

## Minutes of the meeting held at Harrogate on January 21<sup>st</sup> 2006

Present: B Mayoh (Chair), N C Hadley (Secretary/Treasurer, Minutes), E Brearley (NHCC), L Petherick (NTWCC), D Payne (CCC), C Smith (RVCC), A Rolph (DRCC), A Trigg (DCC), P Bell (NACC), I Reynolds (RCC), T O'Neill (ESCC), S Neesam (ACC), D Oulton (PCC), B Emmett (CSTCC).

F Holmes attended the meeting at the invitation of B. Mayoh in his capacity as the long-term former Chairman of the Council. His advice would be particularly useful in the event that any query about matters relating to earlier decisions by the BCC that had effectively set a precedent for some of the more difficult issues that might arise at the meeting..

1. **Apologies:** None

2. **Agreement to Minutes of Meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> January 2005:**

All present agreed that the Minutes were a true and correct record.

3. **Matters arising from the previous minutes:**

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and there were no matters arising that were not covered on the Agenda.

4. **Chairman's Remarks:**

The Chairman explained the capacity in which F. Holmes was to attend the meeting, assuring representatives that Mr Holmes would not comment on sensitive issues involving the CSTCC and the PCC.

He went on to state that he had written to representatives expressing concern at the lack of progress in reviewing Standards. However, since that time several clubs had made significant progress, and he was reassured both by this and by the commitment of representatives in attending this meeting.

5. **Financial Report and Accounts - verbal.**

The secretary gave a verbal report for the full period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2005 and distributed copies of the Balance Sheet prepared by her for both the Prefix Scheme and the Council. The Balance Sheet had been prepared from bank statements, evidence of expenditure and other records. However, the Balance Sheet had not yet been audited.

The fundamentals of the Accounts were that:

- The BCC had an opening balance of £278.67 (HSBC account £414.98 less £136.31 still to be cleared in respect of 2004 expenses).
- Income for 2005 totalled £300.42 (Prefix Income £300 plus Interest Income £0.42);
- Expenditure for 2005 totalled £102.12 (Postage £56.91, Copying £24.55, Stationery £20.66);
- The Surplus of Income over Expenditure was therefore £198.30, giving a Closing Balance of £476.97 (£278.67 plus £198.30).
- The Closing Balance was held as: HSBC Account £450.97 plus Cash £13.95 plus Cheques Not Paid In £40 less Owed In Respect of 2005 Expenses £27.95.

The Secretary confirmed that no payments would be required from specialist clubs towards the running of the BCC for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006.

A short discussion was held regarding possible uses for any current surpluses; and it was agreed that they be invested in the publication of a new Standards Book and in a premier cavy show, to be hosted by the BCC to celebrate everything that the Council has achieved and to be held during the next two years.

#### 6. Stud Prefix Registration Scheme

**Update:** The Secretary gave a verbal report to Councillors on the excellent progress made by Cheryl Proctor, the Prefix Registrar, in her first six months of office.

She had, via the Secretary, raised a query as to how the Council wished her to proceed regarding the few fanciers who persistently showed using an unregistered stud name.

After discussion, Councillors unanimously agreed on three sanctions for persistent offenders:

- a. That the Prefix Registrar should write to advise National, Regional and Specialist Club Secretaries that they **MUST NOT ACCEPT** championship claims from fanciers with unregistered stud names.
- b. That the Prefix Registrar should write to remind National, Regional and Specialist Club Secretaries that they **MUST NOT ACCEPT** subscriptions from fanciers with unregistered stud names, and finally:
- c. That the Prefix Registrar should contact offenders directly to advise/remind them of these sanctions.

Now that the Stud Prefix was readily available to all via the web, electronically or directly via Cheryl, a lack of information should be no excuse for failing to check unregistered names.

The secretary was asked to write to the Prefix Registrar reiterating the Council's support for the Registration Scheme and detailing the above strictures, in order that she could use this letter in her correspondence with National, Regional and Specialist Club Secretaries.

**Councillors were asked to advise their Club Secretaries directly regarding this unanimous decision.**

Councillors raised the concern that they felt that a further serious matter may exist whereby two similar stud names were in use and where one was registered but one was not. It was agreed that in this event the Stud Registrar should make the matter public via the pages of CAVIES in order to try to ensure that the use of the unauthorised name is discouraged. The above sanctions would also apply against the unregistered name.

**Website:** The secretary reported that an offer had been received, and gratefully accepted, from Gillian Allinson to construct and manage a website for the BCC. This would include:

- a. BCC Rules
- b. Standards
- c. Stud Prefix Register
- d. Names and addresses of Club Officers
- e. Up to date links to Specialist Club websites

Councillors unanimously agreed that the site should be developed in this way, that we reiterate to those secretaries who provide data the importance of compliance with data protection and that we commit to an annual cost of £25 for web site hosting. The Secretary was asked to contact Gillian to ask her to liaise directly with Specialist Breed Clubs regarding their own information.

**Councillors were asked to advise their Club Secretaries directly regarding this decision.**

#### **7. Proposed Transfer of the Alpaca cavy to either the CSTMCC or the PCC.**

The Chairman explained the background to this item and asked the RVCC representative Caroline Smith to explain to Councillors the view of the Executive of the RVCC following the recent ballot of its members regarding the above matter. Caroline explained that a ballot had been sent out to RVCC members with a range of questions aimed at both general RVCC members and those who had stated that they kept and exhibited Alpaca cavies. Caroline accepted that there was no way to 'audit' the ballot return as to whether those stating that they kept the breed actually did so.

In terms of detail, the response to the ballot was poor. Of 189 papers sent out only 55 were returned. Of the 55 who returned papers, 14 stated that they kept and exhibited the Alpaca.

Of the vote as to **whether the Alpaca should move from the RVCC to another specialist club to better cater for its needs**, of 14 replies from those stating that they kept and exhibited Alpaca's 13 returned 'yes' and 1 'no'. Of 41 replies overall, 40 returned 'yes' and 1 'no'.

Of the vote as to **whether breeders and exhibitors preferred the Alpaca to move specifically to the CSTCC**, which was described in the ballot as the 'British Longhaired Cavy Club (currently known as 'the Sheltie, Coronet, Texel, Merino Cavy Club)'), there were 10 replies of which 6 returned 'yes' and 4 returned 'no'.

Of the vote as to **whether breeders and exhibitors preferred the Alpaca to move specifically to the PCC**, there were 11 replies of which 5 returned 'yes' and 6 returned 'no'.

Two breeders and exhibitors expressed no preference.

Of the 40 non breeders and exhibitors, 18 returned no preference, 20 wished to see the Alpaca move to the CSTCC and 9 to the PCC.

The Chairman asked Brian Emmett, representing the CSTCC, to state the case to Councillors regarding the possible transfer of the Alpaca to the CSTCC. He stated that the CSTCC was very keen to take on the breed as many existing CSTCC members were interested in the Alpaca and many of the leading breeders and exhibitors were amongst their number. Currently the Club had agreed improved and more consistent standards for all its breeds and he confirmed that the same treatment would be extended to the Alpaca.

The Chairman then asked David Oulton, representing the PCC, to state the case to Councillors regarding the possible transfer of the Alpaca to the PCC. He stated that the PCC wanted to take on the Alpaca as it was closely related to the Peruvian and the two would benefit from being catered for by the same club. He suggested that the RVCC ballot had been impacted by misinformation concerning the PCC's position and by the use of the term 'British Longhaired Cavy Club' to describe the CSTCC. He hoped that the RVCC AGM could resolve the issue after an open debate, to bring a swift end to what has become a highly controversial subject. He reiterated the determination of the PCC to remain an independent club catering for the Peruvian and similar breeds.

The Chairman explained to Councillors that his personal view had long been that the longhaired breeds would be best served by combining into a single specialist club, as the Self breeds did, in order to provide the necessary 'critical mass' of members and exhibitors to run successful shows and a successful club. However, the PCC had repeatedly asserted its determination to remain independent, and he respected and accepted this view. Therefore, as Chairman of the BCC, he would seek to do everything possible to ensure that all of the longhaired breeds were catered for in a two-club scenario as effectively as possible and to the maximum benefit of all breeds.

Caroline Smith stated that the RVCC Executive was very concerned about the future of the Alpaca, and shared the objective that the breed should continue to be well supported in whichever club took over responsibility for it. However, she confirmed that the RVCC Executive could not express a view as to which of the two longhaired clubs was best placed to do this or seek to act as arbiter on the matter.

The Chairman asked David Oulton if the PCC would be prepared to change its name to the 'Peruvian and Alpaca CC' in order to show the Alpaca as an 'equal partner' in the club if it were offered to the PCC. DO replied that the club name would have to be agreed by the Executive, but he would put this point to them.

The Chairman then asked DO to comment on reports that the PCC would seek to rename the Alpaca as the 'Rexoid Peruvian' if it were offered the Alpaca. DO stressed that this would NOT be the case and that the Alpaca would retain its name.

Finally, the Chairman asked DO what was the attitude of the PCC to the issue of aligning longhaired standards more closely, as recommended by the BCC and already actioned by the CSTCC. DO replied that the Executive had not yet discussed this, but he would recommend a constructive approach.

Following an intense discussion amongst Councillors it became clear that there was a clear division of opinion about which club should cater for the Alpaca. Views centred around the issue of whether the Alpaca would most suitably be catered for by a club that already had all of the other longhaired breeds bar one (the CSTCC) or whether the close links in genetics and appearance would render the Alpaca best housed with the Peruvian. The Chairman stated that he was reluctant to split the fancy over a breed that probably had fewer active exhibitors than there were Councillors in the room. He therefore suggested, and the Council overwhelmingly agreed, the following course of action:

- a. David Oulton to go back to the PCC to ascertain out if the Club would change its name to incorporate the Alpaca if it were offered the breed.
- b. Caroline Smith to act as an independent assessor of the views of KNOWN Alpaca breeders and exhibitors as regards the future of the breed, in order to determine whether a clear majority have a preference for one club or the other. Details of known breeders and exhibitors should be given to her by the PCC and CSTCC. She would then use her own judgement in assessing these views, with support from the BCC Chairman regarding questions and procedures.
- c. A meeting would be held between the CSTCC and the PCC (3 representatives from each to attend), plus Caroline Smith, to be chaired by the BCC Chairman. At this meeting the proposal to harmonise longhaired breed standards would be discussed; the results of Caroline's survey considered in an attempt to obtain agreement from the two clubs on which should cater for the Alpaca; and discussions held in regard to the two clubs co-operating in sharing resources such as judges and venues for Stock shows.

All present agreed that if no common ground could be found in these discussions then a BCC meeting would be convened and a final decision made as regards the future of the Alpaca.

8. Renaming of the Coronet, Sheltie, Texel and Merino Cavy Club.

It was proposed by the CSTCC that, should the club be allowed to cater for the Alpaca, it should be renamed 'The British Longhaired Club (catering for all LH breeds except the Peruvian)'. A decision was deferred pending the determination of the future of the Alpaca.

9. Review of Breed Standards

The Chairman introduced this item by reminding Councillors that the original discussion regarding Standards had begun when Fred Holmes was Chairman and the then Council had recognised a number of inconsistencies between Standards that had been written and agreed at different times. The Council had recognised that Standards had never been reviewed in their entirety and in a coherent way, and had asked B. Mayoh to undertake this task.

The aim of the review was to help breeders, exhibitors and judges better understand the important features, and their relative importance, of an ever-increasing number of cavy breeds, thereby making it easier to educate judges and exhibitors and in some small way to improve the quality of judging decisions. It aimed to do this by addressing inconsistencies, removing ambiguities and by improving clarity.

To this end the BCC had given its unanimous approval to the process 2 years ago; and all Councillors had indicated their commitment to see a difficult process to fruition. In the last year, following a general discussion of the principles at several Council meetings, further meetings had been held in which representatives of Specialist Clubs had met and agreed the principles that would underpin improved standards.

The Chairman stated that his intention at this meeting was to update Councillors in regard to the current position on each breed, with the aim of determining how outstanding issues could be resolved and matters brought to a close. Although there would not be time for detailed discussion of each standard, the general principles had been discussed at two previous meetings.

A number of modified Standards had now been agreed by individual clubs, in line with versions previously circulated to (and discussed by) Council members; and it was his hope that these would be provisionally agreed by the Council today, with any minor amendments discussed at the next meeting. **Such Standards could henceforth be published under the heading: 'Standard Provisionally Agreed by the British Cavy Council'.**

The situation for each breed was discussed and the following positions agreed:

**English Self** : The modified Standard circulated to Councillors has been agreed by the Club.

**The Standard was provisionally agreed by the Council.**

**Rex** : The modified Standard circulated to Councillors has been agreed by the Club, except for the recommended call for 'belly to be curly or wavy'. The RCC preferred simply to ask for 'belly to be well covered'. Following a constructive discussion the RCC representative agreed that the wording would specify : "Belly ideally to be curly/wavy, but a straight belly is not to be unduly penalised.

**The Standard was provisionally agreed by the Council.**

### **Abyssinian**

The modified Standard circulated to Councillors has been agreed by Club. **The Standard was provisionally agreed by the Council.**

### **Agouti**

The modified Standard circulated to Councillors has been agreed by the Club, except to add a comment that "Dark or unticked feet are preferred to light or uneven feet" and to remove subheadings for Breed titles.

**This Standard was provisionally agreed by the Council.**

### **Argente**

The modified Standard circulated to Councillors has been agreed by the Club, except that the word "ticked" should be used instead of "banded" in describing the hair shaft of the Argente.

**This Standard was provisionally agreed by the Council..**

### **Crested**

The proposed changes to the standard circulated to Councillors has been agreed in principle by the Club. However, some Club members had asked why the BCC is concerning itself with an existing Standard. The Chairman reiterated his point that the aim was to improve all Standards in the interests of breeders, exhibitors and judges alike. One of the changes suggested, to increase the points for markings in the American from the mere 5 that are presently implied, illustrated this objective in regard to the Crested.

**Modified Crested Standards were provisionally agreed by the Council.**

### **Satin**

The RVCC had agreed the general principle in regard to the proposed Standard, but there was not yet agreement on whether the existing 30 points should be retained for satinisation as against the suggested 25. Various councillors made observations in regard to the difficulty of assessing satinisation as against evenness of colour and depth of

undercolour; although all agreed that satinisation is the defining factor for the breed. Caroline Smith agreed to go back to the RVCC for further clarification, although she personally could see the merits of the 25 point proposal.

It was confirmed that the full standards for varieties in which coat qualities are paramount and which these are fundamentally affected by satinisation would be withdrawn, i.e. Satin Rex, Satin Aby, Satin Rexoid Longhair (Texel, Merino and Alpaca) and Satin Longhair (Peruvian, Coronet and Sheltie). The RVCC will advise on whether these should be Guide Standard varieties.

**The revised Satin Standards were provisionally agreed by the Council, with the issue of the numbers of points for satinisation versus colour to be determined and the status of 'Coated Variety' Satins to be resolved.**

### **Marked Varieties**

A meeting had been held at Newark with representatives of all of the Marked Varieties (DCC, TWCC, RVCC, DRCC, NHCC). This meeting had agreed the following principles:

- All marked breeds to attach equal importance to type qualities in head, eyes and ears (10 points), body type (10points) and coat qualities (5 points).
- The disparate points awarded to Markings and Colour in the various marked breeds to be simplified to 60 points for Markings and 15 points for Colour, other than for the Himalayan where the appropriate ratios are considered to be 50 / 25.
- Detailed specifications of the required Markings to be defined for each breed, but to be similar in closely related breeds (e.g. Tort & White and Tricolour).

Subsequent to that meeting the individual clubs had considered their standards with the following outcomes:

### **Dalmations, Roans**

The DRCC had discussed the proposed Standard with the Chairman of the BCC and had agreed to the version circulated to Councillors, which subscribes to the principles agreed at Newark. There was still some discussion amongst members on whether these breeds might require additional points for type at the expense of those allocated to Colour.

**The Standard was provisionally agreed by the Council.**

### **Himalayan**

The Club has agreed to the Proposed Standards circulated to Councillors, and which subscribe to the principles agreed at Newark. **This Standard was provisionally agreed by the Council.**

### **Tricolours, Bicolours, Tortoiseshell, Brindle**

The Club has agreed to the Proposed Standards circulated to Councillors, and which subscribe to the principles agreed at Newark.



The main outstanding issue of consistency is whether in Tricolours the patches should be of alternating colours, as called for in the T/W Standard.

**These Standards were provisionally agreed by the Council.**

### **Dutch**

The DCC had discussed the Proposed Standard at their AGM and determined not to change the existing Standard. It would consider the removal of a reference to Condition, but this would still leave the Dutch with a ratio of 70 or 75 points for Markings and 10 points for Colour, at variance with all other marked varieties. However, since the AGM several fanciers had recognised that there may be merits in modifying the Standard in the way proposed; and further discussions were likely on the matter.

### **Tort/White**

The NTWCC had not yet discussed the proposed standard, although Mr Petherick suggested that members would be unlikely to support it, on the grounds that the BCC had 'no right to interfere with existing breed standards.' This would leave the T/W with a ratio of 50 points for Markings vs 20 for Colour, again at variance with all other marked breeds.

The Chairman reiterated what he regarded as a fundamental principle of the Council, to ensure that standards for each breed are clear, comprehensible and consistent, so that judges may know what to look for in each breed and can make logical comparisons between representatives of different breeds.

He argued that, if breeders of a given variety only ever wanted to show against exhibits of that variety, then consistency between different breed standards would not matter. However, all breeders expect their stock to compete in duplicates against exhibits of other varieties. In these classes judges are expected to make sensible assessments of the relative merits of exhibits of different breeds.

In this situation, a judge has a right to expect that the standards on which he / she makes such assessments make sense. It is unfair on judges that they might apply what they perceive to be obvious logic, for instance that markings, colour and type might carry similar weightings in T/Ws, Tris and Dutch, to then run the risk of being taken to task by exhibitors or failing to recognise, for example, that they "shouldn't have considered colour so much in assessing the Dutch because this factor is less important than in the T/W." He stressed that, because the BCC has a responsibility to the fancy at large, it has a perfect right to challenge existing standards where these appear not to make sense.

This was the basis on which the present review had started; it had then been agreed by all clubs, including the DCC and the TWCC; and

since then most other clubs had accepted the challenge of improving the clarity and consistency of their standards; and worked hard to take constructive action in this regard. These Clubs surely had the right to expect fellow members of the Council to take a similarly constructive approach and not to adopt an approach of: "It's all right for us to discuss your Standards but you can't discuss ours."

Mr Holmes suggested that, if particular clubs were unwilling to consider change, the 2/3 voting majority required to impose this might be adopted. The Chairman stated that he would prefer not to go down this route at this stage. He re-emphasised the logic of the suggested modifications to both the DCC and the NTWCC, and asked them to meet with each other to see if they could find common ground. The DRCC and the RVCC representatives indicated that they would seek to fit in with any position on a common weighting of points should this be agreed by the two clubs, without committing themselves on this point.

An additional point to be discussed between the Clubs is in relation to Colour, where certain Standards currently refer to 'colour to match ESCC equivalent.' Whilst many breeders of T/Ws, Dutch, Tris, Bis and Brindles regard colour as important, several Councillors agreed that ESCC red is a mahogany shade that it is impossible to replicate in marked varieties and might not be particularly attractive if it were, whilst ESCC cream should be pale, which would render markings indistinct in a Cream Dutch. They felt that the marked varieties were setting themselves up to be judged too harshly if persisting with this requirement.

It was agreed that Messrs Trigg and Petherick would liaise on the matter of Dutch and T/W standards, with a final decision being taken at the next meeting of the Council.

The RVCC will consider the issue of whether patches should ideally be of alternate colours in Tricolours and the requirement to match ESCC colours in Tortoiseshells, Brindles and Tricolours.

#### **Coronet, Sheltie, Merino, Texel**

The CSTCC has reviewed the proposed standards and agreed them with some minor modifications.

These Standards were agreed by the Council, but it was noted that the points for Coat Feel (30) should be split between Texture and Density at 15 each.

#### **Alpaca**

The RVCC has reviewed the proposed standard and agreed it.

This Standard was agreed by the Council; but it was noted that the points for Coat Feel (30) should be split between Texture and Density at 15 each.

### **Peruvian**

The PCC has not yet discussed the proposed Standard, although Mr Oulton suggested that he could see no major issue with it. The Chairman stated that the only substantive difference between the proposed Standard and the existing one, once points for Coat Feel were split between Texture and Density, is that in the revised version 10 points were included for Presentation and 15 for Texture, rather than 5 for Presentation and 20 for Texture as in the existing one. All other points allocations were essentially the same.

He suggested that the requirements under Presentation for a clean, unmatted coat through which a comb could pass freely, was reinforcing the importance of Texture, so that the change would have no practical impact on how the Peruvian should be assessed, simply making the requirements clearer. He wondered, however, whether both Clubs might want to restate the requirements for Presentation under Coat Feel or Look, as had happened in all breeds with those formerly allocated to condition.

Mr Holmes gave his view that this might be a good thing, as perhaps too many judges took the points for Presentation as referring to how well the cavy was first presented to them, and therefore over-emphasised this point.

**It was agreed that the PCC will consider bringing its Standard into line with those for the other longhaired breeds, particularly given its stated commitment to cater for the Alpaca; and that the issue of points for Presentation should be discussed at the proposed meeting of the two clubs.**

### **Guide Standards**

Proposed changes as circulated to Councillors had been discussed and refined by the RVCC.

**These Guide Standards were provisionally agreed by the Council.**

### **Faults & Disqualifications Applying To All Breeds**

Following discussion it was agreed that 'Bulbous or Protruding Eyes' should not be added to the list of Faults & Disqualifications as this could be misunderstood; and that there was no need to add 'Eyes of Unequal Size' to this list, as if this fault is excessive it would be covered by the 'Physical Abnormalities' stricture. It was agreed to add a mention of 'Extra Toes' as a fault of minor significance and of 'Breaks In Coat' to be penalised according to extent.

### **10. Correspondence.**

The Chairman had received correspondence in regard to the transfer of the Alpaca; but proposed to consider this within the discussions with the CSTCC and the PCC. This was agreed by the Council.

11. **Motions of Urgency.** None.

12. **Appointment of Chairman**

The Chairman expressed his satisfaction that, since his last communication in regard to the matter, substantive progress has been made in most Clubs in agreeing improvements to the Standards. As of today 26 of the 29 Full Standards had been reviewed by Clubs and changes agreed that were broadly in line with BCC recommendations but which represented improvements on the original proposals. These had now been provisionally approved by the BCC, with only the issues of the Peruvian, Dutch and T/W standards remaining as subjects for fundamental discussion.

Additionally, the RVVCC had done a considerable amount of work in improving all 9 Guide Standards, and these too had been provisionally approved. This represented considerable progress. He continued to regard the completion of this work as the major task still facing the Council in fulfilling its defined obligations to the Fancy. Because of this, if Councillors so wished, he would be willing to remain as Chairman for a further period of two years.

His hope would be that, in this period, the Council could agree improved Standards for all breeds. This would complement its previous achievement in agreeing a clear set of rules governing the behaviour of the Council and of the Clubs within it. The Council could then celebrate these achievements by holding a 'Spectacular BCC Show', which Mr Holmes and his team had kindly agreed to organise and run. At the end of this next two year period it was his intention to stand down from the role of Chairman and relinquish most of his responsibilities in the cavy fancy.

All present accepted his offer to continue as Chairman with thanks.

13. **Appointment of Secretary / Treasurer**

The Chairman stated that he was delighted that the Secretary / Treasurer had agreed to remain in the post for a further period of two years if Councillors still wished her to do so. All present accepted her offer with thanks.

14. **Any other business**

It was agreed that BCC representatives will ask Specialist Club Secretaries to reaffirm to the Secretary / Treasurer, in writing, details of Councillors, Deputy Councillors and to make their annual return of AGM minutes, balance sheet etc (all as per BCC rules) together with a full set of current Club Rules.

15. **Date and location of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next full meeting of the Council will be held on a date in June (to be agreed). It has subsequently been proposed that a suitable venue would be Bolsover Hall in Rugby. All representatives should send suitable dates in June to the Secretary as soon as possible.