

**The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons  
Advancement of the Professions Committee**

Meeting held on the 5th May 2020.














**Advancement of the Profession**

To be held via Teleconference by Teams.

5 May 2020 14:00 - 5 May 2020 16:00



# AGENDA

| # | Description  | Owner      | Time |
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| 2 | <b>Welcome</b><br> Minutes APC Feb20.docx 7   | Ceri Chick |      |
| 3 | <b>Matters Arrising</b>  | Ceri Chick |      |
| 4 | <b>Update from APC Workstreams</b><br> Workstream Cover Page.docx 15<br> APC reporting framework - DIG.docx 17<br> APC reporting framework - Fellowship.docx 19<br> APC reporting framework - Global.docx 23<br> APC reporting framework - Innovation.docx 25<br> APC reporting framework - Leadership.docx 29<br> APC reporting framework - MMI.docx 33<br> APC reporting framework - RCVS Knowledge.docx 37<br> APC reporting framework - VN Futures.docx 41 | Ceri Chick |      |
| 5 | <b>Presentation by the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change</b><br>Papers to Follow  | Ceri Chick |      |
| 6 | <b>Discussion: The Primary Care project and the APC workstreams within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.</b><br> Discussion Cover Page.docx 45<br> APC Primary Care.docx 47  | Ceri Chick |      |
| 7 | <b>Any Other Business</b>  | Ceri Chick |      |

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## **Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC)**

**5 May 2020, 14:00**

**The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, Belgravia House, London**

### **Agenda**

- 1. Apologies for absence, declarations of interest and minutes of the meeting held on 11 February.**
- 2. Matters arising**
- 3. Updates from APC workstreams**
- 4. Climate change and sustainability, RCVS and the profession. Presentation by the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change. Richard Smith, Chair, UKHACC.**
  - Papers to follow.**
- 5. Discussion: The Primary Care project and the APC workstreams within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.**
- 6. Any other business**
- 7. Dates of next meetings:**
  - 1) 8 September 2020 (14:00)**
  - 2) 10 November 2020 (14:00)**



Minutes of the Advancement of the Professions Committee held on Tuesday, 11 February 2020 at 2pm at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF.

Members:

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Dr C J Allen                       | Council Member                                      |
| Professor D Argyle (Chair)         | Council Member                                      |
| Professor John Innes*              | Chair, RCVS Fellowship Board                        |
| Ms A Boag*                         | Senior Vice-President and Leadership lead           |
| Dr N Connell                       | President, and Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Group |
| Professor S Dawson                 | Chair, Mind Matters Initiative                      |
| Ms L Lockett                       | Chief Executive                                     |
| Miss R Marshall                    | Chair, Veterinary Nurses Council                    |
| Mrs J Molyneux*                    | Chair, Board of Trustees for RCVS Knowledge         |
| Dr C Tufnell                       | Innovation and Global lead                          |
| Mr T Walker                        | Lay Council Member                                  |
| <b>In attendance:</b> Mr A Roberts | Director of Leadership and Innovation               |
| Mr B Myring                        | Policy and Public Affairs Manager                   |
| Mr O Glackin                       | Leadership Initiatives Manager                      |
| Miss C Chick                       | Leadership Initiatives Officer                      |
| Dr G Wild                          | 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:
  - Ms A Boag
  - Prof J Innes
  - Mrs J Molyneux

### Declarations of Interest

3. Declarations of interest were received from:

Dr C Tufnell: In relation to the agenda item updating Committee members on the Fellowship, Dr Tufnell declared he had put forward an application for Fellowship of the RCVS.

### Minutes of the last meeting, held on 12 November 2019

4. The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### Updates from APC workstreams

5. The responsible Committee members or the relevant staff lead provided an update on each of the eight workstreams within the scope of the APC; this reflected the contents of the paper (APC Feb AI01).
6. The Committee considered these updates, as well as other specific matters raised, that were brought to it for discussion and, in some cases, decision. These are highlighted below, in addition to the main questions and comments prompted by each update.

#### Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

7. It was noted that a Mind Matters Initiative stream was hosted at the 2020 Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons (SPVS) / Veterinary Management Group (VMG) Congress, held at the Celtic Manor in Newport. This stream was chaired by the presenter and broadcaster Clare Balding and addressed issues surrounding diversity and inclusion, and the links to mental health and wellbeing. This was well received by the congress delegates who were in attendance.



8. The Committee noted that work was needed to support veterinary students at university to ensure good mental health, without isolating individuals. This notion should also be carried through to the profession.
9. In response, it was highlighted that there is an intention to organise a roundtable meeting with representation from every UK vet school to discuss and share good practice in supporting students.

### Fellowship

10. It was noted that the Fellowship had increased communication activities in the last quarter. Consequently, the number of applications had increased from last year's round of applications, and more were expected before the deadline for Fellowship applications on 17 February 2020.
11. At the last Fellowship Board meeting, held in December, it was agreed that the RCVS would hold an election for Vice-Chair of the Fellowship in the spring of 2020. It was noted that the process would follow that of the election held last year for Chair of the Fellowship Board.
12. In relation to other activities, it was noted that the Fellowship intended to work with RCVS Knowledge to develop Veterinary Evidence Journal Summaries and the Fellowship is also in the early stages of developing a mentorship scheme, the remit and parameters are to be confirmed through ongoing discussion.
13. A Fellowship Day Organising Group had been set up to help ensure the development of an engaging and well-attended Fellowship Day. The date for this year's event had been set for 2 October 2020 and will be held at the Royal Institution of Great Britain.
14. There was a discussion about how to increase attendance at Fellowship Day. It was noted that the RCVS would not be asking for donations from Fellows for the day. It was suggested that the RCVS could reposition their communication strategies by highlighting that the event is an opportunity for free continuing professional development (CPD), and by recruiting a well-known keynote panel chair for the event.
15. In discussion it was suggested that:
  - a) Themed panel discussions at Fellowship Day could provoke exciting debate;
  - b) The name of the event could be updated to highlight the accessibility of the event for individuals who are not current Fellows;
  - c) Further discussion was required as to whether Fellowship Day should remain in its current form, or whether it should be a smaller event aimed at welcoming new Fellows.

16. The Chair highlighted that the issue of diversity within the Fellowship was an important area for action, and that Fellows should be actively recruiting individuals from diverse backgrounds.
17. It was discussed whether the Fellowship should adopt a nomination system to increase diversity, where Fellows are encouraged to nominate women and individuals from diverse backgrounds. It was agreed that this might not be the way forward as a nomination system could create exclusivity within the Fellowship, which the Board is keen to avoid.
18. It was suggested whether Fellowship applications could run two or three times a year instead of once, however there were concerns about the cost of implementing such a system.
19. It was suggested that application support and guidance could be provided at Fellowship Day, where current Fellows and RCVS staff could assist applicants with the forms. It was also suggested that "Application Surgeries" could be organised to assist applicants in a workshop format.
20. It was noted that the Committee strongly recommends that the Fellowship Board consider these suggestions, and to highlight to the profession that Fellowship is not only for academics. The Committee Secretariat was invited to relay these suggestions to the Fellowship Board.

**Action: APC Secretariat**

21. It was noted that the Chair of the Fellowship Board and RCVS President met with representatives from the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change (UKHACC) to discuss whether the Fellowship could play a role in its activities. It was agreed that being a part of this organisation requires greater commitment than the Fellowship would be able to offer. It was agreed that there was a need for greater internal discussion within the RCVS as to what role the Committee and Fellowship could play.
22. It was noted that the Fellowship should consider what role the veterinary professions could have in tackling climate change, as this was high on the political agenda. It was suggested that this could tie in with the innovation workstream's ViVet initiative. It was noted that the profession has an obligation to engage with critical societal issues such as this and that it ties in with recruitment, as students are highly motivated by this subject.

### Global Strategy

23. It was noted that there was ongoing work to develop a "twinning proposal" with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and Botswana had been proposed by OIE as a location

where the RCVS could add significant value by providing guidance and expertise on veterinary regulation.

24. The Committee agreed that the Global Strategy workstream should develop more detailed proposals, and it was noted that this would demonstrate the global reach of the RCVS in improving veterinary standards across the world. This was in accordance with the ambition to 'share knowledge with developing countries to help raise standards' as outlined in the previous strategic plan.
25. The Committee agreed that there was a need to keep RCVS Council informed as to the governance route for this area of work and that this work should also be added to the Risk Register.

### Innovation

26. The Committee was updated on the activities of the ViVet initiative and attention was drawn to how it was being developed in 2020, specifically the work that was underway to create a detailed plan for the year and a series of themed months focussing on particular aspects of the innovation process. For example, one month might focus on 'intrapreneurship' and this theme would provide the topic for blogs, case studies, webinars and workshops. This would bring coherence to the multiple strands of the initiative and help draw out all the factors that contribute to successful innovation.
27. Dr C Tufnell, the Council Innovation Lead, asked the Committee for the opportunity to bring back a paper reflecting on the first two years of the ViVet initiative and outlining the role and scope of the initiative in the future, with a view to such a paper ultimately going to Council for discussion.
28. In discussion it was noted that more clarity could be provided on the website as to the scope of ViVet and the nature of advice and guidance given. Furthermore, it was noted that, to date, ViVet has not looked at the ethics of innovation, but that this could be a relevant and valuable topic of focus in the future.

### Leadership

29. The Committee's attention was drawn to a proposal to begin work to develop a leadership framework or standard that would highlight the leadership competencies required of veterinary professionals at various stages of their careers.

30. It was noted that a reflective self-assessment framework of leadership competencies and core values should be developed with the aim of setting a goal for professionals, rather than a prescribed standard. It was noted that this should be accessible and simple to understand.
31. The Committee gave approval to begin the development of such a framework.

#### Mind Matters Initiative

32. The Committee were updated on the Mind Matters Initiative and the Committee's attention was drawn to the following issues:
- a) A key recommendation of a report reviewing the impact of the RCVS disciplinary process on the mental health and wellbeing of those going through the process, was the development of buddying scheme for people going through it. This had been approved in principle by RCVS Council, and the operation of it would be discussed by the Preliminary Investigation Committee/Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee in February;
  - b) It was noted that veterinary professionals were frequently called upon to support the mental health and wellbeing of clients but do not always know how best to do this - MMI was looking into the development of a package of training and guidance;
  - c) This year's application round for the Sarah Brown Mental Health Research Grant had been launched and MMI was working with RCVS Knowledge to develop proposal-writing workshops, to assist those interested in applying for grants.

#### RCVS Knowledge

33. In the absence of a representative from RCVS Knowledge the Committee noted the update and discussed the following issues:
- a) A closer link needed to be fostered between the Fellowship and RCVS Knowledge / *Veterinary Evidence* and the role of the Fellowship Science Advisory Committee in this regard should be clarified;
  - b) The Plowright Prize, which recognised significant contributions to the field of infectious diseases in animals, was now open and the Committee was asked to help publicise the prize;
  - c) RCVS Knowledge had hosted a well-attended and well-received stream on continuous quality improvement at the recent SPVS/MMG Congress.

## VN Futures - update

34. The Chair of the Veterinary Nurses Council provided an update noting that a series of webinars focusing on maximising the value of veterinary nurses had attracted over 275 views and that work was underway to develop a pilot School Ambassadors programme to promote the VN profession to school-age children.

### **Developing a unifying programme: Advancing the professions through primary care practice**

35. The Committee discussed a paper which built on discussions at the previous meeting about the development of a unifying programme that would focus on 'advancing the professions through primary care practice' and outlined proposals for what such a programme might look like and how the current workstreams reporting to APC could support its delivery.
36. It was noted that a meeting of workstream secretaries was convened in order to develop the paper and consider how each workstream might contribute to its delivery. In the meeting, as each workstream discussed potential activities, it became clear that these coalesced around the issue of 'recruitment and retention in primary care'. Subsequently it was agreed with the Chair that by focussing such a programme on 'recruitment and retention in primary care' it would address a current and critical issue in the profession and answer questions as to why this programme was of relevance now.
37. The Committee agreed that recruitment and retention provided a meaningful focus and helped to ensure the scope was manageable. It was, however, suggested that the programme should focus on celebrating primary care and the value it provided, with recruitment and retention as a sub-text.
38. In discussion it was noted that:
- a) Such a programme should not focus solely on veterinary professionals, but also consider primary care from an animal and client perspective, including issues such as the accessibility and affordability of veterinary services;
  - b) The programme should take a long-term view looking at the changing shape of veterinary primary care;
  - c) The programme should seek to help new graduates develop the skills and confidence to thrive in primary care.
39. The Committee discussed the terminology that should be used in naming the programme, specifically whether 'primary care', 'general practice' or 'first-opinion practice'. After a discussion it was agreed that the term 'general practice' most appropriately described the scope of the programme and it was most easily understood by the profession and public.

Furthermore, 'general practitioner' is a term used regularly by veterinary professionals to describe themselves and their role. It was noted that research could be undertaken to refine the terminology as the programme developed.

40. The Committee discussed what they wanted the programme to achieve, noting that the programme should aim to: raise the profile and understanding of the value of general practice; make those working in general practice proud to be a veterinary professional and MRCVS; improve understanding as to the contributory factors behind recruitment and retention issues; improve satisfaction in the professions.
41. The Committee agreed that the programme needed to be more than just a report, and that it should also provide a benchmark from where the profession can measure change and insights into critical issues such as why people are leaving the Register.

**ACTION: Secretariat and Chair to develop the programme plan and liaise with workstream secretaries regarding their contributions to its delivery.**

#### **Any other business**

42. The secretary noted that the Committee needed to appoint a Vice-Chair. To this end an email would be circulated inviting nominees and a vote would be held if more than one name was put forward.
43. The Chair encouraged members to put themselves forward for the role of Vice-Chair.

**ACTION: Secretary to circulate email inviting nomination for Committee Vice-Chair.**

44. The Committee was invited to contact Anthony Roberts or Lizzie Lockett with any feedback or questions in relation to the results and analysis of the Surveys of the Veterinary / Veterinary Nursing Professions, which had been circulated to members.

#### **Date of next meeting**

45. The Chair closed the meeting noting the date of the next meeting was confirmed as the afternoon of 5 May 2020.

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|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Meeting</b>            | Advancement of the Professions Committee  |
| <b>Date</b>               | 5 May 2020  |
| <b>Title</b>              | Updates from APC workstreams  |
| <b>Classification</b>     | UNCLASSIFIED  |
| <b>Summary</b>            | <p>Provided below is an update on the outputs and outcomes of APC workstreams since the last Committee meeting in addition to looking forward to planned work for the next. Where relevant, also highlighted are matters arising as a result of these activities that would benefit from further APC scrutiny presently or in due course.</p> <p>The Summary is ordered as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Diversity and Inclusion Working Group</li> <li>ii. Fellowship of the RCVS</li> <li>iii. Global activities</li> <li>iv. Innovation</li> <li>v. Leadership</li> <li>vi. Mind Matters Initiative</li> <li>vii. RCVS Knowledge</li> <li>viii. VN Futures</li> </ul> |
| <b>Decisions required</b> | None  |
| <b>Attachments</b>        | None  |
| <b>Author</b>             | <p>Ceri Chick</p> <p>Leadership Initiatives Officer</p> <p><a href="mailto:c.chick@rcvs.org.uk">c.chick@rcvs.org.uk</a></p>   |





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| <b>Area of work</b>   |
| <b>Diversity and Inclusion Group (DIG)</b>  |
| <b>Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>  |
| <p>There have been no major activities since the February meeting – proactive work has been on hold / postponed since Covid-19 took over.</p> <p>However, we have borne diversity issues in mind in making short-term and temporary policy decisions in the light of the pandemic, for example, around ensuring animal owners can continue to access veterinary services remotely, in considering the needs of WP students when it comes to earning during the holidays and carrying out delayed EMS, in reducing the CPD load, and in phasing retention fee payments for veterinary surgeons.</p> <p>We have also tried to remain as flexible as possible with our support for RCVS staff during this time to ensure that no group or individual is disadvantaged.</p> |
| <b>Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>  |
| <p>The unconscious bias training that was due to take place with Council on 16 April has been postponed – potentially until September</p> <p>The joint roundtable with Veterinary Schools Council that was to have taken place in late spring/early summer has been postponed – potentially until autumn.</p>   |
| <b>Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.</b>   |
| Nothing specific although issues with student finances are likely to be exacerbated in the coming year and this is likely to impact those from WP backgrounds in particular.  |
| <b>Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce.</b>   |
| <p>It had been planned that representatives of the Veterinary Chronic Illness Group would attend the Mind Matters Taskforce meeting on 4 April, to explore potential synergies here, but this meeting was cancelled. They will be invited to a future meeting.</p> <p>Meanwhile the President has written an article for <i>MS-UK New Pathways</i> magazine about his personal experiences, including being RCVS President with MS.</p>   |

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| <b>Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee.</b>          |
| Nothing specific.  |
| <b>Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention.</b> |
| Nothing specific.  |

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| <b>Area of work</b>  |
| <b>RCVS Fellowship</b>   |
| <b>Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>   |
| <p><b>Managing applications to the RCVS Fellowship</b></p> <p>Revised processes for reviewing Fellowship applications have been agreed, documented and rolled out. Revised guidance and supportive flow diagrams have also been developed to support this.</p> <p>65 applications for Fellowship were received this year. This represents a significant increase on previous years and reverses the earlier downward trend. In part this is likely to be the result of enhanced promotional activity.</p> <p>The substantial task of bundling and allocating applications to credential panel members was completed week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p>The Fellowship Board is scheduled to make its final decisions at the end of June, applicants will be informed shortly after this.</p> <p><b>Fellowship Day 2020</b></p> <p>Fellowship Day 2020 remains scheduled to go ahead on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at the Royal Institution. In light of the need to cancel Royal College Day 2020, Fellowship Day and Royal College Day will now be merged.</p> <p>A revised programme is still to be agreed. Initial thinking is that the morning should be set aside to the presentation of awards, speeches and the keynote address replicating Royal College Day, with the addition of Fellowship awards. The afternoon would be set aside for the staples from Fellowship Day, namely the student competition Fellows of the Future, and Fellows in Focus.</p> <p><b>Fellowship Governance</b></p> <p>Under the terms of the updated Fellowship governance arrangements it was agreed that in 2020 a new vice-chair from the Fellowship should be appointment via an election, with an announcement in July. The timetable for doing so sought to bring it into alignment with the RCVS senior officer changeover.</p> <p>Owing to the current uncertainty the Committee should note that a delay to the election is being sought – this would postpone it until later in the year, although the current vice chair would still stand down. Last year's governance changes allowed for some flexibility around board members' roles and responsibilities – most relevant here being the decision to allow for the vice-chair and the chair of the Fellowship Science Advisory Panel roles to be carried out by different members. A member of the board has signalled their interest in taking up the role of FSAP chair and they are well placed to do so. It is also worthy of note that it is important to appoint a new chair of the FSAP as there are a number of workstreams that it could play into, including the green initiative due to be discussed as a separate item.</p> |
| <b>Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>   |

**Fellowship application 2020**

Managing this process, and the associated workstreams, continues until June/July 2020.

**Fellowship Day 2020**

With some clarity coming in the next few weeks, it should be possible to develop a concrete programme for the revised day. Developing a plan for promoting the day appropriately should also be well underway.

**Fellowship Governance**

Albeit delayed, the process of electing a new vice-chair from the Fellowship should be underway.

A project to recruit new members to the Fellowship Credentials Panels will be underway.

**Fellowship Science Advisory Panel**

Work targeted at moving forward with the FSAP should start to be taking traction.

**Fellowship mentoring scheme**

A workplan for the proposed pilot of a Fellowship mentoring scheme will continue, although its rollout will inevitably be delayed.

**Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

None at this time.

**Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce.**

**Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee.**

**Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention.**





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| <b>Area of work</b>  |
| <b>Global strategy</b>   |
| <b>Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>   |
| <p><b>World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)</b><br/>Discussions have begun with Botswana in order to assemble an outline plan for how a twinning programme might work in terms of content and structure. Once this plan has been completed and costed it will be submitted to RCVS Council for approval.</p> <p><b>World Veterinary Association (WVA)</b><br/>The RCVS's application for Observer status has now been granted. The General Assembly in New Zealand has been postponed, but Ben Myring attending the virtual AGM in April.</p> <p><b>The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE)</b><br/>The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe General Assembly was due to be held in London in June 2020, however due to Covid-19 this has been postponed until June 2021. It has been possible to carry over nearly all arrangements, including the venue and website.</p> <p>FVE hosted a virtual coronavirus update in April, where member countries were able to share information on their approach to the current crisis. Lizzie Lockett attended on behalf of the RCVS.</p> <p><b>European 'matrix'</b><br/>Following a meeting of the RCVS Brexit Taskforce, work has begun to collate a matrix of information on EU Member states, including details of statutory bodies and education and registration powers. This will be used to help shape post-Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications policy.</p> |
| <b>Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>   |
| Work will focus on the OIE twinning programme and the European matrix.   |
| <b>Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.</b>  |

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| <b>Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce.</b>                  |
|  |
| <b>Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee.</b>          |
|  |
| <b>Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention.</b> |
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**Area of work**
**Innovation**
**Key activities and issues managed in the last quarter that the APC should be aware of.**
**Animal Health Investment Forum –**

Animal Health Investment Europe is a global event showcasing investment opportunities in animal health and nutrition. The ViVet team including Chris Tufnell (Innovation Lead RCVS Council) attended this 2 -day event and had an RCVS/ViVet stand where we met delegates and held 9 one-to-one meetings). We shared a video recording of Chris Tufnell giving a summary of the speakers and engagements over the two days and this can be found on our Twitter page.

**ViVet Innovation Evening**

A list of the ViVet Innovation evening events was circulated in Q1. We had reached out to Vet Schools to create a calendar of events across the UK to encourage those who work in a practice environment to attend events that comfortably fit around their work schedule and engage those who are already working in innovation in the local area. We have now put these events on hold and have been looking at other options to engage such as webinars and podcasts.

**Re-Planning of 2020 –**

Transitioning the project as an educational tool to deliver in a format that allows opportunities for innovation open to all online. To encourage vets and vet nurses to 'Think Innovation' as a topic for CPD this year.

Content to include:

- Online Workshops
- Toolkit of Resources
- Blogs and Case Studies
- Guides
- Podcasts
- Workplace Skills Development
- Insights from attending industry events (Currently on hold)

**Innovation Workshop -**

With much of January and February focused on reviewing, planning and releasing the schedule of our new stream of engagement opportunities for 2020 year ahead. March therefore involved a lot of '*unplanning*' and adapting to the new challenges ahead of the lockdown period. With that in mind we were still able to host, albeit 'virtually' our third instalment of the ViVet: Turning Ideas into Innovation Series, Marketing Masterclass on 24 March. Resources from the day will be made available to watch as a free resource.

**Themed Month**

Following the success of #ViVetMarketingMonth (March) we will continue to support those who are already working on turning their 'idea into innovation' or start-up. Looking to continue provide months where we focus on a specific topic such as Marketing and Branding your Start-up/ Finance and seeking investment and, for practices, a month on 'Managing Change' dealing with communication and implementing new processes.

Resources will be uploaded to the website to create a library valuable tools for the profession to use.

**Proposed activities and issues to be managed in the next quarter that the APC should be aware of.**

**2020 Operational Update – ViVet Project**

Project plan review meeting to discuss and build a new 2 year framework that explores the long term objectives of the ViVet project. Recognising a planned transition year as we move between two RCVS Strategies. We will continue with our amended plan, and adjust ViVet to be able to provide learnings as an education hub and library of resources, with lesser focus on opportunities to engage face to face with our audience.

We plan to bring a new three-year plan and lessons learned summary to the APC committee and then RCVS Council later this year.

**ViVet Website**

Resources from the ViVet: Turning Ideas into Innovation -Marketing Masterclass and supporting resources will be published on the website. We also have 'ViVet Bites' interview that give advice and guidance on Financing your Innovation and Innovation in the Workplace (external support has been sourced for these interviews) –

- Guided Presentation - Start Growing your Business
- Article - Creating a Digital Strategy for your Veterinary Start-up
- Marketing Podcast with Daniel Johnson and Anthony Roberts
- ViVet Bites – George Gunn RCVS, Guen Bradbury RCVS, Greg Dickens RCVS

**Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

**Innovation MOOC (Massive Open Online Course)**

ViVet is looking into the potential to commission and host an Innovation MOOC style. This will involve guided learning specific to the veterinary profession.

**Potential format to include-**

**Innovation Quiz:** Designed to assess the learners' knowledge and understanding of innovation, to stream them into the correct cohorts.

**RCVS Cohorts:** Based on innovation quiz results, learners are re-structured into cohorts, both will cover Innovation Culture & Mind-set Trends.

**Beginner Modules** - Innovation fundamentals/Innovation: what & why? Innovation & Creativity

**Intermediate Modules** - BMI & Go-to-market/ Problem discovery & Solution development/Innovation process: beyond Design Thinking

We are reviewing a proposal from an innovation strategy firm, to support in the creation of this MOOC. Launching a course like this would support the ViVet project aim to ensure veterinary professionals are equipped with innovation capabilities.

**Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce?**

N/A

**Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee?**

- Amended 2020 plan to bridge between the two RCVS strategies.
- Proposal for an Innovation MOOC

**Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention?**

N/A



|  |
|--|
| <b>Area of work</b>  |
| <b>Leadership</b>  |
| <b>Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>   |
| <p><b>Leadership for everyone</b></p> <p>A further run of the Jenner leadership programme will open on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April. Some careful communications promoting the programme have been carried out. These delicately highlight its CPD potential.</p> <p>The usual NHS support has, understandably, fallen away however we continue to provide online mentors to participants, most notably a VS and VN, both earlier learners. Participant feedback has been hugely positive on the support they provide.</p> <p>The programme was recently shortlisted for an award run by Memcom for the category: <i>Best E-learning/Online Education Initiative</i>. Details of whether it has been successful should be available at the start of June.</p> <p>Evaluation work continues.</p> <p><b>Tomorrow' leaders</b></p> <p>A series of focus groups with RVC students were run with support of the RVC student union and RVC Principal. The focus groups provided amongst other things the opportunity to gain a richer understanding of students' knowledge of leadership issues and their awareness of the Jenner resource. The sessions were well attended and well received. They have provided useful insights on promotion, timings and content. They also revealed an appetite for the programme amongst many students. The sessions also served as a useful promotional activity (prompting a number of students to sign up) for the programme as well as the RCVS more broadly. Opportunities to incorporate information from other vet schools is being looked at.</p> <p><b>Leadership framework</b></p> <p>Following discussion of the proposal to develop a leadership framework, work has now got underway, although it has been paused due to reprioritising of workloads.</p> <p><b>Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b></p> <p><b>Leadership strategy</b></p> <p>The three-year leadership strategy concludes this year. During the next quarter time will be set aside to begin the process of developing a refreshed strategy reflecting the aims and objectives contained in the recently launched RCVS strategy.</p> <p><b>Leadership for everyone</b></p> <p>We anticipate a significant uptick in learners on this run of the Jenner leadership programme. Due to the current situation and the nature of the programme we are prepared to increase levels of monitoring of activity on the discussion forums.</p> <p><b>Leadership help during lockdown</b></p> <p>Work to adopt new approaches to offering help and resources to promote adaptive leadership skills that reflect the parameters of the current situation are to be developed. Research to consider what might be helpful and how this can be effectively offered will be worked up. This will be coordinated with other parts of RCVS as necessary.</p> <p><b>Leadership evaluation.</b></p> |

This is on-going. The data from the student forums has also been incorporated into the findings. Some challenges in retrieving data from the NHS have arisen, however. The current situation may worsen this situation.

**Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

**Not at this time**

**Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce.**

Innovation re. leadership advice

**Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee.**

**Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention.**







### Area of work

#### Mind Matters Initiative

**Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B.** Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.

#### Sarah Brown Grant

The 2020 Sarah Brown Mental Health Research Grant launched in February. The closing date has been extended from 30 April to 31 July. RCVS Knowledge has provided one-to-one support for interested applicants. Judging will take place in August.

#### Mental health and wellbeing in the Practice Standards Scheme

The proposed mental health additions that were agreed at the Practice Standards Group meeting were discussed at RCVS Council and approved on 5 March 2020.

#### VetKind student webinar

MMI has sponsored a VetKind webinar, titled 'Calm in the Corona' for student vets and student vet nurses. This was delivered by the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS) in collaboration with Jenny Moffett from SkillsTree on Saturday 25 April.

#### Internal RCVS projects

Mind Matters Manager Lisa Quigley delivered Mental Health for Line Managers training on 7 February and Mind Matters Officer Rachel Pascoe delivered a presentation on body image to RCVS on 6 March to mark Eating Disorders Awareness Week. There were two Wellbeing group meetings on 21 January and 25 March, with the latter specifically focusing on the internal response to Covid-19 for support for RCVS staff and teams. RCVS is also finalists again in the Great Place to Work (GPtW) scheme.

#### Training and events cancellations – Covid-19

All Mental Health Awareness training sessions planned for 2020 have been put on hold until further notice. These were due to be held in Bristol, Leeds, Telford, Basingstoke, Newcastle and Cambridge.

The following MMI and British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Resilience Training sessions due to be delivered by PIPS Programmes had been confirmed for these dates and venues:

19 March – Holiday Inn, Gatwick (postponed due to Covid-19)

21 April – Woodrow House, Gloucester (postponed due to Covid-19)

9 May – Glasgow Vet School (postponed due to Covid-19)

- 14 May – Radisson Blu, Manchester Airport (postponed due to Covid-19)
- 17 May – Cambridge Belfry (postponed due to Covid-19)
- 12 July – Wetherby Racecourse (postponed due to Covid-19)
- 14 October – Camarthen - TBC

The British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) has confirmed that the following resilience training sessions have been rescheduled:

- 19 March – Holiday Inn, Gatwick; rescheduled for 17 September, Holiday Inn Gatwick
- 21 April – BSAVA Gloucester; rescheduled for 26 September, BSAVA Woodrow House, Gloucester

Due to the cancellation of BSAVA Congress, the planned Live Schwartz Round and MMI stream was cancelled. The MMI team is developing a proposal for online facilitated reflection, which will follow the principles of Schwartz.

The planned Taskforce meeting on 3 April did not take place. Instead, Taskforce members were encouraged to share, via email, their thoughts about a collaborative response to the mental health and wellbeing impact of Covid-19.

The planned fifth anniversary celebration has not been able to take place, but the accompanying booklet is under production.

**Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.**

### **Response to Covid-19**

The MMI team has been working on a number of projects addressing mental health and wellbeing amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. These will be showcased in an MMI enews in the coming weeks and include:

- Producing a comprehensive web and PDF resource; 'An A-Z of maintaining mental health and wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic'
- Posting wellbeing and mental health tips on social media
- Publishing a series of blog posts from members of the veterinary community which address how they are looking after their wellbeing during the pandemic, and any steps they are taking to support their teams.
- Developing online facilitated reflection sessions based on Schwartz Rounds
- Three webinars have been organised:

12 May – OCD: Rosie Allister, Vetlife Manager, to deliver alongside Alex Thomson, Liaison Psychiatrist

26 May - Managing mental health remotely; Looking after your team and yourself during the Covid-19 pandemic: to be delivered by Lisa Quigley, MMI Manager

8 June - Anxiety, Covid and you: to be delivered by Lisa Quigley, MMI Manager

#### **Veterinary Nursing Student Roundtable**

Following the success of the veterinary student roundtable held on 23 September 2019, plans are underway for a similar event for student veterinary nurses. This will be held online due to the ongoing situation with the coronavirus pandemic. It is expected that this will be announced and publicised in May, to coincide with Vet Nursing Awareness Month.

#### **Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

None at this time

#### **Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce.**

There are potential synergies with ViVet around innovation; Leadership around wellbeing in the workplace; Knowledge around learning culture/quality improvement; and Global, around Mind Matters international.

#### **Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee.**

None at this time but the MMI team would be happy to take questions on any area of current or future work.

#### **Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention.**

None



### Area of work

#### RCVS Knowledge

**Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B.** Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.

#### COVID-19

We have published a **hub of COVID-19 resources** to help veterinary professionals access vital information and advice about the pandemic as easily and quickly as possible. This has been accessed ~10,000 times with an average time on the page of 00:05:30.

<https://knowledge.rcvs.org.uk/covid-19/>

We have developed a **webinar: Infection control and biosecurity during COVID-19**, which covers the science of Coronavirus, evidence related to the virus and practical advice for practices about how to help stem its spread. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=52tHcC-qjEI&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=52tHcC-qjEI&feature=emb_logo)

The webinar was chaired by Pam Mosedale, Chair of the RCVS Knowledge Quality Improvement and features Alan Radford, Professor in Veterinary Health Informatics at the University of Liverpool and RCVS Knowledge Quality Improvement Advisor; and Dr Tim Nuttall of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies at the University of Edinburgh, RCVS Knowledge Infection Control Advisor and Bella Moss Clinical Advisor. The webinar has been viewed 3,300 times.

We have also released our **FAQs Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in veterinary practice during the COVID-19 pandemic** document which covers many of the key questions Vets and Vet Nurses are having around use of PPE. This has been downloaded 2,500 times.

<https://knowledge.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/faqs-personal-protective-equipment-ppe-in-veterinary-practice/>

The resources page includes veterinary advice and updates, research references, and evidence reviews on relevant topics. It also brings together materials provided by veterinary practices and vet schools, as well as guidance from government agencies around the world. The research updates also include an InFOCUS **review of the latest available evidence on SARS-CoV-2, the virus associated with the disease COVID-19, and animals** <https://www.infocusvj.org/covid-19-and-animals/>

#### Quality Improvement

- a) The results of the research into the landscape and future actions for Quality improvement in the Veterinary Sector were launched at SPVS/VMG Congress in January. The full report and research brief have been mailed to a selection of stakeholders and is available in print and [online](#).
- b) Off the back of the research project, we collaborated with a variety of practices and organisations to produce a [Surgical Safety Checklist Manual](#) which has been launched as part of Patient Safety Awareness Week.
- c) We released our Small Animal Neutering audit data. The baseline figures for spays and castrations in dogs and cats are remarkably similar to last year's benchmarks, indicating neither improvement nor deterioration in treatment quality across the practices included in the audit. Rabbit data has been recorded for the first time, although the small sample size places limits on the inference that can be taken from the numbers.

- a. In total, just under **40,000 cases** were included in the data. Standout benchmarks include:
- i. More than **15%** of animals suffered an abnormality related to the operation, with around half of these requiring medical treatment or surgical intervention.
  - ii. 75% of neuters were complication-free.
  - iii. In cats and dogs, spays suffered a higher incidence of complications than castrates. However, the reverse was seen in rabbits.
  - iv. Spayed and castrated cats suffered fewer complications than dogs.
  - v. In dog spays, **at least 25%** of operations resulted in some form of complication (including fatality).
  - vi. More than 95% of castrated cats suffered no abnormality.
  - vii. Thirty-five animals died as a result of a neutering procedure, including one rabbit.
  - viii. Over 3,000 cases were lost to follow-up.

### Plowright Prize

- a) A new award recognising individuals who have made significant contributions to the eradication of infectious diseases has been launched by RCVS Knowledge, in memory of eminent veterinary virologist Walter Plowright and his wife, Dorothy Plowright.
- b) Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we have extended the closing date and completed nominations must be submitted to [ebvm@rcvsknowledge.org](mailto:ebvm@rcvsknowledge.org) by **19th June 2020**. Please feel free to nominate suitable candidates.

### Veterinary Evidence

- a) Peter Cockcroft , Veterinary Evidence Editor in Chief, has reached the end of his term and will be stepping down as Editor-in-chief July 17<sup>th</sup> 2020. Recruitment is now open <https://knowledge.rcvs.org.uk/about-us/work-for-us/>
- b) From September 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 to February 29<sup>th</sup> 2020 webpage views increased by **114%**.
- c) VE received its highest number of submissions to date in 2019 - a **61%** increase on the number of submissions received in 2018.
- d) On average we receive **3** new submissions per month
- e) We aim to consistently publish **3** Knowledge Summaries and/or articles per month plus a monthly Audio Summary.
- f) We have published 91 podcasts (26 of which are Audio Summaries) our podcasts have been downloaded **30,778** times. <http://rcvsknowledge.podbean.com/>

**Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B.** Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.

**Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

**Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce.**

We are working with the Fellowship team in relation to the project compiling common conditions and the PICO questions in relation to these conditions. The first communications about this have gone out and were keen to work with Fellows on the questions.

**Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee.****Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention.**





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|---|
| <b>Area of work</b>   |
| <b>VN Futures</b>   |
| <b>Activities carried out since the last meeting of the APC. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>  |
| <p><b>Maximising the value of veterinary nurses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two webinars delivered, one webinar to air on 23<sup>rd</sup> June</li> </ul> <p><b>Sustainable workforce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School Ambassador Pilot has of course been impacted by COVID-19 – not just because of the inability to organise school visits, but because several of the members of the pilot are under considerable work pressures.</li> <li>▪ Project manager continuing to develop resources with assistance from other members of the RCVS Team.</li> </ul> <p><b>One Health Group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussions with human nurse educators currently suspended</li> <li>▪ Blog written by Chair of group in relation to COVID and veterinary nurses</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Proposed activities and issues to be managed before the next APC meeting. N.B. Information explaining how these activities contribute to the delivery of the workstream's agreed plan must be clearly stated.</b>  |
| <p>VN Futures Board meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> February.</p> <p>The Board reviewed the work of the project over the past three years against the original actions as set out in the Report and Action Plan. It was decided that the majority of actions had been either addressed and were complete, addressed but still required ongoing attention, or were no longer relevant or necessary.</p> <p>There are ongoing projects that will continue over the next 12 months, including some new areas of work that were identified.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion regarding development of advanced practitioner status</li> <li>▪ The School Ambassador Pilot, and the work that will continue following the pilot</li> <li>▪ Research and development of the community veterinary nursing role</li> <li>▪ Development of flexible working case studies and guidelines</li> <li>▪ Development of career frameworks for veterinary nurses</li> <li>▪ Continuation of involvement with diversity and inclusion</li> <li>▪ Input to MMI projects relevant to veterinary nurses and SVNs</li> <li>▪ Presence and presentations at events</li> <li>▪ Resource-building, with focus on One Health resources</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Generation of a full VN Futures Report, plus an additional handout to summarise key points.</li> </ul> <p>These will not all be completed by the next APC meeting, but have been included for your information.</p> |

A proposal has been developed and approved to provide a discussion event at BVNA Congress, inviting input from the VN profession on the next steps for the project. The recent professions' survey will feed into the key themes.

A similar event is also planned to be delivered at BSAVA 2021.

It may be decided that is appropriate to hold a series of regional events to gain perspective from a wide cross-section of the whole profession (vets and nurses).

Initial considerations from the Board suggest that a VNF Summit would be appropriate in July 2021.

The new VNF website is anticipated to be completed and ready for launch by the end of May.

**Details of any budgetary or risk related issues that should be brought to the Committee's attention.**

From discussion at the Board meeting, it was decided that certain areas of the project work ongoing and in the future, should be managed by BVNA, and therefore this should assist with distribution of the budgetary commitments.

**Synergies with other workstreams that your current activities may introduce.**

- MMI – assistance with publicising student wellbeing talk (VetKind)
- Input to development of student roundtable event
- Leadership – highlighting the EJ course to veterinary nurses and support staff
- Continue to work with the diversity and inclusion group. Julie Dugmore is the VNF / VN representative on this group.

**Areas of your work that you would like to highlight for discussion by the Committee.**

**Any other matters arising from your work that you wish to bring to the Committee's attention.**





|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Meeting</b>            | Advancement of the Professions Committee  |
| <b>Date</b>               | 5 May 2020  |
| <b>Title</b>              | Discussion: The Primary Care project and the APC workstreams within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.   |
| <b>Classification</b>     | UNCLASSIFIED  |
| <b>Summary</b>            | Further to the Chair's earlier email to Committee members, included here as an annex, the Committee are invited to discuss how APC workstreams can pursue activities that mitigate the effects of and enable an effective response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This should be considered in tandem with the nascent plan to develop a programme aimed as advancing the professions through primary care practice. The relevant earlier paper setting this out is also included. |
| <b>Decisions required</b> | N/A   |
| <b>Attachments</b>        | Annex A: Mapping workstream activities to the proposed areas of focus   |
| <b>Author</b>             | Anthony Roberts<br>Director of Leadership and Innovation<br><a href="mailto:a.roberts@rcvs.org.uk">a.roberts@rcvs.org.uk</a>  |



## Developing a unifying programme: Advancing the professions through primary care practice

### Background

1. At the November 2019 APC meeting the Chair gave a presentation setting out how the Committee might be able to adopt a more systematic approach that further leveraged the knowledge and expertise held in its workstreams to deliver the RCVS's strategic goals.
2. This presentation was precipitated by a sense that the Committee was discharging its governance role effectively, but that it should be more than just a reporting body. The Chair challenged the Committee to think about how it might become greater than the sum of its parts, and collectively work to advance standards across the professions. To help achieve this vision, it was proposed that a long-term unifying programme could be developed, with each of the workstreams contributing to its delivery. Moreover it was proposed that 'advancing the professions through primary care practice' could provide the first such programme.
3. The Committee supported the proposal, noting that the need to focus on the impact of primary care in improving animal health and welfare had been discussed on a number of occasions recently, but for various reasons it had not been possible to progress such an initiative.
4. It was agreed that to be meaningful such a programme should span two years, with the first year focusing on data gathering and planning followed by a second year of implementation. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would discuss in more detail how each workstream could support this aim with particular emphasis given to opportunities for cross-cutting activities. The Committee secretariat was invited to coordinate the necessary meetings to precipitate the start of this collaborative endeavour.
5. On 16 January a meeting was organised between the secretariats of the workstreams that report into APC. The purpose of this meeting was to consider how each workstream might be able to contribute to the delivery of such a programme and how to coordinate the work.
6. In this meeting two questions emerged: 'why now' and 'why this focus and how do we give it meaningful direction', when much of what the College does is for those in working in primary care. As each workstream discussed potential activities that it currently undertook or could undertake in future to support such a workstream (Annex A), it became clear that these coalesced around the issue of 'recruitment and retention in primary care'. This, in turn served to answer the questions 'why now' and 'why this focus and how do we give it meaningful direction' – because there is a well-recognised recruitment and retention issue, which will likely be exacerbated over the coming 24 months due to Brexit. Therefore developing a meaningful programme to understand and address the issues that cause this recruitment and retention problem will be beneficial for the profession, society and animal health and welfare.
7. Following the meeting an informal discussion was held with the Chair and he was in agreement that 'recruitment and retention in primary care' provided a clear and valuable focus for this

programme and should form the basis for further discussion in the Committee at its meeting on 11 February 2020.

8. This paper outlines, for discussion, the scope of such a programme, how the existing workstreams could support this, and highlights a number of areas that would benefit from the expert input of the Committee.
9. The Committee is invited to provide strategic guidance as to how such a programme could be developed and delivered so as to maximise value.

### Defining the scope of the programme

10. Recruitment and retention in primary care is a complex and multifaceted issue and it will likely encompass other issues including, for example, developing purpose, pride and respect, being valued by others in the profession and valuing client relationships, and taking charge of the future in a period of rapid change. Given the complexity of the issue, desk-based research will be required to understand better the factors playing into the current issue together with primary research to fill knowledge gaps and create impactful initiatives.
11. As a starting point, however, it is proposed that we begin by considering the following areas, consider the research we already have, identify known knowledge gaps and consider how the current workstreams could support these areas:
  - a. Value proposition: what does primary care practice offer and how do we articulate this from a recruitment perspective?
  - b. Skills and competencies: what are the key attributes of successful, happy and healthy primary care practitioners, and how can the RCVS support the development of these?
  - c. Retention: why are people leaving primary care practice and how can they be better supported or encouraged to stay? Are the issues unique to this branch of the professions or are they fundamentally the same across all branches of the professions?
  - d. Return: how do we encourage people to return (when appropriate) from outside the profession and other branches?
  - e. The impact of Specialist practice: what impact has the rise of Specialist practice had on primary care practice and how can we separate the reality from the perception?
  - f. Technology and change: what impact will technology have on this branch of profession and can practitioners be supported to lead and embrace change to improve their working lives as well as the quality, efficacy and accessibility of the services they provide?



- g. Generational change: what are the career expectations and aspirations of Millennials and Generation Zs, will these be met by primary care practice as it stands today and what needs to change?
  - h. The future Herriot: what does 'James Herriot' look like today and what might he look like in 10 or 20 years? How has this changed and what is the impact for the professional, the veterinary team and clients?
12. Annex A seeks to map the current and proposed activities in the workstreams that report to APC against the above areas of focus, and identifies areas where new research, activities or workstreams may be required.
13. The Committee is invited to consider the above scope and areas of focus in conjunction with Annex A, to identify any gaps and existing research that could support the development of evidence-based initiatives in these areas.

### Definitions and terminology

14. In the Secretariat meeting of 16 January there was a discussion as to the importance of using the correct terminology as this would help determine the scope of the programme and would be critical to success and acceptance by the professions. It was suggested therefore that one of the first tasks for the Committee, should it wish to pursue the development of such a programme, was to agree the terminology used in its title, specifically whether this should be: primary care, first opinion, general practice or something else.

#### Primary care

15. The advantages of this term are that 'primary care' is well understood in the veterinary and human health fields (see examples below), and it has a wide scope incorporating a range of service which provide a gateway into the veterinary or human healthcare system.
16. The key disadvantages of the term are: first, the ambiguity as to whether it includes dedicated Emergency and Critical Care (ECC) providers, which may be the first port of call for someone who needs veterinary attention for their animal, but are not providing 'general practice'; and second that whilst it clearly defines an area of the health ecosystem it is not one that individuals may readily identify with i.e. they would be more likely to describe themselves as a general practitioner (GP) rather than a primary care practitioner.

*"Primary care services provide the first point of contact in the healthcare system, acting as the 'front door' of the NHS. Primary care includes general practice, community pharmacy, dental and optometry (eye health) services" – NHS England*

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/participation/get-involved/how/primarycare/>

*"Veterinary primary care is characterised by its focus on animals rather than their diseases, on continuity of care, on prevention of disease and on maintenance of health both in individual animals and in populations. It aims to integrate and coordinate the comprehensive care of animals as well as to support the relationships which exist between people and their animals, between clients and veterinary care*

*providers and within the veterinary team” – RCVS, in context of Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice*

<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/modular-combinations-veterinary-primary-care/>

#### General Practice

17. General practice/general practitioners are likely the terms most easily understood by members of the public due to their familiarity with the role of the GP in human medicine. Furthermore, general practitioner is a term used regularly by those in veterinary medicine to describe themselves and their role.
18. The disadvantages of the terms are that GPs in human medicine offer more limited services to the GPs in veterinary medicine, and some first opinion veterinary practices may provide a limited range of service e.g. vaccination clinics or those focusing on particular areas of medicine, and it would be ambiguous as to whether they were covered within the scope of a project covering GP practice.

*‘General practitioners (GPs) treat all common medical conditions and refer patients to hospitals and other medical services for urgent and specialist treatment. They focus on the health of the whole person combining physical, psychological and social aspects of care” – NHS Health Careers*

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/general-practice-gp>

#### First opinion practice

19. The use of the term first opinion practice appears more limited in veterinary medicine and is primarily used to describe equine hospitals providing care without the need for a referral. The terms introduces ambiguity as it implies there will be a ‘second opinion’ and it creates a confusion between ‘referrals’ which may be for the purpose of a diagnosis, procedure and/or possible treatment, after which the case is returned to the referring veterinary surgeon, and a ‘second opinion’ which is only for the purpose of seeking the views of another veterinary surgeon.
20. On the basis of the above, it is not recommended that the term ‘first opinion practice’ is adopted for the purpose of naming this programme.

#### Choosing a name

21. Both ‘primary care’ and ‘general practice’ are well understood terms and broadly describe the same concept, notwithstanding the aforementioned issues around their scope. Ultimately therefore the decision will be whether to adopt the term ‘primary care,’ which perhaps best reflects the role of this branch of the profession within the wider health ecosystem, or general practice, which perhaps more easily lends itself to discussions around careers, as the term ‘general practitioner’ is most commonly used to describe the work of individuals in this branch of the profession.

#### **Decisions required**

22. The Committee is invited to consider whether to pursue a programme focused on ‘recruitment and retention’ in primary care practice as outlined in the paper.
23. Furthermore, if the Committee is minded to pursue such a programme, it is invited to:

- a. Review the proposed scope and areas of focus, to identify any gaps and existing research that could support the development of evidence-based initiatives in these areas;
- b. To consider terminology used to describe the programme and areas of focus;
- c. To provide strategic guidance as to how such a programme could be developed and implemented.

### Next steps

24. Subject to the approval of the Committee as to the direction of travel, in advance of the next meeting the secretariat will: undertake initial desk-based research to support the development of initiatives in the areas identified above; make proposals for additional areas of research; and develop a high-level programme plan.

## Annex A: Mapping workstream activities to the proposed areas of focus

1. This annex seeks to map the current and proposed activities in the workstreams that report to APC against the above areas of focus, and identifies where new research, activities or workstreams may be required.

**Value proposition: what does primary care practice offer and how do we articulate this from a recruitment perspective?**

2. Limited work is currently being undertaken that would support the delivery of this aim. The Committee is invited to consider how best this area of focus might be delivered and where further research is required.

**Skills and competencies: what are the key attributes of successful, happy and healthy primary care practitioners, and how can the RCVS support the development of these?**

3. The work of the Graduate Outcome project provides a strong foundation for developing and delivering work in this area. Furthermore, existing and proposed activities from within the current APC workstreams are also highly relevant to its delivery, including:
  - RCVS Leadership: Proposals to develop a 'veterinary leadership framework' and the Edward Jenner Veterinary Leadership Programme - in particular initiatives to engage veterinary nurses in clinical practice and Veterinary Nurse Clinical Coaches.
  - Mind Matters: Proposals to help veterinary professionals manage and support the mental health of their clients, together with wider work to support mental health and resilience amongst the veterinary team.
  - Fellowship: initiatives to expand membership amongst general practitioners, engage the Fellowship in QI initiatives and the creation of a Fellowship mentoring scheme.

**Retention: why are people leaving primary care practice and how can they be better supported or encouraged to stay? Are the issues unique to this branch of the professions or are they fundamentally the same across all branches of the professions?**

4. Limited work is currently being undertaken that would support the delivery of this workstream. As a starting point the Institute of employment Studies (IES) could be asked to analyse the recent Surveys of the Professions to identify how those working in primary care responded to questions about their views of veterinary work and their likelihood of staying in the profession compared to other branches of the profession, in addition to other trends that may be pertinent to this stream of work.
5. The joint Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) / Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons Wellbeing Awards celebrates and promulgates good practice around workplace wellbeing, and wider MMI work seeks to support stress reduction and increased resilience amongst veterinary professionals. Such initiatives play an important role supporting individuals to stay in the profession.
6. The ViVet programme could also begin to explore how new business models for the delivery of veterinary care could make primary care a more or less attractive proposition.

**Return: how do we encourage people to return (when appropriate) from outside the profession and other branches?**

7. This workstream is closely linked to retention and would again benefit from further analysis of the data from the Surveys of the Professions.
8. The new Strategic Plan makes a commitment to continue to support the mental health and wellbeing of members of the veterinary team and, more specifically, the Mind Matters Initiative is planning to develop a return to work programme for those who have taken time away from work due to mental health issues.

**The impact of Specialist practice: what impact has the rise of Specialist practice had on primary care practice and how can we separate the reality from the perception?**

9. Limited work is currently being undertaken that would support the delivery of this aim. The Committee is invited to consider how best this area of focus might be delivered and where further research is required.

**Technology and change: what impact will technology have on this branch of profession and can practitioners be supported to lead and embrace change to improve their working lives as well as the quality, efficacy and accessibility of the services they provide.**

10. The ViVet programme seeks to empower veterinary professionals to drive innovation in animal health. Recently the programme has started to focus on supporting innovation adoption and creation amongst veterinary professionals in clinical practice. A new operational plan is being developed which will align the programme with the new RCVS Strategic Plan. This will be presented to the Committee for consideration at a future meeting.

**Generational change: what are the career expectations and aspirations of Millennials and Generation Zs, will these be met by primary care practice as it stands today and what needs to change.**

11. Now that millennials are the largest group of pet owners, through ViVet the RCVS has on a number of occasions explored how the generational shift is changing attitudes to pet ownership and expectations of veterinary care.
12. Much research has been conducted outside the veterinary sector as to the changing attitudes to employment of Millennials and Gen Z's. Further work could be undertaken to map this onto the veterinary profession to understand better how careers in primary care could meet these expectations and where changes might be required.

**The future Herriot: what does 'James Herriot' look like today and what might he look like in 10 or 20 years? How has this changed and what is the impact for the professional, the veterinary team and clients?**

13. This would be an entirely new project which could build on the horizon scanning and scenario planning work of Vet Futures, to engage the profession and the public around the current and future role of the general practitioner. Looking at how this has changed and how this will change, and the impact this will have.
14. The Committee is invited to consider what such an exercise might look like and its value in engaging the profession and public.