

Labrador Breed Council Health Sub-Committee Meeting

Thursday 12th April 2018 at the Kennel Club

Present

Joy Venturi-Rose - Chair and Breed Health Co-Ordinator

Lynda Heron - Breed Health Co-Ordinator

Janet Cole

Kay Cook

Elaine Grummit

Karl Gawthorpe *

David Coode *

(Joanne McDonald, Minute Taker)

*Not present for whole of meeting

Apologies for Absence

None received

JVR asked as there were two new members to the Committee that everyone gives a brief precis of themselves by way of introduction.

1. Breed Health Representative Personal Specification. JVR felt this was the optimal time to discuss this. As elections for positions were imminent, the draft PS would help Clubs understand better the role of the Representatives, the type of person who would be ideal for the role and the function of the BHSC. There is a PS and a Job Spec for the Breed Health Co-ordinations currently on the BC Website. Feedback was asked for from all Clubs.

Action Point All Committee– All Comments to be returned by June 30th (Please note this was later changed to July 31st at the BC Meeting)

Action Point JVR to send a copy electronically ASAP

2. Previous Minutes Proposed as a true record by LH, seconded by JVR

Matters Arising (Not on Agenda)

3. Ectopic Ureter – Initial contact made by LH, the person at Cambridge Vets was now on leave so recent attempts by LH at an update have not been forthcoming.

Action Point – LH to contact Kennel Club Health Co-Ordinator Bonnie-Marie Abhayaratne Bonnie-Marie.Abhayaratne@thekennelclub.org.uk to ask her regarding progress so far.

David Coode joined the meeting

Discussion Points

4. CPRA - JVR has received a letter regarding CPRA Atrophy to say the eye panel were looking at this for the breed. A previous paper written by Keith Barnet outlined the problem stemmed from a Vitamin E deficiency in the Briard and cocker spaniel. It was felt it was also due to a Vitamin B deficiency, JVR has been gathering published research but mainly general (not Labrador specific). If the problem can be resolved with vitamins supplements it may not be a priority for the breed but this needs to be proven in the Labrador unless we can find evidence to the contrary.

Action Points JVR to circulate papers

JVR to look at number of cases diagnosed and will feed back to KC

5. Animal Genetics - Tom Lewis (Genetic Researcher for the KC) had been in contact to explain that a particular laboratory want to offer a PRA Generalised linkage test with KC endorsement. JVR felt this

would be a step backwards using the linkage test as Optigen have developed the DNA test for this. LH explained that although it was probable that the laboratory concerned was using the same test just calling it a 'Linkage Test' There was some concerns with the particular laboratory due to some incorrect and erroneous results for Labradors in other DNA tests. However, the use of this laboratory may be down to lower costs. Dr Tom Lewis has advised the BCHSC that if the breed was interested then a number of Labradors tested by both laboratories and a comparison of the results would need to be undertaken as a trial. JVR asked as a breed do we want to be part of this? A further discussion was held regarding the issues with the laboratory and quality testing. Cost of shipping samples aboard were mentioned with JVR had received advice from one lab in the USA that the packages should be marked as 'Cotton Swabs' to avoid delays and difficulties at the post office.

Action Point JVR to find out if the laboratory in question is signed up to any external quality assurance schemes

Action Point – LH to contact Optigen as a representative of the committee, regarding Panel Testing, what the BCHSC would like to see on the panel and the possibility of a better rate.

Karl Gawthorpe joined the meeting.

6. Give a Dog a Genome Project – At the previous BC Meeting it was agreed that the Labrador would benefit if the breed went early with the project even if this meant raising the funds via the Clubs to do so. All Clubs were asked to agree to the payment to enabling this to happen. This had not progressed as The Yellow Labrador Club has requested more information and two Clubs (Cotswold and Wye and Northern Ireland) had yet to respond.

JVR raised concerns over the expectation of the Clubs; it will not be a fix for all ills but will initially look at the three most important issues within the breed. The KC survey of Labrador Breed Health reported that the three most stated issue were –

- * Ear Problems
- * Obesity
- * Degenerative Joint Disease

However, JVR doubted whether the clubs would agree with all three.

The Breed Clubs need to decide and provide evidence based reporting on the three areas of most concern to be looked at by the project. JVR suggested

- Elbow Dysplasia
- Hereditary Cataract
- Cruciate Ligament

JVR said that Clubs need to feed back with regard to this but was hopeful of a better response than usual as clubs failure to respond with information has been an issue. KG confirmed, he has the same issue. JC suggested whatever sent out needs to be simple and easy to respond to. JC asked the committee for their feelings. A discussion was held on cruciate with the issue being on the increase in the past 20 years and is mainly seen in show lines. Increase of turn of stifle, over angulation to the rear, short hocks, excess of calcium given, lack of exercise and fitness in youngsters and overfeeding could all play a part. JVR confirmed all conditions we select must be backed up by a scientific evidence base. It was agreed that JVR would take the recommendations of the Committee for the three areas (Elbows, Hereditary Cataract and Cruciate) to the BC and these would be the disease problems of priority unless clubs responded to the contrary by 31st July 2018

Action Point – LH to look at collating published papers on cruciate problems.

7. Puppy Buyers Standard / Quality Standard Badge (NDLRC). EG thought the idea was an excellent one which was agreed upon. There was a proposal from LH that all clubs adopt this, she has been in touch with Andrew Gillon (**New contact at BVA**) who are now keen to work with the BC to ensure buyers get the right type of puppy. It was felt the KC information was too complicated and inaccessible for buyers

and this would show them 'Best Practise whilst giving a level and an aspirational level. JC raised concerns over people now buying via internet sites and Facebook.

JVR explained the BC would need to approve and clubs to adopt with two levels (Gold and Platinum), with qualifiers having the benefit of being able to advertise their litters with a scheme logo and the wording "This litter meets the BC Quality Assurance Scheme". JVR asked what external quality assurance would there be for the scheme. LH explaining scheme would be self-regulating. DC brought up issue of stud dogs meeting criteria but offspring results not being good. JC thought two standards may cause confusion. JVR reported that as the KC has so far turned down any BC recommendations for change to the requirements this would be the way forward. In response to a question about published figures for health testing, LH read out the last given ones –

7.5% Dogs Hip and Elbow Scored

3.4% Dogs Hip, Elbow and hold Current Clear Eye Certificate

75% + have one parent detail Hip, Elbow and hold Current Clear Eye Certificate

DC suggested that the ABS Level was added as a third option to the bottom, this was agreed by all.

Action Points – JVR to contact KC for updated figures on health

Action Points – All delegates to urge committees to respond to BC before 30th June 2018 (later changed to 31st July ay BC Meeting).

Action Points – LH to finalist logo and add ABS

8. Implications of Ending Health Control Scheme (KC) -

Under the scheme if a breeder produced an affected dog with GPRA (or other health issue with a test available) the KC would issue a letter stating a test was available and a recommendation that if to be bred from again not a clear dog was to be used. The KC have said this practice is to be stopped as whilst they do not want to possibly loose pedigree data by refusing registration it felt that most buyers could use the data available on Mate select/MYKC.

LH outlined a case of a three year old blind bitch that had been referred initially to Liverpool then to Chief Panellist Sheila Crispin who gave the bitch a fail. The bitch had had three litters each from a repeat mating producing 24 puppies. Although Gary Johnson (**Breeder Services Manager at KC**) had contacted the breeder, the KC declined to make any contact with the puppy buyers. Further investigations by LH had revealed other puppies not (? Is this right should it be registered please check with Linda) registered from an affected stud dog, possibly 106+ puppies involved.

The KC felt that contacting owners would lead to a shrinking of the gene pool and tools such as mate select were available to help with mating and purchasing decisions, however if the breed felt it had a compelling reason to carry on they would relook at it.

EG highlighted the lack of information available this way on foreign dogs and asked if there was any similar schemes run by other kennel clubs. Also that the KC are according the general public with a greater sense of awareness of the mating tools available than they possess. LH also pointed out that in the case mentioned only one test result was available across the 24 pups, this was as a result of the pup going blind.

The provisional data from the Breed Survey conducted by LH said that 83% of Labradors were never bred from so therefore even if there is say only 2% failing an eye test this could be just the tip of the ice burge and the affected population could be much higher.

LH had spoken to Andrew (BVA) with regard to a possible meeting with the committee (or selected members) to look at raising health testing figures. The possibility of online submission PRIOR to x-rays was mentioned to try and avoid x-rays not being submitted.

Action Point – JVR to write letter on behalf of BCHSC to request this scheme is continued. Out lining the concerns of the committee. Anymore points for her letter would be welcome.

9. Proposal to add Elbow Scoring to ABS as a Requirement – The BC had questioned the decision not to put elbows on to ABS and this had gone back to the clubs. Results would be given in BC meeting. KG was asked to check minutes as JVR thought this was already done and the decision would just be adopted at

BC meeting. However, we can give breed clubs to the 31st July 2018 to respond if they disagree with Elbow scoring being made a requirement for the ABS. After this JVR will write to the KC requesting the addition

JVR thanked LH for all the work put in with regard to the elbow information provided but also suggested references should be added to this type of information as it would help our arguments.

10. Update Breed Health Symposium – JVR attended and found the event very useful. The presentation was circulated to members.

11. Epilepsy - It was positive to hear at the seminar that the gene for light sensitive epilepsy had been isolated.

12. Breed Health Conservation Plans – This is looking at what we are going to tackle.

13. External Quality Assurance – JVR noted there is a lack of this for a lot of external testing laboratories and the committee had been concerned about this for a while. This is set to change and EQA of laboratories is to be taken forward by the organisation below.

14. International Partnership for Dogs and EQA of Laboratories (DogWellnet.com) - JVR mentioned this website which may be useful to members -

The International Partnership for Dogs mission is to facilitate collaboration and sharing of resources to enhance the health, well-being and welfare of pedigreed dogs and all dogs worldwide. Dogwellnet.com, the internet platform of the IPFD functions as the information hub, providing links and additional resources to breeders and others in the dog world. Our Partners include numerous national kennel clubs, industry and non-profit organizations.

15. Health Conference in Paris –It was felt the BC would not feel the expense was worthwhile.

Action Point – JVR to forward to KC and EG

16. Breed Health Survey – This was carried out by LH and will prove extremely useful. 3000+ replies with 99.6% completion of all data including contact details.

Summary points –

258 respondents stated Ear Problems. 30% of which Otis Externa (Age onset between 1 and 2 years)

6 respondents stated Cerebral Vascular Problems. 2 Stokes, 2 Petit-mals, 2 fits

300 respondents stated Dermatological Problems. 52% of which was Dermatitis

192 respondents stated Gastro Intestinal Problems.

JVR said it might be worth reminding people the survey is there or at some point in the future issuing a cut off date and to start the survey again.

Action Point – LH look at cut off. To also try and collate and send survey results to members

AOB

17. KC Website – DC explained there is now a film on breeding a Labrador litter (Breed Specific), the breeder filmed was one known to JVR the KC had circulated an email request to all ASB breeders and the person is an ABS breeder. JVR had not seen the film yet.

18. Judging Videos – DC concerned over the quality of the filming (dark in some cases and the exhibits could not be seen at all times). EG stressed more information should be given about youngsters and how to judge them in the breed.

19. Special Interests – As there is new people to the Committee, the members where asked for any areas they would like to take on as a project or for the BHSC to look at. EG mentioned she would like to look at nutrition in dogs and the effect.

Action Point – **EG** to look at this (published papers, research etc.) and report back for next meeting.

16. Insurance – JVR brought up a case of an exclusion being placed on a dog for a minor ailment whilst with the breeder (Tummy upset) also another of Puppy Head Gland which was then not covered for skin conditions. This seems a very grey area and penalises honest breeders who have to go to the vet. It was also noted that sudden death in Labradors seems to be on the increase (heart murmurs).

Action Point – **KG** to look at insurance re exclusions and also try to find out information re Sudden Death.

JVR thanked everyone for their input and particular LH for the work on the Breed Survey and Puppy Assurance Scheme.

The meeting was closed.