

Efra report supports call for statutory levy | Greyhound News



By Jim Cremin 7:00AM 25 FEB 2016

BOOKMAKERS have been told they must contribute more to protecting racing dogs and should not prioritise profit over high welfare standards by the parliamentary cross-party Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee.

Efra sees a statutory levy as the most effective mechanism to achieve this, a recommendation regarded by the Greyhound Board of Great Britain as a major boost in its chairman Tom Kelly's battle to make progress with the layers over their offshore business.

Certainly, he could hardly have hoped for a more encouraging headline on the official Efra press release of 'Bookmakers should do more to support greyhound welfare and the wider industry, say MPs'.

Neil Parish MP, chairman of the committee, said: "All racing greyhounds should enjoy high welfare standards both during their racing career and retirement. Bookmakers who profit from greyhound racing should contribute to welfare standards regardless of whether the profits are from high-street stores, online or overseas betting.

"The welfare of racing greyhounds shouldn't be at the whim of bookmakers who can simply choose to contribute or not. The government should consider introducing a statutory levy or an alternative betting rights model to protect animal welfare."

However, the Committee noted that a statutory levy could contravene European law, and this is why the Government had stated there was "no plans" to introduce one.

The Efra report said: "Bookmakers profiting from greyhound racing have a responsibility to support

greyhound welfare whether they trade from the High Street or trade online.

"We believe government should apply greater pressure to bookmakers to pay a fair reflection of all the profits they make.

"If a voluntary agreement cannot be struck we recommend that government introduce a statutory levy of one per cent of gross turnover. This will ensure the welfare of greyhounds is adequately funded in the future."