

**MEETING OF THE AGILITY LIAISON COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON
THURSDAY 18 JANUARY 2018 AT 10.30 AM IN THE BOARDROOM, THE
KENNEL CLUB, CLARGES STREET**

A G E N D A

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

ITEM 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2017 (copies previously distributed).

ITEM 3. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

(Pages 11 - 12)

a. Amendments to H Regulations

The following amendments to H Regulations have been approved by the Board:

Regulation H(1)B.3.d

TO:

d. Hoop-(Tyre)—Aperture diameter 533mm (1ft 9ins) minimum. Aperture centre from the ground: Large Dogs - 800mm ((2ft 7.5ins). Medium Dogs - 550mm (1ft 9.6ins). Small Dogs - 490mm (1ft 7.3ins). The hoop to be of a consistent shape, constructed of an impact-absorbing material. The height of the hoop should not be lowered. The tyre/hoop must be directly mounted in a substantial frame structure which must be secured in such a way that dogs cannot knock the obstacle over from either direction; the frame shall not have a beam across the top.

All tyres must have easily displaced element(s). For saloon style tyres, both opening sides must have an ability to swing open to approximately 90-140 degrees from the closed hoop position. They must not self-return and must be manually re-set.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective date 1 January 2018)

New Regulation H(1)(B)5.a.(10):

Tyre – 5 faults for displacing any part of the tyre. If the dog displaces any part of the tyre without negotiating it and making it impossible for it to be negotiated successfully – elimination.

(Insertion in bold)

(All subsequent paragraphs to be renumbered)

(Effective date 1 January 2018)

Regulation H(1)10.e.

TO:

Except for mobility aids, nothing shall be carried in the hand while the dog is under test and food shall not be given to a dog whilst in the ring.

Competitors are prohibited from wearing bags or leads around their bodies whilst under test – elimination.

(Insertion in bold.)

(Effective date 1 January 2018)

b. Breakaway Tyre

The Board approved designs for saloon door style tyres submitted by Longfield Agility Solutions (subject to confirmation that the opening would not swing through 360 degrees) and First Contact.

c. Issues reported in Incident Books

At the Council's previous meeting, the office provided a list of issues which had been reported in Incident Books during 2016 as it was considered this may provide useful information as to any recurring problems which it may be possible for the Council to address.

The Council is invited to note an updated version as requested.

(Annex A refers)

d. Kennel Club Code of Conduct

At its previous meeting, a request was made that the Kennel Club issue a statement drawing the attention of the agility community to the Code of Conduct, which included guidance on the use of social media. The Council was of the view that it should be made clear that there may be consequences to making inappropriate statements on social media. The office undertook to discuss this with the Kennel Club's legal department.

The Council is invited to note that the Kennel Club will be considering issues relating to social media in early 2018 with the objective of formulating a unified response applicable to all disciplines. Once this has been achieved, suitable amendments may be made to the Code of Conduct and details issued via a press release and an announcement in The Scribe.

e. Dogs competing whilst subject to a ban

The Council had discussed whether, in the event of a dog being subject to a temporary or permanent ban, show processors could be advised to ensure that the dog was not permitted to compete whilst under a ban. The same process may also be applied in the case of a person being banned from attendance at Kennel Club licensed events, although this was rare.

It is invited to note an update on the position from the office following consultation with show processors.

f. Use of medicated collars to control fleas and ticksMr C Huckle

At its previous meeting, the attention of the Council was drawn to the issue of dogs wearing medicated collars in the ring, and it was agreed that a formal proposal would be made at the Council's next meeting to amend the relevant Regulation by removing the words 'leather or webbing'.

It is requested to consider an amendment to Regulation H(1)10.c. as follows:

Regulation H(1)10.c.

TO:

c. Dogs must not wear any type of slip, half-slip collar or lead when under test. A flat, close fitting, ~~leather or webbing~~ collar is permitted, providing the only attachment is a plain identification panel as an integral part of the collar i.e.: not attached by a ring.

(Deletion struck through)

(Effective 1 July 2018)

Rationale

To assist in the control of ticks, and subsequently reduce the risk of Lyme Disease, veterinary surgeons often prescribe the use of medicated (impregnated) plastic collars, which are not designed to be removed frequently. H Regulations currently allow for a flat leather or webbing collar to be worn, and the change in wording would allow a medicated or impregnated plastic collar to be worn, in place of the flat leather or webbing collar therefore complying with the regulation above provided that the dog is only wearing a single collar.

ITEM 4. ACTIVITIES COMMITTEEProposed amendments to Regulations H(1)(A)7 and H(1)(B)1.c

At its meeting on 14 September 2017, the Activities Committee considered proposed amendments to Regulations H(1)(A)7 and H(1)(B)1.c. which had been proposed as the existing regulations did not make any provision for the length of the long jump to be altered between the Full Height Option (FHO) and the Lower Height Option(LHO) and vice versa. It was suggested that although there was a range of lengths for the long jump (1.2 -1.5 m for large dogs) it would be preferable to allow for it to be reduced for LHO.

It was noted that the office had received some queries on the issue, which had been discussed by the Agility Liaison Council at its meeting in July. The Council had been of the view that a range of lengths for the long jump was already permissible and it was not necessary for any amendment to be made to H Regulations to cover this scenario.

However the Committee was of the view that the following proposed amendments would be a positive step and requested that they be referred to the Council at its January meeting for further consideration.

Regulation H(1)(A)7.

TO:

Societies may offer the Lower Height Option to all dogs in that height category and it may be offered at all grades. It is to be run as part of any Standard class as defined in these regulations and must be clearly identified in the schedule. Each relevant class will have two heights with a change part way through to raise/lower the jump heights **and extend/reduce the length of the long jump** and competitors must run at their entered height...

(Insertion in bold)

Regulation H(1)(B)1.c.

TO:

No practice is allowed on the course save that competitors will be allowed to walk the course set at Small, Medium or Large height without their dog(s) before the class begins. **The height of the hurdles may be raised/lowered and the length of the long jump may be extended/reduced within the permitted range** during the course walking time if multiple heights are offered within the same class.

(Insertions in bold)

ITEM 5. ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP (Pages 13 - 14)

To note a written report from Mr Huckle on the progress of the Judges Sub-Group following its meeting on 8 November 2017.

(Annex B refers)

ITEM 6. ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP

a. The Council is invited to note a report from Mr Chandler on the progress of the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group following its meeting on 18 September 2017.

(Annex C refers – to follow)

b. It is also invited to receive a statement from the Sub-Group which will provide a summary of progress relating to the issue of jump heights.

(Annex D refers – to be tabled)

ITEM 7. REPORT FROM THE EQUIPMENT PANEL

To receive a written report from the Equipment Panel regarding any issues which had been referred to it.

(Annex E refers – to follow)

ITEM 8. REPORT FROM THE GRADING PANEL (Pages 15 - 18)

The Council is requested to consider options for changes to the Grading System submitted by the Grading Panel.

(Annex F refers)

ITEM 9. REPORT FROM THE JUDGING PANEL (Pages 19 - 20)

To receive a written report from the Judging Panel.
(Annex G refers)

ITEM 10. REPORT FROM THE HEIGHT CLASSIFICATION PANEL
(Pages 21 - 24)

- a. To receive a written report from the Height Classification Panel.
(Annex H refers)

ITEM 11. REPORT FROM THE AGILITY GOVERNANCE PANEL

To receive a written report from the Agility Governance Panel.
(Annex I refers – to follow)

ITEM 12. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

- a. Proposed amendment to Regulation H(1)(B)3.n
Miss L Olden

Miss Olden wishes the Council to consider a proposal to amend the height of the dog walk, with the objective of reducing the risk of injury to competing dogs.

Regulation H(1)(B)3.n

TO:

Dog Walk

A walk plank of approximately ~~1.372m (4ft 6ins)~~ **1.2m (4ft)** measured from the ground to the top of the plank with firmly fixed ramps at either end. The planks must be 3.66m (12ft) in length and a minimum of 25.4cm (10ins) and a maximum of 30.5cm (12ins) in width. The last 91.4cm (3ft) from the bottom of each ramp should be a different colour to indicate the area with which the dog should make contact. Each ramp should have a non-slip surface, and anti-slip slats at intervals but not within 15.2cm (6ins) of the start of the contact area.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold)

(Effective date to be agreed)

Rationale

Over recent years there have been concerns raised with the speed of dogs traversing the dog walk and the potential risks and injuries should a dog fall off.

When the height of the dog walk was initially set many years ago, dogs in general were not completing the obstacle at such great speed. Agility has moved forward a great deal in the past 40 years and the majority of

top level dogs are now negotiating a 30cm wide, 36 foot long plank in under 2 seconds.

Trends in the UK and internationally appear to be moving towards a lower dog walk of 1.2m, and a strong majority of people who have experience competing at this height are very much in favour of lowering the dog walk at Kennel Club competitions to 1.2m.

Most dog walk trestles are adjusted in height on chains so this will be easy for equipment manufacturers/suppliers/competitors to adapt to the change.

It is not known what official statistics the Kennel Club has on specific dog walk related injuries; however it is known that it is only in the last year or so that more injuries have started to be reported to the Kennel Club through the use of the incident book. However there have been serious injuries caused by falls.

If recommended for approval, the Council is requested to consider when the amended Regulation should come into effect, in order to give sufficient notice for equipment suppliers to adapt equipment, and to allow adequate time for any necessary retraining of dogs.

ITEM 13. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Tunbridge Wells & District Canine Society
Mr S Chandler

Tunbridge Wells & District Canine Society wishes the Council to discuss the introduction of a new Regulation regarding the use of whistles. It should be noted that with effect from January 2016 an embargo was placed on any Regulation changes within a three-year period, with the exception of any urgent matters, those currently under discussion prior to this date, or any matter relating to health and welfare of the dog or handler. Therefore, if supported by the Council, a formal proposal on this issue may be submitted to the Activities Committee following the Council's meeting in January 2019.

New Regulation H(1)(10)h.

Whistles must not be used for signalling that dogs and handlers are under test, nor for signalling an elimination.

(Insertion in bold)

Rationale

The Club is of the view that the use of whistles is completely unnecessary as the existing system works well. Whistles add nothing to agility and cause distress to some dogs and handlers. Whistles are also a distraction and would cause confusion if used in several rings. Some people with hearing problems may be affected in various ways, such as being unable to tell which ring the sound was coming from. Scrimers

have always started handlers, and they normally do this by name which is a final check that they have the correct ticket. This can cause major problems if a mistake is not picked up at this stage. The judge controls the start already by signalling to the scimer that they are ready.

Dogs can be extremely scared of whistles in the same way that they may be scared of fireworks or thunder. This is a welfare issue. Some dogs, such as gundogs or flyball dogs, are trained with whistles, and whistles can have different meanings for them.

There would be a great deal more noise at shows if whistles were used in several rings which could affect not only competitors but also local people and the venue itself.

It should be noted that the use of whistles in some special 'fun' classes would still be permitted as their use is necessary in order to indicate time.

ITEM 14. INTERNATIONAL AGILITY FESTIVAL (Pages 25 - 26)

To note a written report on the arrangements for the Kennel Club International Agility Festival, due to be held on 9 - 12 August 2018.

(Annex J refers)

ITEM 15. AGILITY TEAM GB (Pages 27 - 28)

The Council is invited to note a report on Agility Team GB's attendance at the 2017 European Open Championships and World Championships.

(Annex K refers)

ITEM 16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Please give at least two weeks advance notice of matters to be raised under 'Any Other Business' as this assists the office if research is required. These items are discussed at the discretion of the Chairman.

ITEM 17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the Council's next meeting will take place on 12 July 2018. Any items for the agenda must be submitted by 13 April 2018.

NOTES:

1. The Kennel Club will reimburse standard rail fares to all representatives attending the meeting, from their addresses as recorded at the Kennel Club. Claim forms will be available at the meeting.

2. Those resident in Northern Ireland or Scotland may apply in advance for authority to substitute shuttle air travel for standard rail fare, although it is requested that tickets are booked well in advance to take advantage of any reduction in fares.
3. Please give advance notice of matters to be raised under Any Other Business. This assists the Office if research is required. These items are discussed at the discretion of the Council Chairman.
4. Kennel Club Liaison Council Regulations state that the Kennel Club will bear the cost of all reasonable and externally incurred costs connected with a Council, if agreed in advance. Therefore, representatives should apply to the Kennel Club for approval of any costs they may wish to claim prior to the expense being incurred.

THE KENNEL CLUB'S MISSION STATEMENT AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

'The Kennel Club is the national body which exists to promote the general improvement, health and well-being of all dogs through responsible breeding and ownership' *This is to be achieved through:-*

- **Promoting the Kennel Club as the leading national organisation for referral and advice regarding all canine related matters.**
- **Encouraging the responsible breeding of pedigree dogs.**
- **Encourage the responsible ownership of dogs.**
- **Facilitating the breeding of healthy dogs**
- **Promoting the positive benefits of dogs in society.**
- **Promoting and regulating canine activities and competitions.**
- **Providing opportunities for education and training through Kennel Club led initiatives.**
- **Investing in canine health and welfare.**
- **Engaging with the wider dog owning audience/fraternity.**