

Minutes of the Meeting of 18th October 2008, held at Norton Lindsay Village Hall, Warwickshire.

Present: Bryan Mayoh (Chair), Nicola Hadley (Secretary), Allan Trigg (DCC), Ted Brearley (NHCC), Ann Rolph (DRCC), Tony O'Neill (ESCC), Don Payne (CCC), Caroline Smith (RVCC), Nikki Matthews (CSCC), Joan Phillips (PVCC), Penny Bell (NACC), Ken Yates (NTWCC), Rex Matthews (RCC), Simon Neesam (ACC, Item 3 onwards).

1. Meeting Administration

1a. Apologies for Absence: None required.

1b. Minutes of the Meeting of 27th October 2007 (already circulated)

All present agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting were a true record.

1c. Matters Arising from the Meeting on 29th January 2007 (and not on the Agenda)

It was agreed that all Matters Arising were dealt with by the Agenda.

1d. Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman thanked all Councillors for devoting their time to attend the Meeting. Once more, there were a number of important matters to discuss; so that a meeting of circa four hours would be required..

In response to the Chairman's query as to whether any clubs had sufficient members that they could claim two votes, Mr O'Neill responded that the ESCC had over 200 members, so that this would apply.

2. Administration of BCC

2a. Update of Financials

A copy of the Financial information prepared by the Treasurer was circulated. This indicated that the Council had cash assets of £117.72 at the end of 2007. The principal expenditure of the year had been for production of Standards Books (£1,621.49) offset by adverts (£760).

At the end of September 2008 cash assets had increased to £291.65, to which Mr Matthews added a sum of £110 from sales of Standards Books, and which would also increase by circa £80 from sales of advertising space on the web site. Additional costs (£309.71) and income (£367.00) had arisen in connection with the Standards Book. Otherwise, the major expenditure during the year to date had been for production and hosting of the web site (£144.38). Income from Prefix Registrations had been £397 in 2007 but had risen to £437 in 2008.

2b. Standards Booklet

The Chairman reported that he and Mr O'Neill still held considerable numbers of Standards Booklets, possibly reflecting an over-aggressive view of the numbers that would be required for sale. Mr Matthews also had surplus booklets, which he

endeavoured to return, but he was advised that his sales efforts during the year had been so successful that it would be best for him to retain them. Additional and modified pages would need to be produced for all of these booklets, to reflect new / modified standards, so that booklets sold by the Council were always up to date.

2c. Publication of New / Revised Standards

The Chairman reminded Councillors that the original intention had been to print new pages for additional / modified standards and to circulate them via CAVIES. However, the quoted costs of 800 copies of each back-to-back page were in excess of £100, so that this approach was not feasible.

It was agreed that three approaches would be followed:

- New / modified standards would be published in CAVIES so that everyone was aware of their existence, with fanciers able to annotate minor changes in their copies of the Standards Booklet.
- Copies of such modified or new standards could be downloaded free of charge from the web site and printed in an A5 version on the fancier's own computer. Mr O'Neill will produce updates in a format suitable for A5 printing, along with instructions on how to achieve this; and the Chairman will test these procedures.
- For those not having internet access, updated pages could be obtained from the Chairman or Secretary, at a cost of £3 per set. Because of the small numbers of copies likely to be required, these will be produced via computer printer.

2d. Prefix Registration Scheme

The Prefix Registrar, Mrs Smith, reported that the Scheme continued to generate considerable revenues for the Council, much of these from people that are not even members of Specialist Clubs or who appear not to show! The recent production of the BCC website had increased the number of Prefix requests; and it appeared that the provision of a Registration Certificate was a significant attraction.

However, one problem that did occur from time to time was that people appeared to regard the certificate as some kind of BCC approval of the person's abilities as a breeder, which, of course, it is not; and complaints on mistreatment of cavies by 'registered breeders' were sometimes addressed to the BCC.

After a discussion on this issue it was agreed that

- The certificate would be modified to state clearly that the BCC is simply registering the holder's right to use the prefix at cavy shows in the UK but that this does not in any way indicate the abilities or expertise of the holder as a breeder of cavies;
- Any persons complaining to the BCC in regard to the treatment by 'registered breeders' of their cavies would be advised of this fact and asked to address their complaints to either the National or the Southern Cavy Club;
- In the event that these, or any Specialist Clubs, advise the BCC of proven cases of mistreatment of cavies or other disciplinary infringements, then the BCC would have the right to withdraw the prefix registration.

It was further agreed that, due to the effect of increasing costs of paper and postage in reducing the margin on Prefix Registrations, the cost of these would be increased to £6.

In response to a question from Mr Trigg, the Secretary stated that Mrs Smith would be given update access to the website so that this could show an up-to-date list of prefixes, which should be a great improvement on the present means of communication.

Mrs Smith was thanked for her efforts as Registrar

2e Website

The Chairman advised Councillors that he had agreed the Secretary's suggestion of developing and setting up a website, along with the associated expenditure, because this provided the best means of maintaining an easily-accessible reference of BCC standards, rules, meetings etc. In addition, the site would contain references to Specialist Club websites and those of other cavy clubs, photos of cavy breeds, articles and adverts. He suggested that such websites would provide an increasing means of promoting the fancy and attracting new fanciers, equivalent to the long-gone days when this was achieved by the presence of 'Fur & Feather' in newsagents. The more up-to-date, relevant information that cavy club websites contained, and the more that they referred to each other, the more likely they would be encountered prominently on Google Search lists.

The Secretary stated that the costs of the website had already been significantly offset by adverts and requests for prefix registrations generated by visits. The website was only in an embryonic state, and could be improved further; and to this end she asked Councillors to advise her of any suggestions for improvement. It was intended to update the website every two months or thereabouts. All Councillors were asked to encourage their clubs to set up websites and to provide links to / from these sites and the BCC site.

2f. Common Specialist Club Rules

Whilst several clubs had implemented a suitably modified version of the Common Specialist Club Rules suggested by the Council, others had taken no action. The Chairman reminded Councillors that these had been drawn up to be clear and logical, unlike some of the rules formerly encountered; and incorporated reference to BCC procedures that all Specialist Clubs had agreed to follow. Failure to establish proper rules could cause problems in the event of complaints by members against Specialist Club rulings or actions.

2g. Numbers of Club Representatives

The ESCC had written to request that, in addition to the number of votes to which it was entitled at Council meetings as a result of having over 200 members, it should also be able to send additional Representatives. The Chairman and Mr O'Neill outlined the arguments used to support this request. The Chairman then went on to outline the implications of agreeing to the request on Council Rules 3.7 and 3.8, relating to voting majorities, in the particular case (which hopefully would not arise) where ESCC Representatives disagreed on an issue relating to ESCC Standards or ESCC Breeds.

Councillors discussed the following Rule change relating to this issue, namely that an addition be made to Rule 2.2 stating that ‘ Clubs entitled to additional votes may, with the prior agreement of the Council, send appropriate numbers of additional Representatives. In this event the agreement of any of the Club’s Representatives shall be deemed to signify the agreement of the Club for the purposes of Rules 3.7 and 3.8.’ This was agreed by Council by a majority of 11 votes to 1.

The Chairman then raised an issue in regard to the ESCC, which he had not wished to discuss earlier in case it affected the principle of the decision on the number of Representatives. This had arisen after the Council had agreed at its last meeting that the ESCC should, if it so desired, cater for Guide Standard Selves; and the ESCC AGM had subsequently voted in favour of this principle. The ESCC had then put on classes for Guide Standard Selves at its Stock Shows; but at the first of these, at Keighley, the Chairman and Secretary of the Club had refused to permit Caramels to enter this class. This was in spite of their having been advised by the ESCC Representative that Caramels were a Guide Standard breed and told by the Chairman of the BCC that Caramels should be allowed in the Guide Standard class and that refusal to do so would constitute a breach of BCC Rules.

Whilst the principle of whether Caramels should continue to be regarded as a GS Self would be discussed later, they certainly were at the time of Keighley, as confirmed by the BCC Standards Booklet. The Chairman therefore stated his concern that, whilst the ESCC was reasonably seeking additional representation on the Council in the light of its large membership and its significance as the only Specialist Club that has an entire section devoted to its breeds at most shows, it was not acting reasonably if it chose to ignore decisions of the Council as it saw fit. Accordingly, he suggested that the Council should make its approval of the specific case of the ESCC’s having additional Representatives conditional on the Chairman and Secretary of the Club’s writing to him to confirm their and the Club’s agreement to the Principles and Rules of the BCC and that they will, henceforth, follow the stipulations of Council rulings in the areas of its remit.

The Council unanimously agreed this proposal. The Chairman will therefore write to the Chairman and Secretary of the ESCC seeking these reasonable undertakings. Once these are received, the ESCC may, if it so wishes, send one extra Representative to the Council for every additional 100 members that it has over 100.

1. Potential New Standards / Changes to Existing Standards

3a. Significance of Missing Toes, Extra Toes

Mr Brearley had raised this topic after the appearance of ‘Giant’ cavies with different numbers of toes than the normal form. These cavies were known to have aggressive temperaments; and all Councillors agreed that these should not be eligible to be exhibited in the U.K., whether as Standardised, Guide Standard or New / Emerging Varieties. After a discussion on how to identify such cavies, Mr Brearley’s proposal, that ‘Other than four toes on the front feet or three toes on the back feet’ should be added to the list of Serious Physical Abnormalities that should lead to disqualification, was agreed unanimously.

The issue of excluding vestigial toes, which are frequently encountered on otherwise normal cavies, from this disqualification was discussed; but it was decided that defining such a condition would cause undue difficulties, so that in such cases fanciers should

use one of the well-known methods of painless removal, or seek veterinary help, before the cavy is shown.

3b. Solid Agouti

Mrs Bell circulated a proposed standard for the Solid Agouti cavy that had been agreed by the NACC, and presented some examples of the breed. The Chairman stated his opinion that the shorter ticking that gives rise to the appearance of ticking on the belly would almost inevitably lead to a darker appearance of the body colour; and he was concerned not to unfairly penalize the Solid Agouti for this, should the breed be standardised. Councillors concurred that the examples presented were indeed somewhat darker than normal Agoutis. It was therefore agreed to add to the proposed Standard, under the Requirements for Colour, the comment that: 'The colour of the Solid Agouti is likely to appear darker than that of the corresponding 'Normal' Agouti. So long as the ticking is sharp, distinct and even, this should not be penalized.'

It was further agreed to clarify comments on ticking on feet to state that 'The ticking on the feet is likely to be less pronounced than on the rest of the body. This is a relatively minor fault.' A disqualification on 'Nails and Foot Pads different from those specified in the Standard' was incorporated into both 'Normal' and Solid Agouti Standards.

The Council unanimously agreed that the Solid Agouti be standardised as per the proposed standard but with the addition of these changes.

3c. Dutch Standardised Colours (Chocolate Agouti)

Mr Trigg proposed that Chocolate Agouti be added to the list of colours that should be recognised as standardised in Dutch. The Chairman reminded Councillors that the topic of standardised colours in Dutch had been discussed 12 months previously, and the Dutch CC had been asked to consider the removal of some anomalies that seemed to make little sense these days, namely that Lilac Dutch are standardised but Beige Dutch are not; whilst Cream Agouti Dutch are standardised but Lemon Agouti Dutch are not; whilst the Standard for Cream Dutch seems unable to decide whether it is describing cream or buff colour and effectively allows both.

He had attended a meeting of the DCC Executive and had presented arguments on these points. In his view he had countered any objections to his proposal that all standardised colours of Self and Agouti should be recognised in Dutch (other than DEG, which might be confused with Red), as is the case for Tricolours; but much to his non-surprise, after he had left the meeting the DCC Executive had determined to reject this proposal. He did not wish to make a constitutional crisis out of this difference of opinion, but he continued to believe that a 'piecemeal' approach to determining which colours of Dutch should be standardised was illogical and confusing to the rest of the fancy.

After a discussion on the matter it was agreed that the Chocolate Agouti Dutch should be standardised; but that the DCC should be advised that the Council was uneasy about an approach to standardization of colours in Dutch that considers the matter 'colour by colour'; so that if further requests for new standardised colours were brought to the Council it might well be minded to recognize all standardised colours of Self (other than DEG) or Agouti in their Dutch form.

3d. Selves: Colours of Ears & Pads

Mr O'Neill presented proposed changes to the definitions of colour of ears & pads for various Selves. These had been identified as necessary after publication of the existing standards in the BCC Standards Booklet had led some judges to take what were generally regarded as inappropriate decisions in certain cases, particularly in relation to PE Goldens. It was pointed out that problems with the Self Standard would also affect other breeds, such as Cresteds, whose standards refer to the ESCC Standard. Following a discussion it was unanimously agreed that the wording on colour of ears and pads in the various breeds of Self should be modified to:

- Cream: Eyes dark ruby. Ears pink. Pads pink.
- Buff: Eyes dark ruby. Ears pink. Pads pink.
- Saffron: Eyes pink. Ears pink. Pads pink.
- Golden: Ears pink/golden. Pads pink/golden.
- Lilac: Eyes pink. Ears pink/ lilac. Pads pink/lilac.
- Beige: Eyes pink. Ears pink/ beige. Pads pink/beige
- Chocolate: Eyes dark ruby. Ears chocolate. Pads chocolate.

4. Proposals for New / Modified Guide Standards

4a. Non-Standardised Colour Variants of Standardised Varieties

The Chairman reported that the controversy regarding the status of Caramels that he had already reported had illustrated one point that had not been apparent previously. This was that the existing BCC Ruling that 'Non- Standardised Colour Variants of Standardised Varieties should be regarded as having a de facto Guide Standard, the guidance points being as for the standardised breed but with colour definition(s) remaining to be specified', had a particular difficulty when applied to Selves. This was that shade of colour is so fundamental in defining Selves that to give no guidance on this point to judges is likely to create considerable difficulties for them. Because of this the Chairman had suggested to the ESCC that they might wish to propose a change to this rule, to exempt Self varieties on the grounds that shade of colour is so fundamental to these that a specific Guide Standard must be defined for each colour. The ESCC Executive had agreed to this suggestion and was proposing this change.

For the RVCC Mrs Smith reported that, when the Standards Committee had discussed Caramels, they had encountered the same problem as had the ESCC subsequently, in that eye and body colour were rather difficult to distinguish from Beige, and more work was required on these points before a specific Guide Standard could be defined. She suggested that the RVCC had also been under a misapprehension as regards the status of Caramels (as a Guide Standard rather than New / Emerging Variety).

The Council then voted unanimously to modify the ruling on 'Non- Standardised Colour Variants of Standardised Varieties' to state that: 'Non- Standardised Colour Variants of Standardised Varieties will be regarded as having a de facto Guide Standard, the guidance points being as for the standardised breed but with colour definition(s) remaining to be specified, with the exception of Self varieties, for which shade of colour is so fundamental that a specific Guide Standard must be defined for each colour.'

4b. Specific Guide Standard for PE Cream

Given the above change, Mr O'Neill proposed a specified Guide Standard for the PE Cream. It was suggested that this would bear an uncanny resemblance to the Standard for the Cream, minus the points but with a somewhat different requirement for eye colour, this to be pink. This was agreed unanimously.

The ESCC did not wish to propose a specific Guide Standard for the Caramel at this time; so that, given the ruling in 4a above, this variety would revert to being a New / Emerging Variety rather than a Guide Standard breed.

4c. Agouti and Argente Variants of Standardised Varieties

The Chairman reported that the initial draft of Mr Brearley's recent article on Silver Agouti Himalayans had raised the issue of whether Agouti versions of Standardised Varieties should be regarded as having Guide Standards, in the same way as Colour variants were. Mr Brearley had not been alone in being confused on this point. Mr O'Neill stated that the Council had specifically rejected the possibility that Marked variants of Standardised Varieties should be regarded as having Guide Standards, but the Chairman responded that there was a clear distinction between Ticked and Marked varieties; and it should be obvious to any judge how, for example, to assess a ticked American Crested.

For the Crested CC Mr Payne stated that the AGM had discussed this matter and determined not to accept ticked versions of the American Crested as either Full or Guide Standard cavies. The Crested CC would therefore be concerned if the Council voted to overturn this decision. The Chairman responded that, once more, he did not propose to make a major issue of a point that currently had relatively little practical application; but it was obvious how ticked versions of Standardised cavies should be judged, and their presence in New / Emerging Variety classes was illogical and unfair on genuinely new varieties. He was concerned that a somewhat parochial approach by some Specialist Clubs was leading to situations that would appear not to make sense to the cavy fancy at large, and might therefore tend to undermine the credibility of the BCC.

The Council voted not to change the existing ruling on Colour Variants of Standardised Varieties to include Agouti or Argente versions.

4d. New / Emerging Varieties

Mrs Smith updated the Council with the RVCC's progress in defining the characteristics of various New / Emerging Varieties. These are to be published in CAVIES.

The principal new varieties that have fundamentally different characteristics from existing breeds are:

- The Sable, which occurs in black (known as 'Seal') and chocolate ('Chocolate') - based forms;
- The Swiss, formerly known as the 'Swiss Teddy';
- The Lunkarya, which is currently only recognised in the Peruvian variant.

Amongst new varieties that are variants of existing breeds are:

- The Self Caramel, which is the chocolate-based version of the Slate;
- The so-called 'Marten Sable', which has been more appropriately renamed the Sable Fox, and will be considered for transfer to the National Fox & Tan Cavy Club (see below);
- The so-called Chinchilla, for which both phenotype (physical requirements) and genotype (both Agouti Fox and AA Agouti versions have been shown) remain to be clarified, for which further information is required from the breeder before outline guidance notes can be produced.

Solid Argentes, being colour variants of the corresponding Solid Agoutis, will have Guide Standard status from 1st January 2009.

5. Breed Club Responsibilities

5a. Report on Progress of Alpaca

Mrs Phillips reported on the progress of the Alpaca within the Peruvian Varieties Cavy Club. The number of Stock Shows held by the Club had been increased to six, with classes for Peruvians, Alpacas and clipped versions of both available and an average entry of 20 cavies; and local clubs had been encouraged to put on classes for clipped longhairs in the hope of encouraging more fanciers to take up both of the Club's breeds. She confirmed that clipped cavies could not, of course, compete against unclipped cavies in Open classes. Alpacas had gained considerable success, with BIS at the two major shows of the year, Bradford & London Championship Shows, gained by representatives of the breed. The Alpaca was now fully established as a major breed in the cavy fancy.

Mr Matthews commented that the reported entries at Stock Shows were not very large and that it would surely be better to combine the CSCC and the PVCC to form a single, more viable Longhaired Cavy Club. Mrs Matthews suggested that several leading Alpaca breeders still regarded the breed as a poor relation in the PVCC and so refused to join the Club.

The Chairman stated that it was clear that the Alpaca was achieving success as a show variety, and there seemed no point in revisiting the Council's decision that the breed be catered for by the PVCC. His personal view was that longhairs would indeed be better catered for by a single club, which would have a larger membership and be more likely to generate good entries at its Stock Shows. However, this would only happen if both the PVCC and the CSCC agreed to merge, and there had been great reluctance to this on the part of one of these in the past. Whilst there were two Clubs, it would at least make sense for them to hold Stock Shows at the same venue, perhaps using the same judge, since many exhibitors kept both CSCC and PVCC breeds.

5b. Potential Formation of Fox & Tan Cavy Club

The Chairman reported that the RVCC had agreed to the formation of a Fox & Tan Cavy Club, subject to the approval of the BCC. The organisers of the proposed club had liaised with him closely about the details of its formation, in order to ensure that it met BCC requirements. They had established a set of rules, in line with the BCC Guidelines on such, a Steering Committee to organise the Club pending elections, and had obtained almost 50 potential members (who had already paid subscriptions, these to be refunded

in the event that the BCC denied the application for the new club). So far, this seemed like an exemplary approach to setting up a new club, and the Council was now asked to approve its formation.

The only potential concern that he had was that, as new breeds were approved, if each one determined to have its own breed club, then unless the number of fanciers increased proportionately, which has not so far been the case, then the average membership in each club would be likely to decline. However, this was not a strong reason to prevent the formation of a Specialist Club for breeds that were somewhat different from any others.

Councillors discussed the matter and were reassured that, in publicising the formation of the proposed club, its organisers had not pre-empted any BCC decision. They then voted 12 for, 0 against, with 1 abstention, in favour of the formation of the Fox & Tan Cavy Club. This will come into existence on 1st January 2009, and the Club will be invited to send a Representative to the BCC after this date.

5c. Argente, Tricolours / Bicolours, Teddy, Lunkarya, Sheba Mini Yak

The Representatives of the National Agouti CC, National Tortoise & White CC and Rex CC confirmed that their respective clubs had no wish at present to cater for the Argente, Tricolour/ Bicolour and Teddy respectively. The Chairman reiterated his comments that certain clubs should consider the problems that declining membership could pose to their future viability, and might review their scope in this light.

It was confirmed that the Lunkarya would be developed by the RVCC. Mr Matthews suggested that, should these one day be standardised, it would be logical that they be catered for by the PVCC. The Chairman agreed that they were, indeed, a Peruvian-type variety, so that this might well be the case. Although the path to standardisation might be a long one in the case of this variety, given the difficulty of writing a standard for a cavy that some of its adherents believe should be 'scruffy' or ungroomed; it might be a good idea for the PVCC to liaise with the RVCC in guiding and monitoring its development.

The Chairman anticipated a heated debate as regards the Sheba Mini Yak, with Representatives of the Abyssinian CC, Peruvian Varieties CC, Sheltie & Coronet CC and Rare Varieties CC all expected to argue forcefully why their clubs should be given responsibility for this exciting emerging breed. However, it was suggested that, instead, the matter might be left for resolution until one had actually been sighted; and this was agreed unanimously.

5d. Guide Standard Selves

The Chairman reminded Councillors that at its last meeting Council had agreed that the ESCC would be the most appropriate body to control the development of Guide Standard Selves, this being the only Specialist Club that did not fulfil this role for Guide Standard examples of its breeds. He added that he had proposed this change to the ESCC AGM and it had been agreed by a clear majority of members, who had also agreed with his suggestion that both the ESCC and the RVCC should continue to put on classes for such cavies.

Subsequently there had been unhappiness in the RVCC about this decision, with a vote taken at its AGM that it would not put on classes for GS Selves if they were under the control of the ESCC. The RVCC had not responded to the Chairman's offer to intercede with other Specialist Clubs to seek approval for the RVCC to put on classes for all GS cavies, rather than just those under its remit.

The ESCC Executive had apparently then agreed with the RVCC Executive that both clubs would put on classes for the GS Selves but that the RVCC would cater for them, even though this was contrary to the vote taken at the ESCC AGM. However, the intention was that both clubs would be involved in any decisions in regard to standardisation of these breeds.

The Chairman suggested that the major difficulty in regard to GS Selves lay in the use of the word 'cater'. He believed that the intention of the ESCC and the RVCC was to work in co-operation in developing these breeds, but with the RVCC taking the major role in their promotion. There was no difficulty in this. However, the word 'cater' has a specific meaning in BCC Rules 3.7 and 3.8, in that these require a 2/3 majority of Council to change the standard for a breed or to move it from one Specialist Club to another without the agreement of the club that caters for the breed. Despite the best intentions of the present Executives, the situation could still arise that the members of one Club might vote for standardisation of a GS Self breed whilst the other did not. The BCC would then have to resolve this situation.

In particular, if the RVCC were deemed to 'cater' for GS Selves for BCC purposes, then if the ESCC voted for standardisation of a GS Self breed and the RVCC did not, it would require a 2/3 majority of Council to standardise the breed. Similarly, if such a breed were standardised but the RVCC opposed a move to the ESCC, it would require a 2/3 majority to effect such a transfer to the ESCC. This was a nonsensical situation as regards a Self breed, which would not apply to standardisation of a GS variety of any other standardised breed; and it was this situation that he had specifically referred to when proposing the motion that ESCC members had passed.

He suggested that it was probably not this interpretation of the meaning of 'cater' that the ESCC and RVCC intended, more the issue of who would have prime responsibility for the development of these breeds. Mrs Smith agreed with this interpretation, and stated that in similar situations the phrase 'prime custody' had been used.

The Chairman therefore proposed that Council should welcome the decision of the ESCC and the RVCC to work together in developing GS Selves, and note that the RVCC would be primarily responsible for the promotion of such breeds. However, whilst hoping that both clubs would jointly agree if / when such breeds should be standardised, it should consider the potential situation that they might not by stating after Council Rules 3.7 and 3.8 that: 'In the case of a guide standard or unstandardised colour variant of a standardised breed, the Specialist Club deemed to cater for such a variant for the purposes of Rules 3.7 and 3.8 shall be the Club that caters for the standardised breed.'

The implication of agreeing this change would be that it would require a 2/3 majority of Council to standardise a GS Self breed or to allow such a standardised Self breed to be retained by the RVCC without the agreement of the ESCC. It would only take a simple majority of Council to agree to standardise a GS Self breed or to transfer such a standardised breed fully to the control of the ESCC with the agreement of the ESCC.

This proposal was agreed unanimously.

6. Criteria for Judging Pets

The Chairman informed Councillors that, following publicity in CAVIES in regard to the showing of a 'disabled' pet, he had written to the NCC and SCC to suggest that national guidelines were needed on how pets should be assessed and what disqualifications might apply. Mrs Bell stated that the SCC had already been considering this issue.

His suggestion had been that it might be easiest for the BCC to define such criteria, as a minor extension to its existing role of defining and agreeing standards; but to avoid any impression of 'treading on people's toes' he had suggested that representatives of the NCC and SCC should attend this meeting to agree a common set of criteria. The response had been disappointing in that the NCC had decided to issue its own guidelines without discussion with other parties, although apparently incorporating many of the suggestions made in the Chairman's letter; whilst the SCC had not even replied formally but had today provided a copy of its own, quite different, proposals.

The situation was, therefore, that two diverse sets of guidelines had been produced for judges and exhibitors, one apparently to apply to the Northern part of the country and one to the Southern, with the inevitable scope for confusion on what pets could / could not be shown and how they should be assessed. A constructive meeting such as had been suggested could easily have avoided this.

The Chairman considered this to be a poor reflection on the attitudes of some Club Officials towards the sensible organisation of their fancy. He did not propose to make a bad situation worse by producing a third, BCC, version of guidelines on Pet Judging, even though the BCC, through the Specialist Clubs that constitute it, probably represents rather more fanciers and judges than do the NCC or SCC. He therefore suggested that the issue not be discussed by Council, and expressed the hope that the NCC and SCC would belatedly see sense and at least agree common guidelines with each other. Council agreed not to discuss this matter further.

7. BCC Megashow

The Chairman suggested that for several reasons the proposed Megashow was not practicable, principal amongst these being:

- BCC funds were still well short of the level needed to guarantee the show against loss;
- Whilst some Specialist Clubs had been enthusiastic about the concept, others had failed to offer any support. This seemed to represent yet another example of narrow-mindedness in some prevailing over the best interests of all in generating a vibrant, exciting cavy fancy.
- The demands of the proposed Show Organisers had been rather more prescriptive than was ideal.

He therefore proposed that there be no further discussion of this matter until such time as the Specialist Clubs themselves, rather than the Council on their behalf, decide that co-operating to produce a Megashow is a good idea. This was agreed by Councillors.

8. Correspondence

The principal items of correspondence during the year had been concerning matters referred to previously in regard to GS Selves (ESCC), Pets (NCC, SCC) and the formation of the Fox & Tan CC. The Chairman did not propose to read out such correspondence, the main items having been reported.

9. Motions of Urgency

None.

10. Any Other Business

Mrs Rolph asked why in Selves 'White toenails, except on Whites' were a Fault rather than a Disqualification as they are in breeds such as the Dalmation. Mr O'Neill was unable to elucidate this matter, and agreed to discuss it with the ESCC Executive.

Mr Trigg stated that he had been asked to raise the matter of why specific colours are not defined for Satins as they are for Selves. Mrs Smith responded that this was a long-standing policy of the RVCC, since satinisation affects colour in such a way as to render exact definitions difficult if not impossible. The present ruling that any solid colour is recognised should therefore stand, with evenness and undercolour being important rather than exact shade.

Mr Trigg then asked for clarification of the meaning of the Disqualification for 'Inappropriate toenail pigmentation in Fox and Tans.' Mrs Smith and Mr Payne explained that this referred to toenail pigmentation that was inappropriate to the colour of the coat above the particular toe. However, it was agreed that this terminology could be confusing, so the Disqualification is to be removed.

Finally the Chairman raised the issue originally identified by Mr Trigg of the meaning of the disqualification in Rex for 'Areas of coat lying in a different direction from the desirable lie of the coat'. Following discussion at and subsequent to the meeting, it was agreed by the Rex CC that this disqualification is insufficiently clear, and should be removed.

11. Date of Next Meeting

This will be organised, hopefully at the same location, in late September or October 2009. Councillors should advise the Secretary of dates when they are / are not available during this period by 1st November 2008.

In line with previously established procedure, all decisions taken by this meeting will be published in CAVIES and will take effect from 1st January 2009.