

Council Meeting

Thursday, 7 March 2019 at 10:00 am to be held at the RCVS, Belgravia House, 62/64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Agenda

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| 1. President's introduction | Oral report |
| 2. Apologies for absence | Oral report |
| 3. Declarations of interest | Oral report |
| 4. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2019 | Refer to Council minutes |
| 5. Matters arising | |
| a. Obituaries | Oral report |
| b. Council correspondence and matters for report | Oral report |
| c. CEO update | Unclassified |
| 6. Matters for decision by Council (unclassified items) | |
| a. Winding down of Operational Board | Unclassified |
| b. Meeting Procedure Rules | Unclassified |
| c. Registration of EU graduates in a 'no-deal' situation | Unclassified |
| 7. Reports of committees – to note | |
| a. Audit and Risk Committee | |
| i. Minutes of the meeting held 25 April 2018 (previously confidential until agreed) | Unclassified |
| ii. Minutes of the meeting held 3 October 2018 | Unclassified |
| iii. Minutes of the meeting held 31 January 2019 (Ms E Butler) | Confidential |
| b. Advancement of the Professions Committee (Prof G C W England) | Unclassified |
| c. Education Committee (Prof S Dawson) | Unclassified |
| d. Standards Committee (Dr K A Richards) | Unclassified |

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| e. Veterinary Nurses Council
(Ms R M Marshall) | Unclassified |
| f. PIC/DC Liaison Committee
(Ms A K Boag) | Oral report |
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| 8. Reports of statutory committees – to note | |
| a. Preliminary Investigation Committee
(Registrar) | Unclassified |
| b. RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee
(Registrar) | Unclassified |
| c. Disciplinary Committee and RVN Disciplinary Committee
(Registrar) | Unclassified |
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| 9. Notices of motion | Oral report |
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| 10. Questions | Oral report |
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| 11. Recommendation for the appointment of Officers – President and Vice-President (Senior) respectively, for confirmation at the AGM on 12 July 2019 | Oral report |
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| 12. Election of the Vice-President (Junior) – recommendation for confirmation at the AGM on 12 July 2019 | Oral report |
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| 13. Other Elections | |
| a. Treasurer | Oral report |
| b. Chair, Advancement of the Professions Committee | Oral report |
| c. Chair, Education Committee | Oral report |
| d. Chair, Standards Committee | Oral report |
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| 14. Dates of next meeting | Oral report |
| Thursday, 13 June 2019 at 10:00 am (reconvening in afternoon 2:00 – 4:00 pm) | |
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| AFTERNOON SESSION: 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm (TO BE HELD IN COMMITTEE) | |
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| 15. Matters for decision by Council and for report (confidential items) | |
| a. Discretionary Fund Report | Oral report |
| b. Estates Strategy | Oral report |
| c. Draft accounts 2018 | Confidential |
| d. Mind Matters Initiative budget | Confidential |
| e. Review of Professional Conduct / Open Minds Consulting | Confidential |

- f. Outcomes based CPD
- g. Honours and Awards

Confidential
Private/Confidential

16. Any other College business

Oral report

17. Risk Register, equality and diversity

Oral report

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Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 17 January 2019 at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

Ms A K Boag (President in the Chair)	
Dr C J Allen	Mrs A K Jeffery*
Professor D J Argyle	Mr D J Leicester
Mr C T Barker	Miss R M Marshall
Mr D Bray	Professor S A May
Professor E Cameron*	Mrs C-L McLaughlan
Mr J M Castle	Dr S Paterson
Dr D S Chambers	Mr M L Peaty
Dr N T Connell	Professor S W J Reid*
Ms E K Cox	Dr K A Richards
Professor S Dawson	Mr P B Robinson
Dr M A Donald	Dr C L Scudamore
Dr J M Dyer	Col N C Smith
Professor G C W England	Dr C P Sturgess
Ms L Ford	Dr C W Tufnell
Ms L V Goodwin	Mr T J Walker
Dr M O Greene	Professor J L N Wood*
Professor T R C Greet	Ms J S M Worthington
Mrs L V Hill*	

*Absent

In attendance:

Ms E Butler	Chair, Audit & Risk Committee
Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C McCann	Assistant Registrar / Director of Operations (DoO)

Guests (open session only):

Dr S Doherty	President, British Veterinary Association
Ms K Moore	Vetlife Trustee, Chair of Vetlife Helpline and Vetlife Health Support

President's introduction

1. The President welcomed external guests and outlined the order of the meeting.

Apologies for absence

2. Apologies for absence were received from:

- Professor Cameron
- Mrs Hill
- Mrs Jeffery
- Miss Middlemiss (observer)
- Professor Reid
- Professor Wood

Declarations of interest

3. The following declarations were made:

- Professor Argyle: was now a consultant for Zenoaq;
- Ms Boag: her employer had changed to IVC;
- Professor England: was now a consultant for Waltham Pet Foods;
- Mr Leicester: his employer had changed to IVC;
- Miss Marshall: her employer had changed to IVC;
- Col Smith: was now a Trustee for Street Vet;
- Dr Tufnell: was now a Trustee for World Horse Welfare.

Minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2018

4. Council had had an opportunity to comment on the minutes electronically.
5. The minutes from the meeting held on Thursday, 1 November 2018 were accepted as a true record.

Matters arising

Obituaries

6. The President reported that there had been no written obituaries received. However, the College had been notified that one of its Honorary Associates, Mr Gordon (Nick) Henderson, had passed away on 22 December 2018 at the age of 92 after a career of over 60 years. The Treasurer would attend the funeral on behalf of Council and the College.
7. Council held a minute silence for all members of the College who had passed since the last meeting.

Council correspondence and matters for report

8. The President reported:

RCVS Council Election 2019

9. A reminder that the deadline for submissions for this election was 5:00 pm on Thursday, 31 January 2019.

Elections for: Vice-President (Junior); Treasurer; Chair, Education Committee; and Chair, Standards Committee

10. A reminder that the deadline for submissions for these (internal) elections was 5:00 pm on Tuesday, 5 February 2019 and that they would be agenda items at the Council meeting in March.

11. The election procedure for Chairs of standing committees had been amended and was one of the matters for decision later in the agenda; some of the amendments would take into account the election for Chair, Advancement of the Professions Committee.

12. A further reminder that Registered addresses must be used for the paperwork of all of the elections.

President's Reception – eve of March Council (6 March 2019)

13. There would be no Council Supper on the eve of March Council, instead a Reception would be held at Belgravia House; invitations would be sent shortly. Council were reminded that the evening event was a social occasion only therefore expenses were not claimable.

PIC / DC Recruitment

14. Recruitment interviews for members of the statutory committees had commenced. The President sought Council's permission to send the names of selected candidates to members for ratification by e-mail as soon as possible following the end of the interview process (24 January 2019), as some candidates would be required to commence roles as soon as possible and this would relieve pressure on the current members. This was agreed.

Certification Support Officers (CSOs)

15. There had been a minor wording change by Defra to the 10 Principles of Certification and changes to Chapter 21 of the Supporting Guidance since the last meeting, as '*product of animal origin...*' in EU Directives and Regulations, particularly EC 2016/429, the Animal Health Regulation (AHR), effectively was defined by the phrase '*for human consumption*'. This should read: '*animal products excluding germinal products*' to differentiate from EU terminology and remained within the scope of work CSOs were permitted to conduct. There was a further amendment in paragraph 21.18 of the Guidance that defined an 'official auxiliary': to amend from '*authorised by a CSO*' to '*authorised as a CSO*'. Both amendments had been circulated to Standards Committee who agreed the changes as they did not alter the Principles.

CEO report

16. The CEO stated that the work of the College largely comprised three areas:

- day-to-day business: education; registration; committee work; etc.;

- delivery of the Strategic Plan (as outlined in the paper provided to Council);
- reactive work: for example, Brexit; where there had been a huge requirement for time and resources during the last couple of years.

17. The paper included narrative around most areas in the Strategic Plan as it we were entering the last year of the current Plan; and Council would continue to be kept updated. If, however, more information was required around any item, please ask, as there was a lot more detail available than was in the paper.

18. The following items were highlighted:

- Graduate Outcomes consultation: launched at London Vet Show held on 15 – 16 November 2018, and was due to close the day after the Council meeting (18 January 2019). There were currently 1,789 full responses, and 3750 partial responses, that totalled replies from more than 10% of the profession, which was very good;
- Veterinary Stakeholders Day: held on 26 November 2018 to engage with key people from the profession and get them involved in the development of the next Strategic Plan. It was also good to hear from the smaller organisations, for example, the Goat Veterinary Society;
- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA): following its successful application to becoming a member of ENQA, the RCVS had attended its first Conference in Vienna in November;
- Joint Strategy Meeting with the RCVS Operational Board and the British Veterinary Association (BVA) Board: held on 7 December 2018; there were some interesting discussions, including around improving diversity within the profession;
- a series of ViVet workshops: had been launched, the first of which was the day prior to the Council meeting;
- telemedicine: had been on the agenda at the Veterinary Stakeholder Day, so Council could be assured that work was still continuing; this was also discussed at the joint meeting with BVA in December and there had also been interest from overseas veterinary associations in what the College was doing. There would be more formal Stakeholder involvement at a later date as per the agreement at the November Council meeting;
- there was a big year ahead but there was strong momentum from the team. The process for the development of next Strategic Plan had commenced; some of which would be considered in the afternoon **in committee** session of Council.

19. It was suggested that formal consultation with Stakeholders would be useful in order to understand what profession wanted in relation to telemedicine – but how could the College balance a large and expensive consultation when most of the profession did not agree with telemedicine? The CEO responded that Standards Committee was taking this matter forward; a formal consultation had not been started: what was continuing was the conversation with

Stakeholders about telemedicine; although there remained worries and the concerns, it was important that most organisations were now actively engaging in lively debate.

20. Re: item D1 (page 9 of the paper): Develop a strategy to make sure that the profession was in charge of its future by maximising the opportunity and minimising the risks of Brexit. It was questioned if there was an update following the meeting held on 10 January 2019 with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) referring to the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (MRPQ) Directive? The CEO confirmed that the meeting focussed on different aspects, such as:
- the fact that graduates from universities that were not accredited by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) would have to take the Statutory Examination for Membership of the College if there was no deal for Brexit, and the ability of the RCVS to 'scale up' this exam in the light of a potential increased number of applicants;
 - Exemption Orders;
 - VN regulation; and
 - how the College could prepare itself more broadly for 30 March 2019 (the day after Brexit was supposed to take place) if there was no deal.

21. The report was noted.

Matters for decision by Council (unclassified items)

RCVS Delegation Scheme 2019

22. The CEO introduced the paper and referred to how the Delegation Scheme related to the work of the various RCVS committees. The main changes included the newly formed Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC) Terms of Reference, which had been approved by that committee, as well as adding in Senior Team Terms of Reference for clarity. There would be more changes over the next few months referring to the proposed Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) and the winding down of Operational Board (OB) in order to put into place any necessary recruitment for that committee.
23. It was noted that whilst the June 2018 Council meeting minutes stated that OB would cease in the summer of 2019, there was no end date specified in the Delegation Scheme; this would be added into the Scheme when it next came back to Council in March 2019.
24. With the suggested addition of the cessation date of OB to be included in the future paper, Council agreed the amendments to the Delegation Scheme 2019.

Meeting Procedure rules 2014 – amendment

25. The Registrar introduced the paper and the amendments contained therein. She highlighted paragraph 2 of the paper, in that the Chair still had the option to modify the rules during the meeting. There should be one further amendment to paragraph 6 to include: '*...by a show of hands, via electronic means, or by other means of a secret ballot...*'.

26. Comments and questions included but were not limited to:

- historically, when Disciplinary Committee (DC) members were still part of RCVS Council, it was never recorded who voted and how, in order to prevent potential challenges to DC hearings. DC was now independent from RCVS Council so it could be interesting for members of the profession to note how Council members eligible for re-election had voted; this was not currently proposed;
 - o how Council voted was entirely in its hands, and it should decide what it wanted; Council members did not represent a constituency but were representative of the profession. Regarding conflicts of interest, theoretically if a member, or members, of Council were conflicted they could abstain from any vote and the number of abstentions checked, but that was an entirely different matter to whether a ballot should be secret or not;
 - o when voting was by a show of hands, it gave a sense of self-regulation – to be each other’s conscience – but the College did not publish itemised votes, instead Council made a collective decision that was then minuted and reported. To publish who voted / how would be a fundamental change;
- re: paragraph 7 of the Annex showing tracked changes: did the option for postal votes have a time frame?
 - o this related to the processes for the internal RCVS elections for Vice-President, Treasurer and Chairs of standing committees, and there was a deadline given for any postal votes to be received when the details were sent to Council with the names of candidates;
- re: paragraphs 8 and 12 of the Annex: there was disparity between remote participation being eligible to vote, and that Council members voting at a Council meeting had to be personally present;
 - o remote participation/voting related to some (smaller) committee meetings, whereas Council members voting at Council meetings had to be personally present as there was not the ability to do tele-, or video-, conferencing at those meetings;
- there was some agreement that recording how members voted was in the professions’, and the public’s, interests; members all declared their interests and could recuse themselves. However, for an election such as that for Vice-President, should this be a contested election, it was a stressful and divisive time, particularly if you could see who your neighbour voted for; therefore that vote should remain as a secret ballot;
- there was a number of different voting options available. Was it possible to simplify the process before Council by holding the elections for Vice-President, Treasurer and Chairs by secret ballot and all other votes to be identifiable?
- votes should be recorded / identifiable if called for by Council and published / subject to Freedom of Information requests thereafter.

27. The President brought discussions to a close and stated that Council's comments would be taken on-board and a further paper would come back to the next Council meeting, with the emphasis on a simple approach that was transparent.

Election procedure for Chairs of standing committees – amendment

28. The Registrar introduced the paper and highlighted that there was an overlap with the previous paper regarding issues around voting procedures, when a further paper would go to March 2019 Council. However, she was keen to include the election of the Chair of Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC) in the same way as the elections for Chairs of other current standing committees. The process for (internal) elections for Vice-President; Treasurer; Chair, Education Committee; and Chair, Standards Committee had already commenced and the deadline was 5 February 2019 for nominations, with the elections taking place at the March meeting. She requested that the process fall to the same timescale for the Chair APC election for consecutive years, but for this year only to have a shortened nomination period in order to bring it into line with the others.
29. It was questioned whether there was a process in place for a member who had been elected as Chair or Vice-President, who were then not re-elected on Council in the main RCVS Council elections? This was confirmed: if a member was not re-elected, there was enough time to completely re-run the internal election process at the next scheduled Council meeting (June), which was why there was a tight timescale to get this into line now.
30. Council agreed that the election for Chair, APC could run with the short timescale for this year to bring it into line with the other internal elections. Other amendments regarding voting procedures would form part of the Meeting Procedure Rules paper that would go to the next meeting.

Ethics Review Panel – making it permanent

31. Declaration of interest: Ms Boag had been part of an application that had been through the process.
32. The paper was introduced by the Chair, Standards Committee. She stated that the Ethics Review Panel (ERP) was set up for a trial period, initially for one year and extended to two years, and provided access to ethics review for practice-based vets and veterinary nurses. An Oversight Group was convened and included representation from the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA); British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) and the Chair of the ERP, and there was good discussion. During the trial period, there had been 58 applications, and it was possible to increase the number to 100 in the future. In terms of budget, most of the work was completed by email and some members of the Panel did not charge Loss of Earnings although this should still form part of the budget. Page 10 of the paper showed the decisions required.
33. Comments and questions included:
- response time for applications was initially set at 50 days, however, this had not been consistently met, and the timeframe was later reduced to 32 days and, again, had not been

consistently met due to unavailability of reviewers and staff. Also, some reviewers were not responding to more than 50% of applications. Would this be tidied up?

- this was discussed at the Oversight Group meeting, and confirmed it would be 'tightened' up and include clarity around workload and expectations. It should also be noted that there was a lot that was positive in the paper;
- focus was clinical elements whereas some work involved social science ethics – had the Panel given consideration to be able to support that sort of research in practice?
 - the Panel was very aware and mindful on that matter. There were three vacancies currently on the Panel where this would also be addressed;
 - within the breakdown of subject species, two had already had a social science agenda;
- staggered appointments were suggested to ensure continuity on the Panel.

34. Council agreed that the ERP should be made permanent.

Notices of motion

35. There were no notices of motion received.

Questions

36. There were no questions received.

Any other business

37. It was noted that a vet had recently made history: Jasmin Paris from Edinburgh had just completed the Montane Spine Race in record time. The race was 268 miles (unsupported – having to carry everything you need) along the entire length of the Pennine Way from Derbyshire's Peak District to the Scottish Borders. Ms Paris had taken more than 26 hours 42 minutes off the female record, 11 hours 48 minutes off the men's record, and was 15 hours ahead of the second place competitor.

38. It was agreed that such a feat should be celebrated, and the President confirmed that she would write to Ms Paris to congratulate her.

Date of next meeting

39. The date of the next meeting was Thursday, 7 March 2019 at 10:00 am, reconvening in the afternoon 2:00 – 4:00 pm.

40. The President drew the public session of the meeting to a close.

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Meeting	Council
Date	7 March 2019
Title	CEO Update
Classification	Unclassified
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk

Summary

The Strategic Plan 2017-19 outlines 39 actions arranged under five ambitions:

- a) Learning culture
- b) Leadership and innovation
- c) Continuing to be a First-rate Regulator
- d) Global reach
- e) Our service agenda

This paper outlines progress under each heading; we also update the profession on progress on a regular basis by email.

The pages to follow cover a range of areas; but in terms of highlights, since the last update to Council, in January 2019, we have:

- Attended the Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons/Veterinary Management Group Congress, with a focus on Practice Standards, Mind Matters and Graduate Outcomes
- Closed the first stage of the Graduate Outcomes consultation, on 18 January, with 1,963 full responses and 3,825 partial responses
- Launched the 2019 Council elections, with an initial call for questions to be answered by the nine nominees, which includes five current Council members and four others
- Received an excellent response to our call for nominations for RCVS Honours and Awards
- Run two Viet innovation workshops
- Run a series of four pilot resilience training days as part of Mind Matters, with a view to choosing a trainer for a further 12-month series, jointly with the British Small Animal Veterinary Association
- Launched a series of Mind Matters Wellbeing Roadshows, jointly with the Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons and the Veterinary Management Group
- Appointed two students to each of our Education Committee and Primary Qualifications Subcommittee, in line with recommendations from ENQA
- Carried out a full visitation to the University of Surrey

If Council members would like more information on any aspect of our work, please just ask.

Meeting the objectives of our Strategic Plan

Objectives to be tackled year by year are agreed in the November of the preceding year. As we are now in the final year of our current plan, all of the objectives are 'live'. Numbering is as per the 2017-9 Strategic Plan.

A – Learning culture

A1. Establish the extent to which a blame culture is present within the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, and set a baseline against which any change can be measured, as we move towards a culture where learning and reflection is encouraged

An independent research organisation was commissioned to carry out initial research to establish the extent to which any such blame culture might exist in the professions and whether the RCVS contributes to its existence.

An online survey was completed during last spring 2017 by 7,349 people and the responses will be augmented by qualitative research. This work remains in a pipeline behind work ongoing around the impact of the Professional Conduct process on mental health, which is coming to Council in March 2019.

A2. Develop a series of evidence-based actions that the veterinary team can take to reduce blame culture and ensure a culture of continual learning is established

We are in discussion with the Point of Care Foundation (POCF), the charity that delivers Schwartz Round training and support in the UK, about a pilot of this reflective practice model involving a range of different practice types, to see if this approach to developing non-judgemental sharing of the emotional impact of cases can contribute to a learning culture. This was an approach identified as part of the Vet Futures Action Plan. We have spoken to human healthcare organisations who have taken part and the one veterinary practice that has been involved to date - feedback has been very positive and will help shape our pilot. Fees have been agreed and we are finalising arrangements for the pilot.

A3. Help to change public expectations around their interactions with veterinary professionals, including around risk, uncertainty and value (VF ambition five, recommendation 27, action M)

The RCVS and British Veterinary Association (BVA) communications teams launched a social media campaign during National Pet Month in April/May 2018 to encourage animal owners to ensure their pets are registered with a veterinary practice, under the hashtag #petsneedvets. This campaign gained some traction on social media and was the focus on our activity at public events over the summer – the Devon County Show, the Royal Welsh Show and Countryfile Live.

We will review how we communicate on these issues for our forthcoming round of summer public events, which we hope will include the Royal Highland Show and Countryfile Live North.

A4. Review the impact of our concerns-handling and disciplinary framework on the mental health and wellbeing of the veterinary professions, and take appropriate actions

An independent research organisation was commissioned to carry out this review. A series of interviews took place with stakeholders such as Vetlife and the Veterinary Defence Society, and some of those who have been through our disciplinary process. Meanwhile, qualitative data were gathered as part of the blame culture survey outlined above.

A draft report has been produced by the researchers and will be published as part of the Mind Matters Initiative, allowing the RCVS Professional Conduct Department to respond to the recommendations, alongside other relevant organisations who play a part in supporting those going through our complaints process. It has been reviewed in draft by the Mind Matters Taskforce and the Preliminary Investigation Committee/Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee. A further iteration went to the PIC/DC Liaison Committee in October. A paper including the report and our draft responses to the recommendations will be discussed by Council at its March meeting. Thereafter Mind Matters Taskforce members will be invited to comment on the report and recommendations before it is published.

A5. Review the impact of the Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) with respect to mitigating the effects of blame culture and ensure that the project is well enough funded and resourced to address the issues (VF ambition three, recommendation 10, 12 and 15 and action N)

Increased funding was agreed at the September 2018 meeting of Council, on a rolling three-year basis. An outline budget and strategic priorities will be discussed by Council at its March meeting. Evaluation of key activities is underway. A Risk Register for MMI will also be presented to a future meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee.

A6. If appropriate following the completion of trials, introduce an Alternative Dispute Resolution service.

Complete.

A7. Consult upon, and implement as appropriate, an outcomes-based approach to continuing professional development (CPD)

The CPD pilot has now been evaluated, with positive results. Detailed and constructive feedback was provided by participants, and this was presented to the CPD Policy Working Party (chaired by Professor Stephen May) in December 2018, and to Education Committee on 5 February 2019.

Education Committee supported the recommendation of the Working Party that RCVS introduces outcomes-based CPD for members, adopting a phased approach across two years, including a six-month lead-in time to enable an effective IT platform for recording CPD to be developed. The proposal is on the agenda for consideration by Council in March.

A8. Extend our concept of life-long learning to include mentorship (VF ambitions three / six, recommendations 12, 15 and 34, action P)

Since this objective was agreed in 2016, several of the veterinary organisations have embarked upon pilot mentorship schemes. We await the outcome of these pilots before considering this further as an RCVS activity. Meanwhile the Fellowship is considering mentorship as part of its programme of activity, and mentorship also features in the Graduate Outcomes consultation around the Professional Development Phase.

A9. Help to ensure that prospective veterinary students have a clear idea of the reality and opportunities of a career in veterinary science, and assist the veterinary schools in providing support for them (links to VF action H)

Work began in 2018 on refreshing our Walks of Life careers materials, and is ongoing. Meanwhile support for vet students is considered as part of the Graduate Outcomes proposals. Mind Matters has also financially supported a one-day mental health and wellbeing course for students, in partnership with the Association of Veterinary Students – VetKind – which took place on 24 November and was well received. A student wellbeing roundtable event is planned for September 2019, in conjunction with the Veterinary Schools Council and Mind Matters.

A10. Improve communication with veterinary and veterinary nursing students, in order to clarify our role and function

Attendance of vet and VN student representatives at our flagship events has been very well received, and we will continue to invite these representatives to our key events in 2019, including Royal College Day and Fellowship Day.

Vet Futures Student Ambassadors are involved in the next ViVet Symposium in the autumn, and we have been working closely with the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS) to help drive student engagement in the Graduate Outcomes consultation.

A student engagement working group is also being set up to discuss and identify other areas for improving communication and engagement with vet/VN students.

In line with ENQA recommendations, we have successfully recruited two veterinary student representatives to both the Education Committee and the Primary Qualifications Subcommittee. It is anticipated that these four student reps will attend the next meetings in April (PQSC) and May (Education Committee).

In addition, we are recruiting two student members (Further Education and Higher Education routes) to join the VN Education Committee.

Work is also underway to identify extra-mural studies (EMS) opportunities for students within Belgravia House, in recognition of the importance of encouraging students to think broadly about their future veterinary careers. A pilot week will run during March.

Meanwhile to ensure RCVS staff have a better understanding of life at vet school, a group of team members are heading to Bristol vet school for a visit on 28 March.

Plans are underway to create a 'My Account' area for VN students, allowing them to manage the details that we hold for them, and provide the opportunity to increase our engagement with them from an earlier stage. We are also reviewing the opportunity to extend "My Account" functionality to our Higher Education partners, enabling them to have an RCVS home / portal online which would provide a communication channel we can use to interact with each other concerning all aspects of our relationships with them and their students.

B – Leadership and innovation

B1. Continue to support the Vet Futures and VN Futures initiatives, working collaboratively across professions to ensure actions are met

The key Vet Futures activities form part of the ongoing Strategic Plan and are being taken forward accordingly. We are also supporting the delivery of the Vet Futures Europe plan, where appropriate (see D10). The Vet Futures Project Board (RCVS/British Veterinary Association/Veterinary Schools Council) meets regularly to assess progress, and evaluation of the impact of priority activities will be considered this year.

Delivery of the VN Futures Action Plan is being supported by VN Council and is overseen by the VN Futures Project Board (RCVS/British Veterinary Nursing Association). Work is underway to improve the presence of VN Futures online, to help raise the profile of the work of the Project Board and its working groups.

B2. Through completion of our governance review, ensure that we are an effective and efficient organisation, better able to lead the profession and serve the needs of the public, including the carrying out of training and the provision of coaching for RCVS Council members who take, or are considering taking, leadership roles

The LRO completed its passage through Parliament with a debate in the House of Lords on 1 May. The Order was subsequently signed by the Defra Minister, Lord Gardiner, on 2 May and came into force on 1 July 2018.

An independent selection committee was appointed for recruiting and interviewing candidates for the six new lay positions on Council and Council approved their appointment at its June 2018 meeting. The new lay recruits came onto Council at RCVS Day 2018 and have subsequently attended a new-style induction day at the College and have been paired up with existing Council members to support their transition onto Council.

Further training and development opportunities for Council members were discussed at the July 2018 meeting of the Operational Board and the development and introduction of these will be prioritised in 2019.

All new and existing Council members will be asked to complete the Skills Matrix in May in order to support appropriate deployment of skills in committees and working groups. They will also be asked to consider training requirements (as relevant to their Council roles).

B3. Define the role of the new Fellowship to advise and support the RCVS and act as ambassadors for the profession within society at large

Council approved the future direction of the Fellowship following a presentation from the Chair of the Fellowship Board, Professor Nick Bacon, at its September 2018 meeting. Going forward, the activities of the Fellowship will be overseen by the Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC). Discussions are currently ongoing around the process for selection of future chair for the Fellowship Board.

B4. Identify and support the next generation of veterinary leaders and develop leadership opportunities across the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, within all branches of the professions, at all levels - locally, nationally and internationally (VF ambition six, recommendations 12, 17, 31, 32 and 34, action Q)

A three-year plan to address this objective was submitted to the Operational Board at its March meeting, it included three key streams of activity: leadership for everyone; leading the profession; and, veterinary leadership development opportunities.

As part of the 'leadership for everyone' stream, we have been working closely with the NHS Leadership Academy to develop a massive open online course (MOOC) to provide a gateway programme for veterinary professionals wishing to improve their leadership skills.

The concept was launched at British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Congress in April and a pilot comprising 550 vets, vet nurses, students and practice managers was launched. The pilot group has now completed the second of three courses in the programme. Meanwhile, the first course

opened to all in November 2018 and around 1,800 people registered to join. Feedback on the programme has so far been overwhelmingly positive. Initial evaluation of the impact of the first course in the open programme has also demonstrated improvement in participants perceptions of all measured transformative leadership traits. Specifically, significant changes were found for: communicating values clearly; doing what I say I'm going to do; and instilling a sense of pride and respect in the working environment

B5. Develop a biennial Innovation Symposium, to showcase new technologies, educational and business models etc. from within veterinary and related fields, and encourage a culture of innovation (VF ambition five, recommendation 24, action R)

The initial event took place in September 2017 and a further Symposium will be held on 1 October 2019 at the Lowry in Manchester. Although the original Strategic Plan requirement was for a biennial event, in order to maintain momentum in this important area of work, there have been additional events, such as a series of workshops to help support veterinary professionals to develop and launch innovative products and services. The first workshops were held in Cambridge in January and February. Online resources based on the content delivered in these workshops will be made available shortly.

B6. Encourage diversity in our Council, our staff and other groups allied to the RCVS

This activity is being considered as part of the review of governance and Council / committee structure and operation, and ensuring that any proposed changes do not limit diversity is a key objective.

Training for Council members and staff around unconscious bias is under consideration.

The veterinary careers materials we are developing will have a particular focus on encouraging broader diversity within the next generation of veterinary students.

A meeting was held with a representative from the British Veterinary Ethnicity and Diversity Society to see how the College can further support diversity within the profession. The conversation focused on two areas – encouraging diversity and discouraging unhelpful behaviour towards those from minorities from within the profession. A blog by the President – 'We need to talk about veterinary diversity' – was published in September and included in *RCVS News* that month:

www.rcvs.org.uk/blogs

The President also took part in a panel discussion around gender diversity within the profession at the Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons/Veterinary Management Group Congress in January.

At its 31 October 2018 meeting, the Operational Board agreed to the setting up of a Working Group to take these issues forward, which will report through the APC. We now have representatives in place from all the organisations that will form the Working Group and a first meeting is likely in April.

C- Continuing to be a First Rate Regulator

C1. Review Schedule 3 to the Veterinary Surgeons Act, and the relevant parts of the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct, to clarify and bolster the role of the veterinary nurse (VNF ambition six, actions 29-31)

This work is now being fed into the broader review of veterinary legislation which, although it does not feature as a specific line item in the Strategic Plan, is bringing together several strands of work, many of which have been thrown into sharp relief by Brexit.

We published the outcomes of the 2017 consultation towards the end of that year. One of the key findings that could be tackled quickly was the perceived lack of clarity around delegation, which led to a lack of confidence in both delegating veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses being delegated to. Guidance. To address this, in June 2018 we published a series of case studies for vets and VNs illustrating examples of how Schedule 3 should be used in practice. These were publicised in the first edition of our new-style online *RCVS News*, and were subsequently covered in the *Veterinary Record* as well as *Veterinary Times* and *VN Times*. A further series of case studies has been drafted and a handy reference chart for use in practice is in production.

C2. Develop a strategy for regulating allied professionals, either via Associate status or updated Exemption Orders (VF ambition six, recommendations four and six, action U)

Following the decisions of RCVS Council in January 2019, the final Report of the Review of Minor Procedures Regime (RMPPR) has been submitted to Defra; this included the suggested reforms to Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, as approved by Council in terms of a potential route for the regulation of paraprofessional groups in the future. Defra has been asked to consider the Report and recommendations and we have requested a meeting to discuss the matters raised further. In the meantime we are continuing our discussions with the Association of Meat Inspectors (AMI) and the Animal Behaviour and Training Council (ABTC) with a view to progressing towards invitations to these groups to become Associates / Accredited respectively, and we are currently putting in place the appropriate internal resources to develop the necessary structures and documentation.

C3. Review our concerns-handling and disciplinary processes, including the impact of the Legislative Reform Order (LRO) that separated the membership of the Preliminary Investigation and Disciplinary Committees from Council, the standard of proof that we set and our sanctions

The Secretary of State was required to produce a report reviewing the objectives and impact of the LRO by the end of July 2018. To assist in this process, and working within a framework supplied by Defra, we submitted a report to Defra at the end of April. The RCVS continued to assist Defra in completion of the report, which has now occurred. Defra has recently confirmed that the report has been published and is now available on the UK government website.

An outline plan for a review of our First-Rate Regulator Initiative was considered by the Operational Board in September 2018. A Research Officer has been hired on a six-month part-time contract to take this work forward, among other projects.

Meanwhile, it is anticipated that, later in 2019, Council will be asked to consider proposals to consult in relation to the Standard of Proof for Disciplinary Cases.

C4. Review the regulatory framework surrounding new technologies, to ensure it is proportionate and encourages innovation, while maintaining high standards of animal health and welfare (VF ambitions five, recommendations four and 23, action S)

After 18 months of detailed discussion, Standards Committee presented recommendations to Council in November 2018 as to how to progress with the issue of the regulation of veterinary telemedicine. Council sent the proposals back to Standards Committee for further work and consultation with stakeholders.

C5. Explore compulsory practice inspection (VF ambition five, recommendation 26, action T)

This has been included within the workstream of the Legislation Working Party.

C6. Review outcomes for graduates, with consideration of the likely requirements from the profession and the public of the vets of tomorrow (including the structure and provision of extra-mural studies) (VF actions I and J)

The Graduate Outcomes consultation closed on 18 January and received 1,963 full responses and 3,825 partial responses. The project is now in phase two of information gathering, involving several focus groups and 30 individual interviews with key stakeholders. An interim report is expected in March/April. A final report will be made to Council in June, or potentially September, 2019.

D – Global reach

D1. Develop a strategy to make sure that the profession is in charge of its future by maximising the opportunities and minimising the risks of Brexit

Work continues with the joint Defra/RCVS/BVA Veterinary Capacity and Capability Project (VCCP), which aims to ensure that workforce needs continue to be met, regardless of which Brexit scenario becomes reality.

We have also held discussions with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy concerning changes to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 necessitated by Brexit, namely references to the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive (MPRQ) and the Services Directive. A further meeting is due on 10 January 2019.

The RCVS continues to hold meetings with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) on the risks that Brexit holds to the veterinary profession's capacity to meet certification requirements for the export of animal products, including discussion around the APHA proposal for the new role of Certification Support Officers (CSOs). We have also recently been invited by the Defra Stakeholders Team to attend a fortnightly veterinary communications forum to hear the latest from Defra about EU Exit-related communications, policies and priority issues.

On 27 June, the College hosted a successful Lords' Dinner at Belgravia House, where our concerns about Brexit were raised with the attending peers. This was followed by an informal event for parliamentarians held in the Commons Pavilion on 19 December, which was attended by around a dozen peers and MPs who were given individual briefings on the risks of a no-deal Brexit and the importance of ensuring that veterinary surgeons are placed on the Shortage Occupation List. Several peers have requested follow-up meetings in 2019.

We are also received the results of the second survey of non-UK EU veterinary graduates working in the UK to find out about changes to their plans and how they have been treated since the Brexit vote, following the initial survey last summer. The results, which show a considerable increase in satisfaction with the RCVS's Brexit measures, will be published imminently.

On 27 September we issued a position statement regarding the potential impact of a 'no-deal' scenario on the UK veterinary profession, particularly regarding the risks to animal welfare and public health due to the potential impact on the veterinary workforce.

On behalf of the RCVS, Professor Stuart Reid presented on Brexit at the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe's General Assembly, on 10 November in Rome.

A Statutory Instrument (the Veterinary Surgeons and Animal Welfare (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019) was passed by the House of Lords on 6 February 2019, allowing the College to continue to register veterinary surgeons from the European Economic Area without a degree that is recognised by us, by means of them passing our Statutory Membership Examination. We would directly register with from EAEVE-accredited degrees.

The Education Department has identified ways to scale up the RCVS Statutory Membership Exam, to allow up to 45 candidates to sit the practical exam (OSCE) in one sitting if required.

D2. Collaborate with other competent authorities, associations, educational bodies and the commercial sector to establish a framework for the management of the impact of new technologies, such that animal health and welfare remains centre stage, regardless of from where veterinary services are being delivered into the UK and beyond (VF ambition five, recommendations four and 23, action S) [see also B5 and C4]

This work is on hold until we have a clear steer regarding telehealth in the UK.

D3. Improve our support for, and communication with, overseas graduates working in the UK and those considering working in the UK (VF ambition three, recommendation 13, action K)

As mentioned above, we conducted a follow-up survey of the more than 6,100 non-UK EU graduates working in the UK, to re-establish their views on living and working in the UK post Brexit. Just over 50% responded, and the results will be published shortly.

The RCVS/Veterinary Defence Society (VDS) continuing professional development (CPD) course for overseas vets and VNs was held on 20 November in London and was well received by the 50 or so delegates who attended. Further courses are planned for June and October 2019.

D4. Clarify our offer for overseas members and consider expanding the number of members in this category, revising the Registration Regulations, if required

Research among our overseas members better to understand their motivations for retaining that membership category and what they would like to see from the College will be carried out in 2019.

D5. Investigate the global market for RCVS qualifications and Advanced Practitioner and Specialist status

Action to be started, but we are continuing to strengthen our global relationships by attending the 7th Pan Commonwealth Veterinary Conference of the Commonwealth Veterinary Association on 3-7 March 2019, in Bangalore.

D6. Consider the global market for the RCVS accreditation of undergraduate veterinary education, particularly in the light of Brexit

Given the more pressing need to understand how we will work with European veterinary schools in the event of a no-deal, the global market for RCVS accreditation is not currently a high priority.

D7. Investigate the global market for the RCVS accreditation of veterinary practices

This work is to be started, meanwhile it is worth noting that four more overseas practices have been approved for the purposes of VN training, in Singapore, Sweden and Finland (two).

D8. Share knowledge with developing world countries to help raise standards around regulation and also animal health and welfare

Work to be started, meanwhile we aim to better understand the global networks of our Council members to facilitate this.

D9. Stimulate and communicate global career opportunities for UK graduates, including around One Health (VF ambitions two and four, recommendations seven, eight, 17-22, action G)

Work to be started, likely to be in conjunction with the Vet Futures 'My Vet Future' careers hub, which is being led by BVA/*Vet Record*.

D10. Support the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe's Vet Futures Europe initiative (VF ambition six, recommendation 33, action W)

The Vet Futures Europe Report has been published. We offered to support some particular streams of work but these are not those that appear on the FVE priority list for 2019 so there is no immediate need for resources.

The RCVS and BVA will host the FVE General Assembly in the UK in summer 2020, an important signal to our European colleagues that the UK veterinary professions intend to remain fully engaged in Europe and beyond.

E – Our service agenda

E1. Recognising that staff who are highly engaged will deliver the best service for our stakeholders, we will continue to review the way we work, with particular emphasis on cross-departmental working, involving Council members where appropriate

A new approach to staff appraisals was launched in January 2018, with a greater focus on personal and career development. The new approach has been positively received by staff, but line managers need support with the conversations they are having with their team members. Another great output has been a significant increase in training requests directly related to the development of the staff member in their role.

Work continues around mapping of our roles using a job evaluation system, to give us an opportunity to understand the common skills required by seemingly different roles. This will feed into career development and succession planning, helping us to retain and progress talented individuals. The whole organisation has now been mapped and communicated to staff, we are now committed to using the insights from this mapping to review where our structures might not be the most effective and where we can improve career opportunities for staff.

New pay structures have been created, and will be launched for used by department heads in making salary decisions from the annual review cycle in 2019, to support this, a pay decision tool is also being created to enable greater consistency of decision making across the teams. Ultimately, we aim to be as transparent with staff as possible on pay and pay progression. The new structures were discussed at the December 2018 Operational Board meeting and will be implemented effective 1 April 2019.

The Great Place to Work survey was completed by staff in August with a response rate of 89%. Early results are available and suggest there have been increases in areas we have focused on, such as corporate social responsibility, and reward and communication, and some decreases in other areas. Great Place to Work will present to staff in the latter part of the year and results will be used to identify opportunities for further progress.

The new HR information system 'Cascade' is on track for launch in early January. The HR team is currently being trained on the system and team members are working with Cascade to ensure the system is tailored correctly for the College. Go-live will mean the launch of a new self-service element for staff, giving them the opportunity to manage sickness, book leave and see all their data in one place. It means internally we can offer a more accurate and secure service to employees and rely less on manual intervention, which can result in errors.

We have now completed the tender process for our new online Council and Committee Collaboration System, with our panel of staff and Council/committee members selecting eShare BoardPacks as our platform of choice. Pricing has been negotiated, contracts signed and we are now in the process of planning the implementation and training for our administrators ready for launch to all Council and Committee members over the next few months.

Our HR Director, Kim Cleland, relocated last year and although she continued to work with us since then on a part-time basis, she will be leaving the organisation on 28 February 2019. Her introduction of some innovative new approaches and her support of a positive culture within the organisation has been much appreciated, and she will be missed. A recruitment exercise is underway.

E2. Continue to review our Estates Strategy so that we have appropriate spaces in which to work effectively and creatively, and a building that reflects the status of a Royal College

A meeting of the Estate Strategy Group and our advisors is being held in March to look at the next steps, with a view to coming back to Council in June Council.

E3. Embrace the opportunities of technology to fully engage with 'generation mobile' and make interactions with the College as accessible and easy as possible, including the development of innovative ways for us to share our knowledge and communicate our services with all of our key audiences

We have moved one of our long standing team members from Support Engineer to Junior Developer. This move has been a long held ambition of theirs and we will be doing everything we can to help them realise this important career move. In light of this we are now recruiting for a replacement Support Engineer, internally initially, but then externally if necessary. Once this post is filled then we will have the initial Digital Team size as approved as part of the Digital Plan last year.

Our new Software Development function continues working apace on numerous fronts. Creating the first draft specification for our new 'Universal CPD' system, with the help of Education and Veterinary Nursing Teams, and extending the usefulness of the 'RCVS Evidence' tool built to enable secure and easy to use evidentiary video sharing capability for all Preliminary Investigation Committee stakeholders.

Significant work has also been completed to improve the renewal process for all members, with a more streamlined, and clearer, process guiding individuals through the steps required to achieve renewal whilst ensuring the College can operate with the required consents and data quality.

With the new Council and Committee Collaboration System now setup and committee secretaries trained in its use we will be launching it to committee members from March onwards, whilst April will see the arrival of our new set of imagers/printers which will completely replace all the existing outdated devices with a resilient, consistent, secure and more cost effective solution for all staff.

E4. Develop and improve the advice we offer to animal owners and others to ensure they get the best out of their interaction with veterinary professionals

We plan to continue our attendance at animal owner events in 2019, with applications lodged to exhibit at the Royal Highland Show near Edinburgh and the new BBC Countryfile Live event in Yorkshire.

Work is underway with an external agency to develop a digital marketing campaign to promote the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme to animal owners, and explain how it can benefit them and their animals.

The vet-client relationship poster, previously agreed by Standards Committee, is being mailed to all veterinary practices at the end of February/beginning of March, and will be supported with promotional activities across press and social media.

E5. Review our Service Charter and associated Service Standards, making changes to our core services to ensure these promises are met, including reviewing resources and funding, where appropriate

We are still collecting feedback from our 'customers' and monitoring compliance with our service standards. This will provide evidence for changes to the Service Charter and Service Standards. This feeds into the broader First Rate Regulator Review.

E6. Develop a mechanism via which members of the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions can proactively engage with the College so that their issues and concerns are fed into discussions at an early enough stage to influence our agenda, where appropriate

Senior Team has discussed potential options for a mechanism. The Director of Communications drew up a paper for Operational Board to discuss at its February meeting. A range of suggestions was considered, and a number of activities recommended for further development.

E7. Carry out a stakeholder mapping exercise to measure perceptions of the College and see what progress has been made since the research carried out as part of the First -rate Regulator exercise (2013); make appropriate recommendations for change

A paper on this was considered by the Operational Board in September and a Research Manager contracted on a six-month part-time basis. This work will be closely integrated with E5 (Service review) and C3 (review of professional conduct mechanism).

Meeting	Council
Date	7 March 2019
Title	The winding down of the Operational Board
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	According to the Legislative Reform Order on governance changes, the Operational Board will be wound down by 2020. In June 2018 Council agreed that this would take place at the end of this presidential year (ie July 2019). This paper provides some areas for consideration with regard to the structures that will replace it.
Decisions required	Discussion is welcome and decisions sought with regard to the points at paragraph 11.
Attachments	Annex one – paper from June 2018 Council, for reference
Author	Lizzie Lockett / CEO l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0725

The winding down of the Operational Board

1. In June 2018 a paper was approved by RCVS Council which looked at changes that needed to be made to the structure that supports RCVS Council in order to ensure the smooth delivery of the 2018 Legislative Reform Order (LRO) on governance reform (see annex one). This included:
 - a. The setting up of the new Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC) (from July 2018)
 - b. The setting up of the new Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) (from July 2019)
 - c. The winding down of the Operational Board (from July 2019)
 - d. Regular meetings of the Officer Team (ie President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer)
2. The APC has been set up and has met twice. There is now a need to consider the detail of changes b-d.

A new home for the work of the Operational Board

3. The table below suggests which body could be responsible for the work that was previously carried out by the Operational Board.

Current terms of reference for Operational Board	Body responsible from summer 2019
Present a strategic plan to Council for approval each year	Council to do this directly, working with internal and external stakeholders
Present an annual business plan and budget to Council for approval and recommend proposed fee changes	FRC
Ensure that the strategic and annual plans and budget are implemented, within limits of variation approved by Council	Council
Lay down procedures for budgeting and financial control	FRC
Approve expenditure from the Discretionary Fund	FRC
Seek the approval of Council for expenditure from the College's reserves	FRC
Manage the assets and investments of the College	FRC
Manage organisational risks, maintain a risk register and oversee internal audit reviews	FRC, working with Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)
Oversee the appointment of professional advisers to the College	FRC up to £50,000
Approve rates of travelling and subsistence expenses and recompense for loss of earnings	FRC
Authorise the sealing of documents	Council
Advise Council on corporate governance matters, including the terms of reference and composition of committees	FRC

Current terms of reference for Operational Board	Body responsible from summer 2019
Co-ordinate the work of committees	Meeting of Officers and committee chairs
Approve the setting up subcommittees, working parties and other such bodies and determine their members	Sponsoring committees to propose new groups to FRC for decision. Sponsoring committees to select members, Council to ratify members and terms of reference.
Keep under review arrangements for Council elections	FRC
Recommend to Council the names of persons for election as Honorary Associates and Honorary Fellowships of the College and for the award of prizes, in accordance with the Honours, Awards and Membership Bye-Laws	Officer team, CEO and Registrar as remodelled Nominations Committee; Council to have final say on recommendations
Determine external representation and conduct external relations	Officer team and Senior staff

Finance and Resources Committee

4. The FRC is a new committee; its set up was agreed in June 2018 but nothing about its composition was agreed at that point. The following is suggested:
 - a. Treasurer (Chair)
 - b. Chair of Preliminary Investigation Committee/Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee (PIC/DC LC) [an Officer, for a three-year period]
 - c. Chair of Education Committee
 - d. Chair of Standards Committee
 - e. Chair of VN Council
 - f. Chair of Advancement of the Professions Committee
 - g. Two veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse members of Council (ie two in total, breakdown can vary)
 - h. One lay member of Council
 - i. Non-voting members: CEO, Registrar, Director of Operations
5. Its terms of reference are yet to be drafted but the main elements will be those from the table above, with any amendments as agreed by Council. A full set of Terms of Reference will be submitted to the June meeting of Council as part of an updated Delegation Scheme paper.
6. FRC will meet as part of the committee round and report to Council.
7. It is also to be hoped that this committee might replace the need for a range of diverse 'project boards' for substantive projects.
8. Meanwhile, it was agreed in June 2018 that the non-statutory/standing committees (ie excluding Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee) would move to four meetings per year from summer 2019, to ensure that the limiting factor on efficient decision making does

not move from Council to the committees. However, it was agreed that this would be further reviewed in spring 2019 (ie now). Thoughts on this would be welcomed at the March meeting.

Officers and Committee Chairs

9. It is suggested that the Officers and standing Committee Chairs, together with appropriate senior staff, meet prior to each Council meeting, either face to face or by phone, to co-ordinate business for that meeting. This meeting will focus on the Council meeting and not stray into what was previously Operational Board territory. This meeting will be informal. The Chair of ARC and the PIC/DC LC will not be included in these meetings – the former needs to maintain independence and the latter committee has a co-ordinating role.

Officer Team

10. It is suggested that the Officer Team meets monthly (with the possible exception of August) to discuss relevant matters, with a focus on external meetings, media management, communications and stakeholder relationships. This will also be the forum for the CEO, Registrar and other members of the Senior Team to escalate matters that need speedy advice and resolution, for example, HR issues. This meeting will be informal but ensuing actions will be listed. For efficiency and to reduce costs, it may make sense for this meeting also to take place on the day before Council meetings, in months where that is appropriate.

Areas for discussion/decision

11. The following areas are for consideration:
 - a. Does all Operational Board business have a suitable home?
 - b. Does the composition of the FRC seem appropriate?
 - c. It was agreed in June 2018 that Council would review the move to four meetings per year of standing committees in spring 2019 (ie now) – is there any further feeling on this?
 - d. Does the new proposed structure abide by the principles of doing business that Council agreed in March 2018, ie:
 - i. Diversity is not negatively impacted (gender, age, ethnicity, breadth of veterinary roles)
 - ii. Clarity of decision-making
 - iii. Transparency of accountability
 - iv. Effective and efficient decision-making
 - v. Best people for the job, not just best jobs for the people
 - vi. Encouraging a collaborative approach – across the professions, across the RCVS team
 - vii. A manageable workload for Council and committee members
 - viii. A manageable workload for staff, especially Council and committee secretaries
 - ix. Reflective of the veterinary professions and the public they serve – representative of, not representing

Annex One – paper from June 2018 Council, for reference

Meeting	Council
Date	14 June 2018
Title	Proposed post-LRO structure/schedule
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Following the various discussions at the November 2017 and March 2018 Council meetings, this paper aims to summarise a proposed way forward for the future governance structure of the College post-LRO
Decisions required	Does this structure meet Council's needs?
Attachments	Annex one – proposed meeting schedule for 2018-9 and 2019-20 Annex two – current terms of reference for Operational Board and proposed new home for those tasks
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk

Background

1. The Legislative Reform Order (LRO) on governance reform requires us, over a three-year transitional period from July 2018, to move towards a smaller Council of 24 (ie 13 elected veterinary surgeons, six lay members, three vet school members, two veterinary nurses).
2. This LRO modernises our governance and requires us to increase the number of lay people on Council, and gives veterinary nurses a formal voice. It also increases the number of meetings, to improve responsiveness and ensure more efficient decision-making.
3. However, to ensure that the new structure works to the best advantage, it is now important to consider in more detail the interlocking roles of Council, Operational Board and the non-statutory committees (Standards, Education, Veterinary Nurses Council (for the purposes of the Veterinary Surgeons Act, the Veterinary Nurses Council is constituted as a Committee of RCVS Council), Audit and Risk, PIC/DC Liaison).
4. We also have the opportunity to review our governance structure, and how we people it, more broadly to ensure it is fit for purpose and allows the College to perform to the best of its abilities.

Issues and opportunities

5. Issues and opportunities arising from these fundamental changes were considered at an afternoon session of RCVS Council on 18 January 2018, and include:
 - a) The Operational Board was put in place as a measure to help speed up decision making while Council was large in size and meeting infrequently. According to the LRO, it is set to be reviewed within two years (ie by July 2020). With Council meeting more frequently – six to eight times per year – there is the potential for duplication and confusion – clarity is required.
 - b) The current Council agenda format includes a large section on hearing reports from committees, but they may not be meeting as frequently as Council – a new format is required, potentially with an alternating schedule for committee business to be reviewed.
 - c) Although Council has, of late, met more frequently than March, June and November, those additional meetings have been in committee, so there has been a perceived lack of transparency; meanwhile private sessions are very useful for discussion of key issues at an early stage and to give due focus to strategy and risk.
 - d) The change will give us a smaller pool from which to draw members of committees, so we will need to co-opt external experts (from the veterinary professions and elsewhere).
 - e) There is a need to ensure non-regulatory work is better reflected in our governance structure.
 - f) There is a need to ensure better horizon-scanning within our governance structure.
 - g) It is important that Council maintains an ‘upper house’ role and can take oversight of operational issues, to ensure governance is based on a clear understanding of how such issues impact on the College’s ability to deliver the Strategic Plan, without becoming too

embedded in the day to day management of College business. [issue raised at March Council]

- h) Longer term, the structure needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the regulation, or oversight of the regulation via a third party, of groups of associate members who might form part of a vet-led team

Process to date

6. Discussions around the governance change represented by the LRO itself took place over many years, latterly via a Working Party Chaired by Professor Stuart Reid, and the package was agreed by Council in March 2016. Since then there has been a lot of hard work by Council members, staff and members of the Defra team to bring the LRO to completion.
7. Discussion around the detail, and the committee structure to support this, began in earnest November 2017 when the new CEO was appointed. Key milestones have been as follows:
 - a) A Council workshop on the issues, facilitated by senior staff, in January 2018
 - b) An away day for the RCVS Senior Team to consider the issues in February 2018
 - c) The development of broad options that were discussed by Operational Board and Council in March 2018 – simply put the choice was a much more strategic body or one that was more operational: a middle-way was preferred
 - d) The refinement of these discussions into a proposal put before Operational Board in May 2018
 - e) Discussion with RCVS staff during May 2018
 - f) Further refinement of the proposal based on staff feedback, with updates to Operational Board by email
 - g) The presentation of proposals (this document) to Council in June 2018
8. It is anticipated that initial changes will take place over a two-year period, with opportunities for review along the way. This is a new chapter for the College and it is important that implementation of change is taken at a pace that is sustainable for Council and staff, and also takes account of typical planning periods for meeting dates. It will also take some time for appointed members of committees to be put in place.
9. Following the various opportunities for general discussion that have taken place, it is important that decisions are made on 14 June so that the incoming President can define committee membership and to help the staff at Belgravia House organise appropriate meeting dates, facilities and staffing to support the new structure.
10. It is likely that change will continue to take place over time in an evolutionary way as the new approach beds in; it's unlikely that these proposals will address all of the issues straight away.

Major proposed changes

11. It is proposed that the number of public Council meetings increases from the current four to six in the 2018-9 Presidential year and to eight in the following year.
12. A new Advancement of the Professions Committee¹ (APC) will be introduced from summer 2018, to receive and consider reports on Fellowship, Leadership, Innovation, Mind Matters, Vet Futures and new projects TBC. It will also ensure that agreed strategy in these areas is met and provide a forum for discussion around the development of new activities under our Royal Charter role.
13. The Operational Board will cease from summer 2019, although the Officer team (two Vice-Presidents, President and Treasurer) will continue to meet regularly with senior staff around issues such as communications, events and stakeholder relationships. Joint Officers meetings with other organisations will continue. Staff remuneration will also be considered by the Officer Team, CEO and Director of HR. Other than remuneration, policy decisions will not be made by this group in isolation although they can make recommendations to Council/Committees.
14. A new Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) will be introduced from summer 2019 to pick up some operational issues once Operational Board drops away, for example, Estates, IT, budget, data issues, HR, service levels, information-gathering and some strategic communication issues. This will remove the need for some working groups although project boards will remain for large projects as per our protocol, which will report to FRC or other committees, depending on subject matter.
15. The number of times that standing (ie non-statutory) committees meet will remain as now for the next presidential year, and be reviewed in spring 2019 with a view to increasing all to four times per year for the 2019-20 presidential year, to ensure that the frequency of committee meetings does not become the limiting factor.
16. A Council skills matrix system will be introduced in order better to match skills with committee/working party roles (initial questionnaire has been circulated) and help us to understand where development could be supported for less experienced members.
17. A transparent appointment process for co-opted members of committees will be developed over the summer.
18. Chairs will be encouraged to cancel meetings, or hold them remotely, if there is insufficient business. Equally, ad hoc phone/Skype meetings can be called if essential or, as now, decisions made between meetings by email.

¹ The name for this committee has been debated long and hard...other options include Charter Committee, Development of the Professions Committee, Development Committee

Other points for note/consideration

Frequency and focus of meetings

19. All Council meetings to be held in public, with the option for an afternoon 'in committee' where required to discuss confidential matters. 'Unclassified' will be the default position for documents unless there is a good reason for discussion to be confidential, for example, to allow for unfettered discussion at early stages in policy development, because personal or commercially-sensitive data is being discussed, or because risks to the College are under discussion that would be further increased by discussion in public.
20. All standing committees will report to Council; as now, statutory committees will deliver reports for note. Reports from committees will be uploaded to the new electronic boardroom system (under development) so they can be read as soon as possible after the meeting has taken place.
21. Agendas for the Council meetings after the month in which standing committee meetings are held will take reports/consider escalated decisions; other meetings will focus on strategy, risk and horizon-scanning (with a deep dive into other areas on rotation) and other matters arising.
22. The Council meeting in July will be part of RCVS Day, as now, and of limited scope.
23. At this point we recommend the reinstatement of 'committee week' (ie all of the key committees taking place during a single week in the designated month) so that meeting rooms can be block-booked and journeys for Council members streamlined. However, this has both pros and cons and Council's view on the practicality of this arrangement would be helpful.
24. Disciplinary Committee is not included on the schedule below – will meet as required, as now.
25. Preliminary Investigation Committee is not included on the schedule – will meet twice a month, as now.

Composition

26. Composition of Council and statutory committees will be as per the two Legislative Reform Orders to the Veterinary Surgeons Act.
27. Composition of standing committees is tbc in detail but with Council members in the majority, and experts co-opted as required. A maximum and minimum number of members for each committee might be set, but specific skills requirements may vary over time and depending on the strategic focus at any given point.
28. The APC will largely comprise chairs of working groups or Council 'sponsors' for the relevant projects.
29. Committee Chairs could be vet / lay but always Council members; Vice-Chairs could be co-opted. Chairs will receive training in the role and be appraised annually. Consideration also to be given to appraisal of all committee members. With more frequent meetings it is anticipated that Chairs may not always be available – Vice-Chairs to be trained and take a more active role, although overall responsibility remains with the Chair.

30. Committee membership will be on a three-year basis, subject to annual renewal. There may be some staggering of membership for the two proposed new committees.
31. Observers will only be permitted at the discretion of the Chair and will not have voting rights.
32. Members of the Officer Team do not have automatic rights to sit in on all committee meetings, to signal confidence in the delegation process.
33. All Council members will sit on at least one committee as soon as elected, rather than waiting until year two, as now.
34. Quorum will always be a simple majority of the total number of Council / committee members, for example, committee of eight, quorum = 5; committee of nine, quorum also = 5; remote votes may be taken for decisions made at Council (for example, Officer elections) but will not form part of the quorum. Whether the committee members are Council members or co-opted will not be a factor in the quorum.

People

35. A greater focus to be given to induction and training for the specific roles that are being given to Council members – for example, chairing, media training, dealing with conflicts of interest, taking a strategic view, governance, unconscious bias etc. If there are key themes that cut across committees they could be bundled into all-Council training days or an off-site development day.
36. As outlined above, appraisals to be introduced for committee Chairs, and consideration to be given to broadening this to all Council and committee members.
37. In broader terms, we now invest well in staff development and training, which is only appropriate, but Council members play an equally key part in the organisation and it is therefore fitting that we start to consider their individual development needs as well. This focus may also help to encourage a greater diversity of potential Council members to stand for election, including those earlier in their career, as well as demonstrating to practices (and other workplaces) the benefit that can be brought back to the organisation.

Supporting structure

38. Subcommittee and working party meetings will feed into the structure as relevant – this will be considered further once broad agreement on the new structure has been reached.
39. A governance framework for the new associate professionals/accredited professions will be considered in due course.
40. Terms of reference and delegation procedures will come to Council at a later date once agreement on the framework has been reached. It is unlikely that there will be major changes to the delegation scheme for existing committees, as they work well. The current work of the Operational Board is likely to be split across the two new committees, Officers and Council. A draft attempt at this division of labour is suggested at annex one.

- 41. Meanwhile there will be a focus on improved communication around key College activities to Council, including regular email updates and ‘speed-read’ documents on the history of policy changes. The new-style electronic *RCVS News* (to be launched soon) will also include detail of Council and committee decisions.
- 42. There will be a continued focus on improving relationships between staff and Council – and including co-opted committee members in the future. For example, with more committee strategy days that involve both Council and staff members. Staff who write papers to be invited to field questions at Council meetings, where appropriate (as they do at committee meetings).
- 43. The addition of a Research Officer to the staff team will help in providing evidence base for papers and proposals.
- 44. Greater consideration to be given to succession planning for Officer roles.
- 45. Ongoing work to be carried out around encouraging a broader range of candidates to stand for election or apply for appointed roles, to ensure that Council reflects both the professions and the public that it serves.

Agreed principles

- 46. At the March 2018 meeting, Council agreed a set of principles that should be used as a lodestone against which to review any proposed new structure. Such a structure needs to ensure:
 - a. Diversity is not negatively impacted (gender, age, ethnicity, breadth of veterinary roles)
 - b. Clarity of decision-making
 - c. Transparency of accountability
 - d. Effective and efficient decision-making
 - e. Best people for the job, not just best jobs for the people
 - f. It encourages a collaborative approach– across the professions, across the RCVS team
 - g. A manageable workload for Council and committee members
 - h. A manageable workload for staff, especially Council and committee secretaries
 - i. Reflective of the veterinary professions and the public they serve – representative of, not representing

Risks

- 47. As with any proposed change, there are opportunities but also risks. The following risks are to be considered when reviewing the potential new structure. Those which are not felt to be adequately mitigated at this point will be added to the corporate risk register.

Risk	Potential mitigation
A. The enhanced number of Council meetings and the additional committee meetings that flow from this may overload staff resources in terms of secretariat and paper writing etc	Additional staff resources will be considered. In addition, improved staff training on minute-writing, presenting an argument, managing committees etc will be provided

Risk	Potential mitigation
B. There will be increased pressure on meeting rooms	Serious consideration to be given to Disciplinary Committee meeting in external facility on a permanent basis – or Council/committee – depending on which is most practicable. These demands will be fed into the Estates Strategy for longer-term solutions
C. Smaller pool of Council members	<p>Skills matrix will help to deploy skills in the most appropriate way, and we will need to put more resources into training and development (and improved induction)</p> <p>Diversity and breadth of experience across a committee will also be taken into account</p> <p>Skills gaps on committees to be filled by co-opted members</p>
D. Lay people recruitment will not be complete in time for committee selection round	<p>Places will have to be allocated for generic lay members in this first year; skills matrix to be completed for future years</p> <p>Specific induction for lay people</p>
E. Turnaround of minutes/papers etc between the increased number of meetings may be problematic	<p>Papers will be issued one week, rather than two weeks, before each meeting</p> <p>If papers are late they will be held for the next meeting – less of an issue if meetings are more frequent</p>
F. Workload on Council members may be prohibitive, which may affect diversity	<p>Aim to ensure that Council members' availability is taken into account when allotting committee roles</p> <p>Longer term, consideration to be given to salaried roles with greater security over recompense in a given year</p>
G. Smaller Council may allow for individuals with a specific agenda to dominate	Majority of work will be carried out at committee level where elected Council members will be balanced with appointed Council members and co-opted committee members
H. Potential lack of transparency over unelected individuals becoming more involved in committee work	<p>Declarations of interest and biographies to be published online for all those engaged with College business</p> <p>Transparent process for co-opting of committee members to be developed. NB in the first year we may need to be more pragmatic given time constraints</p> <p>Greater visibility online for all working groups and subcommittees (excepting those engaged with appeals)</p>

Risk	Potential mitigation
I. This structure may not be workable in reality even if it appears so on paper	A full review should take place at the end of the 2020-21 presidential year – at which point Council will have come down to its smallest size

Questions for Council

48. Council is invited to comment on the paper as a whole, and specifically the key changes and proposed meeting schedule, with particular reference to the following questions:

- Does the proposed structure and schedule address the issues raised in previous meetings?
- Does it adequately adhere to the agreed broad principles?
- Do the presented mitigations adequately address the potential risks?
- Is Council happy to approve the proposals, with built in review periods?

Annex one: Proposed meeting schedules

This annex has been excluded to avoid confusion, as the schedule has been updated and will be circulated at a later date.

Annex two – future home for Operational Board activities

[NB an updated version of this table appears in the main body of the paper for the March 2019 meeting]

Current terms of reference for Operational Board	Body responsible over time
Present a strategic plan to Council for approval each year	Council to do this directly, working with internal and external stakeholders
Present an annual business plan and budget to Council for approval and recommend proposed fee changes	FRC
Ensure that the strategic and annual plans and budget are implemented, within limits of variation approved by Council	Council to do this directly
Lay down procedures for budgeting and financial control	FRC
Approve expenditure from the contingency fund	FRC
Seek the approval of Council for expenditure from the College's reserves	FRC
Manage the assets and investments of the College	FRC
Manage organisational risks, maintain a risk register and oversee internal audit reviews	FRC, working with ARC
Oversee the appointment of professional advisers to the College	Council or FRC depending on nature of advisers
Approve rates of travelling and subsistence expenses and recompense for loss of earnings	FRC
Authorise the sealing of documents	Council
Advise Council on corporate governance matters, including the terms of reference and composition of committees	FRC
Co-ordinate the work of committees	Council
Approve the setting up subcommittees, working parties and other such bodies and determine their members	Council
Keep under review arrangements for Council elections	FRC
Recommend to Council the names of persons for election as Honorary Associates and Honorary Fellowships of the College and for the award of prizes, in accordance with the Honours, Awards and Membership Bye-Laws	Officer team and committee chairs
Determine external representation and conduct external relations	Officer team and Senior staff

Meeting	Council
Date	7 March 2019
Title	Meeting Procedure Rules 2019 – electronic voting
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Amendments to the Meeting Procedure Rules 2014 to incorporate electronic voting.
Decisions required	To approve the amendments to the Meeting Procedure Rules
Attachments	<p>Annex A: Meeting Procedure Rules 2014 with proposed amendments (tracked changes);</p> <p>Annex B: Election procedure for Vice Presidents and Presidents (tracked changes);</p> <p>Annex C: Election procedure for Treasurer (tracked changes);</p> <p>Annex D: Election procedure for Chairs of standing committees (tracked changes).</p>
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Meeting Procedure Rules 2019

Background

1. Voting on matters of general business at RCVS Council has historically been by way of show of hands of members present. How individuals voted on any given matter was therefore apparent to all present in open session, but only the total votes for / against / abstentions were noted in the meeting (though not otherwise retained).
2. For elections of Vice President and Chairs of standing committees, the historic voting method has been 'secret' paper ballot of members present, with the option available for absent members to submit a postal vote. Voting numbers were not recorded.
3. In September 2018, Council trialled the use of electronic voting through the audio / microphone system currently in place. At its meeting in November 2018, it was agreed that the Meeting Procedure Rules 2014 ('the Rules') would be amended to allow for electronic voting at Council meetings, as had been trialled – i.e. without attribution of voting to individual members. Proposed amendments to the Rules were further discussed by Council in January 2019, when the desirability or otherwise of how individual members had voted in decisions made being attributable, visible and / or recorded was discussed. At that time, it was agreed that the comments made would be taken on board, and the capacity, capability and limits of the current electronic voting system explored, and that the matter would return to Council for further discussion.

Current audio / voting system

4. Investigation has confirmed that the current system has the capacity to be set for either 'open' or 'secret' ballots:
 - 'open': allows a list to be generated, so that votes for / against / abstentions can be matched to individual members. To achieve this, the individual microphones would need to be linked to named individual members and everyone adhere strictly to a designated seating plan drawn up in advance (a seating plan is already drawn up so it is not anticipated that this would pose difficulties);
 - 'secret': generates only the totals for / against / abstention, without attribution to individual members (this is the system as operating since September 2018);
 - as required, microphones can be 'disabled' for voting, for example, for those who may speak at meetings but have no voting rights (Chief Veterinary Officer / Chair, Audit & Risk Committee);
 - designated microphones can also be adjusted so as to allow a casting vote to the Chair.
5. Whilst it is simpler to set in advance as either 'open' or 'secret', it is possible to change from one setting to another within a meeting to allow some ballots to be 'open' and some 'secret' as required.

6. The voting 'result', whether purely totals or linked to individuals can be downloaded and retained.

Points for consideration – pro's and con's

Show of hands – no recording

7. This has the benefit of transparency within the meeting and that abstentions are immediately clear. On the other hand, it can be inaccurate and there is potential for members to feel pressure or to be swayed in their vote by the direction of travel one way or another within the room.

Electronic system – secret / not attributable

8. This avoids the possibility of being swayed by how others are seen to be voting within the room. On the other hand, it arguably lacks transparency and there is no means of checking in relation to abstentions.

Electronic system – open / attributable to individuals

9. Again, this avoids the possibility of individual members being influenced by how others are seen to be voting. For practical purposes, at this time, displaying who has voted for / against / or abstained, during the meeting is difficult (though with future adaptation of the system this could be achieved). An alternative is for the voting list to be downloaded and transcribed / attributed to named individuals post-meeting.

10. The question then arises what should be done with such lists / how long should they be retained?

Proposal

11. Taking into account the capacity of the current system, and comments from previous discussions the following is proposed:
 - a. that electronic voting is maintained for Council meetings (with show of hands retained for meetings of other committees / groups, etc.);
 - b. election of Vice President (Junior) (VP(J)) / Treasurer / Chairs of standing committees and any votes in the **confidential** / closed sessions of Council:
 - these should be by electronic 'secret' ballot i.e. voting of the overall totals for / against / abstentions are recorded without attribution to individual members;
 - postal votes will continue to be permitted in relation to elections for VP(J) / Treasurer / chairs of standing committees, and in such votes the Chair will have no casting vote;
 - records of voting outcomes will be downloaded and retained for 28 days after approval and publication of Council minutes (and would be available on request), after which period of time they will be destroyed;
 - c. general business of Council in open session:

- these should be by electronic 'open' ballot – with overall totals only disclosed during the meeting but with details of voting for / against / abstention attributable to individual members downloaded and recorded after every meeting;
 - records would be retained for 28 days after approval / publication of Council minutes (and would be available on request); after which period of time they will be destroyed;
- d. the Rules continue to provide for votes to be held otherwise (e.g. show of hands, paper ballot) at the discretion of the Chair as required (e.g. where there is a malfunction of the electronic system, or it is, for whatever reason, not available).

Decision

12. Council is asked to consider and approve the proposals as set out in paragraph 11 above – as also set out on the attached Annexes for the Rules by means of tracked changes.

Meeting Procedure Rules 2019

Made by the Council of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons on 6 November 2014, to come into force on the date when the Supplemental Royal Charter of 2014 comes into operation

Citation

1. These rules may be cited as the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Meeting Procedure Rules 2014⁹.

Application and interpretation

2. These rules apply, except where otherwise stated, to general meetings and meetings of the Council and of committees, sub-committees, boards and other bodies transacting College business. The person chairing a meeting of a sub-committee, board or other body shall have discretion to modify the rules in their application to that meeting.
3. In these rules, "member", otherwise than in the expression "Council member", means a person participating in, or who is to participate in, any meeting to which these rules apply.

Voting

4. All questions relating to any business to be transacted at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of the members voting. The person chairing a meeting shall have a casting vote in addition to that person's original vote, whether or not the original vote has been used.
5. Immediately before a question is put to a meeting the text of the question to be voted upon shall be read out, unless it has been made available in writing to those who are to vote.

6. In the case of Council meetings, voting in relation to general Council business will ordinarily be carried out via electronic means, by Council members present at the time, as directed via the system in place (which may vary from time to time). Voting will be one vote per person (except for the Chair where necessary – see paragraph 4). Voting will therefore ordinarily be by means of 'open' ballot. This means that whether a member has voted for / against or has abstained in any given motion will be collated following the meeting and such information held for a period of 28 days after the approval and publication of the minutes of Council meetings, after which period it will be destroyed. During the meeting, however, only the numbers voting will be disclosed. The Chair, at their discretion, may modify the Rules for voting / recording and provide for voting by an alternative means e.g. show of hands / paper ballot, etc. This could apply, for example, in the event of malfunction of the electronic system and / or its non-availability. Voting shall be by show of hands, except that the Council may direct that a secret ballot shall be held for elections to the offices of President or Vice-President.

7. For the purposes of elections to the offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer and Chairs of standing committees, voting will be by electronic means by Council members present at the meeting. Furthermore, absent members will be entitled to a postal vote that will be recorded at the meeting where those elections are held. The Chair has no casting vote in relation to these elections. Voting in these instances (as with any votes held in closed session of Council) will be by means of 'secret' ballot. This means that only the overall numbers voting will be disclosed during the meeting and likewise such information will be held for a period of 28 days after approval and publication of the minutes of the Council meeting. There will be no attribution of votes to individual members. The Chair, at their discretion, may modify the Rules for voting / recording and provide for voting and the disclosure of results by an alternative means e.g. show of hands / paper ballot, etc. This could apply, for example, in the event of a malfunction of the electronic system and / or its non-availability.

6.

8. Voting in the case of other committees, and sub-groups, should be by show of hands.

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Remote participation in meetings

7.9. Some or all of the members of any committee, sub-committee or working party may take part in a meeting by means of telephone conferencing or video-conferencing, at the discretion of the person chairing the meeting. Such participants shall count as present for the purpose of any vote.

Minutes

8.10. Minutes shall be taken of every meeting of the Council and of its committees and sub-committees.

Chairing of general meetings

9.11. The President shall take the chair, but in the President's absence the chair shall be taken by whichever of the Vice-Presidents first took office as a Vice-President or President. If the President and the Vice-Presidents are not present the members present shall choose one of their number to take the chair.

Convening of Council meetings

10.12. The meetings of the Council shall be convened by the Secretary or Registrar. At least ten days' notice shall be given of every Council meeting, unless the President directs that a shorter period is permissible.

Quorum for Council meetings

11.13. The quorum of the Council shall be nine members personally present.

Business of Council meetings

12.14. The agenda for a meeting shall state clearly the business to be transacted.

~~13-15.~~ A Council member who wishes to raise any subject for discussion or move a motion at any Council meeting shall, as soon as possible after receipt of the notice of the meeting, and in any case not later than three days before the date of the meeting, give notice of it to the Secretary or Registrar. That subject or motion shall then be added to the agenda of the meeting; except that no motion which in the opinion of the person chairing the meeting is the same in substance as a motion previously rejected by the Council shall be moved within six months of the date of the meeting at which it was rejected, except with the agreement of the Council.

~~14-16.~~ No business shall be transacted other than that stated on the agenda for the meeting, except with the leave of the Council as a matter of urgency.

Adjournment of Council meetings

~~15-17.~~ If no quorum is present within fifteen minutes of the time fixed for the commencement of a Council meeting, or the meeting ceases to be quorate during its course, it shall stand adjourned to a date and time to be fixed by the chairman, with the agreement of the members present.

~~16-18.~~ Each meeting of the Council shall have power to adjourn to a future date and time, by agreement of the members present.

~~17-19.~~ No business shall be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than that left unfinished at the adjournment of the immediately preceding session of the meeting, with the exception of urgent business designated as such by the President, and of which notice shall have been given to each Council member.

Chairing of Council meetings

~~18-20.~~ The chair at Council meetings shall be taken by the President, but in the President's absence the chair shall be taken by whichever of the Vice-Presidents first took office as a Vice-President or President. If the President and the Vice-Presidents are not present, the members present shall choose one of their number to take the chair.

Convening of committee meetings

~~19-21.~~ At least ten days' notice shall be given of every committee meeting, unless the chairman of the committee directs that a shorter period is permissible. The agenda for the meeting shall state clearly the business to be transacted.

Quorum for committee meetings

~~20-22.~~ The quorum for a meeting of a committee shall be three, or such higher figure as the Council may decide in any case. Ex officio members of committees shall not be counted as part of the quorum for that committee.

Chairmanship of committee meetings

21-23. The chairman of a committee shall take the chair at every meeting of a committee if present. If the chairman of the committee is not present, the vice-chairman of the committee shall take the chair. If neither the chairman nor the vice-chairman of the committee is present, the members present shall choose one of their number to take the chair.

Rules of debate

22-24. The rules of the debate shall be as follows, but subject to the discretion of the person chairing any meeting to regulate the proceedings as they think fit.

23-25. No motion shall be discussed before it has been seconded, and no member shall speak more than once to any motion, except with the leave of the chairman. The seconder of a motion may choose not to speak until later in the debate. The mover of the motion shall have the last word in the debate, but shall only answer points made by previous speakers and shall not introduce new material in the debate. No motion may be withdrawn, except by leave of the chairman. The withdrawal of a motion shall not preclude it from being moved on a later occasion.

24-26. All speeches shall be directed to the chair. No speech shall last for more than five minutes, except with the leave of the chairman.

25-27. Amendments to motions must be relevant to the motion and within the scope of the motion. An amendment shall be for one of the following purposes:-

- to omit words;
- to omit words and insert or add others in substitution;
- to insert or add words;
- in the case of a meeting of the Council, that the subject-matter of the motion be referred to a committee.

26-28. No amendment shall be discussed before it has been seconded. Only one amendment may be discussed at any one time, unless the chairman considers that this will assist the meeting. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall then become the substantive motion before the meeting, and may be further amended. The mover of an amendment shall have no right of reply to the debate on that amendment, but the mover of the original motion shall have the right of reply to the debate on the amendment. The seconder of an amendment may choose not to speak until a later stage in the debate on the amendment, but shall have no right of reply to the debate on the amendment.

27-29. A member who has not spoken in the debate may move the closure of the debate by moving either that the question be now put, or that the meeting do proceed to the next business.

29-30. A motion to close the debate must be seconded. Neither the proposer nor seconder of a closure motion shall speak to the closure motion and there shall be no debate on it. If a proposal that "the question be now put" is carried, the question before the meeting shall then be put to the meeting forthwith, save that the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply to the debate before the question is put. If it is agreed to proceed to the next business the original debate shall be closed without any question being put.

29-31. A member may raise a point of order at any time during the meeting and shall be heard forthwith. A member wishing to raise a point of explanation in relation to a previous speech by that member in the debate shall raise it as a point of order. The ruling of the chairman on a point of order shall be conclusive and shall not be questioned in any way, except by way of substantive motion.

Election procedure for President and Vice Presidents

The current procedures were first put in place in 1994 following a review conducted by Sir Colin Shepherd MP. Minor modifications were made in intervening years, more substantive changes were agreed by Finance and General Purposes Committee in June 2005, and a further minor change was made in November 2015. The procedures set out below represent a consolidation of all the amendments.

Nomination

1. A notice of election for a new Vice President will be circulated to all Council Members not less than 60 days before the February/March Council meeting at which the election is to take place.
2. The notice will be accompanied by a nomination form and these notes.
3. Any candidate seeking election should complete, sign and return the form to the Registrar.
4. Each nomination must be supported by four Members of Council. No Council Member may support more than one candidate. Supporting forms can be submitted separately. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that his/her nomination has the necessary number of supporters. [NB. Office staff will not get involved in chasing the necessary paperwork].
5. All forms must reach the Registrar by the date given, which will be 30 days before the Council meeting. Fax or e-mail copies will be allowed and e-signatures will be accepted from within the Council group (RCVS Council elections will remain as they currently are in that ORIGINAL signatures must be received by the deadline date given).
6. Each candidate may circulate one letter to Council, limited to **250** words, indicating why s/he is standing for election. This should be submitted to the Registrar, where possible with the nomination form, but in any event by the date given.
7. The candidate details and any accompanying letters will be circulated to all Council Members at least 15 days before the Council meeting.

Voting

8. The election will be an agenda item held in public. After the Chair's introduction, the Registrar will read out all the nominations, in alphabetical order, with the names of the supporters.
9. There will be no opportunity for the candidates or supporters to address Council but Council will be given the opportunity to have a confidential discussion, in which case the candidate or

candidates and the public will be asked to leave at this stage. Candidates will be invited back to vote and others to hear the results.

10. In the event that there is only one candidate, the motion will be put to the meeting that the candidate be elected. In the event that there is dissent there will be a secret ballot (in accordance with the Meeting Procedure Rules 2019⁴, paragraph 6⁷). In order to succeed a single nomination must receive more than 50% of the vote. If the nomination captures less than 50% the election will be postponed until the next meeting of Council, during which time additional nominations will be sought.

11. In the event that there is more than one candidate a secret ballot will take place at the Council meeting (in accordance with the Meeting Procedure Rules 2019⁴, paragraph 6⁷).

~~12. A ballot box will be located at the front of the Council chamber. All voting papers will be numbered to secure the principles of anonymity and 'one member, one vote'.~~

~~13.~~^{12.} Council Members not able to be present may ask for a postal vote which will be opened at the meeting by the Chair.

~~14. Ballot papers will be issued to all members present and collected in the ballot box, along with any postal votes, by the Registrar.~~

~~15.~~^{13.} ~~Postal votes cast will be added to the total electronic votes recorded in the meeting, with totals verified by the Registrar and Director of Operations. Ballot papers will be counted by the Registrar in private with the Director of Operations or another member of the internal management team acting as scrutineer.~~ The winner must receive more than 50% of the votes. Where this does not happen the position will be reported; the last placed candidate eliminated and a further ballot carried out until an outright winner is identified. In the event of a tie the procedure outlined below will apply.

~~16.~~^{14.} The Registrar and / or the Chair will report the result of the ballot to Council, with the voting figures for each candidate together with any abstentions.

~~17.~~^{15.} A tie. In the event of a tie there will be an immediate re-run of the ballot between the two tying candidates:

- a. where the tie is between the only two candidates then there will be a short adjournment after which another vote will be called. In the event of yet another tie the candidate who is an elected Member will be preferred. If both be elected Members then the winner will be the one with the greatest number of votes on the most recent election to Council. If both are nominated/appointed members then the winner will be the one with the greatest seniority on the Council. If all these consideration fail then lots shall be drawn.
- b. where the tie occurs in the last round of a ballot in which there were more than two candidates initially then the winner shall be the one with the greatest number of votes in the first round.

- c. where the tie is amongst two, one of whom is to be eliminated from the next stage the considerations in a) shall apply.

Procedure for the election of President and Senior Vice President

~~18.16.~~ Council approved that it would be for the Officers to recommend to Council that the Vice President (Junior) and President would become President and Vice President (Senior) respectively. These recommendations will be separate agenda items directly after the election of the Vice President (Junior), and the motion will be put to the meeting that the candidate be elected.

~~19.17.~~ If either nomination is disputed then the recommendation will be withdrawn and the full election procedure will be initiated, with the election taking place at the summer meeting.

~~20.18.~~ If the Officers do not intend to recommend that the President or Vice President (Junior) become Vice President (Senior) or President respectively, it will be necessary for:

- a. Officers to reach a decision in time for the Registrar to inform Council in the VP(J) election mailing.
- b. It will then become necessary for alternative candidates to be found and arrangements made for an election using the same procedure as for the election of Vice President (Junior).

ECF/dw

~~30/10/18~~ 7/3/19

Election procedure for Treasurer

These procedures were first put in place in 1994 for the election of President and Vice President following a review conducted by Sir Colin Shepherd MP. Minor modifications were made in intervening years and more substantive changes were agreed by Finance and General Purposes Committee in June 2005. The procedures set out below represent a consolidation of all the amendments and they were further adopted for the Election for Chairs of Education and Standards Committees at the Council meeting held in November 2013 and for the election to Office of Treasurer in September 2017.

Nomination

1. A notice of election for Treasurer will be circulated to all Council Members not less than 60 days before the February/March Council meeting at which the election is to take place.
2. The notice will be accompanied by a nomination form and these notes.
3. Any candidate seeking election should complete, sign and return the form to the Registrar.
4. Each nomination must be supported by four Members of Council. No Council Member may support more than one candidate. Supporting forms can be submitted separately. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that his/her nomination has the necessary number of supporters. [NB. Office staff will not get involved in chasing the necessary paperwork].
5. All forms must reach the Registrar by the date given, which will be 30 days before the Council meeting. Fax or e-mail copies will be allowed and e-signatures will be accepted from within the Council group (RCVS Council elections will remain as they currently are in that ORIGINAL signatures must be received by the deadline date given).
6. Each candidate may circulate one letter to Council, limited to **250** words, indicating why s/he is standing for election. This should be submitted to the Registrar, where possible with the nomination form, but in any event by the date given.
7. The candidate details and any accompanying letters will be circulated to all Council Members at least 15 days before the Council meeting.

Voting

8. The election will be an agenda item held in public. After the Chair's introduction, the Registrar will read out all the nominations, in alphabetical order, with the names of the supporters.
9. There will be no opportunity for the candidates or supporters to address Council but Council will be given the opportunity to have a confidential discussion, in which case the candidate or

candidates and the public will be asked to leave at this stage. Candidates will be invited back to vote and others to hear the results.

10. In the event that there is only one candidate, the motion will be put to the meeting that the candidate be elected. In the event that there is dissent there will be a secret ballot (in accordance with the Meeting Procedure Rules 2014⁹, ~~(paragraphs 2 and 67)~~). In order to succeed a single nomination must receive more than 50% of the vote. If the nomination captures less than 50% the election will be postponed until the next meeting of Council, during which time additional nominations will be sought.

11. In the event that there is more than one candidate a secret ballot will take place at the Council meeting (in accordance with the Meeting Procedure Rules 2014⁹, ~~(paragraphs 2 and 67)~~).

~~12. A ballot box will be located at the front of the Council chamber. All voting papers will be numbered to secure the principles of anonymity and 'one member, one vote'.~~

~~13.~~^{12.} Council Members not able to be present may ask for a postal vote which will be opened at the meeting by the Chair.

~~14. Ballot papers will be issued to all members present and collected in the ballot box, along with any postal votes, by the Registrar.~~

~~15.~~^{13.} ~~Ballot papers will be counted by the Registrar in private with the Director of Operations or another member of the internal management team acting as scrutineer. Postal votes cast will be added to the total electronic votes recorded in the meeting with the totals verified by the Registrar and Director of Operations.~~ The winner must receive more than 50% of the votes. Where this does not happen the position will be reported; the last placed candidate eliminated and a further ballot carried out until an outright winner is identified. In the event of a tie the procedure outlined below will apply.

~~16.~~^{14.} The Registrar and / or Chair will report the result of the ballot to Council, with the voting figures for each candidate together with any abstentions.

~~17.~~^{15.} A tie. In the event of a tie there will be an immediate re-run of the ballot between the two tying candidates:

- a. where the tie is between the only two candidates then there will be a short adjournment after which another vote will be called. In the event of yet another tie the candidate who is an elected Member will be preferred. If both be elected Members then the winner will be the one with the greatest number of votes on their most recent election to Council. If both are nominated/appointed members then the winner will be the one with the greatest seniority on the Council. If all these consideration fail then lots shall be drawn.
- b. where the tie occurs in the last round of a ballot in which there were more than two candidates initially then the winner shall be the one with the greatest number of votes in the first round.

- c. where the tie is amongst two, one of whom is to be eliminated from the next stage the considerations in a) shall apply.

ECF/dw

~~30/1018~~7/3/19

Election procedure for Chairs of ~~Education and Standards Committees~~ standing committees

These procedures were first put in place in 1994 for the election of President and Vice President following a review conducted by Sir Colin Shepherd MP. Minor modifications were made in intervening years and more substantive changes were agreed by Finance and General Purposes Committee in June 2005. The procedures set out below represent a consolidation of all the amendments and they were further adopted for the Election for Chairs of Education and Standards Committees at the Council meeting held in November 2013, and Chair of Advancement of the Professions Committee at the Council meeting held in January 2019.

Nomination

1. A notice of election for Chairs of Education, ~~and Standards,~~ and Advancement of the Professions Committees will be circulated to all Council Members not less than 60 days before the February/March Council meeting at which the election is to take place.
2. The notice will be accompanied by a nomination form for each Committee and these notes.
3. Any candidate seeking election should complete, sign and return the relevant form to the Registrar.
4. Each nomination must be supported by four Members of Council. No Council Member may support more than one candidate per Committee. Supporting forms can be submitted separately. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that his/her nomination has the necessary number of supporters. [NB. Office staff will not get involved in chasing the necessary paperwork].
5. All forms must reach the Registrar on the date given, which will be 30 days before the Council meeting. Fax or e-mail copies will be allowed, and e-signatures will be accepted from within the Council group (RCVS Council elections will remain as they currently are in that ORIGINAL signatures must be received by the deadline date given).
6. Each candidate may circulate one letter to Council, limited to **250** words, indicating why s/he is standing for election. This should be submitted to the Registrar, where possible with the nomination form, but in any event by the date given.
7. The candidate details and any accompanying letters will be circulated to all Council Members at least 15 days before the Council meeting.

Voting

8. The election will be an agenda item held in public. After the Chair's introduction, the Registrar will read out all the nominations, in alphabetical order, with the names of the supporters.

9. There will be no opportunity for the candidates or supporters to address Council, but Council will be given the opportunity to have a confidential discussion, in which case the candidate or candidates and the public will be asked to leave at this stage. Candidates will be invited back to vote and others to hear the results.
 10. In the event that there is only one candidate, the motion will be put to the meeting that the candidate be elected. In the event that there is dissent there will be a secret ballot (in accordance with the Meeting Procedure Rules 2019, paragraph 7). In order to succeed a single nomination must receive more than 50% of the vote. If the nomination captures less than 50% the election will be postponed until the next meeting of Council, during which time additional nominations will be sought.
 11. In the event that there is more than one candidate a secret ballot will take place at the Council meeting (in accordance with the Meeting Procedure Rules 2019, paragraph 7).
 - ~~12. A ballot box will be located at the front of the Council chamber. All voting papers will be numbered to secure the principles of anonymity and 'one member; one vote'.~~
 - ~~13.12.~~ Council Members not able to be present may ask for a postal vote which will be opened at the meeting by the Chair.
 - ~~14. Ballot papers will be issued to all members present and collected in the ballot box, along with any postal votes, by the Registrar.~~
 - ~~15.13.~~ Ballot papers will be counted by the Registrar in private with the Director of Operations or another member of the internal management team acting as scrutineer. Postal votes cast will be added to the total electronic votes recorded in the meeting with totals verified by the Registrar and Director of Operations. The winner must receive more than 50% of the votes. Where this does not happen the position will be reported; the last placed candidate eliminated and a further ballot carried out until an outright winner is identified. In the event of a tie the procedure outlined below will apply.
 - ~~16.14.~~ The Registrar and / or Chair will report the result of the ballot to Council, with the voting figures for each candidate together with any abstentions.
 - ~~17.15.~~ A tie. In the event of a tie there will be an immediate re-run of the ballot between the two tying candidates:
 - a. where the tie is between the only two candidates then there will be a short adjournment after which another vote will be called. In the event of yet another tie the candidate who is an elected Member will be preferred. If both be elected Members then the winner will be the one with the greatest number of votes on the most recent election to Council. If both are nominated/appointed members then the winner will be the one with the greatest seniority on the Council. If all these considerations fail then lots shall be drawn.
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- b. where the tie occurs in the last round of a ballot in which there were more than two candidates initially then the winner shall be the one with the greatest number of votes in the first round.
- c. where the tie is amongst two, one of whom is to be eliminated from the next stage the considerations in a) shall apply.

ECF/dw

~~30/10/18~~7/3/19

Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	7 March 2019
Title	No-deal Brexit Policy: EAEVE Graduate recognition
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	This paper provides feedback and recommendations from the RCVS Brexit Taskforce around contingency planning for a no-deal Brexit, including recommendations from Education Committee for operationalising the recognition of graduates from EAEVE approved / accredited veterinary schools.
Decisions required	To consider the proposals and recommendations of Education Committee to accept those from EAEVE approved / accredited schools who graduated after the date approval / accreditation was granted, as part of the interim measures in place in the event of a no-deal Brexit.
Attachments	None
Author	Dr Linda Prescott-Clements Director of Education L.Prescott-Clements@rcvs.org.uk

No Deal Brexit Policy: EAEVE Graduate Recognition

Background

1. In June 2018, RCVS Council approved plans and contingencies recommended by the Brexit Taskforce, in the event of a no-deal Brexit. This included that graduates from veterinary schools approved or accredited by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) are recognised for a transitional period, while RCVS seeks a mutual recognition agreement with EAEVE for the longer term.
2. Based on recent registrations from EU/EEA schools, it is estimated that this will mean around 13% of graduates who currently register through the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (MRPQ) would need to take the RCVS Statutory Examination in order to register with the RCVS, and we are considering how the exam could be scaled up in order to accommodate an increase in applications.
3. The intention after Brexit is to seek a more formal arrangement such as a mutual recognition agreement similar to those already in place with the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC) and the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC). This is likely to focus on accredited schools only (not *approved* schools, which have not been reviewed in terms of educational standards), and involve joint visitation. However, as EAEVE does not have the authority to compel local regulatory authorities to register UK vets, such an agreement may be complex to negotiate, or even one-sided.
4. EAEVE 'Approved' status is being phased out, and therefore acceptance of graduates from approved schools is likely to be temporary anyway.

EAEVE Approved / Accredited School Graduate Recognition

5. In operationalising the decision to recognise graduates from EAEVE approved or accredited schools for a transition period (until an agreement can be reached with EAEVE or the issue returns to Council if an agreement proves difficult), a decision needs to be made regarding the criteria for this recognition, i.e.
 - a. whether *all* graduates from EAEVE approved / accredited schools should be recognised regardless of when the school received EAEVE status. In such cases, this would mean the potential for graduates who had attended the school prior to it being reviewed by EAEVE being recognised by RCVS¹, or
 - b. whether RCVS should recognise only those who graduated after the school had received its EAEVE status.

¹ Those currently on the Register would remain

6. The number of individuals applying from EAEVE approved/accredited schools who graduated before the school was granted EAEVE status is likely to be low. Eighty percent of applicants to the UK register apply within five years of their graduation – greatly reducing the likelihood that they will have graduated before their school gained EAEVE approval/accreditation.
7. Initial attempts at accessing historical information regarding when schools gained their EAEVE approved / accreditation status have indicated that EAEVE does not currently have this information in an easily accessible format. Furthermore, there are concerns that although numbers are likely to be low, option (b) above could exacerbate veterinary workforce shortages further.

Education Committee discussion

8. Education Committee discussed the proposal and considered the options presented at its meeting on 5 February 2019. It was understood that this proposal related to the interim measures agreed by Council, but as the timeframe for this is currently unknown, it was felt that the option to review any decision around operationalising this should be left open as more information around Brexit becomes available.
9. It was agreed that any future decisions around a longer term arrangement with EAEVE would need to include all the accreditation agencies and involve the veterinary profession across Europe.
10. A question was asked regarding the potential situation if a UK school was awarded accreditation by EAEVE, but not the RCVS. It was clarified that under the Veterinary Surgeons Act, graduates from UK schools cannot be automatically registered by the RCVS if their UK veterinary school is only accredited by EAEVE and not the RCVS.
11. The Committee discussed the issue of mutual recognition and acknowledged that this agreement would only cover the mutual recognition of educational qualifications and not the mutual recognition of license to practise. The Committee was informed that the decision would not affect those already on the register as, under the Veterinary Surgeons Act, registration could not be removed from an individual without going through the Committee procedure. The Registrar has clarified the position that as long as the application is received by RCVS by 29th March 2019, it will be processed.
12. Education Committee discussed the two options and whilst some felt that the door should be left open for as many potential applicants as possible, other Committee members made a convincing argument that their experience was that the schools had improved dramatically during the process of working towards and achieving EAEVE accreditation. Therefore Education Committee

agreed option 'b': only those who graduated after the school had received EAEVE status should be accepted.

Next Steps

13. Council is asked to consider the recommendations of Education Committee to accept graduates from EAEVE approved / accredited schools where they graduated after the date which approval / accreditation was granted, as part of the interim no-deal Brexit measures.

Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 25 April 2018 at Belgravia House, 62/64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

Ms E Butler	Chair
Mr N Connell	
Mr V Olowe	
Ms J Shardlow	
Ms J Rutherford	

In attendance:

Dr C Sturgess	Treasurer
Mrs P Dean	Secretary
Ms L Lockett (by Skype)	CEO
Ms C McCann	Director of Operations
Ms N May (part)	Audit Partner, Crowe Clark Whitehill
Mr I Holloway (part)	Director of Communications
Mr R Burley (part)	Chief Technology Officer
Ms E Ferguson (part)	Registrar

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies were received from Mr R Davis.

Declarations of interest

2. Mr Niall Connell will be Junior Vice-President from 13 July. The Committee gave its congratulations on his new role. He will therefore stand down from ARC in summer.

Action: LL and EB to discuss a new member

Minutes of the meeting held in January 2018

3. There were some amendments to be made - see below.

Matters arising

- PD to check that JS amendments are incorporated into the minutes
- Para 21 – recommended a protocol for managing increased number of petitions should be referenced in this section
- Para 15 - final sentence – should read ‘even when’
- Para 26 – student cohort – talking about first visit in the 3rd year

Action: PD to make the amendments

Terms of reference

4. The committee asked that the following amendments were made to the terms of reference:

- Para 3 ref to para 23 should read para 16
- There is no para 27 to be amended to 20
- Track changes on number of committee members to be accepted.

Action: PD to amend

Annual report and accounts

5. Nicola May, Audit Partner, Crowe Clark Whitehill presented the draft accounts. The audit was completed on site and the Treasurer had a meeting with the Audit Partner. Draft accounts were presented to RCVS Council at the January meeting and there are still some final amendments to be made.
6. The Audit & Risk Committee gave its amendments or comments in relation to the document:
- Page 5 – query whether the final paragraph should state work force issues have been thrown into sharp ‘relief/or focus’ – it was agreed that either was possible
 - The committee liked the addition of a new appointments box but suggested that a specific reference should be added to the CEO’s appointment date. The Director of Operations confirmed that this was included elsewhere
 - Page 7 – It was felt that the pie chart was in the wrong place. Income 2016 and income 2017 – should be switched ie put 2017 on the left hand side. The Committee felt the colour scheme was too light and needed to be amended to make it easier to follow
 - Description about surplus brief to include something about investment performance and perhaps an explanation re publications 90% tiny amount on graph – financial review slim
 - Pages 9 to 16 – no amendments. New case studies will be added in each section.
 - Page 17 – It was suggested that there should be more detail given on the risks
 - Page 18 – A few numbers missing, Discretionary Fund reported to each Council and Committee meeting and Operational Board
 - Page 24 – The committee observed that the short-term deposits seemed to be quite high and asked why. The Director of Operations explained that the College receives the majority of vets and vet nurses fees twice a year and at the year-end, quite a large amount is held for the next year.
Designated funds and unrestricted general fund – EB to show CMcC do not tie in with p32
The RCVS Council meeting is on 14 June not 15
 - Page 25 – movements on investments on note 11. Proceeds from sales of investments

Action: Chair of ARC and the Director of Operations to discuss

- RCVS Knowledge and other trusts – what are the other trusts? Presidents Christmas Box charity and Vetlife
 - Page 29 – Audit and Risk committee queried what was included in the direct costs. The largest item in direct costs is solicitors and other professional costs relating to concerns. It also includes visitation costs and excludes all staff costs.
 - Page 30 – formatting here
 - Includes NI – national insurance
 - Page 31 – number should not be in bold
Fair value at the end of the year – 2017 - £11Million – excluding cash values
 - Page 32 – no amends
 - Page 33 – note movements on reserve
7. The Committee asked whether the RCVS would be reporting on the gender pay gap this year. The College is not obliged to do so yet (due to the size of the organisation) and as a pay review is currently taking place within the College, it was decided not to do so in 2018. The College has a good mix of staff with a high number of women in senior roles.
8. The Chair suggested that as the College is in a good financial position this could be reflected in the report. It was also suggested that the narrative in the financial review section could be more positive (p18).
9. The Committee suggested that staff costs could be shown as a percentage of fee income. The Audit Partner agreed that this could be done. The Committee also queried whether there was any benchmarking of staff costs. The Director of Operations explained that as the report is now reported in Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) form more benchmarking would take place.
10. It was also suggested that more text should be added to page 17 to define key risks and how the RCVS mitigates them. The Audit Partner explained that the thinking on risk keeps evolving. The CEO asked if there was another organisation that handled this well in their reporting that could be used as a benchmark. The Chair suggested the General Medical Council (GMC).
11. The Committee further suggested that more information should be used about disciplinary cases and that this could be linked to the statements included in *RCVS Facts*.

Action: Director of Operations to speak to the Registrar about the number of Disciplinary Committee cases and add some narrative about the changing numbers

12. ARC noted the number of staff earning over £60K (p30) and commented that there appeared to be a drift towards higher costs. The Director of Operations explained that this has been cross-referenced (to p18) as there have been a number of new appointments.

13. The Audit Partner gave an overview of the audit report. This is Crowe Clark Whitehill's first year as auditor and it was felt that the audit had gone very smoothly. The Partner thanked the Director of Operations and the wider team who assisted the process.

Section one - Audit overview

14. **Page one** – final checks need to be completed and any final disclosures added. This is on target and where the auditors would expect to have reached in the process. Materiality method was used as previously agreed as a basis for sample sizes
15. **Page two** - there are no remaining unadjusted items.

Section two – significant areas from Crowe Clarke Whitehill's audit - This section highlights areas identified as having specific audit risk – or a greater risk of material misstatement.

16. Key areas of focus include income and income recognition and the treatment of disciplinary costs. Income has been strong this year and there is growth in the results. The Audit Partner felt that they were comfortable with this and there were no issues.
17. Practice Standards Scheme – there was some discussion in the audit around the new Scheme, which started in 2015 – an accrual had been made in respect of the older Scheme. The Audit Partner had spoken with the Director of Operations and explained that the new Scheme, which had been treated as a restricted fund, was better treated as a designated fund.
18. Generally, grants to RCVS Knowledge are provided without restrictions and we do not expect to have them refunded or any underspend to be refunded.
19. Disciplinary costs – these are recognised from the point at which legal representative costs are incurred. RCVS do not estimate an accrual or provide for the costs of ongoing cases due to future uncertainty. The auditors reviewed cases and checked costs appropriately.
20. There were no concerns around journal entries and the financial reporting process.

Section three – this section deals with other matters from the audit

21. Payroll or staff costs – the Audit Partner explained that there would be interest in this section as this is a large expenditure for the College. The cost of training was taken out of this section and restated in direct costs.
22. Previously unrealised gains were treated as a designated fund. Under SORP, a designated fund has a clear purpose and there has to be active movement on this fund. As this does not meet the definition of a designation this has been reclassified.
23. The Audit Partner noted that there is volatility in unrestricted reserves and given this volatility, the College may want to say something about the risk.

24. The auditors were happy that capital projects were designated funds eg large digital project which can demonstrate ongoing value.
25. During a review of the repairs and maintenance, transactions were noted relating to the Strategic Development Budget. Tracing a sample of the expenditure in the financial record the auditors were satisfied that they remained expenditure items and did not need to be capitalised.

Action: EB and KS to take accounts to Council, Annual Report and Financial Statements and the letter of representation to June Council

Section four – challenges organisations face – fraud and error

26. The Audit Partner explained that auditors will make an organisation aware of any particular concerns but it is ultimately the responsibility of an organisation to ensure it is a fraud resilient one whilst still considering other risks. The RCVS has looked at fraud in relation to the registration process but will extend this to financial and other areas.

Action: Senior team to look at this (fraud resilient organisation)

Section 5 and 6 – GDPR, Charity Governance Code

27. This section provides information on preparing for GDPR and for charities to develop high standards of governance.

Section 7 – Eight hallmarks of a risk aware non-profit

28. The final section of the report is to make organisations more risk aware. Crowe Clark Whitehill does this by posing eight questions organisations should ask themselves.

Action: A session will be organised with Council to look at the appetite for risk paper and the questions posed

29. ARC noted that the auditors had referred to charitable governance and asked whether a particular standard was expected and whether there were any principles.
30. The Audit Partner explained that if the RCVS was a charity then it would have to adopt the charity code of governance but often organisations such as a university faculty, for example, could be seen as a standalone charity and also under university's code of governance too.

Action: This exercise will be part of the governance changes, RCVS to check the code of conduct in place already

- Appendix one – Systems and controls issues
A list of recommendations - all findings from the audit were at a very low level and could be completed within an agreed timescale.

- Appendix two – an update from last year
Deloitte made three recommendations last year, which have been partially implemented. One was to amend suppliers' details on the system and be able to report changes monthly for security. This is not possible on the current system.
The second recommendation was to provide evidence of reconciliations between IMIS and SAGE, this has been partially implemented.
The third recommendation was for a complete segregation of duties between financial staff – this has been implemented.
- Appendix three – external developments
This section provides information for the RCVS of developments in the non-profit sector.
- Appendix four – Upcoming Non-Profits events, course and briefings
Crowe Clark Whitehill provide courses for ARC members and staff to attend.

31. ARC recommend to Council that the accounts should be approved. The Committee are assured that there has been a robust audit process so Council should be comfortable to sign them.

Annual report to Council

32. The Director of Operations will prepare an annual report to Council and asked the Committee what they would like to include. The Committee suggested the following items:

- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) visit and recommendations
- Change of terms of reference
- Change of auditors
- Rolling programme looking at risk register
- New members of ARC
- Digital costs
- ARC – has identity properly established
- Departmental registers
- GDPR

Expenses policy

33. The Director of Operations presented the expenses policy. The Audit and Risk committee sought clarification regarding the figures, as there was a degree of ambiguity.

34. In the area surrounding the College, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find accommodation under £200. The committee asked if it was possible to agree a better rate with a local hotel. The Director of Operations explained that this had been tried but as the College could not guarantee a definite number of nights, hotels were reluctant to agree. Additionally some Council members preferred to stay near their train station of exit from London rather than in Westminster.

General Data Policy Regulation (GDPR) update

35. A GDPR meeting takes place each week amongst key members of the Senior Team.

36. Deletion policies (different for each part of the organisation) have been updated and staff have established what data is being held, what is sensitive and what should be deleted.
37. Instructions have been issued about what staff should and should not do such as keeping information on laptops and who should have access to information.

Action: A handout to be created re bespoke training for Council

Departmental Risk Register

38. The Registrar explained that the departmental risk register being presented was for the complaints section of the Professional Conduct department (largest section of the department). The main concern for the Registrar a few years ago would have been timing and potential delays in dealing with complaints. However, the department has put actions in place to mitigate these issues and they seem to be working well. The general impression is that performance is good and that the independent committees are working well too.
39. The Disciplinary Committee has to be independent by the nature of their role but the College speaks regularly to the Legal Assessors whose function it is to advise the Committee on matters of law re their activities. The College ensure that members are well trained to maintain performance and reputation of the committee.
40. The College, however, cannot control the number of complaints in terms of volume – e.g. in 2017, there were 17 disciplinary hearings, in 2015 there were nine. Some of the cases from 2017 spilled over into 2018. It is for this reason that it is difficult to budget year by year and this is an ongoing conversation for the Registrar and Director of Operations.
41. ARC asked if there was an increased risk now that the Disciplinary Committee is independent and whether they would take a decision that was not in line with College Standards. The Registrar explained that the Preliminary Investigation Committee/Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee was very important in this respect. It oversees the work of the DC, monitors its performances against KPIs and provided a feedback loop in terms of implementation of Code and guidance/understanding of intention of the Code and guidance as set by the College. As a result of hearings (or indeed trends of complaints throughout the system) the College can (and has) asked Standards Committee to look to provide more guidance to the profession
42. The Audit Partner asked what the Registrar would do if the Disciplinary Committee made any 'unexpected' decisions. The Registrar explained that occasionally this did happen due to human nature; if it was a frequent occurrence it would be a cause for concern. It was necessary however to recognise that in decisions there will always be a range of reasonable outcomes rather than an absolute answer.
43. The Chair asked how Council could be assured of the performance of the Disciplinary Committee and the Primary Investigation Committee; aside from the overseeing by PIC/DC liaison committee (and feedback loop with Standards referred to above) it was noted that the Chairs of the Committees report regularly to Council. The Registrar confirmed that currently a former Chair of PIC /former Deputy Head of Conduct also consider closed cases on a monthly basis to review

PIC/complaint decisions. While, the Chair was pleased that there were a lot of assurances for the complaints system there was a concern that a number of the actions were reliant on internal review/the Registrar's input. The Committee asked whether there was a way to look at the Disciplinary Process from end to end. It was noted that there had been a review a few years ago, but that it was out of date in the sense that it related to processes and procedures that had changed enormously and it predated the introduction and impact of the current ADR system. The Registrar confirmed that external review of both PIC/Complaints and DC was already scheduled and the report of the review of complaints from a wellbeing perspective was awaited. It was noted that the College had carried out a review in 2015 (The First Rate Regulator Review) and has committed in the current strategy plan to revisit this by the end of 2019.

44. There was a discussion around the mechanism, practicalities and cost of review including the possibilities of someone independent sitting in on cases/reading transcripts/case files. There was also discussion about the limitations in identifying issues from a sample of a relatively small number of cases. The Chair felt that a large amount is spent on seeking financial assurance whereas Professional Conduct was arguably more risky and relatively little was spent here.
45. There was discussion in relation to reputational risk; what precisely that meant; and whether it could be more clearly articulated. The Registrar agreed that 'teasing' this out further with greater definition would be helpful. There was also discussion around the fact that by its very nature there was never going to be a time when risk in this area could be completely eliminated and that acceptance and management of a level of ongoing risk was inevitable.
46. The Chair also explained that the Operational Board had a role to align the operating plan to the appropriate area or person and short-term risks or project risks should be considered in their level of importance.
47. ARC discussed whether the College was overly dependent on one organisation providing services for the disciplinary process and whether there were any risks as a result of this. There was discussion around costs/rates and the nature of the services provided as well as alternatives within the market if needed.
48. The Registrar explained that the College does check the market quite intensively and meets regularly with external solicitors on costing/to discuss provision of services. ARC felt there should be a three or four-yearly review. The Registrar agreed and this does happen. The Chair suggested that when the reviews take place someone who is not in the legal profession should participate in the meeting.
49. It was asked what would happen if for whatever reason current providers could not do the RCVS' work. ARC highlighted the buoyancy of the provision of services in this sector and did not feel this was an area of concern.

The Audit Partner left the meeting

The Registrar left the meeting

Corporate Risk Register

50. ARC reviewed the corporate risk register. Further actions need to be updated.
51. The Committee suggested that an improvement target for each risk would be useful and that the College could look at the weighting of the risk register to understand what works best for the team. The Chair suggested that, as an exercise the Senior Team might like to think about another organisation they know and consider what their risks would be and how the Senior Team would handle them.
52. The CEO agreed that the Senior Team could do this exercise using the graph produced by the Director of Operations and the appetite for risk table. It was felt that generally the staff were cautious and risk averse and that the previous CEO had challenged this and encouraged the organisation to take more risks. The Chair agreed and felt that the Risk Register was better named a 'Risk and Opportunity' Register as a failure to innovate was a risk too.

Any other business

53. **ENQA** - The Chair asked that the feedback from ENQA be circulated to the rest of the College. The CEO thanked ARC for their support during the ENQA visit.
54. **Key staff and recruitment issues** – The Director of Education will be leaving at the end of October and a new person is being recruited
55. **Mind Matters Manager** – a new person has been recruited and will be joining the College on 8 May 2018.
56. **Communications team** – job specifications have been written for two new team members
57. **Media training** – a date will be set for the training
58. The **Chair of Fellowship** will be making a presentation to Operational Board in May.
59. **Legislative Reform Order** – now passed the House of Commons and will be going to the House of Lords 1 May – three new elected Council members will be needed instead of the usual six
60. **Elections** – voting closes at 5pm on 30 April 2018.
61. **Estates Strategy** – there was not much to report. A 'halfway house' resolution will be put to Westminster planning. This option applies all the recommendations we have received to date.

The Chief Technology Officer (CTO) joined the meeting

62. The CTO outlined some issues with the IT systems and the work being undertaken to counteract those. The Chair and the CEO thanked the CTO and his team for their hard work.

Dates of the next meetings

63. The dates of the next meetings were:

11 July 2018 at 10am

3 October 2018 at 2pm

Peris Dean

Secretary, ARC

020 7202 0761, p.dean@rcvs.org.uk



Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 3 October 2018 at Belgravia House,
62/64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

Ms E Butler	Chair
Mr D Bray	
Mr V Olowe	
Ms J Shardlow	
Ms J Rutherford	

In attendance:

Dr C Sturgess	Treasurer
Mrs P Dean	Secretary
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C McCann	Director of Operations
Mr R Burley (part)	Chief Technology Officer
Mrs J Dugmore (part)	Director of Veterinary Nursing
Mrs L Prescott-Clements (part)	Director of Education designate

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies were received from Prof. T Greet.

Declarations of interest

2. The Treasurer was appointed a trustee of Cats Protection.
3. The Chair has been appointed a lay member of the Bar Standards Council and is now a trustee of the Royal British Legion and the Chair of the Royal British Legion Audit Committee.
4. Janice Shardlow has been appointed to the Paralympic Board Anti-Doping Panel.

Minutes of the meeting held in April 2018

5. The Chair thanked Mr Richard Davis for his contribution to the ARC and asked that the secretary write to thank him formally.
6. The role of the Audit and Risk Committee in ENQA should be added to the terms of reference.
7. An internal assurance update should be added to P3 in the terms of reference.
8. Check the numbering and the cross referring in the terms of reference.
9. The Chair requested a grid for all actions at the end of the minutes.
10. Para 34 of the minutes very last sentence – delete 'however'.

Matters arising

- New members were appointed to the ARC.
- Investments (pt 6) Proceeds from sales of investments. The Chair of ARC and the Director of Operations discussed this topic.
- Disciplinary cases (pt 11). The Committee further suggested that more information should be used about disciplinary cases and that this could be linked to the statements included in *RCVS Facts*. The Director of Operations discussed with the Registrar.
- The Annual Report and Financial Statements (pt 25), together with the letter of representation, were taken to June Council.
- Senior Team to discuss how the RCVS could become a fraud-resilient organisation (pt 26) – still to be done.
- RCVS Council appetite for risk (pt 28). Operational Board did this exercise in July. The Operational Board appetite for risk had increased slightly in some areas, however. in the financial and regulatory areas this remained the same.
- Charities code of governance (pt 30) – RCVS to compare their Council code of conduct against the charity code - still to be done.
- Expenses - the Director of Operations produced a paper proposing a full review on expenses and loss of earnings. Council approved an independent group be set up which the Treasurer will join as an observer. ARC will be given a draft copy of the report and ARC will comment on the process so that the Chair can let the Council know it was done.

Action: Draft report to April ARC 2019

- GDPR – a handout will be created with some training points for Council – this item will be added to the March Council agenda. The Chief Technology Officer will speak to Council re security of laptops, security screens to be ordered for Council.
- Dependency on suppliers (pt 51) – the Chair recommended that when the review of external solicitors takes place that someone who is not in the legal profession should join the meeting.
- Lisa Quigley, the new Mind Matters Manager, (pt 58) joined the College on 8 May. Council approved the continued funding of Mind Matters on a three-year rolling basis and increased the funds for 2019.

Action: ARC to look at Mind Matters Initiative at a future meeting to gain assurance

- Two new members of staff (pt 59) were appointed to the Communications team. Emma Cowles and Chloe Baxter.

- Media Training (pt 60) was provided for those who needed it. This group included some members of Senior Team, the President and the Junior Vice-President.
- The Chair of Fellowship (pt 61) made a presentation to September Council.
- The Legislative Reform Order (pt 62) went through.
- Estates Strategy (pt 64) - amended plans were submitted to the Historic England Group. They advised that Westminster Council Planning Department might find issues with the plans and might reject them. It was therefore decided to withdraw the plans and instead the Estates Project Board sought approval for the College to sell the building. The RCVS has only been at Belgravia House for 20 years but staying put is not an option as there is not enough room and there is a large amount of major refurbishment work needed, for example, on the air-conditioning system. As the building is listed this would be very expensive and it would also require staff to move out for 18 months to two years. The preferred option would be to sell the building with a leaseback option to continue to use it whilst searching for new property.
- Council discussed the initial proposal and whether to stay in London or look elsewhere. It was decided that more detailed information was required. Council requested that staff numbers and the costs involved should be shown.

Derek Bray joined the meeting

CEO update

11. The CEO gave an update on progress since the last Audit and Risk meeting in April.
12. Strategic plan actions are moving forward although there have been a few delays as resources have been taken up with Brexit and as we still do not know what is happening this will continue to be the case. It is hoped that all objectives will be reached by the end of 2019.
13. The Senior Team are starting the process of formulating the next Strategic Plan. This will be finalised and signed off by Council in November 2019. The previous strategy was in the form of a Corporate Strategic Plan, with each committee deciding on its own strategic objectives via separate plans, this time the plan will be more holistic.
14. Estates Strategy – discussed earlier in the meeting.
15. The Advancement of the Professions Committee is a new committee, which has been created to provide give a governance framework to Royal College projects and provide an opportunity to exploit potential synergies and horizon-scan for future workstreams (equally recommending closure for those that have run their course).
16. From July 2019, the Finance and Resources Committee will replace the Operational Board. Care will need to be taken to ensure all previous functions of the Operational Board are transferred to FRC, the Officer Team, Council or elsewhere.

17. The Chair reiterated the need to ensure that risks on the Risk Register are linked to the Strategic Plan – both the risks and the positive opportunities.
18. The Committee queried why there were a number of key deliverables which appeared to be outside the Strategic Plan and did not seem to be aligned. The CEO explained that most items are aligned, for example, the Graduate Outcomes project brings together many of the actions from the Vet Futures report, but some are highlighted separately in the CEO Report to show priorities.
19. A discussion had taken place to decide whether the next Strategic Plan should be a three- or five-year plan. It was agreed that a three-year plan was preferable as a five-year plan would have to be very generalised, and therefore difficult to implement, meanwhile Vet Futures had already taken a long-term view to 2030 and provided a useful longer term framework.
20. ARC asked whether there was any further news on the impact that Brexit would have on the profession. The CEO reiterated that, in the event of a no-deal, the College had decided to only accept European vets approved by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE). This would mean that up to 13% of EU graduates may have to take the RCVS Statutory Membership Examination, if they wished to register. This may be an issue for students who take a qualification in English in Central or Eastern Europe and then find that this course is not acceptable in the UK.
21. ARC asked if there were any positive opportunities via Brexit. Under its new Charter, RCVS can regulate new associates which may help with veterinary capacity issues by developing a stronger vet-led team. It is also hoped that Brexit will give the College an opportunity to maximise the global standing of the College by putting a greater focus on our relationships outside Europe. .
22. ARC asked whether the First Rate Regulator was a phrase specific to the College and how the project would be reviewed.
23. The FRR had been a route and branch review of the regulatory aspects of RCVS activity, the term was coined by Nick Stace the previous CEO and its outcomes informed the first Strategic Plan. A plan was in place to review this work although it would not be appropriate to go back to the first group of survey respondents as, hopefully, they would not have had a more recent experience of the disciplinary and complaints process; meanwhile people who have been through the process more recently are not likely to have had a previous experience to compare it to. Therefore the focus will be on the impact of specific changes that have been made. Benchmarking against other regulators will also take place.

The Chief Technology Officer joined the meeting

[Departmental Risk Register – IT](#)

24. The Chief Technology Officer (CTO) gave an overview of the IT departmental risk register.
25. The departmental risk register is divided into operational risks and specific project risks, which come and go as projects are completed.
26. Best practice controls are used for standard IT risks and these are in place, underway or will be addressed in the near future.
27. The Chair queried why item 5b.8 (iMis system does not maintain capability/relevance for stakeholders) was set at such a high-risk level of 25. The CTO explained that the iMis database system holds information on all members, including their payments and activity, and underpins other systems. It is key to managing member information, My Account (online) and other systems. It is outward facing and if iMis failed then this would affect other systems.
28. Following some issues caused by multiple updates of the iMis system taking place at the same time, it is now a high priority for the team to ensure that the College always has the latest version of iMis and that updates are always installed promptly. The CTO has checked the marketplace to ensure that iMis is the best fit for the College's purposes and it he felt that it remained so.
29. The Chair also queried why point 5b.9 (CPD capability/functionality is fragmented and inconsistent) had been given a high-risk score of 20 and with strategic control of the options moved down to 16. It was felt that until action had been taken this risk could not be diminished.
30. The CTO explained that the Continuing Professional Development system had been reviewed and the team discussed what the impact of the recording system would be. It was found to be very fragmented, consisting of three separate recording systems and this was not performing in the way that would help the College. It was felt that now a better understanding about the challenge had been realised the risk was lower.
31. The Chair maintained that if a plan was implemented and a new system was put into place that would help but until the work was done, the risk should remain the same.
32. The CTO explained that as a plan has been formulated and as a system is available to deliver the actions he felt the risk had been lessened. The Education Department will now agree how to resource the CPD project and how to take the process forward.
33. ARC asked that indicative times for the next stages should be shown and then "Project" risks returned to "Operational" risks. In this case, more specifically, as the overall approach to CPD is a key strategic risk, the committee would also expect to see it on the corporate register

Action: CTO to add timings to the departmental register and add this (CPD) risk to the corporate register.

34. The Chair asked that the top risks should be highlighted, that is those in the red zone with a score of 16 or over.

Action: CTO to amend register appropriately.

35. A recent data breach was reported at British Airways, ARC asked if anything had been learnt from this and from the recent data back-up issue with offsite storage.
36. The CTO felt confident that the work done on iMis would help to mitigate issues like this. Two-factor security has been added to follow best practice and the supplier had been challenged. The new Infrastructure Manager joining the team shortly will have a strong focus on network security. In addition, the CTO will ensure a greater level of awareness amongst new starters and penetration testing will continue internally.
37. The committee explained that a member of staff caused the issue at British Airways. They understood that the finance department's staff could be checked and asked if the CTO could check on the IT staff. The CTO keeps an eye on the team but does not keep a complete log of all actions. Every person has the potential to do damage to the organisation but team members can check each other's work, and changes to personal data of members are monitored. A full record of all granular changes has been considered previously, but felt to be too damaging to system performance and storage requirements. This situation will be reviewed by the IT team in light of this and any recommended changes suggested should they arise.

Action: IT to look at systems to cross-check staff and change control systems. Add to RB spot checks – no AI system in place

38. The CTO reiterated the data backup issue for the benefit of new members of the committee. The existing external offsite back-up system had not been working. The IT department put its own manual back-up system in place whilst the external system was reinstated. The onsite back-up is secure, however if the building was inaccessible the College would have to rely on offsite systems. The College will be moving to the Amazon Cloud System and this is being finalised. The CTO is still in negotiation with the supplier re compensation.

Action: Business continuity to be discussed at a future meeting

Corporate Risk Register

39. The Corporate Risk Register was included for information. The Director of Operations is looking into new formats for the Risk Register so a single topic was not discussed on this occasion.

Audit planning – extended audit review expenses and process review

40. The Chair asked if assurances could be provided on corporate governance and fraud and asked how the College would know if a member registered fraudulently, for example. Staff are provided with training to prevent registration fraud.
41. ARC suggested that the team might review the processes for entry to the Register. The Director of Operations explained that it would require someone who had the appropriate expertise and that this would be sought.

Action: Director of Operations and CEO to take forward

GDPR update

42. A GDPR team had been created and this team continues to meet regularly.
43. A continued emphasis has been on staff training and an awareness around GDPR and breach notifications. The training programme will be rolled out as part of new starters' inductions.
44. Regular updates are being provided for staff and a regular update will be circulated too.
45. RCVS members' preferences have been updated via the 'My Account' system.
46. All policies have been reviewed and all contracts are in one place and the team are updating them and looking at renewal dates. Privacy notices are also being reviewed.
47. A breach log has been created. One breach was reported to the Information Commissioner's Office, no further action was required. Five smaller issues were reported internally but did not need to be reported to the ICO.
48. Data share agreements are being put into place and the team attended an e-privacy conference.
49. ARC/DB congratulated the Senior Team and felt that the RCVS was much more advanced than many other organisations in the way GDPR is being tackled.

Audit Planning Report

50. The Committee discussed various issues which could be considered by the auditors and the current position on these topics. It was decided that none of the subjects would be appropriate to cover under an extended audit:

- Fraud resilience

- Estates strategy
- Development budget
- GDPR
- Telemedicine
- Brexit

51. A question was raised about the financial modelling the College had carried out on the impact of Brexit.

52. The RCVS has looked at the number of vets currently and what would happen after Brexit. The Committee queried whether, if the current European vets left and no one new took their place then salaries may increase which could have a knock-on effect on costs to animal owners? This was a possibility

53. The College has been looking at the potential impact on the profession. Currently 24% of registrants are from the EU and they pay their subscriptions yearly in advance so the RCVS would have some notice of any financial impact. There is a healthy reserves policy, although this will be affected by the Estates Strategy. A reduction in the number of vets on the Register would mean some decrease in administration but it is also likely that in at least the short term, the number of complex enquiries to the team will increase. It is not clear if it would mean a direct correlations in terms of a decrease in complaints.

54. ARC asked what assurance the College had on the financial figures going forward. The Committee asked what a critical loss would look like, what activities could be reduced or given up and what the tipping points would be.

55. ARC asked if the RCVS had taken into account the impact of any financial constraints on pet ownership following Brexit.

56. The RCVS did this as part of the previous economic downturn (2008) but have not considered it as part of Brexit. During the downturn, a record number of people insured their pets but many did not then keep up with this insurance. The importance of animals to the family was very apparent, however, and it was not always possible to make the assumption that a reduction in income would mean a decrease in money available for petcare.

Action: RCVS to summarise the actions the College has taken, including financial modelling, Chair of ARC and Director of Operations to arrange a meeting to discuss how to plot a matrix of assurances

[Planning for 2019-20 schedule work areas for review – training](#)

57. It was agreed that the Chair and Director of Operations should have a separate meeting to discuss.

Action: Director of Operations to organise a meeting

Any other business

ENQA

58. ARC asked that ENQA assurances be mapped and that the Education team review the RCVS ENQA register entry.

Education Director designate and the Director of Vet Nursing joined the meeting

59. The Chair welcomed Linda Prescott-Clements and Julie Dugmore and the committee introduced themselves.
60. The Chair praised the ENQA report produced by the RCVS team and also the very positive report received back from ENQA. This was seconded by the Committee.
61. The Education team had hoped to receive a decision from ENQA by now and this may be forthcoming after their next meeting on 18 October. ENQA had asked for further information and RCVS was reassured that this was quite common.
62. The team has been working on an action plan and this will be put to various committees. Whilst awaiting a decision they are already actioning some suggestions from ENQA.
63. ARC asked if there were any recommendations in the report with which the RCVS disagreed. The team explained that there were no surprises and some opportunities such as aligning accreditation processes for both veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses.
64. RCVS is a slightly different organisation - the fit is slightly outside ENQA's normal organisations.
65. The Chair pointed out that as part of the questioning it became apparent that not all RCVS staff understood role of ARC.

Action: Action plan to be RAG rated, areas for review by ARC to be identified and new QA staff member to have work on this area as part of their job description.

66. The Chair asked that the internal ENQA document be distributed to ARC.

Action: ENQA document to be distributed

67. The Committee asked if ENQA foresaw any issue with Brexit – they did not and seemed keen that the RCVS wanted to join. Membership, if RCVS is successful, is for five years before reaccreditation is necessary.

68. The Committee complimented the CEO on the report and asked if anything was learnt from the process.

- The team felt they gained a better understanding of how the vet schools must feel when the RCVS visit
- It made the team think about the work done by other teams as well as the RCVS' own input
- The waiting process (for results) is very stressful

Director of Education designate and Director of Vet Nursing left the meeting.

Dates of the next meetings:

31 January 2019 at 2pm

25 April 2019 at 2pm

10 July 2019 at 2pm

Action list

Actions	By whom	Target date
Senior Team to discuss how RCVS could become a fraud resilient organisation	Senior Team	
RCVS to compare Council code against the Charity code		
Review expenses and loss of earnings	Dir of Ops	April 2019
GDPR handout for RCVS Council		March 2019
Mind Matters Initiative		April 2019
IT risk register – timings to be added and top risks (over 16) to be highlighted	CTO	January 2019
IT CPD risk to be added to the corporate risk register	CTO	January 2019
Investigate change control systems plus record spot checks	CTO	March 2019
Business continuity plan to come to ARC	Dir of Ops	October 2019
Brexit impact on the RCVS	Various	January 2019
Meeting to discuss matrix of assurances	Chair and Dir of Ops	March 2019
Schedule work areas for review including training	Chair and Dir of Ops	March 2019
ENQA document to be circulated	Secretary	October 2018
ENQA action plan to be Rag rated and areas for review by ARC identified	Dirs of Ed and VN	January 2019
ENQA work to be incorporated into role of new QA staff member	Dir of VN	January 2019

Peris Dean

Secretary, ARC

Minutes of the Advancement of the Professions Committee held on Tuesday, 5 February 2019 at
2 pm at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:	Dr C J Allen	Council Member
	Professor N Bacon*	Chair, RCVS Fellowship Board
	Ms A Boag	President and Leadership lead
	Dr N Connell*	Junior Vice-President
	Professor G England (Chair)	Council Member
	Ms L Lockett	Chief Executive
	Miss R Marshall	Chair, Veterinary Nurses Council
	Mrs J Molyneux	Chair, Board of Trustees for RCVS Knowledge
	Professor S Reid	Chair, Mind Matters Initiative
	Dr C Tufnell	Innovation and Global lead
	Mr T Walker	Lay Council Member
In attendance:	Mr A Roberts	Director of Leadership and Innovation
	Mr O Glackin	Leadership Initiatives Manager and APC Secretary
	Mrs J Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Mr C Gush	Executive Director, Knowledge
	Ms L Quigley	Mind Matters Initiative Manager
	Dr G Wild	Policy and Public Affairs Officer
	Mr B Myring	Senior Policy and Public Affairs Officer
	Mr I Holloway	Director of Communications

*absent

Welcome and apologies for absence

1. The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting of the APC.
2. Apologies were received from:
 - Dr N Connell
 - Professor N Bacon

Declarations of Interest

3. No declarations of interest were received.

Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 November 2018

4. The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.
5. In relation to matters arising from paragraph 24, the Director of Leadership and Innovation explained that at a subsequent Fellowship Board meeting the Board decided that creating a broad mentoring network was not a priority at this time when set against its other activity streams.
6. In relation to matters arising from paragraph 30, the Director of Leadership and Innovation explained that the advice received was that as the Fellowship represented an RCVS membership category and veterinary nurses were not members of the RCVS they were precluded from becoming Fellows. It was agreed that further advice from the RCVS Registrar should be sought on whether it might be permissible to create a separate group that could operate in parallel to the Fellowship, much like an associate Fellowship. It was raised that a similar issue could arise in the future in relation to allied veterinary professions.

Action: APC Secretariat

International strategy 'deep dive'

7. The RCVS Innovation and Global lead introduced a session that aimed to look in greater detail at RCVS's International Strategy. The Committee heard that the College had an ambition to extend its global reach by building partnerships and collaborations with other influential organisations and groups from around the world and that progress had been made over the last few years, although managing Brexit-related matters had diverted resources away from it at times.

8. To help the Committee consider how the College might advance its work on this agenda further, it heard from two invited speakers – Rosy Emodi, Head of the Royal College of Surgeons' International Unit, and Ian Travers, a consultant on the regulation of occupational and industrial risk worldwide. They provided presentations sharing their knowledge, expertise and insight.
9. Points the speakers raised included but were not limited to:
 - The importance of international members as a means to leverage international influence. It is crucial, therefore, that they are involved in international activities and given a 'voice'.
 - That building institutional relationships is essential. These can be forged through memorandums of understanding.
 - Building capacity of staff at home in the UK and in countries/regions of interest focussed on delivering international work is invaluable particularly for ensuring efficient coordination of activities across territories. By extension this should include using international Fellows as ambassadors and as your 'eyes-and-ears' on the ground as well as trainers in some instances.
 - The UK is looked to and respected for its regulatory expertise and its ability to implement high standards of protection, striking the right balance between protection and freedom as well as being perceived as fair and professional.
 - Important to ensure advice and guidance is targeted and communicated in such a way that it reflects country and local business culture.
 - That outcomes must be tangible and sustainable.
 - That accreditation is only as good as the worst awarding body.
10. Comments and questions arising as a result of the presentations included but were not limited to potential sources of funding that might be available to resource RCVS global activities, how to effectively coordinate overseas members' participation and identifying where regulatory expertise can be effectively promoted in other territories.
11. Following the presentations, the Chair invited Committee members to work in groups to consider some questions that the agenda raised before feeding back. It was agreed that this feedback would be compiled and form the basis of a discussion paper to be brought before the next meeting of the APC.

Action: International strategy

Updates from APC workstreams

12. Before the Committee considered matters brought to it by its respective workstreams for discussion, the Chair invited views on the format that had been devised to bring information to it for consideration. Whilst on the whole it was viewed to be satisfactory and there was acknowledgement that care should be taken not to increase the burden of reporting, some areas for improvement were identified by the Committee. First, it was suggested that a section covering matters relating to risk and finance should always be provided irrespective of whether the workstream has any specific information to report so that the Committee can keep track of these issues – even in their absence. Second, that information on workstream activities should be provided within the context of how they support the overarching strategic aims and objectives of the workstream. Third, that an action log should be created to enable progress to be readily tracked.

Action: APC Secretariat

13. The Committee then discussed specific matters that had been brought to its attention.

Innovation Symposium

14. The Director of Leadership and Innovation drew the biennial Innovation Symposium to the Committee's attention and asked for a steer as to whether the College should seek to achieve a level of cost recovery, or if, like the inaugural event, it should be a free-of-charge invitation only event.
15. The Committee agreed that opening the event more widely was preferable and that as such it would be appropriate to charge a fee to contribute towards the costs of hosting the event. This did not, however, preclude inviting key individuals to the event who could helpfully contribute to the discussion and debate.
16. It was agreed that, like the inaugural event, the symposium should be live-streamed to ensure the important content was available the largest possible audience. It was also proposed that a venue outside of London should be sought.

RCVS Knowledge

17. The Executive Director of RCVS Knowledge brought the VET19 Conference (27-28 June, London) to the Committee's attention, noting this could provide an opportunity for Fellows to showcase their work and that veterinary reviewers of abstracts from the farm animal and equine sectors were still being sought.

Mind Matters Initiative budget breakdown **(Confidential)**

18.

19.

20.

21.

Any other business

22. The Chair noted the difficulty in ensuring the correct balance of the agenda between reporting and governance issues, and in depth topics for discussion and blue-sky thinking; he proposed that in future meetings could alternate between having a focus on reporting on current activities and a focus on in-depth discussion.

Date of the next meeting

23. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as the afternoon of Tuesday, 7 May 2019.

Meeting	Council
Date	7 March 2019
Title	Education Committee Report
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Education Committee held on 5 February 2019
Decisions required	By Council: To receive and note the minutes.
Attachments	Education Committee report of 5 February 2019
Author	Britta Crawford Committee Secretary 020 7202 0777 b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk

Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2019

Present:	Professor Ewan Cameron	
	*Mr Danny Chambers	
	Professor Susan Dawson	- Chair
	*Ms Linda Ford	
	*Mrs Andrea Jeffrey	
	*Dr Susan (Sue) Paterson	
	Dr Cheryl Scudamore	
	Professor James Wood	
By invitation:	Dr Clare Tapsfield-Wright	- PQSC Chairman
	*Professor Jill Maddison	- CertAVP Sub-Committee Chair
	Professor Gary England	- Chair of Specialist Sub-Committee
	Mr Peter Robinson	- Advanced Practitioner Working Party Chair
In attendance:	Mr Duncan Ash	- Senior Education Officer
	Mrs Britta Crawford	- Committee Secretary
	Ms Jenny Soreskog-Turp	- Senior Education Officer
	Mr Jonathan Reid	- Examinations Manager
	Miss Laura Hogg	- Senior Education Officer
	Mr Jordan Nicholls	- Senior Education Officer
	Dr Linda Prescott-Clements	- Director of Education
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	- CEO
Ops Board		
Observer:	Professor Stephen May	

* Absent

Apologies for absence and welcome

1. There were apologies received from Sue Paterson, Jill Maddison and Danny Chambers.

Declarations of interest

2. There were no amendments.

Minutes

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2018 were approved.

Matters arising

4. There were no matters arising.

Education department update

5. The Director of Education, Dr Linda Prescott-Clements, gave an oral update on the work of the Education department. The Committee welcomed Jonathan Reid as Examination manager (Education). Jonathan is joining the department with wide ranging experience in professional examinations, including roles at the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and more recently the Accountants' regulator. Jonathan will be responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of the written and practical elements of the Statutory Examination, in addition to supporting the team with other projects where there is an assessment element such as the review of the CERT AVP and synoptic exam.
6. The Committee heard that the MRA with AVBC is due for its 5 year renewal in May. AVBC have sent through an updated version for RCVS to consider. There are very few changes other than dates and reference to a single Statutory Membership Exam recognition where previously they had two, one for Australia and one for New Zealand. This updated version will go to PQSC in April for review and recommendations to this Committee in May.
7. The Education department are proposing to review the RCVS Standards and processes for Vet School accreditation visits. This is likely to be in the second half of the year, to keep in line with the Graduate Outcomes consultation results, around Day One Competences, and to allow further discussions with other accrediting bodies to ensure consistency wherever possible for Joint Visitations.
8. Vet Schools Council have kindly agreed that the RCVS may have input into the content of their graduate survey and this can be jointly rolled out. This will enable RCVS to establish some baseline data against which any future interventions resulting from the Graduate Outcomes consultation can be evaluated for impact.

CPD Audit

9. The Committee received the results of the 2018 CPD audit. A full report including trends and comparisons to previous years will be presented at the next meeting in May.
10. The committee was disappointed with the level of non-compliance; 68% compliance was considered not to be acceptable. It was noted that two of the main reasons for non-compliance are maternity leave and lack of records. The reluctance of some members to use the online PDR was discussed, and it was suggested that we needed to promote this more.

ACTION: Jenny S-T to investigate why some members are reluctant to use the PDR

11. The committee thought it was important for the CPD policy for parental leave to be inclusive and suggested that it should be discussed by the RCVS diversity group. Many veterinary surgeons are reluctant to change their status to non-practising while on parental leave and the reasons behind that needs further research. Additional details on non-compliance and reasons will be presented to the committee in May.

ACTION: Take to diversity group

CPD Working Group – Outcomes based CPD

12. Professor Stephen May presented the paper about the evaluation of the extended pilot of the outcomes-based CPD, including the feedback from volunteers.
13. The CPD Policy Working Party recommends that we launch the new outcome based CPD model, including the new IT recording system, for a group of volunteers in October 2019 to get some initial feedback. Then followed by a soft launch for members on a voluntary basis in January 2020 over two years with the new CPD requirement becoming mandatory for all in January 2022.
14. The committee noted that although a majority of volunteers had found it beneficial to use the outcome based model a few expressed concern over the planning component and the additional amount of time it would take to follow the CPD cycle.
15. In order to make recording as easy as possible, it is essential that the new recording system will be easy to use and allow for recording and reflections on the go. The Education Department is actively working with the IT department on the specification for this, and a meeting with other medical colleges and regulators has been organised to learn from their experience of introducing a reflective CPD recording platform.
16. It is important that we communicate the outcomes of the pilot and the launch of the of the outcome based CPD system properly so that we can get a wide variety of veterinary surgeons involved in the voluntary phase and monitor how the new system affects CPD compliance.
17. Education Committee supported the recommendations from the CPD Policy Working Party.

Referral Group - Update

18. The committee received the minutes from the Referral groups meeting on the 7th January 2019.
19. There are 13 cases that are being monitored by the group and 28 new veterinary surgeons will be referred following the 2018 audit. 17 of the new referrals are overseas practising which might be because of conflicting CPD requirement from their country of resident or difficulty finding suitable CPD activities. It was suggested that further communication with overseas vets to make sure they understand that they still need to be compliant would be helpful.

Graduate Outcomes Update

20. Professor Stephen May, Chair of the Graduate Outcomes working group gave the Committee an update of the progress of the consultation since the last meeting. The initial consultation phase came to a close on the 18th January. A pleasing 1963 people had completed the survey in full with a further 3825 submitting a partial response.
21. The committee were provided with an early snapshot of the results from the 13th December 2018 and were advised that it represented only a partial picture, which was subject to change, with the gathering and analysis of further qualitative data.
22. At the point of data collection there was already a huge endorsement of the potential additions to the Day One Competences, particularly around clinical reasoning, communication skills and professional identity, reflecting the direction many of the schools have been taking for a number of

years. The early results showed that the responders felt that skills were best developed in the context in which they were going to be used, for example, in general practice.

23. The Committee heard that there was general support for the Professional Development Phase and support for a more structured approach. The EMS section of the consultation will likely be the most difficult to tease apart but will benefit from the further analysis.
24. The next stage of the consultation involves focus groups and individual interviews. The Committee were reassured that whilst the current figures show a high proportion of responses from Small Animal vets, the further research will involve a more varied cross section of the profession and the data analysis will make allowances for bias towards certain sections.

Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice

25. The minutes from the CertAVP sub-committee were noted by the Committee.

Statutory Exam Update

26. Linda P-C provided an update on progress with the development of the new Statutory Membership Examination. Recruitment of the examiners was now complete. There had been a high number of good quality applications, enabling the appointment of additional examiners representing the different areas of practice. This would be useful if Brexit results in the need to run further diets of the exam, and also for content development.
27. The formative quiz was now complete and available to candidates who have applied to sit the exam. Invitations for the membership of the Exam Board have been sent out and the final membership will be confirmed to education committee in May.
28. Work has been progressing to be able to scale up the exam in light of Brexit: we envisage being able to take up to 45 candidates in the OSCE in one sitting.

Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC)

Report of sub-committee meeting held on 18 December 2018.

29. The minutes of the sub-committee meeting held on 18 December 2018 were presented to Education Committee for review. In addition to the items which were drawn out into their own agenda item, the chair updated the committee on a number of points to note.
30. The annual monitoring reports from the UK veterinary schools had been considered and RCVS was to write to the schools with the results. A number of institutions had been asked to clarify some of the data presented, which would be considered by PQSC at their next meeting.
31. There were proposals for a wider review of RCVS processes for visitations, aimed at strengthening guidance for visitors and veterinary schools, and tightening RCVS QA procedures. This was likely to commence in the second half of the year, with a review of the standards on the

back of the graduate outcomes project. The review would also look more closely at the standards relevant for community-based and distributed models of teaching, which were becoming the norm for veterinary training now.

32. Another project was also to commence to develop visitor training which would combine a range of training materials from online videos and simulated exercises, to mock visitations where new and experienced visitors could develop or refresh their skills in a live setting.
33. It was commented that the annual training programmes used by the Professional Conduct Department could be adapted and applied to visitors, pulling teams together each year to go through case examples and scenarios for training. There was currently a lack of good accreditation based CPD available to the profession and this was seen as an opportunity for RCVS to take the lead and develop something that was world leading. It was also requested that the training should not only apply to visitors, but also to PQSC and Education Committee members so that they had an understanding of the processes that they were being asked to make recommendations on.
34. It was noted that RCVS is hoping to send an observer on the AVMA visitation to Tuskegee University in 2020. In addition, there may be an opportunity to send a representative on the AVMA visit to Auburn University in November 2019. It had been decided to explore whether both the chair of Education Committee and the Director of Education are able to attend to consider AVMA processes alongside those of the RCVS.
35. Clarification had been given on the South African community service requirement for new vets registering in South Africa. There was no exemption for overseas graduates and the current regulations stood. It had been noted, however, that SAVC were in talks with the office of the Minister regarding revisions to the exemption clause.
36. Committee members noted the trend from visitor feedback about senior University staff members being present in every meeting during the visitation. It was agreed that this stifled discussions, especially amongst junior members of staff, and that this should be discouraged. It was commented that a good policy would be to agree in advance of the visit the participants for each meeting.
37. On the issue of the size of the pool of visitors available for visitations, it was requested that data be brought to the next meeting to show how many visitations those on the list had done over time. It was agreed that a chart would be put together by the Education Department.

ACTION: Data for next meeting

Cambridge Visit

38. The Committee was presented with the Cambridge revisit report and University response from 2018 for consideration. It was noted that before the Education Committee papers had been circulated to members, which included Professor Wood, Head of Veterinary School at Cambridge, advanced notification was given as to the recommendation from PQSC. Professor Wood subsequently provided an additional statement to clarify Cambridge's position, which the Chair of

Education Committee and Director of Education agreed may be helpful and should be circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting. It was noted that PQSC had not had this additional update when they considered this at their meeting in December and that their recommendation was based solely on the visitation report and University response.

39. PQSC had considered the report and response at length, and there was concern that there were still a number of issues still outstanding from both the 2015 visitation and the revisit in 2018. Whilst it had been noted that work on developing and instigating a cohesive programme-wide assessment strategy had commenced, PQSC had been disappointed at the speed in which it was being implemented. The Department response indicated that there would not be a robust assessment programme in place until at least 2020-21, which PQSC found to be concerning considering that this was an issue that was also highlighted in the 2015 visitation.
40. The University response had also indicated that the curriculum review was still not complete and that the restructuring of the curriculum was not planned to commence until after the assessment review had been completed.
41. It was commented that the RCVS standards say that many of these items needed to be in place, not “working towards” as was stated in the University response and subsequent additional information. Therefore, PQSC had felt it appropriate to recommend a short focussed revisit within one year, to specifically look at the standards on curriculum, assessment and outcomes assessment.
42. Education Committee discussed the recommendations from PQSC in detail. It was questioned whether the updates on progress with meeting the recommendations could be submitted through the annual reports as suggested by the visitation team, however it was decided that in this case the committees would prefer to see the actions completed in person than through a University report.
43. It was also queried as to whether PQSC might reconsider their recommendation if the further update from Professor Wood was taken back to the sub-committee at their next meeting, however it was commented that this additional update still affirmed that the issues were being dealt with and not yet complete. It was also pointed out that all universities are given a statutory period of consultation on their visitation reports, and that this also includes the opportunity to respond to the visitors findings, which Cambridge had done in November 2018.
44. Therefore, Education Committee voted to agree to the recommendation from PQSC that Cambridge University receive ‘Accreditation for a shorter period’ of one year’, with a short focussed revisit to be undertaken concentrating on the Curriculum, Assessment and Outcomes Assessment standards.

Changes to standards

45. One of the recommendations to come out of the ENQA review was the need to make the RCVS accreditation option of “Full accreditation for a shorter period” more precise. The ENQA panel felt

that not having a defined time period within this option could lead to inconsistent application of accreditation decisions.

46. PQSC had reviewed the wording of the standard, and considered stating a specific time frame of accreditation for one year, where a short focussed revisit is recommended, or accreditation for three years, where a full revisit across all of the standards is recommended. However, it was felt that this would be too constrictive to implement and that each visitation report was individual and needed to be considered on a case by case basis. Education Committee agreed to the recommendation from PQSC to add the sentence “When accreditation for a shorter period is granted, the exact period of time will be specified and rationale for the decision conveyed to the veterinary school” to the end of the accreditation classification to help further clarify the status.

James Cook

47. Following the visit to JCU in 2016, RCVS had granted a status of ‘Accreditation for a shorter period’ until the minor deficiencies found on the visitation had been addressed. Education Committee had noted the steps being taken to rectify these deficiencies are previous meetings and the latest reports were presented for review.
48. It was noted that the university had completed the building of their new isolation facilities, and in doing so had addressed the last of the remaining minor deficiencies. Therefore, Education Committee agreed with the recommendation from PQSC that JCU receive full accreditation until their next scheduled visitation in 2023.

Charles Sturt

49. Education Committee was presented with the visitation report and follow up annual reports from the visit to CSU in 2017. Whilst it was clear that progress was being made with meeting the recommendations of the visitation team, there were still a number of minor deficiencies outstanding. Therefore, it was agreed that CSU should be granted the status of ‘Accreditation for a shorter period’ and that this be reassessed at the next PQSC meeting upon receipt of the next annual report, which is due in March 2019.

South Australia

50. Education Committee had previously been updated to the possibility of the Veterinary Surgeons Board of South Australia (VSBSA) resigning from AVBC. RCVS had now received confirmation that this had happened and that the VSBSA is no longer a part of AVBC. The school which is affected by this is Adelaide vet school and whilst it is currently unknown what the full implications of this decision are, RCVS will liaise closely with AVBC to try and understand the repercussions that will come out of this resignation.

No-deal Brexit Policy: EAEVE Graduate recognition

51. The Committee heard that in June 2018, RCVS Council approved plans and contingencies recommended by the Brexit Taskforce, in the event of a no-deal Brexit. This included that

graduates from veterinary schools approved or accredited by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) are recognised for a transitional period, while RCVS seeks a mutual recognition agreement with EAEVE for the longer term.

52. To operationalise the decision to recognise graduates from EAEVE approved or accredited schools for a transition period (until an agreement can be reached with EAEVE or the issue returns to Council if an agreement proves difficult), Education Committee was asked to decide:
 - a. whether *all* graduates from EAEVE approved / accredited schools should be recognised regardless of when the school received EAEVE status. In such cases, this would mean the potential for graduates who had attended the school prior to it being reviewed by EAEVE being recognised by RCVS, or
 - b. whether RCVS should recognise only those who graduated after the school had received its EAEVE status.
53. There was an understanding that this was a temporary, interim measure in a situation of a no deal Brexit. However the Committee sought clarification on what was meant by a no deal Brexit as this could generate a variety of scenarios. The Committee also asked for clarification over the expected length of the transition period. The Committee reserved the right to review the situation when there was further detail available but acknowledged that there was a need to decide on a pragmatic way forward to secure a work force. Further decisions would need to include all the accreditation agencies and also involve the veterinary profession across Europe.
54. It was clarified that under the Veterinary Surgeon Act, graduates from UK schools cannot be automatically registered by the RCVS if their UK Veterinary school is only accredited by EAEVE and not the RCVS.
55. The Committee discussed the issue of mutual recognition and acknowledged that this agreement would only cover the mutual recognition of educational qualifications and not the mutual recognition of license to practise.
56. The Committee was informed that the decision would not affect those already on the register as, under the Veterinary Surgeons Act, registration could not be removed from an individual without going through the Committee procedure. Currently the Registrar was seeking clarification on at what point Veterinary Surgeons were considered to be on the register at the point of the UK leaving the EU. The question was as to whether in the event of a rush of applications and a back log occurring, would those waiting to be registered be allowed to complete their registration.
57. Education Committee discussed the two options and whilst some felt that the door should be left open for as many potential applicants as possible, other Committee members made a convincing argument that their experience was that the schools had improved dramatically in receiving EAEVE accreditation. Therefore Education Committee agreed option 'b': only those who graduated after the school had received EAEVE status should be accepted.
58. The Education Committee asked for clarification on the definition of approved and accredited schools and its relation to educational standards as laid out in the paper.

ENQA Action Plan Update

59. It was reported that RCVS had been awarded ENQA accreditation and the current ENQA action plan, based on the recommendations from the visit, was presented for note. One further update to the plan was given in relation to student representation on committees. It was noted that RCVS had received 9 applications from students at various vet schools, and a shortlist of applicants had been drawn up. It was envisioned that 2 students would sit on PQSC and 2 students would attend Education Committee. It was reported that Professor Dawson and Dr Tapsfield-Wright would be conducting interviews with the students before the next round of committee meetings.
60. It was noted that careful consideration would need to be given to the timing of committee meetings so that students would be able to fully engage without neglecting their studies. Flexibility around meeting locations, or remote dial-in to meetings, would need to be explored.
61. One of the key recommendations was around the need for clear concept and plan for thematic analysis and it was asked how plans for this development were progressing. It was reported that, in liaison with the veterinary nursing department, a role description was being drawn up for a QA person to lead on this, pulling together the evidence required for presenting a thematic review to the RCVS Audit and Risk committee.

Specialists

62. The Committee received and noted the minutes from the Specialist Sub-Committee (SSC) meeting which took place on 9th January 2019.
63. An update to the SSC Terms of Reference had been drafted which were approved.
64. Professor England reported that he would be stepping down from the SSC, and it was agreed that the replacement Chair would be nominated by the SSC from within the group. However, the SSC had also put forward a nomination for a new member, but it was decided that the process for appointing new members should follow similar processes for other committees and that instead the new member would be appointed by application when the committees rotate in July.
65. Two Specialist applicants had applied for listing in Equine Medicine (Sports Medicine), but were already currently listed as Specialists in Equine Surgery. SSC had agreed that it would not be appropriate to be listed as both a Specialist in Equine Surgery and Equine Medicine (Sports Medicine), as whilst they may be practicing within the sports medicine field, surgeons would not be practicing in the wider equine medicine field. Therefore, SSC agreed that a title of Equine Surgery (Sports Medicine) could be more appropriate and recommend that the new sub-speciality be approved by Education Committee. There was some concern from the Committee that an additional title may be over proliferated, however it was ultimately approved, and the applicants would be offered the choice to move to the new title or remain with their existing Equine Surgery titles.

66. This lead on to a discussion around multiple, or dual Specialist listings. The Committee had noted from the minutes that this was discussed at the SSC meeting as European Board of Veterinary Specialists (EBVS) did not allow dual listings. At the time, SSC were of the view that RCVS did not need to follow this and had also not done so in the past by allowing dual listings but only in related areas. However, the Committee were of the opinion that this should not be allowed going forward, and Professor England agreed that he would go back to the SSC and they would revise the requirements. Those who were already listed with dual Specialities would be contacted and informed that the criteria would change, however they would be permitted to remain listed in two areas as an anomaly, however no further such listings would be allowed.
67. SSC had also received a request from a prospective applicant to consider the eligibility of the Diploma of the Asian College of Veterinary Ophthalmology for Specialist status. There was currently no reciprocity between the Asian College of Veterinary Ophthalmology and the European College of Veterinary Ophthalmology, nor yet any between the Asian Board of Veterinary Specialities and EBVS in general to be able to use as a guide. Therefore it was difficult to ascertain the level of qualification without making a full formal assessment of it. SSC were of the opinion that it would be best to wait until if and when EBVS had formally declared equivalence before the eligibility could be considered. However, Education Committee were invited to consider if they would wish for a further assessment of the qualification in the meantime, but the Committee were of the same opinion of the SSC and it was agreed to wait for a judgement from EBVS.
68. In 2018, the criteria for listing as an Emeritus Specialist was updated so it could be more easily achieved in the hope of increasing the number listed. SSC had noted however that there would have been many former Specialists who had retired from practice before these changes were put in place, and therefore would now be eligible to apply but may not necessarily be aware that they can. Therefore, SSC recommended to Education Committee that the RCVS president should write to those who would now be eligible to invite them to apply to be listed. The Committee agreed that this was a good idea and that the Emeritus status should be celebrated more, so therefore all of those who would meet the criteria would be contacted by a letter from the President and invited to apply.

New Qualifications

69. The Committee received the current list of qualifications approved for inclusion in the Registers and a list of recently approved qualifications that would be included in the next version of the list.
70. The committee also approved the new and re-additions to the List of Specialists.

Advanced Practitioner

71. The AP Chair, Peter Robinson, gave an oral update on the progress of appointing new AP panel assessors. There was quite a high interest rate with over 100 applications of which 60 have been appointed. Three training sessions have been arranged where panel members will be briefed on

their role and assessing applications in readiness for the new application process starting in March.

72. The list of Advanced Practitioners approved by the panel in October was noted and approved.

73. The committee discussed the recommendation of adding Ruminant Nutrition as a designation area as there is not currently one. There was some discussion over the wording and whether it should be kept in line with the specialist designations. The committee agreed to add 'Ruminant Nutrition' as it was consistent with other Advanced Practitioner designations.

Risk Register

74. The Committee noted the risk register which was tabled for the meeting.

Any other business

75. There was no other business

Date of next meeting

76. Tuesday 7 May 2019 at 10am

Britta Crawford
Committee Secretary
February 2019
b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk

Minutes of the Standards Committee held on Wednesday, 30 January 2019 at 10 am at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:	Prof D Argyle	
	Mr M Castle	
	Mrs L Cox	
	Dr M A Donald	
	Mr D Leicester	
	Ms C-L McLaughlan	
	Mr M Peaty	
	Mr M Rendle	
	Dr K A Richards	Chair
In attendance:	Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
	Mr N Oldham	Standards and Advisory Manager
	Mrs V Price	Senior Standards and Advisory Officer
	Ms B Jinks	Senior Standards and Advisory Officer
	Ms B Lovell	Standards and Advisory Officer
	Mrs P Soomal	Standards and Advisory Officer
	Ms A K Boag	President (observer from RCVS Operational Board)

AI 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed Ms Boag to the meeting as an observer.
2. There were no absences and no interests declared.

AI 1 Minutes of last meeting held on 26 September 2018

3. The minutes were noted and it was agreed that they are accurate.
4. In relation to the action points:
 - a. In response to paragraph 13, a meeting of relevant parties will convene on 28th March to consider and discuss other institutions' approaches to Recognised Veterinary Practice (RVP), and to discuss how the RCVS could help the profession to understand RVP, to achieve a better degree of consistency in veterinary research and practice.
 - b. In response to paragraph 21, it was confirmed that Council had been notified of the amendments to Chapter 2 of the supporting guidance, which were approved by Standards Committee at its meeting on 26 September 2018.
 - c. In response to paragraph 23, it was reported that the Communications Department have produced one format for the case studies and are in the process of producing a second more interactive format. It was agreed that these would be presented to the Standards Committee at their meeting on 10 April.

AI 2 Standards and Advice End of Year Report

5. The Chair thanked the Standards and Advice Team for their on-going work.
 6. The Committee noted the report and the Standards and Advisory Manager highlighted the following aspects:
 - a. Written advice queries increased significantly in 2018 compared to the previous year, which it believed to be as a result of the increase in enquiries relating to Complementary and Alternative Medicines (CAMs), the General Data Protection Act (GDPR), and more recently an increase in queries relating to telemedicine services.
 - b. There have been fewer enquiries relating to GDPR than was initially predicted. A more detailed year-on update will be provided at April's Standards Committee meeting, but since the last meeting in September only 22 calls and emails relating to GDPR have been received.
 - c. The team continue to receive compliments from members of the public and members of the profession in response to the advice provided.
 - d. The informed consent case studies have been developed and published in RCVS News (October 2018 Edition). It was confirmed that the team have not seen any significant increase in queries relating to this topic. It was suggested that further work/case studies could be prepared focussing on the conversations required prior to consent forms being signed, and which aspects of the process can be delegated to veterinary nurses and/or lay staff. It was further suggested that the VDS could be contacted to see whether they could include informed consent in their communications. A query was raised as to whether written consent required a signed consent form or whether this could be a note on a client's record. A query was then raised with reference to written consent required for cascade prescriptions. It was agreed that this would be confirmed following the meeting.
- Action: Registrar/Standards and Advice Team**
- e. There was some discussion on the format of the RCVS Newsletter to members, which has changed to being digital only.

7. It was noted that the Ethics Reviews Panel has now been made permanent, with an increase in the number of applications received.
8. The team are working on horizon scanning to ensure we are picking up any upcoming legislative changes which may impact the Code or supporting guidance. The Policy team will attend team meetings following each Committee meeting towards that aim.

Matters for decision

AI 3(a) Matters raised by PIC/DC liaison committee

9. The Committee confirmed there were no objections to the proposed amendment to paragraph 13.2 of the supporting guidance in relation to the legibility of clinical records, and the amendment was unanimously accepted.

Action: Standards and Advice Team

10. The Committee confirmed there were no objections to amending the paragraph 7.9 and 7.10 of the supporting guidance to include the general principle of informing clients of any conflict of interest. However, the Committee considered the word 'close' to be too ambiguous and instead agreed on the following amendments:

*'7.9 Ideally, veterinary surgeons should not carry out PPEs where the vendor is an existing client **and/or has a personal relationship with the veterinary surgeon**, because of the conflict of interest. However, if, for practical or other reasons, veterinary surgeons do, they should follow additional safeguards to ensure the examination is not only fair, but perceived to be fair, by the client requesting the PPE.*

7.10 These additional safeguards are:

- a) *the veterinary surgeon makes the purchaser aware that the vendor is also a client **and/or has a personal relationship with the veterinary surgeon**, and the potential purchaser has no objection. If there is an objection, the vendor's veterinary surgeon must not act;*
- b) *the vendor agrees to permit disclosure of relevant clinical/case records. If permission cannot be obtained then the vendor's veterinary surgeon should not act. If the records reveal a factor which is likely to be prejudicial to the purchaser's intended use, the purchaser should be informed with the vendor's permission in advance of the examination; and,*
- c) *it is made clear to both parties that in this instance the veterinary surgeon is acting on behalf of the purchaser.'*

Action: Standards and Advice Team

AI 3(b) Surgical AI of dogs

11. The Committee noted the report and accepted the recommended amendment to paragraph 27.30 of the supporting guidance to correct the discrepancies between this guidance and the Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (England) Regulations 2007.

Action: Standards and Advice team

12. It was confirmed that the discrepancy in the supporting guidance was identified by a veterinary surgeon when reading the supporting guidance, and not in relation to a concern raised against any veterinary surgeon's practice. It was agreed that this change should be highlighted in an RCVS Newsletter and via the Kennel Club.

AI 3(c) Unlicensed dog breeders: reporting obligation

14. The report was noted and the Committee unanimously agreed to the proposed amendments to paragraph 14.6 of the supporting guidance.

Action: Standards and Advice team

AI 3(d) Amendments to chapter 8 re: euthanasia

15. The report was noted and the Committee accepted the proposed inclusion of a new paragraph in Chapter 8 of the supporting guidance.

Action: Standards and Advice team

16. It was raised that an absence of sedation prior to euthanasia was included in a list of charges against a veterinary surgeon in a recent Disciplinary Committee Hearing. There was some discussion about whether the guidance should advise that sedation is essential prior to euthanasia. It was agreed this was a matter of clinical judgement and that this is not something that would be dealt with by way of supplementary guidance. However, the Standards and Advice team will monitor the number of queries that relate to this matter.

Action: Standards and Advice team

Matters for report

AI 4(a) DC report

17. The Committee noted the report and discussed the following aspects:

- a. Since the Committee last met the Disciplinary Committee have held five inquiry hearings.
- b. The Committee noted that the issue of informed consent arose in one of the hearings and suggested that further work could be considered on this topic.

AI 4(b) Riding Establishments Sub-committee Report

18. The Committee noted the report.

19. Mr Oldham provided an additional oral report that the Riding Establishments Sub-Committee were looking to expand their membership and would report back to the Committee in due course.

Action: Standards and Advice team

20. It was suggested, following a roundtable on Scottish breeding establishments' legislation, that a similar Sub-Committee could be established for veterinary surgeons undertaking inspections of breeding establishments.

AI 4(c) Practice Standards Scheme Report

21. The Committee noted the report and the following points:

- a. 65% of all eligible practice premises are now part of the Practice Standards Scheme (PSS), of which the majority are Small Animal practices.
- b. The British College of Veterinary Specialists (BCVSp) have proposed a specialist strand for PSS under a Veterinary Specialist Hospital multidisciplinary, which the PSS group agreed was a positive suggestion. The BCVSp have offered to present their proposal to the Committee. It was agreed instead that a paper should be provided to the Committee for comment. It is anticipated this paper will be presented to the Standards Committee at their meeting in April 2018.
- c. It was confirmed that the upcoming PSS 2020 review happens every five years. It was explained that any proposed changes to the guidance are sent to Standards Committee for approval, and any proposed changes to the actual Standards and rules require approval at Council level.

Confidential matters for report

AI 5(a) Certification Sub-committee Report

22. There were no comments and the report was noted.

AI 5(b) Recognised Veterinary Practice Sub-committee Report

23. The report was noted and the following discussed:

AI 5(c) Ethics Review Panel Report

AI 6 Risk and equality

25. No items were identified to be added to the risk register.

AI 7(a) Election of Vice-Chair of Standards Committee

26. No nominations have been received for the election of a Vice-Chair of Standards Committee. It was confirmed that the current system will continue to apply whereby should the Chair be unavailable for a Committee meeting, another member will act as Chair for the meeting on an ad hoc basis. Members still considering the role should inform the Chair or Standards and Advisory Manager before the April 2019 Standards Committee meeting.

AI 7(b) Council/Committee Collaboration System

27. Mr Oldham provided an oral report to the Committee on a new collaboration system, Boardpacks, which the College is planning to use across Council and Committees, which will enable everyone to have a single repository of current and previous minutes and papers.

28. The Committee agreed to have training on the new system at the meeting on 10 April.

Any other business and date of next meeting

29. There were no further items for discussion.

30. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday, 10 April 2019 at 10 am.

Meeting	Council
Date	7 March 2019
Title	Veterinary Nurses Council Report to Council
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 6 February 2019
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary 0207 202 0713 a.amato@rcvs.org.uk

Veterinary Nurses Council

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019

Members:	Mrs Belinda Andrews-Jones	
	* Mrs Lucy Bellwood	
	Miss Alison Carr	
	Ms Elizabeth Cox	- Vice-Chair
	Mr Dominic Dyer	
	Dr Joanna Dyer	
	Ms Wendy Drinkwater	
	* Ms Lucie Goodwin	
	Mrs Susan Howarth	
	Mrs Andrea Jeffery	
	Mrs Katherine Kissick	
	Miss Racheal Marshall	- Chair
	Professor Susan Proctor	
	Mr Matthew Rendle	- Vice-Chair
In attendance:	Mrs Annette Amato	- Committee Secretary
	Mr Luke Bishop	- Senior Communications Officer
	Mrs Julie Dugmore	- Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	- Examinations Manager
	Mrs Lily Lipman	- Senior Practice Standards Manager
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	- Chief Executive
	Mr Ben Myring	- Senior Policy and Public Affairs Officer
	Mrs Jenny Soreskog Turp	- Senior Education Officer

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Lucy Bellwood and Lucie Goodwin.

Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2018

3. The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2018 were accepted as a correct record,

subject to a correction in respect of the declarations of interest – Lucy Bellwood's role is a Practice Director at Central Veterinary Services (CVS) , not Director of Veterinary Nursing at CVS as stated in the minutes.

Update on operational matters

4. The CEO's update report, provided to RCVS Council in January, had been circulated to Council members for information. This summarised the actions outlined in the RCVS strategic plan and how these were being met. The CEO highlighted the main achievements since the last meeting, which included the launch of the leadership Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), the Vivet Innovation Workshops and the Graduate Outcomes consultation.
5. Other recent items of note included the ENQA recognition of the RCVS in respect of its accreditation of veterinary and veterinary nursing education, which was confirmed in October.
6. The Operational Board will meet in Liverpool in February, and this will be tied in with a Regional Question Time meeting, and meetings with students and staff of the Liverpool University Veterinary School.
7. A decision had been taken at the January meeting of RCVS Council to open the way for other groups to become Associates of the College, following the successful inclusion of veterinary nurses as Associates in 2015.
8. In response to a query on the impact of the introduction of case studies to assist in the understanding of Schedule 3, it was noted that there is no planned research on this at present. It was suggested that relevant activities could be planned for BVNA Congress in October, and that an online quiz format – similar to that done several years ago on the Code of Professional Conduct – might be a good way to gather data. It was also noted that the website team can produce reports showing the number of times different pages are accessed.
9. In response to a query, it was confirmed that the Alternative Dispute Resolution Service trial has been completed, and is now branded as the Veterinary Client Mediation Service. This has reduced the number of complaints dealt with by the Preliminary Investigation Committee, which now generally relate to more complex issues.

Veterinary Nursing Department update

10. The Director of Veterinary Nursing reported on several recent changes in the staffing and activities of the VN Department. Lily Lipman had recently moved from the position of Qualifications Manager in the Veterinary Nursing team to the role of Senior Manager of the Practice Standards team. Lily was thanked for her support to the department and her work during her time as Qualifications Manager. A new Qualifications Manager has been appointed, to start in mid-April, and the College is currently advertising for a Quality Assurance Officer to support that role.

11. The new VN project co-ordinator, Jill MacDonald, started in post in January and will cover the management of VN Futures and the secretariat of ACOVENE, as well as a broader engagement with stakeholders.

VN Education Committee (VNEC)

12. Susan Howarth, Chair of the VNEC, presented the report of the meeting held on 10 December and highlighted a few points in the report.
13. The Committee had welcomed two new members as employer representatives. Applications from potential student representatives for the Committee would be considered in a short meeting later in the day.
14. The Committee had been pleased to note that student enrolments are being processed well within the stated timeframes and that several centres had passed on their thanks for the efficiency in dealing with these. It was confirmed that temporary staff support would be provided again for the busy three-month period from September to December, if required. In response to a query regarding staff support for initial registration of newly qualified veterinary nurses, it was confirmed that these are now processed by the registration department, and resources are provided to ensure that they are able to cope with the peaks in the workload.
15. The Post Registration Working Group had met again in January and hoped to have a final set of proposals for approval to put to the VNEC meeting in March, then to VNC in May.
16. The Committee had approved two additional visitors to add to the panel for accreditation visits. The Committee had also considered and approved a number of reaccreditation reports.
17. It was noted that Training Practice (TP) numbers were stable and growing. It was confirmed that it was not possible to show a split between TPs taking in students from the further education (FE) and higher education (HE) sectors, as some TPs take students from both sectors.

Registration of Veterinary Nurses trained within the EU/EEA

18. The Examinations Manager introduced a paper setting out the current systems in place for processing registration applications from veterinary nurses educated overseas, with suggestions for changes to the system when the UK exits the EU.
19. Currently, applicants qualified outside the EU/EEA who have a qualification similar in content and experience to the RCVS Day One Skills and Day One Competences are required to pass the VN pre-registration examination before applying for registration. Nurses who have been educated and qualified within the EU/EEA who have a qualification similar in content and experience to the RCVS Day One Skills and Day One Competences must be accepted

onto the Register. If the qualification is lacking in some areas, the applicant must be given the opportunity to be assessed in these areas, and may choose whether this is completed via work-based assessment or examination. Most applicants choose to complete work-based assessment.

20. When the UK exits the EU, legislation relating to the registration of veterinary nurses educated within the EU/EEA is likely to change. The draft amended Statutory Instrument indicates that regulatory bodies will no longer need to accept applications from individuals whose qualification does not meet the minimum content, scope and level required of professionals educated in the UK. If accepted, this will allow greater flexibility in creating new arrangements and provides an opportunity to reconsider the current processes.
21. The proposal for consideration by Council was that if and when permitted to do so, the same process should be applied for all applicants regardless of their country of qualification. In this case, all applicants, with the exception of those who completed their qualification at an ACOVENE accredited school, would be required to pass the pre-registration examination. Applicants would be permitted to complete work experience in a UK practice in preparation for the examination, but the choice of a work-based assessment as an alternative to examination, currently offered to EU candidates, would no longer be available.
22. In response to a query regarding language testing, which is an area of concern for many professions, it was confirmed that there are currently no differences in the requirements for EU and non-EU applicants and there is no formal requirement for either group.
23. It was confirmed that the proposed new system would be simpler for the RCVS to administer and would be a fairer system for all. All applicants would have a clear idea of the requirements. It was also confirmed that there should not be any issues for the RCVS in administering a pre-registration examination for a greater number of candidates. It was noted that a small number of applicants may be unable to register, where they may have been able to do so under the previous work-based assessment system. All those currently in the system would be permitted to continue and would not be disadvantaged.
24. The Director of Veterinary Nursing confirmed, in response to a query, that it was not known whether there was likely to be an increase in ACOVENE-accredited institutions.
25. At the conclusion of the discussion, Council agreed that if the UK leaves the EU without an agreement, the application process set out in the paper should be adopted for all new applicants. It was reiterated that those currently in the system would not be disadvantaged.
26. It was suggested that it would be helpful for the Comms department to prepare information on registration for EU nationals living in the UK, when the situation became clearer.

Continuing Professional Development

Andrea Jeffery and Katherine Kissick joined the meeting at this point.

27. **CPD Audit 2018.** Council had been provided with the initial findings of the 2018 CPD audit

at its previous meeting. The full analysis of the responses was provided for information, together with information on some of the issues raised during the audit process.

28. Council again expressed disappointment that the overall non-compliance levels are not decreasing year on year, with 28% of the RVNs in the 2018 sample being non-compliant. A particular area of concern was that eight of the non-compliant RVNs had been included in seven successive audits and each time had not met the minimum requirements. It was noted that since the CPD Referral Group had been established, referrals to the Group had mainly been RVNs who did not comply with the Code of Professional Conduct, due to not responding to repeated requests for their CPD records. At present those who have responded but do not meet the minimum requirements have not been followed up.
29. It was agreed that in future, any RVN who was non-compliant for a successive three audits should be referred to the Referral Group. Support and publicity by means of the CPD champions and blogs should be promoted as widely as possible, and the benefits of CPD should be stressed.
30. It was confirmed that RVNs could not be prevented from renewing their registration if they do not confirm their CPD compliance at the time of annual renewal, as CPD compliance is a professional rather than a statutory responsibility. However, more information could be provided on what is expected, in the renewal email. All those who are non-compliant or do not confirm compliance are included in the next year's audit. It was also agreed that the referral procedure needs to be consistently and effectively resourced.
31. Council approved the proposed arrangements for the 2019 audit, as set out in the paper. It was suggested that the audit might look into the reasons for the lower levels of compliance (57% non-compliant) in the 58-64-year-old group.

CPD Referral Group.

32. The minutes from the meeting of the CPD Referral Group on 16 January 2019 were noted.

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

33. Council received the summary of the report produced by ENQA following the successful accreditation visit, and noted the summary of the key strengths and areas for improvement. Work had already commenced on the action areas and a follow-up visitation will take place in 2020 to review progress. It was confirmed that the ENQA accreditation relates only to Higher Education Awards in veterinary nursing, and that the Veterinary Nursing Standards will need to be cross-referenced to the ENQA standards.

Reports from RCVS Committees

Practice Standards Group (PSG)

34. Council noted a paper from the Practice Standards Manager containing an update on the

Practice Standards Scheme. 65% of all eligible practice premises are now part of the Scheme.

35. In response to a query on the comment in the report that changes would be required to the in-house training programme for PSS assessors if this were to include veterinary nurses in the future, it was suggested that the changes would likely be small adjustments to ensure that all assessors were standardised to the same level.
36. A query was raised as to whether a requirement for a minimum number of RVNs in an accredited practice, which had not been included in the past, should be considered with the next review of standards. Council agreed to request that this should be considered at the next standards review.

Standards Committee

37. Matthew Rendle provided a brief update on the meeting of the Standards Committee the previous week. The Committee had agreed a number of amendments, additions or changes in wording to the supporting guidance to the Code of Professional Conduct. These included: amendment to the guidance on euthanasia; additional text on breaching client confidentiality in relation to unlicensed dog breeders; prohibition of the surgical artificial insemination of dogs; guidance on disclosure of a relationship between a veterinary surgeon and the seller prior to an equine pre-purchase examination; and guidance which stipulates that clinical records should be legible.

Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

38. Council noted the report on the work of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee since the last meeting of VN Council.

Period of Supervised Practice(PSP) exemptions

39. It was reported that since the introduction of the pilot PSP exemption procedure for UK-qualified veterinary nurses who had been working abroad, following the May 2018 Council meeting, two applications had been considered and approved by the panel appointed by Council, and both applicants had since restored to the Register. A member of the panel commented that the standard of both applications had been very high with clear supporting evidence.

VN Register report

40. Council noted a report showing statistics on the total number of registered veterinary nurses, including the number of new registrations, removals and restorations annually for the calendar years 2013 – 2018. Figures were also provided for the number of student enrolments for the past six academic years. These figures showed a steady increase year on year in the number of enrolments, new registrations and those on the register, with the current number of RVNs approaching 17,000.

41. There was a general discussion on the recruitment and retention within the profession and it was suggested that the next survey of the professions should include questions on these issues.

VN Futures

42. The Director of Veterinary Nursing confirmed that the VN Futures project would be managed by the VN Project Co-ordinator, who would be providing a full report at the next meeting of VNC in May. It was noted that the members of the different focus groups are all volunteers and the Project Co-ordinator is checking and reviewing the groups' membership. The Project Board comprises two VNC members and two BVNA Council members, and oversees the budget and the risks. It was accepted that this is a long term project and that some of the ambitions may take longer to achieve than others, and would be kept under review.

Communications report

43. The Senior Communications Officer reported on a number of recent and forthcoming activities.
44. **Events.** The Veterinary Wellbeing Awards had been presented at the recent SPVS/VMG congress, where there had been a Mind Matters related stream, and the Practice Standards Scheme had also been promoted.
45. A Vivet workshop had been held in Cambridge on 16 January, and the second workshop in the series would take place on 20 February. The next Regional Question Time would take place in Liverpool on 19 February.
46. RCVS activity at the BSAVA Congress in April would include a dedicated VN Futures stream with four sessions covering wellbeing, Schedule 3, the Post Registration Qualifications Framework and Practice Standards. There would also be sessions on Mind Matters and Graduate Outcomes.
47. The College also hoped to have a presence at more public-facing events in 2019 including The Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh in June and Country File Live at Castle Howard in Yorkshire in August.
48. **Publications.** The most recent online *RCVS News* had been published in January and the next edition of *VN Education* would be published in April, following the VN Education Committee meeting in March.
49. **Website.** The website now includes a number of CPD Champions blogs written by both veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons. Ideas for topics and contributions from VN Council members are always welcomed. The website also includes additional Schedule 3 guidance materials in the form of case studies. VN Futures also has a more prominent online presence.

Date of next meeting

50. Wednesday 8 May 2019, at 10.30am.

Meeting	Council
Date	7 March 2019
Title	Preliminary Investigation Committee Chairman's Report to Council
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	This report describes the work of the Preliminary Investigation Committee since RCVS Council's last meeting, including by reference to key stage indicators, and provides information about the nature of concerns being considered by the PIC.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Gemma Crossley Senior Case Manager g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk</p> <p>Velia Soames Head of Professional Conduct v.soames@rcvs.org.uk</p>

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Preliminary Investigation Committee

Chairman's Report to Council 7 March 2019

Introduction

1. This report provides information about the activities of the Preliminary Investigation Committee from November 2018 to February 2019.

Since the last Report to Council (which gave information to the end of October 2018), there have been seven Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) meetings: 7 and 21 November, 12 December, 9 and 23 January, and 6 and 20 February.

New cases considered by the PIC

2. The total number of new cases considered by the Committee at the seven meetings referred to above is 37. Of the 37 new cases considered,
 - 29 were concluded at first consideration by the Committee. Of these,
 - 14 cases were closed with no further action, and
 - 10 cases were closed with advice issued to the veterinary surgeon.
 - 5 cases were held open with advice issued to the veterinary surgeon
 - 8 were referred for further investigation, that is, further enquiries, visits and/or preliminary expert reports.

No cases have been referred to the RCVS Health or Performance Protocols in the reporting period.

Ongoing Investigations

3. The PI Committee is currently investigating 15 ongoing cases where the Committee has requested statements, visits or preliminary expert reports for example. This figure does not include cases on the Health and Performance Protocols, nor does it include investigations following notification of a conviction (of which there is currently one with the Committee).

Health Protocol

4. There are three veterinary surgeons either under assessment or currently on the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Protocol

5. There is one veterinary surgeon currently on the RCVS Performance Protocol.

Professional Conduct Department - Enquiries and concerns

6. Before registering a concern with the RCVS, potential complainants must make an Enquiry (either in writing or by telephone), so that Case Managers can consider with the enquirer whether they should raise a formal concern or whether the matter would be more appropriately dealt with through the Veterinary Client Mediation Service.
7. In the period 1 November 2018 to 22 February 2019 (the date of writing the report),
 - the number of matters registered as Enquiries was 968, and
 - the number of formal Concerns registered in the same period was 182.
8. The table below shows the categories of matters registered as Concerns between 1 November 2018 and 22 February 2019.

Concerns registered between 1 November 2018 and 22 February 2019

Description of Category	Number of Cases
- Certification	3
- Client confidentiality	16
- Clinical and client records	7
- Clinical governance	1
- Communication and consent	3
- Conviction/notifiable occupation notification	3
- CPD Compliance	2
- Euthanasia of animals	1
- Miscellaneous	3
- Practice information, fees & animal insurance	3
- Referrals and second opinions	2
- Treatment of animals by unqualified persons	1
- Unassigned	8
- Veterinary care	116
- Veterinary medicines	7
- Veterinary teams and leaders	1
- 24-hour emergency first aid and pain relief	5
Total	182

Data source – Profcon computer system concerns data.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

9. Since the last report to Council (ie in the period November 2018 to February 2019), the Committee has referred seven cases to the Disciplinary Committee; these cases referred arose from concerns around clinical matters, honesty, and integrity and professionalism.

Veterinary Investigators

10. The Veterinary Investigators and the Chief Investigator carried out 4 unannounced visits and 3 announced visits in the period October 2018 to 22 February 2019 (the date of writing the report), 6 unannounced visits and are currently assisting two enforcement agencies in the investigation of alleged breaches of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. These investigations are ongoing and at various stages. No health related or performance related or review visits were undertaken in the period.

Concerns procedure

11. At Stage 1 of the process, the aim is for the Case Examiner Group to decide 90% of cases within 4 months of registration of complaint (the Stage 1 KPI). Since 1 November 2018, the median monthly percentage of cases achieving the Stage 1 KPI is 75%.
12. The Stage 2 KPI was reviewed at the PIC DC Liaison Committee meeting in July 2018, and is now for the PIC to reach a decision on 90% of simple cases before it within 7 months, and on 90% of complex cases within 12 months. A case is deemed to be complex where the PIC requests that witness statements and/or expert evidence be obtained.

In the period November 2018 to February 2019, the PIC reached a decision (to close, hold open or refer to DC)

- in 83% of simple cases,
- in 75% of complex cases.

Performance against the KPIs continues to be reported and discussed in detail at the PIC/DC Liaison Committee meetings.

Operational matters

13. Training for PIC members, RVN PIC members and veterinary investigators (with RCVS staff in attendance) took place in December 2018. Attendees participated in case studies facilitated by the College's external solicitors and heard from Pam Mosedale, PSS Lead Assessor on Veterinary Medicines.
14. Implementation of the new professional conduct case management system took place in November 2018.

Conclusion

15. The Committee continues to consider concerns on a wide variety of topics. The table at paragraph 8 above shows in broad terms the categories of enquiries and concerns, and numbers in each category, which have been registered in the period. As can be seen from that table, concerns about veterinary care form the largest categories of complaints received by the RCVS, and this is reflected in the concerns coming to the PIC. It should be noted that the balance of cases being referred to DC is slightly different, with concerns around honesty, integrity and professionalism outweighing the number of concerns about veterinary care.

16. As referred to in previous reports, consent and communication continue to be a common cause for complaint, with differences in understanding about dental extractions, out of hours care and surgical procedures generally all giving rise to complaints.

Meeting	Council
Date	7 March 2019
Title	RVN PI Committee Report to Council
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation (PI) Committee.
Decisions Required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Michael Hepper Barrister/Chief Investigator 020 7202 0755 m.hepper@rcvs.org.uk</p> <p>Velia Soames Head of Professional Conduct 020 7202 0740 v.soames@rcvs.org.uk</p>

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Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

Report to Council 7 March 2019

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nursing Council there have been three meetings of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee (16 October and 27 November 2018 and 15 January 2019). The next scheduled RVN PIC meeting is on 26 February 2019.

RVN Concerns received / registered

2. Between 3 October 2018 and 18 January 2019 there were eight new Concerns received against RVNs. Of these eight new Concerns, three are currently under investigation by the Case Examiners Group (a veterinary and lay member on RVN PIC and a Case Manager). Three Concerns were closed by the Case Examiners Group as there was no arguable case and two Concerns are in the process of being assessed.

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. There were two new cases, raised before 3 October 2018 but considered by the RVN PIC on 15 January 2019. One of the new Concerns was fast tracked to RVN PI Committee because it involved the alleged theft of drugs by an RVN employee – the RVN PI Committee decided that there was a realistic prospect of serious professional misconduct against the named RVN and therefore referred this case to the RVN Disciplinary Committee for a public hearing. This case is still to be listed and shall be included in a future Report to VN Council. The second Concern involved an RVN carrying out a castration procedure on a cat and administering buprenorphine to a patient which had not been prescribed by a veterinary surgeon. The Committee decided that based on the information presented there was insufficient evidence to pass the realistic prospect threshold in regard to the RVN administering buprenorphine. However, in regard to the castration procedure the Committee decided there was a realistic prospect for serious professional misconduct, but took the view that it was not in the public interest to refer the RVN's name to the RVN Disciplinary Committee for a public hearing as the RVN had shown insight, had admitted carrying out the procedure and given assurances that there would be no repetition. However, the Committee decided, in order to minimise the chances of any similar issues occurring in the future, to hold the case open for 2 years with formal advice to the RVN on Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966; registered veterinary nurses are not permitted to carry out cat castrations. If concerns of a similar nature are brought to light during the relevant held open period, the new Concern can be joined to the held open Concern and both Concerns may be referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee.

Ongoing Investigations

4. It was reported in previous reports to VN Council that one ongoing case was adjourned pending the outcome of an RVN's appeal against conviction by the criminal court. The criminal proceedings have very recently concluded as the RVN did not continue with her/his appeal and at its meeting on 15 January 2019, the RVN PIC Committee referred the RVN's name to the RVN Disciplinary Committee for a public hearing. This case is still to be listed and shall be included in a future Report to VN Council.

Health Concerns

5. There are currently two RVNs being managed in context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Concerns

6. There are currently no RVNs being managed in context of the RCVS Performance Protocol.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

7. Since the last report to VN Council, the RVN PI Committee has referred two cases to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. These cases are currently with the RVN Disciplinary Clerk and are in the process of being listed.

Training

8. The RVN PIC, PIC, Veterinary Investigators and members of the Professional Conduct team took part in two days of training in April and December 2018. Among the topics covered were refreshers on CEG/PIC roles and responsibilities, threshold tests (arguable case/realistic prospect), and relevant recent case law. Attendees also participated in case studies, and heard presentations on the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013 and unconscious bias.

Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	7 March 2019
Title	Disciplinary Committee Report
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Update of Disciplinary Committee since the last Council meeting on 1 November 2018
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Yemisi Yusuph Clerk to the Disciplinary Committee Tel: 020 7202 0729 Email: y.yusuph@rcvs.org.uk

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Report of Disciplinary Committee hearings since the last Council meeting on 1 November 2018

Background

1. Since the last update to Council on 1 November 2018, the Disciplinary Committee ('the Committee') have met for seven hearings. Of which, all have been Inquiry hearings.
2. On Wednesday 28 and Thursday 29 November 2018, the Disciplinary Committee's ('DC') Annual Training took place.
3. Following the resignation of Christopher Moger, (one of the Legal Assessors), in November 2018, Richard Ferry- Swainson was appointed in January 2019, and has now been added to the poll of Legal Assessor.

Hearings

Mr John Hendrie Smith

1. On 25- 26 October 2018, the Committee met to hear the resumed Inquiry into Mr Hendrie Smith which was adjourned in August 2018 due to insufficient time.
2. The Inquiry was in relation to a number of charges involving undertaking euthanasia of a German Shepherd named Bouncer, including:
 - Failure to ensure that he was sufficiently prepared for the euthanasia
 - Failure to delay the euthanasia until he was in possession of the necessary items to perform such procedure
 - Undertaking the euthanasia by means of an injection to the chest without sedating
 - Failure to provide the owner with an adequate explanation of the procedure
 - Failure to obtain informed consent from the owner to undertake the euthanasia
 - Failure to make any clinical records in respect of the procedure
 - Failure to provide adequate veterinary care and caused unnecessary suffering
 - Failure to communicate adequately to the owner.
3. The full charges can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/smith-john-hendrie-october-2018-charges/>
4. Mr Hendrie Smith made an application to the Chair to attend the resumed hearing via skype- his application was successful.

5. At the outset of the Inquiry, Mr Hendrie Smith, who was unrepresented, accepted charges 6. He denied all other charges against him.
6. In August 2018, the Committee heard evidence from a number of witnesses including an expert. They found all of the charges against him proven, with the exception of charge 4(e) on the grounds that there was insufficient evidence.
7. The full decision as to finding of facts can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/smith-john-hendrie-october-2018-decision-on-facts/>
8. Both disgraceful conduct and sanctions were addressed in the resumed hearing in October 2018.
9. In establishing whether disgraceful conduct had occurred, the Committee concluded that of the facts proved, all amounted to disgraceful conduct.
10. The full decision as to disgraceful conduct can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/smith-john-hendrie-october-2018-decision-on-disgraceful-conduct/>
11. At sanction stage, the Committee considered both mitigating and aggravating factors. In mitigation, the Committee considered that this was a single, isolated incident. They had also considered the fact that Mr Hendrie Smith had been practising for 65 years and had an otherwise unblemished career with no adverse professional findings against him. It also took into account testimonials from professional colleagues, clients and his local community.
12. The Committee also considered the aggravating factors. This included actual injury and unnecessary suffering to an animal, and blatant disregard of the systems that regulate the veterinary profession (including the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct and its supporting guidance relating to euthanasia, informed consent, preventing unnecessary suffering and working within one's area of competence).
13. The Committee directed that Mr Hendrie Smith be removed from the Register stating:

"...This is a case where there has been a serious departure from professional standards as set out in the Code, serious harm was caused to Bouncer, and, in the view of the Committee, there is a risk of serious harm to animals in the future if the Respondent were to continue in practice. The Committee has concluded that the Respondent's conduct is so serious that removal from the Register is the only means of protecting animals and the wider public interest."

14. The full decision on sanctions can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/smith-john-hendrie-october-2018-decision-on-sanction/>

Mr David Eccles

15. On Monday 5 and Tuesday 6 November 2018, the Committee met to hear the Inquiry into Mr Eccles. Mr Eccles attended the hearing and was represented.
16. The Inquiry was in relation to two charges brought against Mr Eccles that related to the treatment of a cat, namely Leo. The first charge related to events that took place in September 2017, involving failure to diagnose Leo correctly and failure to make a clear, accurate and detailed clinical record in respect of the consultation. The second charge comprised of numerous elements. This included the fact that Mr Eccles failed to undertake an adequate assessment of Leo's presenting condition; failed to offer a referral as an option to the owners; performed inadequate surgery; and failed to provide Leo with the care and monitoring he needed post-operatively.
17. The full charges can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/eccles-david-henry-november-2018-charges/>
18. At the outset, Mr Eccles accepted that his conduct in providing care to Leo amounted to disgraceful conduct and that he failed to provide the appropriate care to Leo and Leo's owners. After consideration, the Committee also took this stance and concluded that:

“The conduct of the Respondent, as covered by each of the Particulars of Charge which the Respondent has admitted and which it has found proved, clearly does constitute Disgraceful Conduct in a Professional respect.”

19. After finding disgraceful conduct, the Committee went on to consider the appropriate sanction to impose on Mr Eccles. In its consideration, the Committee bore in mind the primary purpose of the available sanctions. The Committee listened to the submissions from the Respondents Counsel, in which Counsel acknowledged that realistically, the sanction of “no further action” was not reasonable arguable in this case. The Committee accepted this point and stated that:

“ a No Further Action order outcome is wholly inadequate to meet the seriousness of the failings which are confirmed by the Respondent's admissions of the Charges to which he entered pleas.”

20. Counsel for the Respondent went on to submit that the sanction of postponement was the appropriate outcome in this case. It was contended that the Respondent's conduct can be justly and properly dealt with by an order of postponement accompanied by undertakings. The Committee agreed with the Respondents Counsel and postponed judgement for two years, provided that Mr Eccles does not breach his Undertakings. In its determination, the Committee imposed the following:

“the Respondent should be required to prepare a Personal Development Plan which he will need to submit and have agreed by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons within 28 days of today's date, which plan should cover the period of 2 years from today's date and which plan should address his clinical and diagnostic shortcomings with particular reference to the decision of this Committee in this Hearing. Secondly the Committee is firmly of the view that an approved Mentor should be appointed and instructed to provide advice and guidance to the Respondent on his practice, such supervision should continue for a period of 2 years from today's date and that such Mentor should be required to report to the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee by way of progress reports at quarterly intervals.”

“In addition to the required minimum of 35 hours of annual CPD required of all veterinary surgeons, the Respondent should be required to undertake an additional 35 hours of CPD in the areas identified in the Personal Development Plan as may be recommended by the Mentor and that quarterly reports of the courses completed with details of the course provider, copies of the course content and any certificates attained by the Respondent should be submitted to the Chair of the Committee.”

“Further, the Committee considers that the Respondent should be required to enrol in the Practice Standard Scheme and to achieve the core standards of the Scheme within the next 12months.”

21. The full decision on disgraceful conduct and sanction can be found here:

<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/eccles-david-henry-november-2018-decision-on-disgraceful/>

Mr Richard Sutcliffe

22. In November 2018, the Committee met for three days to hear an Inquiry into Mr Sutcliffe. The Inquiry was in relation to three charges against him.

23. The first charge related to his conviction at York Crown Court in February 2018 on two counts of common assault by beating. This was in relation to an incident in 2016 in which he assaulted two individuals. The second charge related to Mr Sutcliffe undertaking, or attempting to undertake a non-emergency surgery on the eyelid of one of the individuals referred to in the first charge and administering or attempting to administer a Prescription-Only Medicine to the same person. The third charge related to Mr Sutcliffe supplying the same individual with Prescription-Only Medication other than in accordance with a valid prescription.
24. The full charges can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/sutcliffe-richard-john-herbert-november-2018-charges/>
25. At the outset, Mr Sutcliffe who was present at the hearing and legally represented, admitted charges 1 and 2, however, denied charges 3.
26. After the Committee heard evidence from a number of witnesses, they found Mr Sutcliffe guilty of charge 1 and 2. The Committee however dismissed charge 3, stating that:
- “Having considered the totality of the evidence in relation to this charge, the Committee is unable to be sure that the College has proved the allegation in Charge 3 to the requisite standard of proof namely so that the Committee is sure.”*
27. The Committee went on to address both disgraceful conduct and sanctions.
28. Mr Sutcliffe admitted that the convictions in charge 1 render him unfit to practice, and that his conduct as set out in charge 2 renders him guilty of disgraceful conduct. The College was of the same view.
29. In considering the appropriate sanction, the Committee had regard to both aggravating and mitigating factors, and appreciated that Mr Sutcliffe displayed insight as to the seriousness of his behaviour. Having heard evidence from various witnesses and receiving written testimonials, the Committee accepted that Mr Sutcliffe’s conduct was wholly out of character, stating that there was no *“significant risk of repeat behaviour”*
30. The Committee concluded that the appropriate sanction was to suspend Mr Sutcliffe for a period of 6 months.
31. The full decision of the Committee can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/sutcliffe-richard-john-herbert-november-2018-decision-of-the/>

Miss Laura Padron Vega

32. Following an adjournment in September 2018, the Committee met for five days to hear an Inquiry into Miss Padron Vega in December 2018.
33. Miss Padron Vega, who was unrepresented, made an application to the Chair to attend the hearing via video link- her application was successful.
34. The Inquiry was in relation to complaints made to the College in respect of two application forms that she had completed and signed on 3rd February 2016, but had back dated to 7th December 2015.
35. The full charges can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/padron-vega-laura-december-2018-charges/>
36. At the outset, Miss Padron Vega admitted paragraphs 1 and 2 of the charge, paragraph 3 (c) and paragraphs 4 (a-d).
37. In addressing disgraceful conduct, the Committee took into account the fact that from the outset, Miss Padron Vega had admitted that her conduct was in breach of the Principles of certification laid down in the Code Of Professional Conduct, namely Principle 12 which states:” *“When signing a certificate, a veterinarian should ensure that ... (d) the certificate bears the date on which the certificate was signed”*. The Committee reflected on the importance of such principle and considered carefully the mitigating factors advanced by Miss Padron Vega, in that, as stated by her and confirmed by a number of witnesses, the FAI Farm was extremely busy during the period in question. Subsequently, she was under immense stress on the day of the audit. The Committee ultimately proved that Miss Padron Vega’s actions amounted to disgraceful conduct.
38. The full decision on disgraceful conduct can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/padron-vega-laura-december-2018-decision-on-disgraceful-conduct/>
39. The Committee went on to consider the appropriate sanction to impose on Miss Padron Vega, having found her guilty of disgraceful conduct.
40. The Committee continued to dwell on the fact that Miss Padron Vega’s conduct was contrary to the Regulatory requirements for certification by a veterinary surgeon, stating that: *“the system imposes a considerable degree of trust in the veterinary surgeon to carry out her duties competently and truthfully. The Respondent’s conduct on this occasion constituted a clear breach of that obligation which it was her public duty to fulfil.”* They concluded that her conduct undermined public confidence. After considering all factors in relation to this case, the

Committee decided that the only proper sanction should be that Miss Vega's name should be removed from the Register.

41. The full decision on sanctions can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/padron-vega-laura-december-2018-decision-on-sanction/>

Mr Amir Kashiv

42. On Tuesday 18 December 2018, the Committee met for one day to hear the Resumed Inquiry into Mr Kashiv.
43. The Inquiry was originally heard in December 2016, and was in relation to his management of a 10 or 11 year old Scottish Terrier. At the hearing in December 2016, following evidence, the Committee found a number of heads of charge proved and concluded that Mr Kashiv's conduct amounted to disgraceful conduct in a professional respect. The Committee decided to postpone judgment for a period of two years and Mr Kashiv was to comply with a number of undertakings. These included a structured programme of clinical and professional development over the said period.
44. At the resumed hearing on 18 December 2018, the Committee heard evidence from a College witness who attended and reviewed Mr Kashiv's practice throughout the two years. They also heard from Mr Kashiv himself and his appointed mentor. The Committee also took into account the numerous positive testimonial statements that were provided to it.
45. Counsel for the Respondent invited the Committee to take no further action. However, the College opposed this invitation, stating that it was not open for the Committee to take no further action as the case had been postponed.
46. In light of all the evidence heard, the Committee concluded that Mr Kashiv had successfully completed the undertakings and now considers him to be a safe practitioner. The Committee made it clear that it had not lost sight of the fact that this was a serious case that subsequently caused substantial harm as a result. They appreciated the fact that over the course of the two years, Mr Kashiv had gained considerable insight, developed better communication skills and remains open to improving his practice. As such, the Committee decided that the appropriate sanction would be to impose a reprimand.

Dr Navarro & Dr Kristin

47. On Monday 7 January 2019, the Committee met for a ten day hearing into Dr Kristin and Dr Navarro.

48. On the ninth day, the Committee adjourned the hearing due to a lack of time. The hearing is due to resume on 4 March 2018. Following the outcome of this Inquiry, the full facts and outcome will be reported.

Dr Jacqueline Bohnen

49. In January, the Committee met for three days to hear the Inquiry into Dr Bohnen. The case concerned the alleged failures to provide the appropriate and adequate care for a dog, named Belle who was in the care of Dr Bohnen. The dog died at some point over the night or early morning, when Dr Bohnen was on call for the practice.

50. The full charges can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/bohnens-jacqueline-january-2019-charges/>

51. A week prior to the hearing, Dr Bohnen, who had not really been engaging in the process sent an email requesting that the hearing be postponed on the bases that she now resides in South Africa and was unable to apply for a visa to come the UK until July 2019. The College opposed the application and put forward submissions to the Committee stating that the Inquiry should proceed in her absence.

52. After consideration of both Dr Bohnen's and the College's applications, the Committee found that the College had properly served the Notice of Inquiry on Dr Bohnen in accordance with the Rules and she had had sufficient time to apply for a visa and that in any case, she could remotely attend the hearing via Skype or telephone (which were all options that he given to her). The Committee refused Dr Bohnen's application.

53. The Committee heard oral evidence from a number of witnesses. In considering all the oral and written evidence, the Committee dismissed the parts of charge 1 the related to considering alternative treatment options and updating the owners in relation to Belle's condition. They did however, find the charge proven in relation to Dr Bohnen failing to assist Belle with urination. In respect of the facts of charge 2, the Committee found this to be proven in its entirety.

54. The full decision on the finding of facts can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/bohnens-jacqueline-january-2019-decision-on-facts/>

55. The Committee went on to decide whether the facts found in charge 1(i) and charge 2 amounted to disgraceful conduct.

56. In relation to charge 1(i), the Committee concluded that while Dr Bohnen's conduct did fall below the standard expected of a reasonably competent veterinary surgeon, when she failed

to assist Belle with urination, it did not amount to serious professional misconduct. In regards to the second charge, the Committee found Dr Bohlen's conduct constituted to serious professional misconduct.

57. In determine the appropriate sanction to impose on Dr Bohnen, the Committee considered that the principle aggravating factor in this case was her serious dishonesty towards both her colleagues and the dog, and it was evident that there was an apparent breach of the Code of Professional Conduct. The Committee also took into account mitigating factors. They bore in mind that Dr Bohnen is of previous good character and had no professional findings against her. She had also demonstrated some insight into her behaviour when she admitted being dishonest and misleading prior to the hearing.

58. The Committee came to the conclusion that Dr Bohnen was to be suspended from the Register for a period of nine months. The Committee stated that:

"Because of the seriousness of this case, the Committee did not consider that it was appropriate to postpone judgement, take no further action, or to administer a reprimand and warning as to future conduct. The Committee considered that the respondent's conduct, involving significant and admitted dishonesty over a period of time, required a significant penalty, in order to protect the welfare of animals and to serve the public interest"

59. The full decision on disgraceful conduct and sanctions can be found here:

<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/bohlen-jacqueline-january-2019-decision-on-disgraceful-conduct/>

Upcoming Hearings

60. There are currently three Inquiry hearings listed before the Disciplinary Committee on the following dates:

- 25-26 February 2019
- 24-25 April 2019
- 29 April – 8 May 2019

61. There is currently one Inquiry hearing listed before the Veterinary Nurse Disciplinary Committee on the following dates:

- 20-21 May 2019

62. Four cases have been referred to DC and these will be listed by the Clerk as soon as possible.

63. One restoration hearing has been listed for 28 February 2019.

64. A case that was adjourned in January 2019, and will be relisted by the Clerk as soon as possible.

Appeals

65. Dr Hendrie Smith has lodged an appeal has lodged an appeal with the Privy Council against the Committee's decision (25 October 2018), however a date is yet to be fixed.