

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AGILITY LIAISON COUNCIL HELD AT
9.30AM ON WEDNESDAY 28 JANUARY 2026 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

PRESENT

Mrs J Bale
Mrs T Davis
Mrs J Gardner
Miss A Gilchrist (from paragraph 20)
Mr J Hallam
Mr C Harley
Miss S McConnell
Dr R Miller
Miss R Sargent
Mrs D Tedds
Mrs T White

IN ATTENDANCE

Miss D Deuchar Senior Manager Canine Activities
Miss A Morley Activities Liaison Manager
Mrs E Osborne Activities Liaison Advisor

GUESTS

Mrs S Garner Board Member – Activities Committee Chair (*until paragraph 9*)

**ITEM 1. TO CONFIRM APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR FOR THE
LIAISON COUNCIL TERM FOLLOWING A SECRET BALLOT
CONDUCTED VIA EMAIL PRIOR TO THE MEETING**

1. It was noted that the Chair would attend the Activities Committee meeting to represent the views of the Liaison Council.
2. The office also reiterated the need for confidentiality on discussions and outcomes, until such time as the minutes of the meeting could be published.
3. The office confirmed that Mrs Tedds was duly elected following the secret email ballot prior to the meeting.

**ITEM 2. TO CONFIRM APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE CHAIR FOR THE
LIAISON COUNCIL TERM FOLLOWING A SECRET BALLOT
CONDUCTED VIA EMAIL PRIOR TO THE MEETING**

4. The office confirmed that Mrs Gardner was duly elected following the secret email ballot prior to the meeting.

ITEM 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5. Apologies had been received from Miss N Jones.

ITEM 4. HEALTH AND WELFARE

6. Apologies had been received from Ms C McNamara who had been unable to attend the meeting. It was hoped that this could be deferred to the summer meeting instead.

ITEM 5. YOUNG KENNEL CLUB & DOG TRAINING

7. Apologies had been received from Mrs H Lawrence and Mrs F Moore who were unable to attend the meeting. It was hoped that this could be deferred to the summer meeting instead.
8. The Liaison Council was requested to consider allowing YKC Agility judges to be able to compete on the same day which they judge the YKC classes, within agreed parameters. The Liaison Council was requested to work together with the Accredited Trainers to look into the matter for Agility and come up with a workable solution. It was suggested that a proposal could be worked on for the summer Activities Committee meeting.
9. The Liaison Council agreed that this was something that would be taken away and considered including consultation with the community.

Mrs Garner left the meeting

ITEM 6. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

10. The Liaison Council noted that the Board, at its meeting on 21 October 2025, approved the following amendments to H Regulations from 1 January 2026:

Amendment to regulations H5, H(1)4 and H(1)(D)3.b

Regulation H5 – Application

TO:

The application for a licence to hold an agility show must be made to the Secretary of The Royal Kennel Club together with the appropriate licence fee, at least ~~6 weeks~~ **six months** before the proposed date of the competition.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Regulation H(1)4- Societies are required to apply for permission to hold Special Events

TO:

Applications should be submitted to The Royal Kennel Club by email at least ~~six weeks~~ **months** before the start of any qualifying heats for the event.
(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)
(Effective 1 January 2026)

Regulation H(1)(D)3.b - Licences

TO:

b. Applications for a limited agility licence must be made at least ~~42 days~~ **six months** before the date of the show, specifying the name of the responsible person to whom the licence is to be issued, the venue, date and relevant fee.
(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)
(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to regulations H.9.(14) and H.10.h

Regulation H.9.(14)

TO:

A statement that in estimating the number of awards won, all wins up to and including ~~25~~ **18** days before the start of the competition shall be counted when entering for any class. For these purposes a competition shall be defined as all classes covered within the same schedule. In the event that a dog becomes eligible for the next grade at a particular show, after the entry for that show has been sent, it is the competitor's responsibility to notify the show secretary or the show processor at least 14 days before the date of the show. The dog should then be moved into the appropriate class(es) for the next grade. The dog must be moved into the corresponding number of classes as were entered at the lower grade. If there are fewer or no classes available for the next grade the competitor should be offered a refund of the relevant entry fees. **Failure to notify the show secretary or processor at least 14 days before the date of the show will result in the dog being ineligible to compete at that show.**

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Regulation H.10.h

TO:

In estimating the number of awards won, all wins up to and including ~~25~~ **18** days before the start of the competition shall be counted when entering for any class. For these purposes a competition shall be defined as all classes covered within the same schedule. In the event that a dog becomes eligible for the next grade at a particular show, after the entry for that show has been sent, it is the competitor's responsibility to notify the show secretary or the show processor at least 14 days before the date of the show. The dog should then be moved into the appropriate class(es) for the next grade. The dog must be moved into the corresponding number of classes as were entered at the lower grade. If there are fewer or no classes available for the next grade the competitor should be offered a refund of the relevant entry fees. **Failure to notify the show secretary or processor at least 14 days**

before the date of the show will result in the dog being ineligible to compete at that show.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to regulations H19.b.(4)

Regulation H19.b.(4)

TO:

(4) have judged Royal Kennel Club qualifier(s) in each height category for Crufts, Discover Dogs, or The Royal Kennel Club Agility Stakes (excluding YKC classes) **at a minimum of 2 licensed agility shows**, and

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to regulations H19.b.(8)

Regulation H19.b.(8)

TO:

(8) have attended a Royal Kennel Club Agility Judges Seminar and passed the assessment **within the last 5 years**, or

(Insertions in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to regulations H(1)8.a

Regulation H(1)8.a - Ballot for championship running orders.

TO:

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. **Where a handler has more than one dog entered in the same Championship Class, the dogs will, where entries permit, be drawn with a minimum of 20 places between them. Where there are insufficient entries to allow this spacing, the maximum separation possible must be applied.** The dogs must run in the order in which they are drawn. ~~and unless agreed otherwise by the judge, in conjunction with the show manager, who may, in exceptional circumstances, relax the running order, by no more than 10 dogs.~~

If a handler is competing in more than one championship height category on the same day, the judge, in conjunction with the show manager may relax the running order by no more than 20 dogs.

All such decisions must be recorded in the Show's Incident Book.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to regulations H(1)9.b, H(1)9.e and H(1)(A)11.c

Regulation H(1)9.b

TO:

The winner of each round will be invited to the final, in addition to the top 50% of the entry, up to a maximum of 20 dogs from the combined results of the two

qualifying rounds, making the final a maximum of 22 dogs. The winner of the jumping round will run first in the final, the winner of the agility round will run second in the final, **unless it has qualified through the normal route, in which case it will be in the standard running order.** If the winner of either of the two qualifying rounds are in the top 50% of the entry, up to a maximum of 20 dogs, then the 'win on spot' will not transfer down to the 2nd placed dog. The winner of each round must have competed in both qualifying rounds. (Insertions in bold. Effective date - immediate effect.)

Regulation H(1)9.e.

TO:

A dog having been eliminated in either qualifying round will not be eligible for the final, except the winner of the opposing round which will be invited to compete in the final.

(Insertions in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Regulation H(1)(A)11.c

TO:

c. Elimination in either of the qualifying rounds will exclude the dog from competition in the final round, except the winner of the opposing round which will be invited to compete in the final.

(Insertions in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to regulations H(1)(A)5, H(1)(D)2 and H(1)(D)3.c.

Regulation H(1)(A) 5.

TO:

A maximum of four standard classes may be scheduled for any dog on an individual day of competition **including a maximum of two graded classes.**

Any number of special classes may be scheduled.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Regulation H(1)(D) 2.

TO:

Type of show

Limited agility shows are shows at which the classes (except for standard classes) may be limited by numbers of class entries, overall numbers of entries, specific breeds, residence of competitors, membership of societies or organisations or otherwise subject to the approval of the Board of The Royal Kennel Club. A maximum of four standard classes **including a maximum of two graded classes**, and any number of special classes may be scheduled, other than qualifying heats for Royal Kennel Club sponsored or sanctioned competitions.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Regulation H(1)(D) 3.c.

TO:

A limited agility show may schedule an unlimited number of special agility classes and up to four standard classes (which may be capped) **including a maximum of two graded classes.**

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to regulation H(1)(B)1.(3)

Regulation H(1)(B)1.(3) - Design

TO:

Design—The course should require a dog to traverse at least 15 obstacles but not more than 20, **with the exception of Championship classes (jumping, agility and final) where the maximum number of obstacles must not exceed 22.**

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.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to regulations H(1)(B)3.l and H(1)(B)3.m

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

TO:

l. 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 must be 295mm minimum and 305mm maximum. The plank must be 3.66m in length and 300mm in width.** The height of the central bracket measured from the ground to the top of the plank must be 610mm. The maximum distance from the pivot point to the top of the plank should not be more than 100mm. 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.

m. Dog Walk—A walk plank of approximately 1.2m measured from the ground to the top of the plank, with firmly fixed ramps at either end. The planks must be 3.66m in length and **300mm a minimum of 254mm and a maximum of 305mm** in width. The last 914mm from the bottom of each ramp should be a different colour to indicate the area with which the dog should make contact. Each ramp should have a non-slip surface, and anti-slip slats at intervals but not within 152mm of the start of a contact area.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

11. It was raised that an issue had occurred with the announcement of the regulation updates online, where the strikethrough had been removed, which presented some initial confusion in the Agility community.
12. The office confirmed that this was a technical issue which had been addressed and would be closely monitored in future to prevent further issues.
13. Clarification was sought as to whether, under the new regulation, Show Processors would be responsible for drawing handler entries with a minimum separation of 20 dogs between them where necessary. The office confirmed that the adjustment would be applied automatically by the Processor.

ITEM 7. PANELS

14. The Liaison Council considered the continued use of panels, and it was agreed that some panels would be beneficial with the aim of being more proactive in areas where issues could sometimes be overlooked. It was identified that the following panels would be valuable moving forwards, with members of each panel agreed and listed below.

Judges/Trainers Panel

Mr Harley (*chair*)

Miss Jones

Mrs Gardner

Show Organisers Panel

Mrs Davis (*chair*)

Mr Hallam

Mrs Gardner

Mrs Tedds

Equipment Panel

Mrs Bale (*chair*)

Miss Sargent

Miss Gilchrist

Miss Jones

Mrs Davis

YKC Panel

Mrs White (*chair*)

Miss Sargent

Mr Hallam

Mrs Davis

Measurers Panel

Mrs Gardner (*chair*)

Mrs White

Mrs Bale

Miss Sargent

15. In addition, an International Agility Panel was discussed, and it was agreed that while some feedback and discussion on information from international agility and the FCI would be beneficial it would need to remain confidential and so information would be incoming only, not an open communication. Mr Hallam confirmed he was happy to take on the role as an area of responsibility.
16. The Liaison Council noted that there was also an area of responsibility for data collection and analysis. It was agreed that this would be assigned to Dr Miller, Miss Gilchrist, and Miss McConnell. The group was not established as a formal panel but would operate in a supporting capacity, working in the background to assist all areas.

ITEM 8. ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP

17. The Liaison Council noted that there was no update from the October meeting of the Activities Judges Sub-Group.

ITEM 9. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

18. No proposals were received for the meeting.
19. To submit a proposal or discussion item, the community were invited to use the online form so the Agility Liaison Council could discuss and review any suggestions prior to the next meeting in June. Submissions were accepted at any time of year via the online form: [Liaison Council Agenda Item](#)

Miss Gilchrist joined the meeting.

20. A concern was raised around transparency within the Royal Kennel Club and the communication channels reporting back to the Liaison Councils. It was noted that while minutes for the Activities Committee and the Board meetings were not published, the office would endeavour to inform the Liaison Council of any outcomes as soon as possible following the meetings.
21. It was confirmed by the office that a Micro height had been approved by both the Activities Committee and the Board for introduction from 1 January 2027. More information on the Micro height could be found on the Royal Kennel

Club website: [Positive steps for Agility with the introduction of a new Micro Height category](#)

22. It was noted that the introduction of a Micro height was separate to the grade review which remained an ongoing discussion.
23. A query was raised around qualifiers, and it was confirmed that if a dog eligible for Micro continued to run in Small following 1 January 2027, including any qualifiers, semi-finals or finals, then the dog would need to remain at Small. It was agreed that owners should approach the decision with the dog's welfare in mind.

ITEM 10. DISCUSSION ITEMS

24. Due to the timeframe associated with establishing the new Liaison Council, discussion items received prior to the meeting were deferred to be considered in due course, including public consultation where appropriate.

ITEM 11. STRATEGIC 5 YEAR PLAN

25. A brief discussion took place regarding a strategic 5 year plan and it was agreed that it would be beneficial to create a new document that better reflected the new Liaison Councils aims. Dr Miller volunteered to take this away and create the document with the assistance of Miss Sargent and Miss McConnell.

ITEM 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Safeguarding

26. A query was raised regarding safeguarding at shows and the process of reporting concerns. It was considered that the safeguarding policy needed to be clearer and that some felt confused about the process of reporting.
27. The office confirmed that an external party was assisting through additional staff training and clarification of the processes and that the online information had been updated <https://www.royalkennelclub.com/safeguarding/>.

Clashing shows

28. A concern was raised about whether shows that clashed with the Royal Kennel Club International Agility Festival and Crufts would be allowed to go ahead. It was confirmed by the office that shows scheduled for 2026 would be

permitted to proceed and it was noted that the Regional Support Network had informed shows directly.

29. A brief discussion took place about whether shows should be allowed to clash with both events in the future and a vote was undertaken by the Liaison Council. The majority agreed that clashing shows should be allowed to go ahead, and it was confirmed that the Activities Committee and the Prestige Events Working Party would discuss the matter again at their next meetings.

ITEM 13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

30. The Liaison Council noted that the date of the next meeting would be 3 June 2026.

31. The meeting ended at 12.00pm.

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