

**MEETING OF THE AGILITY LIAISON COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON
THURSDAY 17 JANUARY 2019 AT 10.30 AM IN THE BOARDROOM, THE
KENNEL CLUB, CLARGES STREET**

A G E N D A

- ITEM 1. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL**
- ITEM 2. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE TERM OF THE
COUNCIL**
- ITEM 3. TO ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE ONTO THE ACTIVITIES
COMMITTEE EFFECTIVE FROM JUNE 2019 TO MAY 2022**
- ITEM 4. TO ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE ONTO THE ACTIVITIES
HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP FOR THE TERM OF
THE COUNCIL**
- ITEM 5. PRESENTATION TO THE COUNCIL ON KENNEL CLUB
STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES**

The office will give a presentation to Council representatives giving details of the Kennel Club and Liaison Council structure and procedures and the role of Council representatives.

- ITEM 6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- ITEM 7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2018 (copies previously distributed).

Amendment to Regulation H(1)(A)11.f

The Council is invited to note that at its meeting on 12 July 2018 it recommended for approval an amendment to Regulation H(1)(A)9 which

included the following: 'Progression from Grade 5 will require the dog to have won four first places, two of which must be in agility classes.'

In the interests of clarity and brevity, this Regulation was reworded prior to consideration by the Activities Committee to state that 'Progression from each Grade will be determined by the eligibility for the class as referenced in Regulation H(1)(A)11.' which stated: 'Grade 6: Open to dogs which have gained a minimum of five first places at Grade 5 at Kennel Club Licensed Agility Shows, 3 first places must be gained in Agility (not jumping) classes'. However due to an oversight, Regulation H(1)(A)11.f. this was not amended in line with the Council's wishes.

The Council is invited to note that Regulation H(1)(A)11.f has now been amended by the office to reflect the Council's wish that Grade 6 should be open to dogs which have gained **four** first places at Grade 5, **two** of which must be in agility classes.

ITEM 8. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

(Pages 15 - 30)

a. The Council is invited to note that at its meeting on 2 October 2018, the Board approved a number of amendments to H Regulations, relating to the following issues:

- Progression structure

The Activities Committee considered the Council's recommendation that a 5-year moratorium be placed on any further changes to the progression structure, with the exception of minor amendments or corrections if necessary, and any changes relating to Championship classes. This would allow for the impact of the current changes to grading and progression to be fully realised before making any further amendments.

The Board approved the imposition of the 5-year moratorium as outlined above, with the exception of issues relating to health and welfare.

- Jump heights and height limits for dogs

The Committee considered the implementation date for the above, noting the Council's recommendation that the revised Regulations should come into effect on 1 January 2019, however, there were some concerns as to the practicalities of early implementation and whether an implementation date of 1 January 2019 would allow sufficient time for competitors, show organisers, and equipment manufacturers to prepare. It also acknowledged that there would be implications on office resources, such as alterations to the Kennel Club website and the production of FAQs to assist competitors. In addition it would be necessary for show processors to re-programme their systems to accommodate the new Intermediate height.

In view of these concerns the Committee recommended that the new implementation date for the revised Regulations H(1)(B)2 Height Limit for Dogs and Regulation H(1)(B)3 should be 1 January 2020. This recommendation was subsequently approved by the Board.

- Consequential Regulation amendments relating to equipment
- Removal of imperial measures in H Regulations

A full list of all amendments approved by the Board, together with effective dates, is attached.

(Annex A refers)

- b. Use of whistles - proposed new Regulation H(1)10.h
The Committee considered a proposed new Regulation to prevent the use of whistles in standard classes, however it did not accept that there was any necessity to make any amendment to H Regulations. It was of the view that there were other ways in which the issue may be addressed by show organisers wishing to exclude the use of whistles, such as the inclusion of a statement in schedules indicating that they may not be used, or via judges' contract documentation. Accordingly, it did not recommend approval of the proposed amendment.
- c. Restrictions on shows held on the same date
At its meeting on 18 January 2018, the Council noted that a new Customer Relationship Management database was currently under development by the Kennel Club, however this would not be in place until 2020. Until such time as the new system came into operation, it would not be possible to implement measures relating to clashing shows, such as the restriction of licences for shows within a specified distance of each other.
- The Council agreed that a further discussion on the issue should take place, and, accordingly, it is invited to consider whether any changes to the current procedures are necessary, and if so, what changes would be required. Any changes proposed by the Council would be subject to approval by the Activities Committee and the Board.
- d. Issues faced by agility judges
The Council had requested that both the Judging Panel and the Activities Judges Sub-Group give further consideration to issues facing agility judges, in light of the Council's views on the matter with a view for further discussion.

It is invited to note that the Sub-Group had noted the Council's concerns regarding the number of agility judges who were retiring from judging, for a variety of reasons, including health, age, and possibly issues relating to social media. It also accepted that the overloading of judges was also an issue.

The Sub-Group noted that the concerns applied mainly to agility, and acknowledged that efforts must be made to ensure that enough new judges were being trained to support the growing number of participants in the discipline. This included the provision of an adequate number of seminars, and also mentoring services which were necessary to ensure that new judges felt confident.

Accordingly, it requested that the matter be referred back to the Agility Liaison Council for a further discussion on ways in which existing judges could be supported to prevent them retiring from judging, and ways in which new judges may be encouraged.

ITEM 9. AGILITY STRATEGY REVIEW WORKING PARTY

The Council is invited to note 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 Agility Strategy Review Working Party be disbanded.

ITEM 10. ACCREDITED TRAINERS ANNUAL SEMINAR AND ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP (Pages 31 - 32)

The Council is invited to note a written report from Mr Huckle following the Accredited Trainers Annual Seminar and the Activities Judges Sub-Group meeting held on 9 October 2018 and 1 November 2018 respectively. (Note: Mr Huckle is no longer a Council representative so will not be present at the meeting).

(Annex B refers)

ITEM 11. ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP

The Council is invited to note a report from Mr Chandler following the Sub-Group's meeting held on 10 September 2018.

(Annex C refers – to follow)

ITEM 12. REVIEW OF PANELS (Pages 33 - 34)

The Council is invited to review the membership, roles, and remits of the following Panels, and to assess the processes used by them over the previous three years, with a view to determining the best approach to be taken by the Council over its forthcoming term of office in line with the timescales agreed at the Council's previous meeting.

(Annex D refers)

Equipment Panel

Remit: To be the first point of contact with equipment manufacturers for approval of any new equipment, or for approval of any modifications to currently approved equipment. To review currently approved equipment to ensure that the specifications are still relevant in today's agility arena, and to ensure that all equipment is safe to use. To take instructions from the Kennel

Club to look at and advise regarding any concerns raised by the Agility Community.

Membership
Mr S Chandler
Mrs J Gardner
Mr M Hallam
Mr C Huckle (no longer on Council)
Mr K Smith

Grading Panel

Remit: To review the grading structure.

Membership
Mrs P Baltes (no longer on Council)
Ms J Hudson (no longer on Council)
Ms S Hawkswell
Mr I McDonald
Mrs Y Croxford
Mr A Dornford-Smith

Agility Governance Panel

Remit: To examine issues relating to show management, Regulations, and communications, and to consider ways in which the Council could be more effective in making decisions on behalf of the agility community.

Membership
Mr S Chandler
Mr M Cavill
Mrs J Gardner
Mr K Smith
Ms J Harker (no longer on Council)

Height Classification Panel

Remit: To consider issues relating to jump heights, including health and welfare issues, and to consider ways of determining optimum jump heights for all dogs dependent upon height and conformation. Also to consider issues related to dog heights and measuring.

Membership
Mrs P Baltes (no longer on Council)
Mrs Y Croxford
Mr M Cavill
Mr M Hallam
Mrs S Hawkswell

Judging Panel

Remit: To work in conjunction with the Activities Judges Sub Group to consider any issues relating to judging, including competency and education –

to include issues arising from Continuing Personal Development and Mentoring schemes.

Membership

Mrs J Gardner

Mr C Huckle (no longer on Council)

Mrs L Olden

ITEM 13. REPORT FROM THE EQUIPMENT PANEL (Pages 35 - 36)

- a. The Council is invited to note a report from the Equipment Panel, and to discuss any issues arising from it.

(Annex E refers)

- b. Height of pivot point on the see-saw

At its previous meeting, the Council discussed a suggestion that the maximum height of the see-saw plank, measured at the pivot point, be amended to 600mm. The Council noted that Regulation H(1)(B)3.m stated that the height of the central bracket measured from the ground to the top of the plank should be 610mm minimum and 685mm maximum. It was of the view that it would be desirable for all seesaws to be of a single standardised height, and it requested that the matter be referred to the Equipment Panel for detailed consideration.

In the discussions held by the Council representatives with their regions, and at the Council's meeting in July 2018, the views were unanimous in support of standardising equipment. It was felt that the different heights of the pivot points resulted in the point at which the see saw tips could vary. The original discussion item asked for 600mm at the central bracket. The Council was of the view that standardising at 610mm which is the height of most see-saws would minimise changes needed to clubs' equipment.

It is invited to consider a proposal from the Equipment Panel to amend Regulation H(1)(B)3.m. as follows:

Regulation H(1)(B)3.m.

TO:

See-Saw—This obstacle will consist of a plank firmly mounted on a central bracket. The length of the plank must be 3.66m. The width should be 254mm minimum and 305mm maximum. The height of the central bracket measured from the ground to the top of the plank should be 610mm ~~minimum and 685mm maximum~~. The last 914mm from each end should be a different colour to indicate the area with which the dog should make contact. The plank should have a non-slip surface with no slats. The See-Saw must start to tip and then touch the ground between 2–3 seconds after a weight of 1 kilogram has been placed in the middle of the down contact area.

(Deletion struck through)

ITEM 14. NUMBER OF CHAMPIONSHIP AGILITY SHOWS (Pages 37 - 38)

At its meeting on 14 June 2018, the Activities Committee discussed the number of Championship Agility shows, noting that at present there was no maximum number in place. It was of the view that it may be a positive step to introduce a cap on the number of Championship licences issued.

It directed that the issue be referred to the Council for its consideration, and accordingly, the Council is requested to review the number of Championship shows, and to consider setting a cap at a suitable level.

Should this number already have been reached, it would be possible to state that, in future, the Kennel Club would advertise for new applicants and that ad-hoc applications would no longer be considered.

It is invited to note that at present the number of Agility Certificates available each year is as follows:

Small – 31

Medium – 31

Large – 32

(Annex F refers)

ITEM 15. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

No proposals have been received.

ITEM 16. DISCUSSION ITEMSa. Mrs J GardnerAdvertisement of shows

There is an assumption amongst the agility community that all shows being advertised had already applied for, and been granted, their show licences. However Mrs Gardner wishes to highlight that this is not the case, and that some shows being advertised have not only not had their licences approved, but have not even applied for these licences.

Mrs Gardner is of the view that this situation should be clarified, in the interests of competitors and judges who may plan their attendance at shows only to find that a licence for an advertised show is not subsequently granted by the Kennel Club.

She wishes to highlight that anyone wishing to check the licensed status of a show may do so at the Kennel Club's Find A Show page:

<https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/services/public/findashow/>

The site displays show dates which have been allocated, including those which have not yet been licensed, noting that licences only need to be applied for 6 months prior to the show. It is possible to filter results by discipline, date, location, and by a further filter on a club name or licence type.

- b. Ms T Stilgoe Mrs J Gardner
Running Orders in Championship Classes

Ms Stilgoe wishes to draw the attention of the Council to the issue of running orders in Championship classes. She is of the view that it is unfair on handlers with more than one dog who are drawn to run consecutively, especially when there are quite a number of dogs in Championship classes these days.

Ms Stilgoe notes the importance of warming up dogs prior to competing, but is concerned that being drawn consecutively in Championship classes does not allow for the first dog to be cooled down, or for the second dog to be warmed up.

Accordingly, she wishes the Council to discuss the possibility of amending Regulation H(1)7.a., to ensure that no handlers have a consecutive running order in a Championship class. Ms Stilgoe's suggestion is that the Regulation be amended to read as follows:

Regulation H(1)7. Ballot for Championship Running Orders

- a. Agility Round and Jumping Round - A draw for the running order of the Agility and Jumping Rounds must be made prior to the Show. The relevant competitors must be notified before the day of the Show. The dogs must run in the order in which they are drawn. **After the draw has been carried out, and where a handler runs more than one dog in a Championship Class, there should be a minimum of *x-number (suggest 10 or 12)* dogs between a handler's runs. This should be done by the show secretary prior to the issue of the running orders to competitors, and should be done by moving the later drawn dog further down the running order list. If this is not possible (because of consecutive draws at the end of the class), the first drawn dog should be moved up the running order list.**

(Insertion in bold.)

- c. Mr A Stafford Mr K Smith
Removal of the Table from the list of obstacles
 Mr Stafford wishes the Council to consider removal of the Table from the list of obstacles as specified in Regulation H(1)(B)3.e. He is of the view that the Table has not been used for many years and that there is no set way of judging it.
- d. Cornwall Agility Club Mr M Tait
Geographical Spread of Championship Agility Shows

The Club wishes the Council to discuss and review the geographical location of Kennel Club Championship Agility Shows throughout the UK, and to make recommendations to improve the geographical spread.

It wishes to highlight that there is a very active agility community in the South West which feels itself to be disadvantaged, with the nearest Championship Shows at Chippenham and Gillingham, in excess of 120 miles from the nearest locations in Cornwall for Large Championship competitors, and 150 miles for Small and Medium Championship competitors.

Cornwall Agility Club also wishes the Council to discuss the criteria used by the Kennel Club when considering applications for Championship status, and to consider whether these should be published with the objective of assisting clubs in formulating successful applications.

- e. Ms H Grantham Mr H Hallam
Increase of Minimum and Maximum Number of Obstacles
 Ms Grantham requests the Council to discuss a change to the current Regulation regarding minimum and maximum obstacles that can be used in an agility or jumping course. It is suggested that the maximum number of obstacles should be increased to 22.

Regulation H(1)(B)1.a.(3) currently states:

Design—The course should require a dog to traverse at least 10 obstacles but not more than 20 and all jump obstacles in any class should be the same height. All obstacles should have a minimum of 5m and up to a maximum of 10m between centres of consecutive obstacles using the straight line centre-to-centre method.

With ever increasing demand and pressure on judges to design grade appropriate, safe, yet challenging courses, a maximum of 20 obstacles is unduly limiting for judges. Some judges, having designed a course, then realise that 21 or 22 obstacles are required to maintain the test they wish to set, as a result of which it is necessary to remove parts of the test and redesign the course to conform with the Regulation above.

The above is also applicable to the minimum number of obstacles permitted within a course which is currently set at 10. This minimum is hardly used and Ms Grantham is of the view that it is not possible to set a sufficient standard of challenge using just 10 obstacles, especially in agility classes where four of those obstacles must be the three contacts and weaves. The Council is requested to discuss raising this minimum number to 15.

Value for money is part of the judges training program and judges are encouraged to set courses more towards the maximum number than the minimum, therefore most courses are set within the 17 to 20 obstacle mark. Increasing the minimum to 15 and the maximum to 22 would give judges flexibility to design courses that test a good level of ability and

contribute to raising the standard of agility competitors as a whole. The only adverse implication may be that the course time matrix would require reviewing, however it is likely that this will be reviewed as a result of reduction in jump heights being reduced so 2020 may be the optimum time to apply this possible change.

- f. Ms N Cuddy Mrs L Olden
Regulation H 28.a.(9) (Disqualification and Forfeit of Awards)
 Ms Cuddy wishes the Council to discuss a suggested amendment to the above Regulation as follows:

Regulation H28.a.(9)

TO:

A dog may be disqualified by the Board from any award whether an objection has been lodged or not, if proved amongst other things to have been;

~~(9) Handled by the scheduled judge's spouse, immediate family or is resident at the same address as the scheduled judge. This shall not apply to a judge appointed in an emergency.~~

(Deletion struck through.)

Under the terms of the suggested amendment, judges would be permitted to judge a spouse, immediate family member or resident at the same address in all classes at Kennel Club Licenced shows, with no exceptions.

Rationale

Since its introduction in January 2012 the above Regulation has caused problems for both show organisers and competitors alike:

- Experienced judges have withdrawn from judging due to the restrictions it places on their immediate family when competing, which has a negative impact on Agility.
- Show organisers have found it much more difficult to find a good range of different judges for their shows to support a broad range of challenges being tested.
- Assigning judges to classes once a contract is accepted has become more problematic for show organisers. Often judges' classes need to be reassigned and show organisation reworked once shows are closed and entries known.
- Competitors may enter classes at a show, to find that their entry is no longer allowed due to a change in a judge's class allocations.

A proposal to address these issues was discussed by the Council at its meeting in January 2015 but its recommendations were not recommended for approval by the Activities Committee due to concerns regarding different criteria being applied for agility to those in other disciplines. However, in both breed and field trial competitions the above regulation is not in force.

Agility judges are bound to judge by the H Regulations and appropriate Codes of Best Practice, and as such their decisions are highly objective, producing results which are based on timing and accuracy. A clear appeal path is also in place should there be any cause for concern.

It should also be noted that this issue has been addressed by the FCI due to similar concerns and arguments and amendments have recently been agreed to allow judges to judge spouses and family members.

ITEM 17. INTERNATIONAL AGILITY FESTIVAL (Pages 39 - 40)

To note a written report on the arrangements for the Kennel Club International Agility Festival, due to be held on 8 - 11 August 2019.
(Annex G refers)

ITEM 18. AGILITY TEAM GB (Pages 41 - 56)

The Council is invited to note a report on Agility Team GB's attendance at the 2018 European Open Championships and World Championships.
(Annexes H, I and J refer)

ITEM 19. FIVE YEAR STRATEGY (Pages 57 - 58)

To note the items on the Council's five year strategic plan.
(Annex K refers)

ITEM 20. 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 21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the Council's next meeting will take place on 11 July 2019. Any items for the agenda must be submitted by 12 April 2019.

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.**

