

GREYHOUND FORUM

Tuesday 31st January 2pm by Zoom

MEETING SUMMARY

In attendance: Battersea Dogs & Cats Home; Blue Cross; DEFRA; Dogs Trust; Greyhound Board of Great Britain; Greyhounds in Need; Greyhound Trust; Kennel Club; RSPCA.

No apologies were received.

- The Forum discussed the recent decision of Blue Cross, Dogs Trust and RSPCA to change their policy position on Greyhound racing and call for a phased end to the activity by 2027. The Forum requested that these three members share the evidence base for their decisions to help inform GBGB's welfare programme and the Forum's work, and to provide more detail on how they anticipated a phased end to Greyhound racing being introduced.
- The Forum considered its Terms of Reference that were last updated in 2019. Some amendments were considered. A majority of members agreed that, since the effective operation of the Forum is dependent on collaborative working with the Greyhound racing industry, membership of the Forum may not be compatible with active campaigning for the cessation of regulated Greyhound racing in Britain.
- The membership of Blue Cross, Dogs Trust and RSPCA was discussed in this context. A majority of members agreed that the three charities should be permitted to remain members, reflecting their significant contribution to the Forum's work over many years and in the expectation that continued collaborative working between the charity sector and GBGB will lead to further welfare improvements. It was recognised that some amendments to the Forum's ways of working may be required.
- DEFRA advised that Westminster government was not currently considering a ban on Greyhound racing and was supportive of the implementation of GBGB's Welfare Strategy "A Good Life for Every Greyhound". DEFRA would, however, be open to suggestions from the Forum to changes to the 2010 Welfare of Racing Greyhounds Regulations to tackle any welfare concerns members had.
- The Chair had completed a one-year term. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, nominations were invited from any other individuals within member organisations wishing to take on the Chair role.
- GBGB provided an update on the progress of their Welfare Strategy. The current focus is on the short-term actions (6 to 18 months for completion). Highlights included:
 - The online research repository has been created.
 - The first round of Continuous Personal Development (CPD) training is commencing in spring 2023.
 - Tiffany Blackett has been appointed as Executive Veterinary Surgeon at GBGB
 - Training of track and kennel auditors is underway with an emphasis on the PAS:251 standard.
 - Two regional regulatory veterinary surgeons have been appointed and will carry out kennel inspections and provide advice to trainers on health and welfare issues.
 - The firework and cold weather policies have been updated.
 - A new track maintenance manual has been developed including a new recording tool for track operators.
- GBGB provided an update on funding. Discussions with the betting industry were ongoing and GBGB was seeking an increase to the current 0.6% of turnover voluntary contribution level from contributing bookmakers. There remained concern that without an increase in bookmaker funding, GBGB was unlikely to be able to implement its Welfare Strategy in full.
- Members considered the impact of the Cost of Living (CoL), in particular on the rehoming of Greyhounds. Welfare members were encouraged to share their Greyhound rehoming data

including average length of stay for Greyhounds within a rescue environment and with a comparison to other breeds in the case of mixed-breed rescues.

- It was agreed that the Forum would meet next in June 2023. A representative from Premier Greyhound Racing – a new joint venture involving various track operators – would be invited to attend to share details of its welfare programme.