



**MINUTES OF THE OBEDIENCE LIAISON COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON THURSDAY 10 JANUARY 2019 AT 10.30AM IN THE  
BOARDROOM, THE KENNEL CLUB, CLARGES STREET**

**PRESENT**

Mrs A Benoist	North East
Mr R Burbidge-Grant	Midlands
Miss F Godfrey	South East/East Anglia
Mr R Harlow	South East/East Anglia
Mrs J Jessop	Wales
Mrs D Lavender	North East
Mrs J Le Fevre	South East & East Anglia (via teleconference call)
Mr M McCartney	Northern Ireland
Mr J McIntosh	Scotland
Mr D Moxon	South & South West
Mrs C Patrick	Scotland
Mrs K Russell	North West
Mr N Slater	Midlands
Mrs B Smith	Midlands
Mr R Wakelin	North West

**GUEST**

Mrs S Garner	Chair, Activities Committee
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**IN ATTENDANCE**

Miss D Deuchar	Senior Manager - Governance & Education
Mrs V McAlpine	Executive - Events and Youth Development – item 13 only
Mrs A Mitchell	Senior Committee Secretary - Working Dog Activities Team
Mr R Shead	Governance Officer - Working Dog Activities
Mr P Slade	YKC Events Co-ordinator – item 13 only

1. All Council members were welcomed to the meeting. All present introduced themselves.
2. A short silence was held in memory of Mr D Ashley, a previous member of the Council and an active and valued member of the Obedience community for many years.

**ITEM 1. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL**

3. In the absence of any other proposed and seconded nominations, Mr Harlow was re-elected as Chairman. Mr Harlow thanked the Council for its continued support.



**IN THE CHAIR**      **MR R HARLOW**

**ITEM 2. TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL**

4. In the absence of any other nominations, Mr McCartney was elected as Vice Chairman for the new term of the Council.

**ITEM 3. TO ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE ON TO THE ACTIVITIES SUB-COMMITTEE EFFECTIVE FROM JUNE 2019 TO MAY 2022**

5. Two candidates, Mrs Lavender and Mrs Russell, were proposed and seconded for the role of representative onto the Activities Committee.
6. A ballot took place following which Mrs Lavender was elected to fulfil the role.

**ITEM 4. TO ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE ON TO THE ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP**

7. Two candidates, Mrs Le Fevre and Mrs Patrick were proposed and seconded for the role of representative onto the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group. A ballot took place, as a result of which Mrs Patrick was elected to fulfil the role for the term of the Council.

**ITEM 5. PRESENTATION TO THE COUNCIL ON KENNEL CLUB STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES**

8. The Council noted a presentation from the office which explained Kennel Club and Liaison Council structures and procedures. The importance of confidentiality until such time as the minutes were published was particularly highlighted.
9. The Chairman reminded Council members that they were not obliged to vote on proposals as mandated by their areas, but may vote as they saw fit having taken into account discussions during the meeting.

**ITEM 6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

10. Apologies were received from Mrs Allen and Mr Farr. Mrs Le Fevre attended the meeting via teleconference call.

**ITEM 7. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

11. The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2018 were approved as an accurate record.

**ITEM 8. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Proposed amendment to Regulation P4.h.**

12. The Council noted that the Activities Committee, at its meeting on 22 March 2018, did not recommend approval of the Council's recommendation for an amendment to the above Regulation which would provide for the use of proxy votes by Council representatives who were unable to attend a meeting in person. It was of the view that a representative not attending a meeting, and using a proxy vote, was unable to participate in the exchange of views, and could not therefore amend his or her vote having taken into account points raised during the



discussion as was the case for those present at the meeting.

13. The Committee wished to strongly recommend that, should a representative be unable to attend a meeting in person, he or she should take part via conference call if possible. However the facility to do so was only intended for use in exceptional circumstances. (**Note:** following the cancellation of the Council's meeting in July 2018, the Council had been advised of the Committee's decision via an email issued by the office on 24 April 2018).

### **Border Collie Database**

14. The Council noted that Miss Godfrey had once again contacted the owners of the Anadune Border Collie Database to request that they reconsider allowing working sheepdogs to be added to the database, however no response had been received.
15. Mr Harlow undertook to try to contact the owners as it was agreed that it would be very helpful for Obedience competitors to have access to pedigree information for working sheepdogs, particularly as show organisers were no longer required to provide a catalogue.
16. It was noted that the Kennel Club was in the process of developing a new database system which potentially may be able to provide public access to pedigree information for dogs registered on the Activity Register, similar to that already available for dogs registered on the Breed Register. However as development of the new system was already well under way it would be necessary to advise the office immediately as to what facilities would be desirable.
17. The Council was of the view that in addition to pedigree details it would be helpful for health testing information for individual dogs to be available.
18. Mrs Garner undertook to pursue the matter on behalf of the Council.

### **Training for commentators**

19. At its meeting on 20 July 2017, the Council noted that the Training Board had agreed there was a need for training for commentators at major events, however no further update on the matter was available at the time.
20. The Council was advised that a commentary course may be considered provided it could be held on a break even basis, or alternatively an online educational video may be produced.
21. It was of the view that training for commentators would be very useful and should be progressed. It accepted that an online video may be a helpful first step, but also emphasised that practical training on a face to face basis, to include feedback, would also be necessary.
22. Noting that other departments within the Kennel Club had a requirement for such training, it was suggested that an option for training via an external supplier should be considered. However, it was acknowledged that at present there was no budget available for training for obedience commentators.
23. It was agreed that the matter should be referred to the Activities Committee for further consideration as to whether a bid for funding should be submitted to the Finance Committee.

### **Progression of obedience judges**

24. A formal proposal on the matter had been submitted and was discussed later in the meeting under agenda item 14 (paragraphs 71-76 refer).

### **Content of classes**

25. At its previous meeting, the Council discussed a suggestion from Miss Godfrey regarding the



content of classes, which it was hoped would allow for a smoother progression through the classes. Following its discussion, a survey was issued by the office and the results had been circulated to Council members.

26. It was noted that a total of 557 responses had been received which was a significant number. The feedback for each individual item had been varied, but overall there had been a great deal of support for the principle of reviewing the content of classes in order to encourage and engage competitors as they progressed.
27. If the Council wished to progress the matter then formal proposals may be considered at a future meeting, however it would be necessary to give careful consideration to the way in which any individual changes to the existing class content were developed.
28. It was suggested that it may be preferable to do this on a step-by-step basis rather than to make any major changes all at once.
29. This led to a discussion regarding the serious issues currently facing obedience and the way in which they may be addressed. The Council acknowledged that such issues did exist and that it was necessary to consider the position as a whole rather than focussing on relatively minor issues.
30. It was highlighted that over 37,000 Good Citizen bronze/silver/gold awards had been made in 2018, and the Council expressed some concern that more of the owners and dogs taking part in the Good Citizen scheme were not going on to compete in competitive obedience. The Council had had previous discussions regarding closer links with the Good Citizens scheme but it did not appear that any progress had been made.

### **Judges and stewards competing at shows**

31. At its previous meeting, the Council discussed the issue of judges and stewards competing at shows at which they were officiating, with particular reference to the difficulties faced by small clubs.
32. It noted that a proposal had been submitted by Lisburn & District Dog Training Club, which appeared under item 14 of the agenda. (paragraphs 63-68 refer).

### **ITEM 9. OBEDIENCE STRATEGY WORKING PARTY**

33. The Council noted that, in view of the Sports Governance review which was currently in progress, the Board, at its meeting on 17 July 2018, agreed that the Obedience Strategy Working Party would be disbanded.

### **ITEM 10. FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES**

34. All Council representatives provided reports regarding activities undertaken in their area to gain feedback from competitors since the previous meeting. Contact with competitors had been made via a number of methods including online surveys, social media, visits to clubs, posters, organised meetings, informal conversations at shows, telephone calls and emails, and at training courses.
35. However it was noted with concern that in many areas there was a high degree of apathy, with very little enthusiasm for any change. Further, although many clubs did their best to be proactive in promoting competitive obedience, it was accepted that in many cases there were considerable difficulties in recruiting new members who were willing to offer their services to assist in running shows, as a result of which some shows had been lost.

### **ITEM 11. ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP**



36. The Council noted a written report from Mr Rutter on the work of the Activities Judges Sub-Group following its meetings on 2 May 2018 and 1 November 2018.
37. The main points relating to obedience were as follows:
- The Sub-Group had recorded its thanks to Mrs S Garner for her work on its behalf as a representative for obedience. The Kennel Club Board had approved the appointment of Mr R Kebble to replace Mrs Garner on the Sub-Group.
  - Reaccreditation of judges trainers would now take place every five years, following the newly accredited judge's initial reassessment and reaccreditation at 3 years.
  - A new Customer Relationship Management system for the office was under development and was scheduled to be launched in late 2019.
  - The Sub-Group discussed the progression of obedience judges and agreed that following discussion at the Accredited Trainers Annual Seminar a formal proposal would go forward to the January 2019 Council meeting. **Note:** the proposal appeared later on the agenda under item agenda item 14 (paragraphs 71-76 refer).
  - Obedience content for the Kennel Club Academy was currently under development.
  - The Sub-Group discussed the use of social media by societies trying to recruit judges. It noted that the soliciting of appointments by a judge is not acceptable, but if a judge replied to a request from a society this would not be viewed as soliciting for an appointment as the first move had been instigated by the society, but show societies should satisfy themselves that prospective judges are qualified and able.
  - Mr B Luckock had been appointed as a new Accredited Trainer for Obedience.
38. The Council noted that there were three Obedience representatives on the Sub-Group: Mr Harlow, Mr Kebble, and Mr Rutter.

## **ITEM 12. ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP**

39. The Council was invited to note a tabled report from Mrs Patrick following the meeting of the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group held on 16 January 2018. It was noted that the report did not cover the Sub-Group's meeting held on 10 September 2018.
40. The main points relating to Obedience were as follows:
- Instructors at registered clubs: The Sub-Group had discussed the wording of advice on the Kennel Club's 'Find a Dog Club' page. The final wording used was as follows:  
  
'Dog owners should use dog training instructors who have proven specialist knowledge, skills and experience. Instructors can prove their commitment to good practice by being part of the Kennel Club Accredited Instructors Scheme which encourages its members to gain accreditation based on a robust assessment standard set by the Kennel Club. On joining the scheme, all members agree to abide by a code of practice which sets out the principles governing both their professional conduct and training practices.'
  - Kennel Club Academy – 'Pre-competition' video: the Sub-Group had supported the concept of a 'pre-competition' film being made available on the Kennel Club Academy, development of which was under way.

41. A number of other issues had been discussed, including:
- Canine Biomechanics and Movement film
  - Budget for minor projects
  - Research opportunities
  - Kinematics of the dog during the heel test (obedience)
  - The 'Sustainable Canine' seminar
42. Council members were reminded of the necessity to submit reports, where requested by the office, in a timely manner so that they may be distributed with the agenda papers two months prior to the meeting to allow adequate consideration beforehand.

### **ITEM 13. YOUNG KENNEL CLUB**

43. The Council was pleased to welcome Mrs McAlpine and Mr Slade, representing the YKC, who had been invited to attend the meeting in order to discuss any issues, and to consider how obedience may be promoted to young handlers. The Council was strongly of the view that it was vital to ensure that new handlers were encouraged into YKC Obedience as these would in turn progress to competing at Obedience shows.
44. Mr Burbidge-Grant reported that the YKC had run a training and Crufts qualifying event at Newark, held 26 -28 October 2018, at which training sessions for YKC members had been run by Sue Shardlow and Polly Poulton. The classes were judged by Emma Lavender.
45. The Council was satisfied to note that more shows were scheduling obedience classes for YKC members, and that entries from YKC members at Crufts were higher than last year. However, it reiterated the view expressed at its meeting in January 2018 that there remained a need for improved communications links with the YKC office.
46. A suggestion was made by Mrs McAlpine that a monthly teleconference call between the YKC office and Mr Burbidge-Grant, to provide updates on developments and activities relating to the YKC, may be helpful. It was agreed that this would be a positive step and the YKC office undertook to make the necessary arrangements.
47. Mr Burbidge-Grant agreed to provide an update to all Council members following each monthly teleconference.
48. It was acknowledged that some show societies which held YKC qualifiers were slow in returning results to the YKC office, which caused some difficulties. It was hoped that the provision of standardised results sheets to show societies would assist them in providing results in a timely fashion.
49. In response to a query it was confirmed that rosettes and an up to date notice of relevant competition regulations were automatically issued by the office to all show societies scheduling qualifiers.
50. A concern was raised that it appeared that rule changes were sometimes made to YKC obedience competitions with no consultation with the obedience community. It was confirmed by the office that it was not its policy to undertake extensive consultation for any discipline in respect of rule changes, although appropriate advice was always sought from suitable individuals where necessary. All rule changes were made by the YKC Management Committee and were subject to approval by the Board.
51. In response to concerns that some competitors were not made aware of rule changes to YKC competitions, it was confirmed that current rules, together with a wide range of additional information, were readily available on the Kennel Club's website at [www.ykc.org.uk](http://www.ykc.org.uk). A dedicated email address, [YKC@thekennelclub.org.uk](mailto:YKC@thekennelclub.org.uk) was available for use by those who had further queries.



52. It was highlighted that all YKC Obedience competitions were largely based on standard Obedience exercises but with a small number of exceptions which were designed to include a 'fun' element which would be attractive to young handlers.
53. Mrs McAlpine and Mr Slade were thanked for attending, and for their positive contribution to the discussion.

## **ITEM 14. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS**

### **Proposal for an amendment to Regulation G30.h.**

54. The proposal was proposed and presented by Mr McCartney on behalf of Lisburn & District Dog Training Club, and was seconded by Mrs Patrick.
55. At its previous meeting, the Council had discussed the issue of stewards competing at shows at which they were officiating, with particular reference to the difficulties faced by small clubs. It had noted that currently, Caller and Scribe Stewards used by judges at the show must not work a dog on the same day.
56. It was emphasised that the objective of the proposal was to assist clubs in those areas of the country where entries were low by allowing stewards to compete. It was hoped that it would ease the burden on some clubs which faced difficulties in trying to find both judges and stewards from a small pool of people. Where class numbers were small it was not anticipated that there would be any adverse effect on the class for which they were stewarding.
57. The Council was sympathetic to the plight of such clubs and was in support of the principle of the proposal which would encourage people to act as stewards at small shows. However, it was agreed that a limit should be placed on the number of classes in which a steward may work, to ensure that no undue delays occurred.
58. A discussion took place as to the precise framing of the amended Regulation to ensure clarity. It was agreed that the revised regulation, if approved, should apply to shows with 6 scheduled classes or less, rather than 10 as specified in the original proposal, and that it should be clear that stewards may only compete in one class.
59. A revised proposal was submitted by Mrs Patrick and seconded by Mr Slater. A vote took place and the following amendment was unanimously **recommended** for approval:

Regulation G30.h.

**TO:**

Judges should whenever possible, provide their own Caller Stewards, but the Show Management shall provide any Caller Stewards if necessary. Caller and Scribe Stewards used by judges at the show must not work a dog on the same day., **with the exception that at a show with 6 scheduled classes or less, caller and scribe stewards may compete in one class, other than the class they are officiating, provided that the class in which they are acting as caller or scribe steward has 20 entries or less. Caller and scribe stewards taking up this option will be exempt from any running order and may compete with their dogs at a convenient time and in agreement with the judges concerned.**  
(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold).

### **Proposed amendment to Regulation G 32.d(1)**

60. Miss Cornish, an individual, wished the Council to consider a proposed amendment to Regulation G 32.d(1) with the objective of moving the focus more on to the newly qualified Judges' personal development and to allow them the opportunity to progressively move forward when they felt ready to do so.



61. Miss Godfrey proposed the amendment on Miss Cornish's behalf, but no seconder was available, and the matter was not discussed further.

### **Proposed amendment to Regulation G32.e. Approval of Judges**

62. The proposal was presented and proposed by Mr Harlow, representing the Kennel Club Accredited Trainers for Obedience. It was seconded by Mrs Lavender.
63. The Council noted that there appeared to be a widespread feeling that under the terms of the current Regulations, there was too big a leap from judging three Novice classes to effectively being 'qualified' to judge Open Class C. The proposal was made with the objective of introducing a more gradual qualification for judges leading to their judging the higher classes.
64. The proposal had been formulated taking into account concerns that being too restrictive on the classes in which new judges may officiate would present difficulties for show secretaries in securing judges.
65. The Council was in agreement that it was important to ensure that judges undertaking appointments at higher levels had sufficient experience to do so, and it was fully supportive of the principle of the proposal. It went on to discuss the specific number of appointments at each level which should be completed prior to judging Class C.
66. Following the discussion, a revised proposal was made by Mrs Smith and seconded by Mrs Lavender, as follows:

Regulation G32.e.

**TO:**

A Judge's first three appointments for shows must be restricted to Novice.

**The next three appointments should be up to and including Class A.**

**Before accepting an Open Class C appointment, a Judge must have completed at least a further nine appointments. These must include a minimum of three Class A and three Class B appointments. It is the individual's responsibility to retain proof of their judging appointments.**

(Insertions in bold)

67. A vote took place and, by a majority, the above amendment was **recommended** for approval.

### **Proposed amendment to Regulation G(A)6**

68. Burnbank Dog Training Club wished the Council to consider a proposed amendment to the above Regulation. This was presented and proposed by Mrs Patrick on its behalf, and seconded by Mr McIntosh.
69. The Club was of the view that, due to low entries in Pre-Beginners and Beginners classes, some new handlers had progressed into Novice very quickly and with very little ring experience, which had proved in some cases to be very discouraging. Some handlers had lost confidence and the Club was concerned that there was a high risk of losing such people to obedience. Accordingly the proposal had been made with the objective of ensuring that handlers had an opportunity to gain more experience in the lower classes before progressing.
70. Under the terms of the proposal, to compete in Pre-Beginners a handler or dog must not have won **two** First places in either Pre-Beginners or Beginners nor gained a third place or above in any other Obedience class (Introductory Class excepted). To compete in Beginners a handler or dog must not have won a total of **three** or more First places in Beginners Class or one First place in any other Obedience class (Introductory Class and Pre-Beginners excepted).

71. The Council accepted that the concern was a genuine one, but a query was raised as to whether increasing the number of wins required to progress would be the best way to address it. A view was expressed that the proposal may have the opposite effect to what was intended and that some competitors may find it discouraging.
72. After discussion, a revised proposal was made by Mr Moxon that Regulation G(A)6. which related to the criteria for competing in Pre-Beginners be amended, but that no change be made to Regulation G(A)7. relating to the criteria for Beginners. The proposal was seconded by Miss Godfrey.
73. A vote took place and by a majority, the Council **recommended** the following proposal for approval:

Regulation G(A)6.a.

**TO:**

- a. To compete in Pre-Beginners a handler or dog must not have won **two a First places** in either Pre-Beginners or Beginners nor gained a third place or above in any other Obedience class (Introductory Class excepted).  
(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

### **Proposed amendment to Regulation G30.g.**

74. Mr Moxon, on behalf of Ms D Davies, proposed an amendment to the above Regulation under the terms of which it would be specified that details of timed stays may be published with running orders by post and/or through social media, but that published stay times may not be changed, except in exceptional circumstances to be decided by the show management. The proposal was seconded by Mrs Le Fevre.
75. Ms Davis was of the view that the existing Regulation did not take into account the fact that it was no longer necessary for a catalogue to be produced.
76. Further, it was highlighted that the publication of timed stays with the running orders was becoming common practice, however Ms Davies wished to raise a concern that such publication may cause issues for show secretaries where competitors had sight of details of timed stays prior to the day of the show but wished to challenge the timing of their stays.
77. The Council accepted that it was helpful for competitors to see details of timed stays beforehand, especially for those competing with multiple dogs as it allowed them to plan their day in advance.
78. It also acknowledged that under the terms of the proposal, publication of details of timed stays would not be mandatory so would not impose an additional workload on those clubs which did not wish to do so. However it would clearly state that no changes may be made to timed stays unless under exceptional circumstances, and it was anticipated that this would preclude challenges from competitors being made.
79. It was agreed that it was not necessary for the amended regulation to make any reference to the method by which publication should be made and the reference to publication by post and/or social media was removed.
80. A vote took place and, by a majority, the following amendment was **recommended** for approval:

Regulation G30.g.

**TO:**

Where timed stays will take place it must be announced in the schedule that they take priority over other tests. The times of such tests to be published at the show and in the catalogue, **if available. Details of timed stays may also be published with running orders. Published stay times may not be changed, except in exceptional circumstances to be decided by the show management.** In the case of Championship Class C stays must not be judged before 12 noon. In all other cases, timed stays must not commence before one hour after the



published time for the commencement of judging.  
(Insertions in bold)

## **ITEM 15. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Allocation of Championship show dates**

81. Mrs Russell presented the discussion item on behalf of Lune Valley Dog Training Club which wished the Council to consider the allocation of Championship show dates being made on a week number basis.
82. It was anticipated that doing so may assist in resolving issues of clubs being unable to use the date originally allocated to them, where another show had moved forward or back by a week causing a clash of dates, to the detriment of both shows.
83. It was noted that the Council had discussed the issue on a previous occasion but had not progressed it due to concerns that using week numbers may cause issues in booking venues.
84. The Council accepted that no single measure would be wholly successful in resolving the issue, but it acknowledged that good communication and co-operation between show organisers would be instrumental in avoiding clashes of dates in many cases. It noted that all dates applied for were accessible on the Kennel Club's Find a Dog Show website and that this information may be helpful to show organisers when planning dates.
85. It was agreed that Mrs Russell, with assistance from Mrs Benoist, would prepare a plan of all future Championship and Open show dates, and would submit a proposal to the Council at its next meeting as to the best way to progress the matter.

#### Qualifying for Championship Class C

86. Burnbank Dog Training Club, represented by Mr McIntosh, noted that over a period of time there had been a considerable number of occasions where qualifiers to compete in Championship Class C (wins in Open C and/or gaining a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place) had been gained with the competing team making a considerable number of errors and therefore on very high scores. The Club was of the view that that this was impacting on the quality of handler/dog partnerships being able to compete in Championship Class C.
87. It was noted that that Regulation G(A)11.a. stated:  
For Championship Class C at Championship Shows, dogs must have won out of Novice, Class A, and Class B and have won open class C on one occasion and have been placed not lower than third on three further occasions; all Open Class C places and wins must have been won under different Judges at Kennel Club licensed shows.
88. The Club wished the Council to discuss the possibility of amending the above Regulation to state that all qualifying open class C wins and places must be awarded on 285 points or more, and must have been won under different judges at Kennel Club licensed shows.
89. Some concerns were raised as to whether, with entries dropping, the timing was right to introduce further restrictions on the numbers competing in Championship Class C. It was accepted that some dogs qualifying for the class may not be of the very highest standard but this was not perceived to be unduly problematic.
90. The Council also acknowledged that every judge was different and that requiring a minimum mark of 285 points would not ensure consistency. Further, it was highlighted that provision existed within the Regulations that in classes with 10 or less entries the award of first place may be withheld if in the opinion of the judge the standard of work did not merit the award.
91. It was agreed that the Council's views would be referred back to Burnbank Dog Training Club which may submit a formal proposal to the Council at its next meeting if it wished to do so.

## **ITEM 16. FIVE YEAR STRATEGY**

92. The Council's Five Year Strategic Plan document was noted. Some of the issues discussed earlier in the meeting would be added to it.
93. The Chairman reiterated the necessity for the Obedience community to give urgent consideration to the serious issues facing the discipline. Accordingly, all Council representatives were requested to consult with those in their areas with a view to consideration of ways forward at its next meeting.
94. It was suggested that it may be a positive step to open a channel of communication with the Kennel Club's Good Citizen Dog Scheme (GCDS) department, and if possible, for a representative to attend the Council's next meeting in order to discuss ways in which Obedience may be promoted. The office agreed to liaise with the GCDS department in order to make the necessary arrangements.
95. Noting the success of the GCDS Pre-Beginner Obedience Stakes competition, a query was raised as to whether a similar Novice Stake may also be organised. It was acknowledged that this suggestion had been discussed some time ago but had not been progressed as a lack of resources within the GCDS department made it impossible for it to run such a competition.
96. It was highlighted that one of the semi-finals for the Pre-Beginner Obedience Stakes was held at a venue in Scotland which lacked the prestige and facilities of the semi-final held at Discover Dogs in London. It was noted that this matter was not in the Council's remit, but the office agreed to pass the Council's views to the GCDS department.
97. A suggestion was also made that an Obedience Festival, similar to the Kennel Club's International Agility Festival, should also be held. This was noted.

## **ITEM 17. OBEDIENCE INFORMATION STAND AT CRUFTS**

98. The Council noted a report from Mrs Benoist and Mrs Lavender regarding the Obedience Information Stand at Crufts.
99. Information was available to visitors regarding the activities taking place each day, together with photographs of competitors' working dogs, by courtesy of Dog Training Weekly and a number of competitors. A great deal of positive feedback had been received. However there remained room for improvement in some areas.
100. Mrs Benoist and Mrs Lavender wished to acknowledge the assistance which they had received from a number of people which had been greatly appreciated.
101. It was noted that there was currently no funding available for the stand, although the Council was advised that it would be possible to apply for funding, which must include an appropriate business case.

## **ITEM 18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Clashes of dates for open shows**

102. In response to a query, the Council was advised that clubs applying for a particular date would not routinely be advised if another club had applied for the same date unless it was within 100 miles, and then only if an objection was in place to the other show, as the office did not currently have the facility to provide such information. However clubs could use the 'Find a Dog Show' facility on the Kennel Club website in order to identify any shows for which dates had been applied.
103. It was anticipated that the new Customer Relationship Management system, when implemented, would offer the facility to apply for dates online, and to readily identify any other shows which had already applied for the same date.



### **Championship status**

104. A query was raised regarding the position regarding the Championship status of the Northern Alsatian and All Breeds Training Society. The Council was informed that the office was dealing with the matter and that further information would be released in due course.

### **Meeting date**

114. The office was requested to clarify whether it would be possible for future meetings to take place in February rather than in January, which presented some difficulties in obtaining feedback from the Obedience community over the Christmas period.
115. The Council was advised that on this occasion it had been necessary for the meeting to take place early in the year in order to provide an adequate timeframe for the election and approval of a representative to the Activities Committee at the start of its three year term which would run from June 2019 – May 2022. Meeting dates were subject to approval by the Council's Chairman and Vice Chairman, and by the Board, but in future, should only one meeting be required in any one year, it may be held in July if this was considered preferable.

### **Survey Monkey**

116. The Council wished to note that the use of Survey Monkey had been very helpful and it was keen to continue its use in future.

### **ITEM 19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

117. The date for the next meeting of the Council would be announced in due course. [Afternote: it was subsequently confirmed that the next meeting would take place on 18 July 2019.]

**The meeting closed at 4.10 pm**

**MR R HARLOW**  
**Chairman**

#### **THE KENNEL CLUB'S MISSION STATEMENT**

'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'