

**MINUTES OF THE LABRADOR BREED COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE KENNEL
CLUB, CLARGES STREET, PICCADILLY, LONDON ON THURSDAY, 12 APRIL 2018**

Present:

Erica Jayes	Cotswold & Wyvern Labrador Retrievers Club
Lynne Minchella	Cotswold & Wyvern Labrador Retrievers Club
Joy Venturi-Rose	Kent Surrey & Sussex Labrador Retrievers Club
Alison Scutcher	Kent Surrey & Sussex Labrador Retrievers Club
Carole Coode	Labrador Retriever Club
Karl Gawthorpe (Secretary)	Labrador Retriever Club
Agnes May Pollock	Labrador Club of Scotland
Robin Pollock	Labrador Club of Scotland
Margaret Barker	Labrador Club of Wales
David Coode	Labrador Club of Wales
Janet Cole	East Anglian Labrador Retriever Club
Sheelin Cuthbert (Chairman)	East Anglian Labrador Retriever Club
Kay Cook	North West Labrador Retriever Club
Ian Jones	North West Labrador Retriever Club
Lynda Heron	Northumberland & Durham Labrador Retriever Club
Jo McDonald	Northumberland & Durham Labrador Retriever Club
Jenny Dobson	Midland Counties Labrador Retriever Club
Julia Lewis	Midland Counties Labrador Retriever Club
Kate Smith	Yellow Labrador Club
Paul Collins	Yellow Labrador Club
Geoff Hatfield	West of England Labrador Retriever Club
Alex Douglas	Northern Ireland Labrador Retriever Club
Liz Hallgarth	Three Ridings Labrador Retriever Club
Ian Dawson	Three Ridings Labrador Retriever Club
Shelagh Walton	
Chris Kempson (Minutes Taker)	

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all present.

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the General Breed Council meeting dated 6 April 2017:

Page 3. It was asked if the KC had provided the statistics regarding silver Labrador registrations. It was confirmed they had not

Page 4. It was confirmed 'slight wave permissible' was refused.

Page 8. Three Ridings confirmed they are happy to continue with Discover Dogs. The Chair thanked the Club.

Margaret Barker proposed agreeing the Minutes and Linda Heron seconded. The motion was carried.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting dated 6 April 2017:

Linda Heron proposed acceptance and David Coode seconded. Motion was carried.

Minutes of the Special General Meeting dated August 2017:

Margaret Barker proposed acceptance and Linda Heron seconded. Motion was carried.

Sub-committee meeting dated December 2017:

The Chairman reported that Mark Coccozza was helpful and positive, and Tom Lewis interested and helpful. Hopefully we were getting somewhere, however, the KC had cancelled the meeting in January and decided not to form a sub-committee at that time but will in the future. Mark Coccozza says he has no further information at this stage but will continue to work on it and will contact us in the not too distant future. He assured us that the issue is being actively discussed.

The Chairman stated some people might think we have spent a lot of time and money and are not getting anywhere, however all we can do is keep at it. Any information from the clubs, particularly on health issues, please let Jo McDonald, Linda Heron or the Chairman know. It all adds weight to the argument.

David Coode commented he had actually had an enquiry via the KC puppy finder for a silver Labrador. When he questioned why it was sent he was told the system worked that way. He suggested that a drop down box with the 3 choices only would be the answer.

The Chairman asked David to prepare a proposal, which he has done as follows:

'Kennel Club: Find a Puppy Service.

The current page allows the user to write in the colour of their choice. This should be replaced with a drop down box giving a choice of "yellow, black or liver/chocolate" only.'

Alison Scutcher informed the Council that at a meeting the previous day she understood this might have been dealt with as the KC computer system was being updated.

David confirmed that although on the Field Trial entry form for the Labrador Retriever Club of Wales they must state colour as they will not accept CNR entries, unfortunately entries via Higham Press or Fosse Data do not have the facility to state colour and if CNR enter they must be allowed in.

3. Matters arising - None

4. Accounts:

Copies were distributed and Karl reported and explained the higher expenses caused by extra meetings.

Carole Coode proposed accepting and Alex Douglas seconded. Accounts were approved.

5. Election of Chairman

Sheelin Cuthbert was re-elected which she accepted but only for the next 12 months when she will retire from the post.

6. Election of Secretary

Karl Gawthorpe was re-elected which he accepted.

7. Secretary's Expenses

It was agreed the Secretary's expenses be increased from £200 to £300 per annum.

8. Subscriptions for 2018

Although the BC accounts were in credit at present this would go down quickly if there were more meetings. Linda Heron proposed the Council increase the present £250 plus £50 for Discover Dogs to £275 plus £50. This was seconded by Joy Venturi-Rose and the motion was carried.

9. Auditors

Karl reported no problems with the auditors, David Alison-Beer FCCA, and proposed Council retain them. Robin Pollock seconded and the motion was carried.

10. Liaison Committee

Shelagh Walton reported from the Liaison Committee. The usual two meetings of the Kennel Club Breed Liaison Council took place last year, one in May and one in November.

The results of the recommendation of the Council to the Field Trials Committee that the letters SGWC be added after a dog's name were reported at the May meeting. The Committee did not recommend the proposal for approval as there was an existing regulation that the Show Gundog Working Certificate was not in itself a qualification. The Council was invited to note that Regulation J(F)1. Currently stated that:

'The Show Gundog Working Certificate is not a qualification in itself, however, when awarded it enables the "Sh" to be removed from the title of Show Champion. In no circumstances can the letters SGWC be placed after a dog's name.'

The Council noted the views of the Field Trials Committee and expressed its strong dissatisfaction with the decision regarding use of 'SGWC' after a dog's name. It wished to highlight its view that allowing the use of the letters would encourage owners of show dogs to participate in gundog training, which it considered to be highly desirable and reflected the Kennel Club's 'fit for function' ethos. Whilst acknowledging that the main intention of the SGWC was to enable a gundog to be awarded its full Champion title, it was of the view that many owners of show gundogs would never achieve the Sh Ch title but nonetheless would be keen to undertake the SGWC if the achievement could be recognised.

The Council was concerned that the Field Trials Committee was disregarding the views of those breeds affected in view of the strong opinions expressed.

At the November meeting it was reported that the matter had been referred back to the Field Trials Committee with a request that it reconsider its decision not to recommend for approval the recognition of the attainment of a Show Gundog Working Certificate by the addition of 'SGWC' to the dog's name.

The Council was advised that the Field Trials Committee had noted the Council's strong dissatisfaction with its decision. However, it was of the view that there had been no change in circumstances, and no new evidence presented in support of the proposal, since its original decision, and directed that it should stand.

An unfortunate consequence of this matter having been raised is that Border Collies who pass a Show Border Collie Herding Test which enables them to remove the Sh from the Sh Ch title in the same way as the Gundogs have now been informed that they can no longer use the letters SBCHT after their dog's name which they were previously allowed to do. It is a pity as their representative provided strong support to the Golden Retriever Club's proposal.

A proposal by the miniature poodle club 'That the advisory /ideal age for a first litter be published as recommended by the breed code of ethics'.

It was felt that the ideal minimum age for a first litter would vary from breed to breed, as larger breeds tended to be later in maturing and that ideally breed specific advice should be available. It was highlighted that website content relating to the Assured Breeder Scheme did provide such breed specific information, but there were concerns that many novice breeders may not be aware of it and hence would not access it.

It was suggested that it would be a positive step to provide guidance on the Novice Breeder Checklist to the effect that minimum breeding ages would vary across different breeds, and to place a cross-reference to the advice provided via the Assured Breeder Scheme on the Novice Breeder Checklist.

It was emphasised that breed clubs should be aware that they may request the inclusion of recommendations regarding minimum breeding ages upon application to the Assured Breeder Scheme.

At the November meeting the Council was advised that the Kennel Club was in the process of updating the list and would be happy to consider the addition of further breed-specific recommendations if requested to do so by breed clubs or councils. Should a request be received from a club representing a breed for which there was a number of clubs, all other clubs would be consulted prior to any changes being made to the list of recommendations. Requests may also be submitted by Breed Health Co-ordinators. All Council delegates were requested to ensure that this information was disseminated to all breeds which they represented.

At the May meeting a Question and Answer session on the Judges Competency Framework took place.

Key points highlighted during the meeting were:

There would be a major campaign by the Kennel Club to disseminate information

The involvement of breed clubs would be key to the success of the Framework

The Framework would be transparent in nature

It would provide a highly useful resource for show organisers to identify suitably qualified judges, especially for Open shows

Judges would be required to demonstrate an interest in a breed by attending a breed appreciation day and passing a multiple choice examination before being placed on a Level 2 list or above

Judges must be current members of the Kennel Club Academy both at the time of accepting an invitation and on the date of the appointment

Show organisers would retain full control of the selection of judges

Trainee judges must be mentored on three occasions, by three different mentors

Clubs would have discretion regarding the selection of mentors, who may be selected on the basis of an appropriate level of experience as judges, breeders, or exhibitors

There would be no objection to an individual exhibiting at a show and also acting as a mentor during that show

Breed clubs and/or trainee judges may be requested to contribute towards costs incurred by mentors

Clubs may join forces to run joint training days where it was appropriate to do so

The difficulty involved in providing dogs to participate in assessments were acknowledged and the Kennel Club confirmed that it would work with Breed Education Co-ordinators to assist in resolving this issue

A pilot scheme would be undertaken to identify and remedy any issues regarding the Framework prior to full implementation in 2019

It was reported at the November meeting that following initial comments from the pilot breed clubs and other feedback the following adjustments to the JCF had been announced:

The stewarding requirement for judges at entry level had been increased from four full days of stewarding to six full days.

The critique writing seminar would now be mandatory for Level 1 judges (it was previously announced that this would be compulsory for people at Level 2.)

Kennel Club Academy membership would not be required from 1st January 2019 for those who had accepted to act as a referee at a breed club show and had no further wish to judge. Accordingly, for championship shows, breed clubs may appoint anyone who had previously awarded CCs in the breed to undertake this role and KC approval would not be formally required. This applied to referees at breed club shows only and not to judges appointed to award BIS at general, group or sub-group shows (i.e. not variety breeds such as Dachshund, Poodle etc.).

A presentation from the representative of the English Setter breed, which was one of the 14 breeds selected to take part in the pilot scheme for the JCF, provided a brief update on progress.

Those breeds taking part in the pilot scheme had been required to undertake the following tasks:

Nomination of a Breed Education Co-ordinator.

Formulation of a multiple choice examination paper to support a breed appreciation seminar. A bank of approximately 50 questions was required, of which any 20 may be used at a seminar.

Development and hosting of breed appreciation days.

Compilation of a list of mentors for the breed.

A Level 1 judge attending a breed appreciation day, and passing the examination, would qualify as a Level 2 judge, provided that they met all the JCF Level 1 requirements, and would move on to the mentoring stage of development. Once three mentoring sessions had been undertaken, and the candidate had been observed judging at a club show or supported entry show, he or she would be required to undertake a breed specific Breed Competency Assessment.

The KC was developing a new 'Eye for a Dog assessment' with the Finnish Kennel Club and this would be a once only requirement to register at JCF Level 3.

We hope to have a further update at the next meeting.

Unfortunately, the next meeting scheduled for May has been cancelled due to insufficient Agenda items. So the next meeting will take place on 7th November. If you have any items you wish to be included on the Agenda for this meeting can you please let me have them by 5th August 2018.

. There was a discussion regarding the proposal not to remove SH from a show champion when it receives its Gundog Working Certificate. Shelagh offered to contest this on behalf of the BC with the LC if the BC would put forward a good rationale. Joy and David were asked to get together on this. Joy thought perhaps quite a few of the BC would be willing to put forward a proposal.

11. Health Sub-Committee

Joy Venturi-Rose gave a very comprehensive and informative report which can be read below. Particular discussion was around the loss of confidence in DNA testing and finding a reliable laboratory. International Partnership For Dogs has been set up as "quality assured".

Joy also asked the BC to go back to their Clubs and ask if they agree to recommend to the KC that elbow x-rays be a requirement not a recommendation to assured breeders by 30 July. Joy circulated a draft "Health Committee Reps" to look at and amend if necessary and stressed that health reps need input. General comments were made about how difficult it was to get the club committee members to respond.

Linda Heron raised the question of quality assurance scheme for breeders/litters. Joy read out a proposal and Karl said it would be slightly amended and circulated to the Council. There was some discussion re policing the Scheme. Yellow Lab Club asked for clarification on PRA ie how many generations. Karl stated they have to accept the KC regulations.

Labrador Breed Council Health sub-committee report 2017

Health Committee Breed Health Survey

The Labrador Health report went live in April 2017 It was promoted via google surveys and there have been over 3000 responses so far. Initial results are:

83% of respondents have not bred or do not intend to breed their Labrador.

52% of respondents reported no health problems at all with their Labrador of the remainder problems identified were:

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.

All bar 1 or 2% of respondents gave contact details (voluntary) so responses can be confidentially followed up if necessary.

Give a Dog a Genome

It was agreed through Breed Council that should Breed Clubs wish they could pay £155 each to join the Give a Dog a Genome scheme earlier than planned. However, two breed clubs did not wish to contribute to start this early. As there is some misunderstanding on what this scheme can do it is worth considering the following before further decisions are taken.

The objective of the project is to build a bank of genomes that will help distinguish between DNA variants (mutations) that are neutral/benign and those that cause inherited disorders, in all breeds of dog. There are two options that the researchers could take in relation to each breed.

The researcher could sequence the genome of a dog that is affected with an inherited disorder that is known to be a concern in our breed, in the hope that they could make progress understanding the genetic factors that might underlie the disorder, or alternatively they could sequence the genome of an apparently healthy, older dog

The amount of progress that can reasonably be expected from a single genome depends on the complexity of the disease, the mode of inheritance of the disorder and the nature of the underlying genetic risk factors.

For autosomal, recessive disorders that are likely to be caused by a single mutation it is possible that a causal mutation could be identified by sequencing the genome of a single dog. The team have previously used whole genome sequencing to identify the mutation responsible for a rare form of cerebellar ataxia in the Hungarian Vizsla:

http://www.aht.org.uk/cms-display/genetics_gdg_success_stories.html

For more complex disorders, such as idiopathic epilepsy, it is less likely that they could identify genetic risk factors associated with the disease from a single genome, but the genome would provide data onto which future studies can build.

To enable the researchers to make informed and appropriate choices for each breed they would need to know more about the health disorders that are currently of concern amongst our breed community and any evidence that may support this. This needs to be scientifically based not just anecdotal.

By gathering this information for the researchers they would be able to make a decision on a breed by breed basis on whether it will be more valuable to sequence an older, healthy dog or a dog with a health condition that we have highlighted to them.

Therefore before the Labrador Breed enters the Give a Dog a Genome scheme the Labrador Breed needs to decide which diseases we consider to be the most problematic for our breed. The sub committee have identified. Elbow Dysplasia, Hereditary Cataract for which we have scientific data and cruciate ligament for which we do not currently have a strong evidence base. We intend to name these conditions when the Give a Dog a Genome becomes live for the Labrador unless we hear from breed clubs to the contrary by 31st July 2018

Research into Hereditary Cataracts in the Labrador was started by the Animal Health Trust in 2017. The point of contact for this is Sally Rickets. Latest feedback received April 2018 is:
"We now have high-quality genome-wide marker data for 226 Labradors (117 Labradors with bilateral posterior polar subcapsular cataracts and 109 unaffected Labradors over the age of eight with a current clear eye examination). This set of dogs was typed for around 730,000 markers spanning the canine genome. After quality control filtering we assessed around 351,300 markers across the genome for association with HC. Unfortunately after adjusting for population effects (relatedness amongst individuals) we did not find any regions of the DNA showing strong statistical association with HC. However, we plan to conduct several further analyses and will also continue to collect additional cases and controls for the study that we can use to supplement the current dataset so do put the word out that we are still in need of samples from dogs with HC in both eyes and from older dogs over 8 years that have a current clear eye examination."

This has gone on our facebook site.

KC control Schemes

We had been successful in implementing a scheme whereby if a Labrador was diagnosed with GPRA the KC would write to the breeders requiring them to mate to a clear DNA dog prior to another mating. Unfortunately, the KC have chosen to end this scheme and any similar schemes as they think there is sufficient information on mate select for buyers to be aware and they do not want to drive breeding underground. Also, they need all pedigree information to gather accurate data on inbreeding parameters. However, they also state "Notwithstanding the above, the KC may consider a submission if there are compelling reasons why a control scheme may still be desirable. In such cases, a submission clearly stating the reasons a breed club feels a control scheme is necessary in spite of the above should be submitted to

the Dog Health Group Genetics and Health sub-committee. This committee comprises both KC and external geneticists and veterinarians and meets three times a year. The submission will be discussed by the sub-group and if successful will pass on to the Dog Health Group and then the Board with a recommendation it is approved.

There are various alternative ways the KC can assist breed clubs in raising awareness of particular health tests, for example adding a test to the Health Test Results Finder, requesting a test as a recommendation or requirement under the ABS, and promoting the Health Test Results Finder tool among the breed and potential puppy buyers. It is therefore strongly recommended that these routes are strongly considered and utilised before any request for a control scheme is proposed. We intend writing a letter to have our breed's scheme reinstated and any comments from clubs are welcome within the next month.

Screening scheme for Ectopic Ureta

There is apparently a non invasive screening procedure available for some other breeds in the EU. Initial discussions between the KC, Golden Retrievers and a Finish? Breed have been started but the researcher identified has gone on leave we will be following this up with the KC.

Centralised Progressive Retinal Atrophy (Retinal Epithelial pigment dystrophy). We had been led to believe many years back that this was caused by a vitamin E deficiency. Therefore, although there might be an underlying genetic problem that reduced the ability to process vitamin E effectively essentially if supplementation were given the problem was resolved. This is apparently only partly true as the evidence base for this was in Briards and Cocker Spaniels. Consequently, Dr Katy Evan Breed Health Manager at the KC has written to say that the BVA are investigating the incidence from the 80s to date in the Labrador and other breeds.

Elbow Dysplasia Unless Breed Clubs reply to the contrary by 31st July 2018 the committee intend to advise the KC that we wish Elbow Dysplasia screening to be an ABS requirement instead of a recommendation.

Person Specification

We have produced a draft person specification for Health Committee representatives. Any comments welcome as we would like to finalise this document as advice to Labrador Breed Clubs when they are seeking to nominate suitable Health Committee representatives at Elections or when positions become vacant.

Joy Venturi Rose Health Sub Committee Chairman

12. Constitution

The Chairman brought attention to the underlined part of Point 3. The Yellow Lab Club supported this but felt (c) was not relevant. Joy Venturi-Rose thought it was difficult to be objective if the Chairman and Secretary were on a Club Committee. David Coode said it should be given to someone not on a Committee but who would make a good Chairman or Secretary and this would open the field wider to search for suitable people.

Paul Collins proposed and David Coode seconded. Motion was carried.

Point 4. Carole Coode proposed and Alison Scutcher seconded.

13. East Anglian LRC proposal

(a) Much discussion about reasons but felt unnecessary. Not carried.

(b) Agreed.

14. Judges Competency Framework

Alison Scutcher circulated copies of the JCF Recommendations and gave a very comprehensive explanation of the amendments. Alison told the Council that:

These amendments would be going online in the middle of 2019 but the start date would remain January 2022.

The £26 is payable in single breeds where there are several variations.

If you have done hands on assessment as part of A3 breed specific seminar under the old system you do not need to do it again under the new system. This had been confirmed to her.

Approval for CC judges - considering online process.

Academy - husbands and wives must have separate email addresses as the KC computer system cannot distinguish the difference in a single email address but different applicant.

Mentoring - looking at making this an online system.

Breed appreciation day was discussed. KSS are doing one next year. Carole Coode said they were easy to run as she had attended one.

David Coode stressed the need to prepare multiple choice exam which can be circulated to Clubs in confidence. Lynne Minchella commented that some committees have novice people and do not want everyone to see the paper. Joy Venturi-Rose suggested keeping copies to CC judges on committees only; Linda Heron suggested perhaps a sub-committee only receive the questions.

The point was also made that some questions might be ambiguous and be seen to have more than one answer.

Linda Heron proposed passing and Janet Cole seconded. Motion was carried.

15. Judges who awarded Challenge Certificates for the first time in 2016 to be considered for inclusion on the A1 lists

Breed Specialists

Mrs R Agostini	For: 10	No: 3	Abstention: 0
Mr C Hancock	For: 6	No: 5	Abstention: 2
Mr G Fox	For: 12	No: 0	Abstention: 1
Mr H Bishop	For: 9	No: 2	Abstention: 1

Non Breed Specialist's

Mrs J Peak	For: 6	No: 6	Abstention: 1
Mrs L A Oxley	For: 1	No: 11	Abstention: 1
Mrs J Ward	For: 6	No: 3	Abstention: 4

16. Roll of Honour

Lynne Minchella queried including field trial people and the Secretary suggested she ask for her Club to put this proposal forward.

Mrs D Beckett was proposed by The Labrador Club and seconded by The Labrador Club of Wales, Roll of Honour was agreed.

17. Any Other Business

Paul Collins of Yellow Labrador Club asked if BE Co-ordination should be one per Club or one every two clubs. The Secretary said he will send round an email to be voted on. Whoever is the co-ordinator needs to understand the new judging system. He would shortly be talking to the KC re assessors and also to some Golden Retriever people, but he thinks each club has its own.

The Chairman suggested that Karl do the job for one year. Carole Coode proposed Karl and Robin Pollock seconded. Motion was carried.

Chairman said it was a big job and perhaps it should be discussed at the next meeting if someone should concentrate on this solely. Karl said he struggles for assessors. Recently he requested a list from the KC and they sent a list of people who had given tickets 3 times. Others had experienced a similar problem.

Everyone agreed it was a problem and the present criteria was not fit for purpose.

The Chairman reported "The Video" is going to be filmed July 18th.

Jo McDonald reported to the Council on the rules on being compliant with data protection and their complexities.

Thanks were given to Chris Kempson for taking the Minutes.

The Meeting closed at 16.05.