

**MEETING OF THE RALLY LIAISON COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4
FEBRUARY 2026 AT 9.30AM, VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

A G E N D A

**ITEM 1. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL
EFFECTIVE FROM JANUARY 2026 TO DECEMBER 2028**

**ITEM 2. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL
EFFECTIVE FROM JANUARY 2026 TO DECEMBER 2028**

ITEM 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

ITEM 4. HEALTH AND WELFARE

The Council will receive a presentation from Ms C McNamara (Head of Health & Breeding) to discuss health initiatives at the Royal Kennel Club and explain the Health and Breeding Advisory Group.

ITEM 5. YOUNG KENNEL CLUB & DOG TRAINING

- a. The Council is invited to note a presentation from Mrs H Lawrence (Head of Education and Dog Training) and Mrs F Moore (Youth Training and Volunteer Development Manager).
- b. Following a presentation received by the YKC Team at the September 2025 Activities Committee meeting, the Committee was requested to consider allowing YKC Obedience judges to be able to compete on the same day which they judge the YKC classes, within agreed parameters.

The Committee agreed to raise this with the new Liaison Councils to gather views of the community. The Rally Liaison Council is requested to work together with the Accredited Trainers to look into the matter for Rally and come up with a workable solution. A timescale of 6 months was suggested, in order to form a proposal for the summer Activities Committee meeting.

ITEM 6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2025 (copies previously distributed).

ITEM 7. MATTERS ARISING AND RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. The Council is invited to note that the Board, at its meeting on 21 October 2025, approved the following amendments to S Regulations from 1 January 2026:

Amendment to Regulation S(B)2(1)

Performance and Scoring Guidelines and Competition Management

TO:

2. Course Design.

(1) There ~~should~~ **must** be a minimum distance of 2.5 metres between exercises. **This minimum can be extended where space permits excluding changes of pace.**

(Insertions in bold) (Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to Regulation S(B)1(f)

Regulation S(B)1(f)

TO:

Unless specified in the exercise description, exercises ~~are executed~~ **start** as the handler approaches the sign

(Insertions in bold) (Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to Regulation S(B)4.d

Regulation S(B)4.d

TO:

Tied scores for place awards - In the event that two or more dog/handler teams score an equal number of points, ~~the team(s) with the fastest recorded time(s) shall be placed above those with slower times. In the event that one or more such dog/handler teams have equal scores and equal times or where at least one of the competitors has not had a time recorded,~~ they shall be invited to participate in a run-off using ~~the~~ **a Bonus exercise appropriate to the level. The run off bonus should be stated on the course plan submitted to the Secretary and/or the Chief Steward.**

(Insertions in bold. Deletions stuck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Addition to Regulation S(B)2 Course design

Regulation S(B)2

TO:

(3) The angled recall and angled recall over jump exercises may each be used twice in a course to enable them to be laid in both directions, once to the left and once to the right.

(Insertions in bold. Subsequent points to be renumbered)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to Regulation S19

Regulation S19

TO:

- a. The host organisation shall provide printed awards to a minimum of fourth place in all classes.
- b. The host organisation shall also provide qualification certificates ~~and/or qualifying rosettes~~ to all dogs which receive a qualifying score **in standard classes at Open Rally competitions. The wording must clearly state the organising society or club, the date of the competition, the dog's Registered Royal Kennel Club name, the score gained and the judge's name and signature. The Certificate must state that it is a qualifying score. These certificates are proof of qualification which would be relied on in case of dispute for any future award.**
- c. Other rosettes and special awards may be offered at the discretion of the competition host, **these must be clearly stated in the Schedule.**
- d. In standard classes, rosettes and/or place cards may not be awarded to dogs that have received a non-qualifying score for any of the reasons listed in the non-qualifying scoring regulations.
(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)
(Effective 1 January 2026)

Event Licence Applications

- b. The regulation to extend the licence applications from 6 weeks to 6 months has been approved from 1 January 2026. However, it has been raised that this may cause issues for smaller clubs and societies, which will struggle to meet the application date. The Council will receive a verbal update regarding the amendment for Rally.

ITEM 8. ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP

The Council is invited to note a written report from Mrs Bradley following the Sub-Group's meeting held on 16 October 2025.

(Annex A refers)

ITEM 9. INTERNATIONAL RALLY UPDATE

The Council is invited to note an International Rally update from Mrs Sanford.

(Annex B refers)

ITEM 10. REVIEW OF CHAMPIONSHIP FRAMEWORK

The Council is invited to note the Rally Review. The document outlines the rationale and suggested courses of actions for the introduction of Foundation Level and Level 7.

(Annex C refers)

ITEM 11. PROPOSALS

Proposal to Clarify S(B)4.d – Run Offs

- a. The Council is requested to consider an amendment for clarification to regulation S(B)4.d relating to run offs, which was effective from 1 January 2026. The Council is requested to consider clarifying what should happen if all the teams involved either declined to run off or were no longer present at the competition.

The following amendment has been proposed for the Council to consider:

Regulation S(B)4.d

TO:

Tied scores for place awards - In the event that two or more dog/handler teams score an equal number of points, they shall be invited to participate in a run-off using a Bonus exercise appropriate to the level. The run off bonus should be stated on the course plan submitted to the Secretary and/or the Chief Steward. **Where none of the parties involved are available for the runoff, the order shall be decided at the discretion of the judge.**

(Insertions in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2027)

Proposals to Implement and Support the New Framework

- b. The Council is requested to discuss the proposed amendments to the S regulations to support the new framework.
(Annex D refers)
- c. The Council is requested to discuss the proposed amendments to S(A) Levels, Classes and Eligibility regulations to introduce Foundation Level and Level 7.
(Annex E refers)
- d. The Council is requested to discuss the proposed amendments to S(B) Performance, Scoring guidelines and Competition Management regulations to support the new framework.
(Annex F refers)
- e. The Council is requested to consider the proposed new exercise set. The amendments to the S(C) regulations include the introduction of Foundation Level and Level 7, as well as a table indicating the list of Pace and Link exercises.
(Annexes G & H refers)

ITEM 12. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Data Repositories

Mr Dornford-Smith & Mr Lindsey

- a. The Council is invited to discuss the possibility of setting up an open data repository, especially for judges and competition results.

It has been suggested that the database could sort information such as a list of Rally judges, with their qualifications and contact details, which would be used by show organisers to assist them in finding judges for their shows.

A repository of dog results has also been suggested, which would be useful for handlers, show organisers, and the Royal Kennel Club, if required.

It has been acknowledged that the development of the data repositories would be costly to the Royal Kennel Club. However, the Council is of the view that the Rally Community and the Rally Liaison Council members have various IT skills and they may be willing to volunteer to assist with the project. Therefore, incurring no additional cost or staff time required from the Royal Kennel Club.

Collection of any data would be on a voluntary basis, provided by the handler, judge, or show organiser.

Any data would belong to the Royal Kennel Club, however any General Data Protection Regulation compliance would be the responsibility of a data controller appointed by the Council.

The suggested repositories would fulfill the requests of the Rally Community, aid the work of the Council and benefit the Royal Kennel Club by having the data more available.

The Council would like to investigate all viable and acceptable options to develop the data repository. The Council is of the view that it is important that any solution is not under the control of an individual or commercial organisation. This would ensure that the system could be passed on to other volunteers. It would also be accessible to the Royal Kennel Club and Council as required.

Requirements of the Rally Veteran Warrant

- b. The Council is invited to consider the requirements of the Rally Veteran Warrant, to increase fairness for competitors and dogs throughout the country and to encourage continued involvement for older dogs.

Currently the requirement for the Bronze Rally Veteran Warrant is 9 qualifying scores in Veteran classes, however there is only one show a year in Northern Ireland with a Veteran class. It has been raised that the Northern Ireland community would be required to travel to the mainland with a dog to achieve the warrant, which is costly to competitors. It has been raised that this may be affecting other geographical areas where there are limited Veteran classes available too.

Therefore, the Council is requested to consider whether a reduction in the requirements would be beneficial in encompassing all competitors and encouraging handlers with older dogs to continue competing.

Judges Course Walking

- c. The Council is requested to consider the possibility of allowing a more experienced judge to walk a course, in order to provide mentoring and support to new judges.

It is suggested that the judge asked to walk the course and provide feedback should not be a competitor in the class, it could also be limited to judges qualified at the level concerned or higher level only.

Currently, only the judge, chief steward, scribe and competitors in the level are allowed in a Rally ring. However, it has been suggested that allowing another judge to walk the course on the day of the competition to provide their views would help to support new judges, building their confidence and subsequently improving course design overall.

Management of the Rally Information Booth at Crufts

- d. The Council is requested to consider the management of the Rally information booth at Crufts. The booth is located by the Obedience Ring in Hall 5 and the Council is invited to discuss how it would like the booth to be managed going forward.

ITEM 13. FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

The Council is requested to review the Five-Year plan, updated by Mrs Sanford, and to consider further details and prioritisation.

(Annex I refers)

ITEM 14. CRUFTS JUDGES

The Council is requested to consider possible Crufts judges for the Inter-Regional Rally Competition in 2028 and future YKC Rally judges.

ITEM 15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

ITEM 16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Council is invited to note the date of the next meeting:

15 July 2026

THE ROYAL KENNEL CLUB'S STRATEGIC AIMS

- *Champion the wellbeing of dogs*
- *Safeguard and enhance the future of pedigree dogs, addressing breed-associated health issues*
- *Protect the future of dog activities together with our grassroots network*
- *Become relevant to more dog owners to increase our impact*
- *Deliver an excellent member experience and widen our community*
- *Ensure we are financially secure and sustainable*