

Summary

Meeting	APC
Date	07 October 2025
Title	Advancement of the Professions Committee Report 07 October 2025
Summary	To note the attached minutes of the meeting held on 07 October 2025
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix (confidential)
Author	Charlie Coaker Secretary to Advancement of the Professions Committee c.coaker@rcvs.org.uk

Classifications

Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	N/A
Classified appendix	Confidential	2

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation, or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Minutes of the Advancement of the Professions Committee Meeting Held In-Person at 10:00 on 07 October 2025

Members:

Dr Z Kennedy (Chair)	Chair of the Advancement of the Professions Committee & Chair of Mind Matters Initiative
Mrs. B Andrews-Jones	VN Council Chair, Chair of Innovation
Ms. A Boag (Observer) *	Chair of Board of Trustees for RCVS Knowledge
Mr. J M Castle	RCVS Lay Council Member
Dr T Gardiner	Lead for EDI
Prof. M Jones	Lead for Environment & Sustainability
Ms. L Lockett	RCVS CEO
Prof. C Loughrey	Lead for Global Development
Dr S Paterson	Lead for Leadership
Mr. S Williams	VN Futures Project Board
Dr Niall Connell	Chair of the Fellowship Board

In attendance:

Mrs. A Belcher	Director for Advancement of the Professions
Mrs. G Gill *	Leadership and Inclusion Manager
Mrs. R Newton	Mind Matters Initiative Lead
Mr. S Hurley	Mind Matters Initiative Senior Officer
Mr. L Emeka	Diversity and Inclusion Senior Officer

Ms. A Youngs	Fellowship and Leadership Senior Officer
Mrs. T Goodwin Roberts	Projects Implementation Manager
Ms. C Coaker	AP Officer / Secretary to the Committee
Mrs. J Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
Miss J Macdonald	Veterinary Nursing Progression and Development Lead
Ms. Katie Mantell	RCVS Knowledge CEO
Mr. I Holloway	Director of Communications
Mr. L Bishop	Media and Publications Manager
Mrs. Abi Hanson	Media and Publications Officer
Mr. B Myring	Policy and Public Affairs Manager
Mr. M Sundhu	Policy and Public Affairs Officer
Dr V Bolton	Research Manager
Ms. Cheryl Walmsley	Head of Media and Content

* apologies

Welcome and Apologies for Absence

1. The chair welcomed all present to the meeting, introducing new members Matthew Jones, Lead for Environment & Sustainability and Christopher Loughrey, Lead for Global Development. The chair also noted that this was their first meeting in the role and expressed thanks to Dr S Paterson for her contribution during her tenure in this position.
2. Apologies were received from Amanda Boag and Gurpreet Gill.
3. Dr. Sue Paterson declared a new interest as Vice Chair of Trustees at Battersea Dogs & Cats Home.

Matters arising and minutes of the meeting held on 07 May 2025

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

Workstream Updates

Diversity and Inclusion

5. Health passports for students remain at an early stage of development, with a current focus on use within the workplace. Collaboration continues with the RCVS Education and Veterinary Nursing teams, alongside two veterinary school representatives. Wider engagement will follow once a draft is ready for circulation. The initiative was commended as an excellent development.
6. Progress on the Reasonable Adjustments campaign was congratulated and international interest in RCVS leadership in this area was noted. An Australian veterinary equity campaign resource will be shared.

Mind Matters Initiative

7. The Committee noted research by an MMI grant recipient on integrating wellbeing principles into veterinary nursing curriculum and discussed links with other educational bodies undertaking similar work.

Leadership

8. Initial recruitment challenges for the Leadership research were raised but these have been overcome through broader outreach, resulting in 42 participants across focus groups segmented by career stage and minority ethnic background. The first phase will conclude by mid-November, with findings to follow. Potential collaboration with the Fellowship initiative was noted.

Workforce

9. The Committee reviewed plans for the upcoming podcast series which will include Workforce content as key segments within the show. The first episode will be due to be published shortly on Podbean, Spotify, Apple, Amazon Music and the RCVS website. Accessibility and promotion strategies were discussed.

Oral Update: RCVS Knowledge – Contextualised Care

10. An overview was provided of the 2025 contextualised care events. The update summarised engagement across the veterinary sector, including practitioners and pet owners alongside the research methods being applied. Initial insight indicates that this is an important area for further evidence-based exploration and development. A detailed update, including key findings and final recommendations, will be shared at the February 2026 meeting.
11. The Committee commended the Contextualised Care event as an excellent and well-delivered session. Members who attended reported that it was highly engaging and noted that it had received very positive feedback from a wide range of participants.

Oral Update: Vital transitions – MMI International

12. The RCVS continues to collaborate with several international veterinary organisations to promote a positive culture of mental health and wellbeing across the global profession. Planning is underway for a coordinated international programme to be delivered over four weeks, combining global online sessions and locally hosted events.
13. Practical considerations noted include funding constraints for a regulator-led initiative, as well as variable partner capacity in certain regions. Time-zone, language, power and connectivity challenges were also highlighted. The team will continue to develop the programme, adjusting timelines as partnerships and resources are confirmed.

Oral Update: VN Vision

14. An update was received on progress following the initial research into the role and integration of veterinary nurses within UK practice. A series of workshops, using the *Theory of Change* approach, were held across the UK and informed the report published in June 2025. Early themes of culture, collaboration and trust have emerged from the analysis, with the overriding issue focused on RVN skills not being effectively utilized. This has led to the first derivative project: *A Vision or a Necessity: Strengthening the role of RVNs in team-based veterinary healthcare*.
15. Events have so far been held in Usk, Belfast, Edinburgh, London, Dorchester and Birmingham. Further engagement activities are planned for 2026, with participants due to receive interim summaries of ongoing work.

Discussion: UKHACC Paper (Annex A) Confidential

16. This information is available in the classified appendix.

Discussion: Fellowship-led Debates

17. As part of the new strategic plan, there is a plan to provide space for more challenging topics to be discussed, engaging not only the professions but also animal owners, keepers and wider society on key issues. Fellowship will be responsible for delivering some of these discussions, and the committee considered a range of potential themes. It was noted that, depending on the subject and intended audience, events could be held in different formats to encourage open and constructive dialogue. Suggested approaches included in-person sessions at Hardwick Street, professional-only and mixed events, as well as educational, evidence-based, or science-led discussions. Other ideas included debates, roundtables and citizen science sessions, with flexibility to operate under the Chatham House Rule where appropriate. Members were invited to submit further topic suggestions for consideration to the Fellowship Board.

AOB

18. No AOB was raised.
19. The date of the next meeting is 04 February 2026. This will be held in-person at Hardwick Street.