to the current small height.

68. It was noted that there were other considerations in introducing a ‘micro’ height that had not applied to the introduction of intermediate, such as the rising spread, long jump and tyre obstacles. It was agreed that this would be included in the discussions by the panel though it was noted that a number of owners with ‘micro’ height dogs thought that only the jump heights were the issue. It was also requested that another suggestion to be considered could be reducing the existing small height to accommodate ‘micro’ height dogs and it was agreed that it could also be considered.

69. Other considerations were raised such as the difference between height and build of dogs and how that would impact the requirements. There was also a need to consider the grading structure again if a fifth height was introduced. The situation around championship classes and qualifiers was also raised. However, it was felt that it was too early to make any decisions on such things until more data and research had been done.

70. Therefore, it was agreed that data would be collected and the main issues that needed to be addressed would be identified and brought back to the next Council meeting. Once these were identified it would be considered whether there would be merit in asking for research from the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group.

*(Mr J Hallam left the meeting at this point.)*

71. The grading review was briefly discussed to say that the timeframe for the new grading structure was up, and work would begin on reviewing the structure. This would happen alongside the work on ‘micro’ height and data collection would take place to determine numbers in each grade and potentially the numbers within separate regions.

72. The Council went on to discuss the regulations relating to permission to hold special events and the lack of clarity surrounding when permission should be applied.

73. It was clarified that where an event was held where the qualifiers were held at the same show as the final, then this would not require permission to be held as all the dogs would be entered at that show. However, if the qualifiers for a final were held at events held throughout the year and the final held at a separate event, then permission to hold a special event would need to be applied for. It was clarified that you could not judge and compete on the same day, and this applied to a special event.

74. It was asked what the situation would be where a final was held after the closing of a show held by a different club. It was equated to the situation where two shows were held on the same day under different licences and people could judge at one show and compete at the other and vice versa. The office agreed that there was some confusion over this aspect of the regulation and would take it to the Activities Committee to clarify.

**ITEM 9.** **REPORT FROM THE JUDGING PANEL AND OTHER JUDGING ISSUES**

75. The Council considered a report from the Judging Panel. It was noted that the Code of Best Practice for Agility Judges and Stewards and Guide to Agility Equipment was in the process of being finalised as discussed earlier in the meeting.

76. Issues were still being raised regarding the number of dogs a judge was expected to judge in a day, and this was still on the list of items to consider as well as continuing personal development for existing judges. It was noted that with the appointment of new accredited trainers for agility this would help progress those items. Course design guidelines were also still being considered.

77. The topic of judging contracts was raised and whether there was a need for the contract wording in the regulations to be amended to include that a judge had to confirm they had passed the online exam. It was agreed that the topic would be put to the Activities Judges Sub-Group at its next meeting in April.

78. A brief discussion occurred on guidance for having to change the course after a class restart. It was clarified that this was covered within the Code of Best Practice which stated, ‘If a class has to be restarted from scratch the judge should make some significant change to the course so no advantage is given to the handlers and dogs who had already run in that class.’

Activities Judge Sub-Group

79. The Council went on to receive a verbal report from Mrs Gardner regarding the Activities Judges Sub-Group meeting held on 15 November 2023.

80. The resignation of Mr D Jolly and Mr C Huckle from the Sub-Group was noted. The Sub-Group had thanked them both for their hard work over the years and appreciated their valuable support. Replacements were discussed and names were put forward to the Activities Committee.

 *(****Afternote:*** *Subsequently, Miss N Jones and Mr C Harley had been approved to the membership of the Activities Judges Sub Group.)*

81. Several agility specific topics had been discussed at the meeting including mentoring of new judges and continuing personal development (CPD) for existing judges. The accredited trainers for agility would look into improving the current mentoring scheme and look at ways CPD could be improved, including developing more resources on The Kennel Club Academy.

82. It was queried whether the Activities Judges Sub-Group had discussed guidance for judges on setting grade appropriate courses. Mrs Gardner confirmed it was not a topic that had been discussed by the Sub-Group and agreed to bring it to accredited trainers to discuss.

 **ITEM 10. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS**

Proposed amendment to Regulation H(1)(B)5.a.(5)

83. The Council considered a proposal from Mr G Usher to amend the regulation relating to the marking of the hurdle/wall to account for situations where a dog dislodged the cups, but the pole did not fall to the floor.

84. There was no seconder for the proposal and as such the matter was not discussed.

Proposed amendment to Regulations H(1)11.e & H(1)(D)9.e

85. Ms Bostock wished the Council to consider a proposal to amend the regulations relating to food being given to a dog in the ring to include carrying food into the ring.

86. Ms Bostock explained that while it was not permitted for competitors to give their dogs food whilst they were in the ring there were a growing number of people carrying food to the start line which presented the possibility of food being dropped on the start line, thereby affecting dogs competing in the ring afterwards.

87. A brief discussion followed, noting that there had been some confusion over the suggested amendment to H(1)(D)9.e and whether it was being applied to all classes at a limited show. It was clarified that H(1)(D)9.e only applied to special classes at a limited show, while H(1)11.e would cover all other classes regardless of the level of show.

88. Mrs Hawkswell seconded the proposal and following the clarification, the Council **recommended** the following amendments for approval:

Regulation H(1)11.e

**TO:**

e. Except for mobility aids, nothing shall be carried in the hand while the dog is under test and food shall not be **carried in the hand or** given to a dog whilst in the ring. Competitors are prohibited from wearing bags or leads whilst under test – elimination.

(Insertion in bold)

Regulation H(1)(D)9.e

**TO:**

e. Silent toys may be used in the ring, at the discretion of the organisers, but must be used with consideration for other competitors. Except for mobility aids or silent toys, nothing shall be carried in the hand while the dog is under test and food shall not be **carried in the hand or** given to a dog whilst in the ring – elimination.

(Insertion in bold)

Overseas measurements

89. Mr Dornford-Smith wished the Council to consider an amendment to Regulation H(1)(B)4.(2) which would make it mandatory for all dogs coming from overseas to compete at UK Kennel Club licensed shows to be measured under the UK Kennel Club measuring system.

90. It was clarified that currently dogs coming to the UK would compete at the height they competed at in their home country. It was also noted that UK dogs were not required to be measured when competing abroad.

91. A lengthy discussion occurred about the matter, and it was clarified that the primary concern was dogs that competed in the Republic of Ireland under IKC rules with an IKC measurement as well as in Northern Ireland. There were some dogs that had started the measuring process in Northern Ireland under the UK measuring process but had then chosen to get their dog remeasured in the Republic of Ireland to compete at that height in the UK. It was noted that dogs that had started the UK measuring process would be required to compete at their UK height in UK competitions. They would also be required to complete the measuring process.

92. It was agreed that there was work to be done on the proposed wording but that it was an issue that needed resolving. Due to the complexity of the topic, it was agreed that the proposal would be deferred and brought back to the next meeting and the wording would be reviewed between Mr Dornford-Smith and the office.

**item 11. discussion items**

Timing Display for Qualifiers

93. The Council had been requested by Mr S Seale, an individual, to discuss making it a requirement for all Kennel Club qualifiers to have a timing display for the crowd, competitors, and scribe to see the time.

94. There was no support for the discussion item and as such it was not discussed further.

Re-runs

95. The Council had been requested by Mr Seale, an individual, to consider introducing a stipulation where re-runs were awarded due to a timing failure or scores not being recorded correctly that the re-run should be for time only, except for contact fault marking. The course would still need to be completed correctly.

96. The Council noted that that was how re-runs had been dealt with in the past, but it had been changed due to handlers running the course without attempting to complete the course correctly with too much speed and not enough consideration of safety.

97. There had been some support for the change in some regions and as such a vote was taken. The majority was not in favour of any change and as such the item was not taken forward.

*(Mrs Gardner left the meeting at this point.)*

Collars

98. Ms J Holness, an individual, wished the Council to discuss allowing dogs to wear a medicated flat collar as well as the currently regulated flat, close-fitting collar.

99. While some regions were in favour of the idea, overall there was not enough support and as such the item was not discussed further. It was agreed that the medicated collar could remain on the dog while competing if the other collar was removed, but two collars would not be permitted.

Awarding warrant points to a minimum of third place

100. Ms J Wood, an individual, requested the Council to discuss awarding warrant points down to a minimum of third place in classes where awards stopped at first or second. This would ensure that dogs that were consistent were not losing out on warrant points due to small class sizes.

101. A brief discussion followed on whether this was a situation that should be managed by show managers increasing the number of places they awarded to, noting that place cards could be awarded and as such extra rosettes and trophies would not be needed.

102. However, it was noted that a number of regions were in favour of the principle and as such Ms Bostock would contact Ms Wood to bring a proposal forward to the next meeting.

Competitors influencing courses

103. Mr A Sully wished the Council to discuss whether competitors should be able to compete in classes where they had had a significant input into the changing of a course.

104. It was noted that there was some confusion regarding the difference between raising a concern with the show manager or judge about a course and competitors who took it upon themselves to suggest and make changes to a course. It was agreed that there was a lack of understanding of the process of dealing with course issues on the day. It was noted that a regulation had recently been introduced to deal with competitors who took it upon themselves to make changes to a course.

*(Ms T Davies left the meeting at this point.)*

105. It was felt that it was not an issue that could be articulated fully in a regulation change but it was in need of clarification. As such it was agreed that the Governance Panel and the Judging Panel would collaborate on the issue and bring it back to the next meeting for further discussion once there was a better view of how to deal with it.

*(Ms R Sargent and Mrs S Robinson left the meeting at this point.)*

106. It was noted that the Council meeting had been running for a long time and a number of Council members had needed to leave. It was suggested that the meeting be adjourned and reconvened at a later date to fully consider the remaining items on the agenda. The Council was in agreement and the office would determine the next available date for a meeting. (***Afternote:*** *a meeting date of 22 February was subsequently decided.)*

107. The meeting was adjourned at 5pm.

**MR M HALLAM**

**Chairman**

<TRAILER\_SECTION>

|  |
| --- |
| ***THE KENNEL CLUB’S STRATEGIC AIMS**** *Champion the wellbeing of dogs*
* *Safeguard and enhance the future of pedigree dogs, addressing breed-associated health issues*
* *Protect the future of dog activities together with our grassroots network*
* *Become relevant to more dog owners to increase our impact*
* *Deliver an excellent member experience and widen our community*
* *Ensure we are financially secure and sustainable*
 |