



The Bulldog Club Taskforce

26 October 2018

The Executive Council
Dogs NZ
By Email

British Bulldog Breed Standard: Proposed Dogs NZ changes

Purpose

Dogs New Zealand has asked the Bulldog Clubs to comment on the proposal to change the NZ British Bulldog Standard (**DogsNZ Proposal**). Dogs NZ have asked the Bulldog Clubs (**Clubs**) to respond on or by 26 October 2018 to this proposal. The Clubs consulted members to understand their view of the DogsNZ Proposal. They have asked DogsNZ for an extension of time to allow for the completion of submissions following consultation. The Clubs are yet to receive a response to that request. On that basis (and to ensure that common themes are provided to DogsNZ within the deadline) this letter where it can summarises and supports the Clubs in their submissions, those that are made prior to the current deadline and those that will come after.

Comment

We have read the submissions of the Clubs and by a number of members who have or will make individual submissions including British Bulldog Breeders; President of the Wellington Bulldog Club Frank Muncey and President of the Southern Bulldog Club; Kathy Brown. The Taskforce supports and reiterates the comments made in those submissions.

The DogsNZ letter proposed that the changes to the British Bulldog Breed Standard were to be made on the basis of format. It is clear that this was not the case, we hardly think that the Canine Health and Welfare Committee would seek change for the purpose of an easier more readable document. The Clubs with the assistance of the Taskforce have sought to provide enough information to members to allow them to consider the DogsNZ Proposal and have discussed it with the international Clubs who have been affected by the changes to the UK Breed Standard in 2011 or had those changes proposed to them.

Consultation has shown that there is strong support of the Clubs view that:

- a. The United Kingdom (**UK**) should be retained as the country of origin for the NZ British Bulldog Breed Standard. The transfer to the FCI standard is not supported and format is not a sufficient

reason to turn away from the history of the “British” Bulldog Breed Standard within New Zealand connected to the UK.

- b. Further as stated in Kathy Brown’s submission given the many regulatory changes to the detriment of brachycephalic breeds happening in FCI countries why would we support a change to an FCI standard?
- c. While the UK standard was amended in 2011 (**2011 UK Standard**), it was not supported by the UK Bulldog Clubs or Bulldog Council. Given the perception that the purpose of the changes was a response to negative commentary, the 2011 UK Standard has done nothing to appease the push by animal activists to undermine the British Bulldog in the UK, nor the pedigree dog for that matter. It will not stop it here. All the DogsNZ Proposal will do is allow DogsNZ to say they have responded to the negativity. This is not a sufficient reason to approve the DogsNZ Proposal and change the NZ Standard.
- d. Further an attempt to bring the 2011 UK Standard into Australia was strongly opposed and prevented by the Australian Bulldog Clubs. Those Clubs support the NZ Clubs in their opposition here.
- e. The NZ Clubs and members support the views of their fellow UK and Australian Bulldog Clubs and oppose the change of the NZ British Bulldog Breed Standard to the 2011 UK Standard. Preferring the retention of the current NZ British Bulldog Standard which reflects the UK British Bulldog Standard pre-dating the 2011 changes.
- f. Finally, as identified in Frank Muncey’s submission the changes were they to be implemented will have a significant effect on the conformation of the British bulldog in contrast to its original purpose. This submission was the subject of significant written support by members and as stated above is supported by the Taskforce.

The Clubs remain focussed on a range of activities including their Health Schemes, education and advocacy. As with the UK where health testing has been provided by the UK Bulldog Council for many years we consider that this emphasis will bring further improvement in NZ British and French Bulldogs for generations to come as breeders make better informed decisions, more so than an arbitrary change to the breed standard. We note there has been considerable take up of the Health Schemes here since they started.

Further, in discussions with officials and stakeholders such including Trademe and insurance companies these groups acknowledged that they too recognise that a package of changes is necessary with emphasis on health and education of both breeders and the public. They acknowledged that the Clubs have a voice and role to lead this work for their members, directly involved and with a vested interest in improvement of the health and perception for the British and French Bulldogs.

The Clubs are also mindful of the need for DogNZ requirements including the Breed Standards to be seen to be part of breed health and improvement. Earlier this year the Taskforce put forward proposed changes to the French Bulldog Breed Standard. Those changes were not supported because they did not reflect the FCI (as the country of origin for the NZ French Bulldog) or other international standards. The offer was made by DogsNZ for Clubs representatives to meet with the Breed Standard Committee to discuss options other than amendment of the French Bulldog Breed Standard to enact mechanisms to meet the concerns and changes needed to ensure that breeder, judge and public alike understand what is required for a French Bulldog compliant with the breed standard. The Clubs accepted that offer of engagement.

The Clubs propose that rather than making the changes proposed, DogsNZ do the same with the perception of issues with the NZ British Bulldog Standard and that the Clubs work with the Breed Standards Committee to consider options both within the current Dogs NZ regulations and overseas options such as addendums to provide further clarification and education. Those changes could then


be consulted and discussed with members and form part of the package of work the Clubs are working on for the breed.

Conclusion

We strongly ask that DogsNZ listen to the views of the Clubs and their members and not change the British Bulldog Standard. Rather we propose that DogsNZ support the Clubs in their work and agree to their engagement with the Breed Standards Committee. This support would reflect the statements of the DogsNZ president and the Executive Council members who attended the meeting with the Southern Bulldog Club last year that DogsNZ would support the clubs in their work. Work that it was acknowledged that they would lead.

If you have any queries please contact us.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Loretta Lovell', written in a cursive style.

Loretta Lovell
Co ordinator