

Draft Minutes of the EGM

March 6th 2022

Held at 10.00am via Zoom



Present:

Jen Aazem, Debra Allen (Secretary), Mark Allen, Judy Badcock, Val Ball, Brian Bishop, Louise Bufton, Matthew Crowle, Jane Curnock, Kirty Davies-Pryor, Tim Doyle, Sabina Dunkling, Tina Dunstan, Malcolm Eames, Roy Ellis, Kirby Emerson, Colleen Ford-Ellis, Claire Gardner, Carolyn Graves-Brown (Chair), Magda Gryczmanska, Michelle Harley, Essex Havard, Caroline Havard, Melanie Hurley, Lindsay Jackson, Nicola Jones, Chris Kinsey, Claire Lawson, James Lewis, Debbie Lucey, Katie Murrell, Matthew Murrell, Jenny Newbury, Emma Pickering, Darren Pritchard (Treasurer), Lesley Owen, Tracey Smith, Jan Stanton, Alain Thomas (Vice Chair), Karen Thomas, Louisa Tom, Steve Tom, Karen Townend, Martin Townend, Amanda Townsend, Jon Trew, Roger Vick, Vivienne Vick.

Apologies:

No apologies were received.

Agenda Item	
1.	Welcome
	<p>Carolyn Graves-Brown welcomed everyone and outlined the code of conduct for the meeting, as previously circulated.</p> <p>A commitment had been made at the AGM in September 2021 to review the Vision and Mission of GRW, which was one of the recommendations in Martyn Hubbard's report (available on GRW's website). As a membership led organisation the EGM had been arranged for a vote to be taken on the new Vision and Mission, to guide the future direction of GRW.</p>
2.	Change Management Programme
	<p>Tim Doyle, the Change Manager appointed following the AGM, spoke to members about the change process and MH's recommendations. To date the process had involved communicating with stakeholders to identify key issues. Priorities will be determined for the remainder of the change programme once the new Vision and Mission are agreed.</p>
3.	Special Resolution on a new Vision and Mission
	<p>Option 1 - presented by Carolyn Graves-Brown</p> <p><u>Vision Statement:</u> <i>Working for a Wales where every greyhound and lurcher has a home and receives the best possible care.</i></p> <p><u>Mission Statement:</u> <i>Our mission is to improve the lives of greyhounds and lurchers by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming greyhounds and lurchers</i>● <i>Calling for improvements in welfare in greyhound racing</i>● <i>Raising awareness of the issues facing greyhounds and lurchers</i>● <i>Promoting greyhounds and lurchers as pets</i> <p>CG-B outlined this option as a non combative stance where GRW could still speak out about welfare issues. If GRW makes a declaration against greyhound racing it may lose its voice on the Greyhound Forum, and jeopardise good relationships with trainers. There have been welfare improvements in the industry and the greyhound retirement scheme (GRS) has provided additional income for GRW. If Valley becomes a GBGB track there may be an opportunity to affect change. It may be easier to encourage other</p>

	<p>changes, such as the introduction of a betting levy, with a neutral stance. Greyhound racing is just one area with issues, others include rural crimes using lurchers. CG-B said she would continue to support GRW whatever the outcome of the vote at this meeting.</p>
	<p>Option 2 - presented by Jon Trew</p> <p><u>Vision Statement:</u> <i>Working for a Wales without greyhound racing, where every greyhound and lurcher has a home and receives the best possible care.</i></p> <p><u>Mission Statement:</u> <i>Our mission is to improve the lives of greyhounds and lurchers by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming greyhounds and lurchers</i> ● <i>Supporting the movement to end greyhound racing in Wales</i> ● <i>Raising awareness of the issues facing greyhounds and lurchers</i> ● <i>Promoting greyhounds and lurchers as pets</i> <p>JT said this vote is about the future direction of GRW, by members sharing a love of greyhounds and lurchers, and asked that they honour and respect the outcome of the vote. It is no longer possible for GRW to have a neutral position on greyhound racing. At the last AGM members did not agree to the appointment of an owner of racing greyhounds as a trustee. This was a clear indication that the membership is not neutral. The majority of GRW rehomed dogs have raced in England, and GRW needs to continue to work with those trainers, and develop relationships further. Organisations such as Caged and the League Against Cruel Sports are already campaigning for a ban, but they do not rehome dogs too. GRW is better placed lending support to other organisations' campaigns, and focus on adoptions as a rescue and rehoming charity.</p>
	<p>Option 3 - presented by Alain Thomas</p> <p><u>Vision Statement:</u> <i>Working for a Wales without greyhound racing, where every greyhound and lurcher has a home and receives the best possible care.</i></p> <p><u>Mission Statement:</u> <i>Our mission is to improve the lives of greyhounds and lurchers by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming greyhounds and lurchers</i> ● <i>Actively campaigning to end greyhound racing in Wales</i> ● <i>Raising awareness of the issues facing greyhounds and lurchers</i> ● <i>Promoting greyhounds and lurchers as pets</i> <p>AT said all three options have merit and integrity and he would remain a member of GRW whatever the result. The only difference between options two and three is that GRW would be actively campaigning. If Valley becomes a GBGB track the number of race meetings will increase four fold. Suffering would increase as a result, and the cost of treating injured dogs would also increase massively. This could result in five hundred dogs needing homes in Wales each year. There is a real opportunity to stop the development of the track. Hope's petition to ban greyhound racing in Wales has been signed by 35,000 people, and is about to be debated in the Senedd. Dogs Trust, RSPCA and Blue Cross are all currently reviewing their positions on greyhound racing. GRW would need to develop relationships with trainers, work with intermediaries, and manage public statements carefully. This would ensure dogs would still be given to GRW for rehoming. The loss of income from GRS would not be missed as it only represents 2.5% of GRW's income and the charity is financially sustainable.</p>
4.	Discussion
a)	<p>Contributions from members (registered to speak)</p> <p>Kirty Davies-Pryor As a fosterer of two GRW greyhounds KD-P felt GRW needs a strategic marketing campaign. GRW needs to promote greyhounds and lurchers using social media to show how loving the dogs are in the home. GRW should have a presence at local markets, fayres etc so that the public can meet greyhounds. Relationships should also be built with the press.</p> <p>Debbie Lucey DL said GRW has done well working with trainers so far, but needs to start actively campaigning for a ban on greyhound racing.</p>

Jan Stanton

JS said GRW has been neutral in the past to facilitate engagement. The possibility of a GBGB track, with more races being held, and being streamed across the world meant that it is time to campaign now. JS said the public trusts GRW and would expect it to speak out.

Malcolm Eames

ME first adopted a dog thirty-three years ago. That dog was from a laboratory, and a campaign by a national newspaper was successful in stopping the mistreatment. ME believes campaigning produces results and supports the option to campaign against greyhound racing in Wales. Apart from the UK/Ireland there are only six other countries where it is legal, including Vietnam and China. It is only legal in three states in the USA. ME said Hope has done a fantastic job with their petition and when it is presented to the Senedd on 7th March he will attend with Hector, his Last Hope dog, on Hector’s behalf.

Essex Havard

EH said greyhound racing should be referred to as an industry not a sport. Fewer tracks would result in fewer injuries and fewer dogs bred, as six thousand greyhounds are killed every year for not being ‘good enough’ at racing. A ban on racing would slow the supply. EH supports option three as an opportunity to lead by example, and doesn’t think the racing industry would see the distinction between option two and three. EH has experience of change management and said GRW’s process is good and thanked the change team.

Lindsay Jackson

LJ wanted to highlight that the signatures on Hope’s petition were not all from people in Wales, and that there was a lot of rhetoric and not evidence presented. LJ felt there was a lack of attention to finance in the documentation. Also a ban could result in greyhound racing going underground and this could not be regulated. Dogs are raced because of gambling and LJ felt GRW should be against this as a root cause. LJ said there would be unintended consequences to a ban, and she felt the impact on GRW staff, existing contracts etc had not been fully considered.

b) Additional contributions from the presenting Trustees

Carolyn Graves-Brown

Option one allows GRW more time and resources to look at problems, and would allow welfare issues in the industry to be addressed. If Valley becomes a GBGB track the situation may improve there and they would pay for injured dogs so that cost may not fall to GRW.

Jon Trew

The issue isn’t just greyhound racing, it’s also about what members want GRW to become. There are other campaigning organisations but they don’t rehome dogs. If there was a racing ban in Wales GRW would still need to maintain good relationships with Welsh trainers racing their dogs on English tracks. From his experience on the Greyhound Forum, he believes trainers would see the difference between options two and three.

Alain Thomas

AT thanked Tim Doyle and the Change Steering Group for their hard work leading up to the EGM. A risk register has been established, detailed evidence provided, and there has been a robust process, keeping everyone informed. AT agreed that gambling is the root of the problem but that can’t be tackled. There is the opportunity to stop the establishment of a GBGB track and end greyhound racing in Wales.

Carolyn Graves-Brown thanked everyone for their contributions.

5. Vote 1

The first round of voting for the three options was held using Opavote.

Result:

Vision and Mission	Number of votes cast
Option 1	12

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Option 2</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Option 3</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Total: 51</td> </tr> </table> <p>Option 1 was removed from the second vote, as it received the least number of votes.</p>	Option 2	15	Option 3	24		Total: 51				
Option 2	15										
Option 3	24										
	Total: 51										
6.	Vote 2										
	<p>The second round of voting for the remaining two options was held using Opavote.</p> <p>Result:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Vision and Mission</th> <th>Number of votes cast</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Option 2</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Option 3</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Abstentions</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Total: 51</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Vision and Mission	Number of votes cast	Option 2	25	Option 3	24	Abstentions	2		Total: 51
Vision and Mission	Number of votes cast										
Option 2	25										
Option 3	24										
Abstentions	2										
	Total: 51										
7.	Results of the vote										
	<p>The new Vision and Mission agreed at the meeting is option 2 as follows:</p> <p><u>Vision Statement:</u> <i>Working for a Wales without greyhound racing, where every greyhound and lurcher has a home and receives the best possible care.</i></p> <p><u>Mission Statement:</u> <i>Our mission is to improve the lives of greyhounds and lurchers by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming greyhounds and lurchers</i> ● <i>Supporting the movement to end greyhound racing in Wales</i> ● <i>Raising awareness of the issues facing greyhounds and lurchers</i> ● <i>Promoting greyhounds and lurchers as pets</i> <p>Carolyn Graves-Brown thanked members for attending, and for their opinions and casting their votes, demonstrating their shared love of greyhounds and lurchers. She also thanked Tim Doyle and the Change Steering Group.</p> <p>The website will be updated with all the information and there will be the facility to comment.</p> <p>The new Vision and Mission will be used to move forward, to look at governance and ensure that GRW continues to be sustainable going forward.</p>										