

Labrador breed council health council Health Sub-committee meeting 12th April 2012

Those present: Marion Hopkinson (Chair) Fiona Braddon, Linda Heron, Penny Carpanini, Karen Morton, Janet Cole.

Apologies for absence: Margaret Brown

Minutes of the last meeting

These were proposed as correct except that Penny Carpanini represents the LRC Wales She cannot remember who else she represents.

(Proposed Janet Cole Seconded Penny Carpanini)

Matters arising

For information some of the members had results from the clubs they represented on the EIC survey sent to clubs. It appeared clubs had processed this in different ways some attempting to survey their membership and others making committee decisions.

MC LRC and 3 Ridings 46 1a 2b (40 plus 6) LRC of Wales voted for status quo (Penny Carpanini)

KSS LRC votes have gone direct to Breed council secretary and LRC North Ireland voted b for both

N & D voted b for both

EALRC 1a and 2b

YLRC and WLRC have gone direct to Breed council secretary

North West and LRC Scotland have gone direct to Breed Council Secretary

Cotswold and Wye and Yellow LRC gone direct to Breed Council Secretary

Full results would be announced at the breed council (*This was later found not to be the case as the Breed Council Secretary did not realise that she was to collate the results and feed back to the KC i.e. Gary Johnson*). *Health reps need to ensure their results have our fed back to her*). **ACTION ALL**

Letter was read out by the chairman from Dr Dylan Clements who attended the last meeting

Around 2350 dogs had been recruited to the Dogs Life survey. Recruitment will continue until 2012 estimating a total of over 2000 dogs registered and around 3500 illnesses registered.

The first report is in the process of being compiled for publication

The view was expressed that at around 40,000 per annum this figure only represented about 4% of annual registrations of the breed so was not really a representative sample. The point was made that breeders would like to have been involved as this would have vastly increased the sample. We would also have liked a specific leaflet to given out to new owners with their registration documents.

Health Leaflet

John Jackson's updated leaflet, which included up to date information of LRC clubs contact details, was approved to be used at discover dogs. The meeting proposed that all breed clubs put this on their web site and it go on the Breed Council web site.

In line with this it was suggested that a puppy Dos and Don'ts sheet would be useful for new puppy owners.

It was decided that a letter would be written to Bill Lambert and the Chairman of the KC requesting two actions.

Higher registration fees for the puppies of Labradors where the parents had not been hips scored currently for Jeff Sampson's figures presented a few years ago this would effect around 25% of breed registrations.

That we request that that where a dog/bitch has been proven to be a carrier of or affected by GPRA that they can only be mated to DNA tested clear Labradors if they want future progeny registered. The chairman Marion Hopkinson MH will draft a letter for circulation to the committee. **ACTION MH**

Extreme generalised muscular stiffness

The small number of dogs that have been seen so far have all been male and there is a study currently going on at Cambridge University. Currently, it appears all the dogs were related. It was generally felt that this would be an isolated disease in a small family. It was recommended that individuals could volunteer to submit samples if they wished. Linda Heron (LH) would keep a watching brief on it and feed back to the committee. **ACTION LH**

The RSPCA puppy contract has just been published LH will circulate. Members were also advised to look at the draft standard for dog breeders developed by the Dog Breeding and Welfare council on their web site. LH and Ann Taylor had carried out a survey of responsible breeders to see how close their practices were to the draft standard. It appeared that some of the criteria were considered unrealistic or unnecessary and that there appeared to be a move against keeping dogs in Kennels at all particularly in relation to the provision of additional heating that was not felt necessary for our breed as long as they were dry and out of drafts and the weather. LH to circulate link **ACTION LH**

The KC Puppy Plan was discussed and it was felt a letter should be written to the KC stating that although we viewed puppy socialisation as a very important aspect of puppy rearing that there were several areas of concern which needed discussion and the input of experienced breeders. It was noted that it appeared that no breeder input had been sort. It was also recommended that the breed's liaison representative raise the issue at that meeting. **ACTION MR**

AOB

The meeting was advised that the AHT are looking for blood samples from Labradors with mast cell tumours. They are also interested in samples from dogs that have never been affected as controls. It was recommended that breed club web sites have a

“causes” page to advertise these types of useful studies that are very relevant to Labradors.

Atopic dermatitis was another condition that was rather common in the breed and would be a useful area of study. The condition of nasal hyper-keratosis was raised and apparently there is a team in Switzerland looking at the condition and DNA cheek swabs were required. The chairman also gave an example of the use of camrossa ointment on a bitch with inflamed feet that worked very well. We must be careful of wording and can only state in public that breeders have found this useful.

Fiona Braddon (FB) to include good causes page on Breed Council Web site

ACTION FB

The Karlton Index was discussed this is a web site that campaigns for better breeders. It is run by a non breeder giving information to potential pet owners. Labradors are quite high on the league table of best practice on the health side (we were number five) author commended the breed on its health area of the breed council web site but she noted that our meeting minutes were not up to date on the web site. The committee will ask the breed council to make the health area more prominent. In general the meeting felt it beneficial to interact positively with what was considered a more balanced web site, such as this, as some are very biased against breeders.

The kennel club mate select site and the breed average inbreeding co-efficient and its relevance to the inbreeding co-efficient of many “top/good” dogs was discussed. Many people felt that although out crossing is necessary from time to time. Experienced breeders actually wanted to double up on positive points (including health aspects) If you shuffle the pack too much you have no idea of what you are bringing into the mixture and this helps good breeders to eliminate undesirable points. However, experienced breeders also have a better understanding of what is behind their stock. The counter argument is that the higher the inbreeding co-efficient the higher the likelihood of doubling up on the same genes some of which can have negative effects. The methodology the KC use to create this needs to be discussed and someone who understands and can evaluate the methodology needs to be approached for advice. It appears there is more than one method of working out inbreeding co-efficient and an opinion had been expressed (on facebook) that the KC methodology was a cumulative one from which the percentage would only increase over time. An example of breeding where an outcross was carried out every 3rd generation was discussed and many breeders felt this to be a “safe” way of proceeding. As a committee we need expert support to counter some of the arguments being put forward by the “anti pedigree dog” campaigners many of who were in authoritative positions. More information on the positive aspects of some long established “in bred” examples e.g. the Gillingham Cattle and Welsh Hill ponies were needed.

The meeting concluded by those present expressing the opinion that we had much work to do and that with just an annual gathering, events would overtake us if we did not take a pro-active stance and we needed to take the whole breed along with us and get smarter in the expression of well researched views and facts on the breed.