

## Council Meeting

Thursday, 5 September 2019 at 10:00 am to be held at the RCVS, Belgravia House,  
62/64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

### Agenda

1. **President's introduction** Oral report
2. **Apologies for absence** Oral report
3. **Declarations of interest** Oral report
4. **Minutes of the meetings held on 13 June and 12 July 2019** Refer to Council minutes
5. **Matters arising**
  - a. Obituaries Unclassified
  - b. Council correspondence Oral report
  - c. CEO update Unclassified
6. **Matters for report**
  - a. Telemedicine – update Oral report
7. **Matters for decision by Council (confidential items – TO BE HELD IN COMMITTEE)**
  - a. Discretionary Fund report Oral report/**Confidential**
  - b. Estates Strategy Oral report/**Confidential**
  - c. Strategy Development (*to be continued in afternoon session as required*) **Confidential**
8. **Notices of motion** Oral report
9. **Questions** Oral report
10. **Date of next meeting** Oral report  
Thursday, 3 October 2019 at 10:00 am (reconvening in afternoon 2:00 – 4:00 pm)

### AFTERNOON SESSION: 2:00 – 4:00 pm

11. **RCVS Knowledge Annual General Meeting**
12. **Any other College business** Oral report
13. **Risk Register, equality and diversity** Oral report

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## Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 13 June 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    |
| Professor 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:

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Dr S Doherty   | President, British Veterinary Association (open session only) |
| Mr I Green     | Chair, Disciplinary Committee (open session only)             |
| Dr J B Johnson | Agenda item 16c only  |
| Lord Trees     | Agenda item 15 only   |

### President's introduction

1. The President extended a warm welcome to guests and outlined the order of the meeting.

## Apologies for absence

2. Apologies for absence were received from:

- Professor D J Argyle
- Professor S Dawson
- Professor S A May
- Miss C H Middlemiss (Observer)
- Dr C L Scudamore

## Declarations of interest

3. Declarations of interest were received from:

- Dr M A Donald: Senior Vice-President of the Scottish Branch of the British Veterinary Association;
- Dr S Paterson: President, British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA); Chair of Trustees BSAVA;
- Professor J L N Wood: Member, EU Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Standing Technical Committee.

## Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2019

4. Council had the opportunity to comment on the minutes electronically.
5. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

## Matters arising

### Obituaries

6. There had been three written obituaries received for:

- Dr Lorraine Allan MRCVS
- Dr Alistair Gibson MRCVS
- Miss Louise O'Dwyer RVN

The President also reported that the following veterinarians had died:

- Mr Andrew Brown MRCVS
- Dr Gary Stamp
- Mr Mark Richer MRCVS – former RCVS Council member 1997 – 2001

7. Council and guests stood and observed a minute silence for all members of the College who had passed away since the last meeting.

### Council correspondence and matters for report

8. The President reported:

#### RCVS Council Election 2019

9. Council had been notified of the outcome of the recent RCVS Council elections 2019. As it was in a period of transition under the Governance Legislation Reform Order (LRO) to reduce numbers and change the composition of Council, this meant that only the first three candidates (in order of number of votes) would take up their four-year terms at RCVS Day on Friday, 12 July 2019. These were: Dr Niall Connell, Miss Linda Belton and Dr Joanna Dyer.

10. There would be two university changes: Mrs Jeffery was standing down as the University of Bristol representative on RCVS Council, and would be replaced by the Head of School, Professor Hammond. Mrs Jeffery did, however, remain as an elected member on the Veterinary Nurses Council. Furthermore, Professor Reid was standing down as the University of London representative and his replacement was awaited.

#### RCVS Day 2019

11. Arrangements for RCVS Day were:

|          |   |  |
|----------|---|--|
| Date:    | Friday, 12 July 2019  |  |
| Venue:   | Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), 66 Portland Place, London W1B 1AD |  |
| Timings: | 09:30 am:   | Coffee   |
|          | 10:00 am:   | Annual General Meeting (followed by Meeting of Council)  |
|          | 11:00 am:   | Presentation of Awards   |
|          | 12:00 noon:   | Talk from guest speaker: Dr Patricia Mundy, entitled: <i>'Navigating Diversity and Inclusion in the Veterinary Profession'</i> |
|          | 12:45 pm:   | Drinks   |
|          | 13:00 pm:   | Lunch  |
|          | 15:00 pm:   | End  |

#### Committee membership 2019 - 2020

12. Following the RCVS Council Election 2019 results, the (internal) election for Chair of Standards Committee had to be re-run [later in the meeting]. This had a knock-on effect when finalising the committee membership for the forthcoming College year. The CEO would send details to Council after the meeting with the proposed committee population for approval by Council – by email – in order to get arrangements into place as soon as possible.

#### CEO update

13. The CEO reported that highlights of the work undertaken since the last Council meeting were listed on page two of the report.

14. The CEO further highlighted:

- Great Place to Work 2019: the College had ranked 28<sup>th</sup> in the top 100 medium-category (50 – 499 employees) work places in the 2019 survey;
- she had signed the '*Time to Change*' pledge that look to address mental health and wellbeing within the College;
- her new Executive Assistant would start on Monday, 8 July 2019;
- 'veterinary surgeon' had been recommended for a return to the shortage occupations list by the Migration Advisory Committee;
- the forthcoming '*Survey of the Professions*' had some new questions regarding diversity in order to provide a benchmark at the start of the College's work on this issue;
- RCVS Strategic Plan 2017 – 2019: there was six months left on the current Plan; progress had been made across all areas, although some of the tasks under the global and learning culture ambitions remained outstanding.

15. There were no questions and the report was noted.

## Matters for decision by Council (unclassified items)

### RCVS Delegation Scheme – June 2019

16. The CEO outlined the work undertaken to the Scheme since there had been feedback at the March 2019 Council meeting, and the Scheme now included Terms of Reference for the new Finance and Resources Committee (FRC), and descriptions for the meetings of committee chairs and Officer Team. The College was going through a period of change so the Scheme would continue to evolve. Once the outcome of the Chair, Standards Committee election was known, committee population could be finalised and thereafter each committee would choose their own representative on FRC.
17. The style of minutes for Officer Team meetings was questioned. It was confirmed that Officer Team minutes would take the form of action points to be completed, but there would be no policy decisions; the actions would be circulated to Council. With regards to committee chair meetings with the Officer Team scheduled for the night before Council, these would not be formally minuted as they were intended to generally co-ordinate the structure of the Council meeting the following day and there would be no policy decisions to be made; any actions would be in an informal note.
18. It was commented that the Scheme did not reflect who appointed the CEO of the organisation; the Veterinary Surgeons Act was there for the Registrar, but not the CEO. It was confirmed that it was the responsibility of Council to confirm appointments, as well as the contents of the document before it.
19. There was discussion regarding Paragraph 42, composition of Education Committee and Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC) and that consideration be given to both terms of reference

and terms of office, thereafter a further paper to come back to Council on how sub-committees should work. The CEO noted that there were inconsistencies but that work was being undertaken to remedy that; FRC would review all sub-committees and working groups and a paper would come back to Council.

20. It was proposed that the Nominations Committee should comprise: the Officer Team, CEO, Registrar and, additionally, two members from RCVS Council, one of whom should be an appointed veterinary nurse:

Proposer: Dr K A Richards  
 Seconder: Mrs L V Hill

21. A vote was taken:

In favour: 32  
 Against: 0  
 Abstentions: 0

Council agreed unanimously to accept the proposal.

22. Thereafter, a vote was taken to accept the recommended changes to the RCVS Delegation Scheme as detailed in the paper:

In favour: 32  
 Against: 0  
 Abstentions: 0

Council agreed unanimously to accept the recommended changes.

### Conflicts of interest policy

23. The Director of Operations outlined the paper, in particular the highlighted items in paragraph 17. She confirmed that co-opted members onto committees, etc., would be subject to the same policy.

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

- re: paragraph 17, religious beliefs or vegetarian preferences: these were not the same thing, it could simply be a life-style choice;
  - o it was suggested to amend this to 'ethical beliefs';
- re: paragraph 19, personal relationships in the context of specific discussions: it was commented that this could potentially be all of the time should a member, for instance, be married to another person in the veterinary sphere;

- re: paragraphs 30/31, gifts and hospitality: the offer of, as well as receipt of, gifts or hospitality should be recorded;
  - o agreed.

25. It was proposed to amend paragraph 17, final sentence to read: '*...in appropriate cases it may be necessary to disclose religious or ethical beliefs in so far as they may have a bearing on a particular discussion.*'

Proposer: Mr D J Leicester  
Seconder: Dr D S Chambers

26. A vote was taken:

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| In favour:   | 32 |
| Against:     | 0  |
| Abstentions: | 0  |

Council agreed unanimously to accept the proposed amendment.

27. Thereafter a vote was taken to approve the amended policy, inclusive of the proposed sentence change:

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| In favour:   | 32 |
| Against:     | 0  |
| Abstentions: | 0  |

Council agreed unanimously to accept the recommended changes.

### Brexit issues

28. Council agreed at its last meeting to recognise the degrees of graduates from veterinary schools that had been accredited by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) in the case of a 'no deal' Brexit. Following that meeting, the recognition of degrees from veterinary schools that had EAEVE temporary accreditation was questioned. Education Committee recommended to Council that degrees from such schools should also be recognised.

29. It was questioned why schools would only be granted temporary accreditation, and confirmed that this could be a number of reasons, not least that the accrediting body had sufficient concerns and wanted to re-visit the school within a shortened timeframe. However, within EAEVE, graduates of schools under temporary provisions were accepted for registration and it was suggested this should also be possible if they wanted to register to work in the UK.

30. It was further questioned whether 'temporary' was the same as 'conditional' accreditation that was used for UK veterinary schools, and what would happen if a veterinary school was under temporary accreditation, but was to then fail; would the graduates lose the right to be registered in the UK? It was confirmed that temporary was technically the same as conditional accreditation



and that the only thing to consider was the accreditation status of the veterinary school at the point of registration for the graduate.

31. With the suggestion that 'temporary' accreditation be amended to 'conditional' accreditation of the veterinary school, Council voted on the recommendation from Education Committee, and also to accept the updated wording for one of the RCVS Brexit policies:

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| In favour:   | 31 |
| Against:     | 0  |
| Abstentions: | 1  |

Council agreed to accept the recommended changes.

### Continuing Professional Development (CPD) non-compliance

32. The paper was introduced by Dr Paterson. She explained the current CPD system; the issues experienced; and the proposed changes outlined at paragraphs 17a – f in the paper. It was noted that, under the Veterinary Surgeons Act (VSA) 1966, the College could not refuse to register or renew a member who had not completed their CPD. It was further noted that whilst the majority of the profession completed their CPD requirements, there could be issues with animal welfare – one of the core responsibilities of being a veterinary professional – with prolonged non-compliance.
33. It was questioned whether an administration fee could be charged. It was confirmed that whilst the College did not have specific powers to charge a fee, there had been conversations with Defra in the past for certain fees and it could, therefore, be a recommendation. However, it was commented that if a person was non-compliant with CPD, then it was unlikely that a fee would be paid.
34. It was further questioned if the new requirements took in to account difficult circumstances when considering CPD, for example, maternity/paternity leave; sick parents/children; etc. It was confirmed circumstances would be considered for non-compliant professionals, particularly as this could be an indication of issues in other areas of the professional's life.
35. It was commented that there was a lack of clarity about what counted as CPD, to say 'regular CPD' did not actually mean anything; and that any form of record-keeping should be as easy to use as possible. There was an anomaly in that Advanced Practitioners (AP) were required to do more CPD over a longer 'rolling' five-year period and that there should not be two separate ways of recording. It was suggested that they should do the [what would become] mandatory annual CPD and any extra CPD required for AP status should be on a 'rolling' stream.
36. Council voted on the recommendations arising from the CPD non-compliance meeting outlined at paragraph 17a – f in the paper that were endorsed by Education Committee and VN Council:

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| In favour:   | 31 |
| Against:     | 0  |
| Abstentions: | 1  |

Council agreed to accept the recommendations as detailed.

## Reports of committees – to note

### Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC)

37. The Chair, APC, introduced the report. There was a large amount of positive and exciting work being undertaken by the workstreams represented on the Committee; collaboration was encouraged in order to share work and opportunities; and external speakers had been invited to speak to the meetings to help develop aspects of the strategy.

38. Highlights from the report were:

- paragraph 5: discussions were taking place to expand the Fellowship for veterinary nurses, this would come forward in the future;
- paragraph 9: development of the Fellowship Directory; Fellowship Day was scheduled to be held on 20 September 2019;
- paragraph 16: discussions on ViVet and branding would be considered as it was felt that the link with the RCVS had been underplayed in the past;
- paragraph 17: more ambitious ‘hackathons’ were to be considered to bring people together to find focused ways of working.

39. It was commented that a Fellowship stream for veterinary nurses was a fantastic idea. Concern was expressed, however, that veterinary nurses should be judged at the same high level as veterinary surgeons, whilst ensuring that criteria for entry were relevant and appropriate to the veterinary nursing profession.

40. Under Global Strategy, the key objectives in relation to India were questioned as the future direction appeared to be with South-East Asia/Japan, etc., and there was a need to move as quickly as other organisations were when forming relationships; it was felt that the College was already behind in this sphere. It was confirmed this issue had been discussed at the last meeting of the Committee; Dr Tufnell had attended the Commonwealth Veterinary Conference in India and the intention was to try to use that meeting to explore the appetite of other countries for collaboration with the RCVS.

41. The report was noted.

### Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)

42. The Chair, ARC, outlined the minutes of the meetings held 31 January 2019, 25 April 2019 (**confidential**) and the annual report of the Committee. She highlighted:

- a founding member of the Committee, Judith Rutherford, was stepping down from the Committee in July and would be missed;

- the objectives of the Committee had been delivered in conjunction with its Terms of Reference; the use of the College's Risk Register drove the work of the Committee which had a 'deep dive' into different areas of the College at each meeting. The Risk Register was considered resilient and robust;
- there had been impressive progress within the IT Department, and the Finance Department was incredibly well run and the controls in place were strictly adhered to;
- a lot of time had been spent considering the accounts – the lead up to the publication of the Annual Report had been a very smooth process;
- progress was steady on work relating to the College's European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) accreditation.

43. There was one question that related to a confidential minute that would be raised in the closed session. The reports were noted.

#### **Education Committee (EC)**

44. The Chair-Elect, EC, introduced the report and highlighted:

- the new students on the Committee contributed a lot to discussions;
- outcomes-based CPD: further to the discussion on the earlier paper, proposed dates were outlined;
- graduate outcomes: there was progress following consultation, there were now three Working Groups for this project;
- the review of RCVS accreditation standards, processes, guidance and training had been approved by Education Committee and the process was going ahead;
- Advanced Practitioner (AP): the Education Department would consult on the criteria for AP status over the next few months.

45. It was questioned what was meant by 'diet' at paragraph 25 of the minutes (Statutory Examination Update)? It was confirmed that the term 'diet' was known across medical Royal Colleges for those people sitting the examination.

46. The report was noted.

#### **Standards Committee (SC)**

47. The Chair, SC, introduced the report and highlighted:

- interviews had taken place for new members of the Ethics Review Panel (ERP); there had been a great selection and seven new members recruited to the Panel. A press release

would be issued to announce the changes and summarise the work undertaken by the Panel so far – the Chair had presented a summary which had been useful;

- case studies: a range of case studies on informed consent had been published; those on Schedule 3/telemedicine were under development.

48. There were no questions and the report was noted.

### **Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC)**

49. The Chair, VNC, introduced the report. She highlighted:

- the post-registration qualification framework developed as part of the VN Futures project had been approved/ratified by VNC; the feedback was very good; and VNs from any background could gain a certificate;
- veterinary nurses with international qualifications wishing to practise in the UK should now submit a Letter of Good Standing from a regulatory authority instead of professional references;
- Veterinary Nurses Education Committee (VNEC) now had a Higher Education student representative, but a Further Education student representative was still being sought;
- VNC agreed with the proposals before Council earlier in the meeting regarding CPD;
- Lucy Bellwood, an elected member of VNC was to retire at RCVS Day after four years.

50. There were no questions and the report was noted.

### **PIC / DC Liaison Committee (PIC / DC LC)**

51. The President, as Chair of PIC / DC LC, introduced the report and highlighted:

- the new Professional Conduct computer system was now in place; there had been teething problems and those were being worked through;
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the concerns process at Stage 1 had slipped slightly since the previous meeting, the reasons why had been identified and work undertaken to resolve them;
- An external review of the work of the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) had been undertaken, some areas to think about were identified but, overall, the report was very positive and details would be published in conjunction with the Disciplinary Committee (DC) review details.

52. The set KPI and current figure was explained to Council as well as the reason for the slippage.

53. The report was noted.

## Reports of statutory committees – to note

### Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) (and annual report)

54. The Registrar introduced the report in the Chair's absence. She reported that Mr Ash was nearing his term-end as Chair, on 30 June 2019, though would remain on the Committee as a member for a further year, and wanted to thank him for his tremendous contribution to the work of the College during his tenure.
55. With reference to Stage 2 figures outlined in the paper, it was noted that any minor change in number makes a large change to the KPI percentage. Ways of explaining this were discussed in the April PIC/DC Liaison Committee, particularly in relation to complex cases where explanations were vital. The Liaison Committee continued to focus on and challenge the Registrar and Professional Conduct team to ensure plans for continual improvement were under consideration.
56. It was noted that training was crucial for the statutory committees; PIC had annual training and was looking to add further dates.
57. There were no questions and the report was noted.

### RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

58. The Registrar introduced the report in the Chair's absence, noting that it had been before VNC in May.
59. There was a discussion regarding Interim Suspension Orders and that for the College to have such powers would require changes to primary legislation (i.e. the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966); it was explained that criminal investigations could prevent the RCVS from taking a case through its own disciplinary process first, and delays in the case coming to the College were usually outwith the College's control.
60. The report was noted.

### Disciplinary Committee and RVN Disciplinary Committee (DC) (and annual report) (taken out of order)

61. The report was introduced by the Chair, DC. It had been a busy year with 24 hearings since the last Committee annual report to Council and there were a number of cases listed for the remainder of 2019. All members received ongoing training, and there had been separate training relating to chairing hearings for those members that were interested. Committee make-up had changed from having two Vice-Chairs, to only having one Vice-Chair and a panel of suitably-trained Committee members to call upon.
62. The Committee had undergone an internal audit, and it was confirmed that legal advice was within the reasonable bounds of outcomes. One of the Legal Assessors, Christopher Moger QC, had retired from the Committee and Richard Ferry-Swainson had been appointed in his place.
63. Recruitment had taken place for new members of the Committee – there would be three new lay members from 1 July 2019 with a further two lay members whose terms were due to commence

on 1 July 2020. All members of the Committee were independent of the College / Council. Furthermore, his term as Chair, and Dr Barr's term as Vice-Chair, were due to end at the October 2019 annual DC training; interviews were scheduled for 21 June 2019 for their replacements.

64. There were no questions and the report was noted.

### Notices of motion

65. There were no notices of motion received.

### Questions

66. There were no questions received.

### Dates of future Council meetings

67. The President reported that there had been a change to a date provided for Council June 2020 – this should be the week after (to fall in line with previous years) and will allow for the FVE General Assembly taking place in London.

To confirm, future dates are:

- 12 July 2019 (RCVS Day)
- 5 September 2019
- 3 October 2019
- 7 November 2019
- 23 January 2020
- 5 March 2020
- 16 April 2020
- 11 June 2020 (change: previously scheduled as 4 June – **\*\*please see note below**)
- 10 July 2020 (RCVS Day)
- 3 September 2020
- 8 October 2020
- 5 November 2020

**[\*\*After note: Following the meeting it was agreed that the June 2020 Council meeting should return to 4 June, to allow for joint meetings with the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) as they would be in London for their General Assembly at that time.]**

## Retirements from Council

68. The President reported that there would be six retirements from Council at RCVS Day in July 2019:

### Elected members:

Professor T R C Greet (four years)  
 Mrs L V Hill (20 years)  
 Dr K A Richards (four years)  
 Mr P B Robinson (four years)

### University appointed members:

Mrs A K Jeffery (nine years)  
 Professor S W J Reid (14 years)

69. On behalf of Council, the President thanked those members for their hard work and contributions to both College and Council, listing their achievements while members of Council – members would also be thanked officially at RCVS Day. However, as Mrs Hill and Mrs Jeffery were not attending RCVS Day, the President took the opportunity to present them with a scroll of service. Collectively, the members had 55 years' service to the College which was a huge contribution. A list of the main committees and other groups on which members had served is attached at **Annex A**.

70. The President in turn was thanked in the public forum for the way she had chaired Council for the past year.

## Election of Chair, Standards Committee (re-run)

71. There had been three nominations received:

|                                |  |   |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Candidate:                     | <b>Dr M A Donald</b>   | <b>Dr J M Dyer</b>  | <b>Mr M L Peaty</b>   |
| Supporters:                    | Dr N T Connell<br>Dr S Paterson<br>Professor S W J Reid<br>Dr K A Richards | Mr C T Barker<br>Dr M O Greene<br>Ms L V Goodwin<br>Col N C Smith | Mr J M Castle<br>Ms E K Cox<br>Mr D J Leicester<br>Dr C W Tufnell |
| Date of first joining Council: | July 2016 (Elected)  | July 2015 (Elected)   | July 2017 (Elected)   |
| Current term due to end:       | July 2020  | July 2023   | July 2021   |

72. The candidates had circulated letters to Council to support their nomination.

73. The President outlined the process and, that in accordance with the Chairs of Standing Committees' Election Scheme, neither the candidates (nor supporters) may address Council

(other than to answer any questions submitted), but if anyone wished to have a confidential discussion she could ask candidates and members of the public to leave the room.

74. There had been one question submitted in advance of the meeting:

*“Please would you give examples of your experience of chairing meetings, any challenges that have arisen, and how you have managed those.”*

75. The candidates each took the opportunity to respond to the question, before voting by secret ballot and leaving the room.

76. There was no confidential discussion. The remainder of Council voted by secret ballot, and the President included the three postal ballots received from absent members.

77. The Registrar and Director of Operations (DoO) briefly left the room to count the ballot papers. Upon returning to the room, they reported that there was no need for a further vote as the successful candidate had received more than 50% of the vote of those present (and postal votes received) in the first round.

78. The candidates returned to the room and Dr Donald was congratulated on election as Chair, Standards Committee.

### Date of next meeting

79. There would be a very short meeting of Council as part of the RCVS Day arrangements on 12 July 2019. This would take place at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), 66 Portland Place, London W1B 1AD immediately following the Annual General Meeting at 10:00 am.

80. Thereafter, the date of the next (full) meeting is Thursday, 5 September 2019 at 10:00 am (reconvening in afternoon 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm).

### Risk Register, equality and diversity

81. There were no risks identified from the open session.

Dawn Wiggins  
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## Annex A

**Retiring members at RCVS Day – main contributions** (not exhaustive as there were a number of years that Boards/Working Groups memberships were not added to the main committee lists)

**Professor Tim Greet: elected 2015 – 2019 (four years)**

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Education Committee
- Certification Sub-Committee
- Specialist Recognition Sub-Committee
- Exemption Orders and Associates Working Party

**Mrs Lynne Hill: elected 1999 – 2019 (20 years)**

- President 2005 – 2006
- (Chair) Advisory Committee
- (Chair) Examination Appeals Committee
- (Chair) Preliminary Investigation Committee
- (Chair) Public Affairs Committee
- (Chair) RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee
- (Vice-Chair) Finance and General Purposes Committee
- Audit and Risk Committee
- Education Committee
- Education Policy and Specialisation Committee
- External Affairs Committee
- Nominations Committee
- PIC / DC Liaison Committee
- Planning and Resources Committee
- Specialisation and Further Education Committee
- Veterinary Nurses Committee (prior to becoming Veterinary Nurses Council)
- Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee
- Register and Registration Sub-Committee
- Specialist Recognition Sub-Committee
- Communications Board
- Estates Strategy Project Board
- RCVS Trust

**Dr Kate Richards: elected 2015 – 2019 (four years)**

- (Chair) Standards Committee
- PIC / DC Liaison Committee
- Operational Board

**Mr Peter Robinson: elected 2015 – 2019 (four years)**

- Veterinary Nurses Council
- Certification Sub-Committee
- Register and Registration Sub-Committee
- (Chair) Panel of Assessors for Advanced Practitioner Status
- Graduate Outcomes Working Party

**Mrs Andrea Jeffery: university (Bristol) appointed 2010 – 2019 (nine years)**

- (Chair) Veterinary Nurses Council
- (Chair) Veterinary Nurses Education Committee
- Advisory Committee
- Education Committee
- Education Policy and Specialisation Committee
- RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee
- Science Advisory Panel

NB: Mrs Jeffery will remain as an elected member of the Veterinary Nurses Council – current term to July 2021.

**Professor Stuart Reid: university (Glasgow/London) appointed (14 years)**

- President: 2014 – 2015
- University of Glasgow rep: 2005 – July 2011
- University of London rep: July 2011 – 2019
- Chair, Education Policy and Specialisation Committee
- Chair, Examinations Appeals Committee
- Chair, Fellowship Appeals Committee
- Chair, PIC / DC Liaison Committee
- Chair, Specialist Recognition Appeals Committee
- Advancement of the Professions Committee
- Education Committee
- Nominations Committee
- Planning and Resources Committee
- Preliminary Investigation Committee
- Standards Committee
- Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee
- Operational Board
- Chair, Science Advisory Panel
- Chair, UK Co-ordination Group for FVE
- Chair, Mind Matters Initiative
- Vet Futures Project Board
- Brexit Taskforce

## Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 12 July 2019 at the Royal Institute of British Architects, 66 Portland Place, London, W1B 1AD

### Members:

Ms A K Boag (President in the Chair)

Dr C J Allen\*

Professor D J Argyle\*

Mr C T Barker

Miss L Belton

Professor D Bray\*

Professor E Cameron\*

Mr J M Castle

Dr D S Chambers

Dr N T Connell

Ms E K Cox

Professor S Dawson

Dr M A Donald

Dr J M Dyer

Professor G C W England

Ms L Ford

Ms L V Goodwin

Dr M O Greene

Professor R A Hammond

Mr D J Leicester

Miss R M Marshall

Professor S A May

Mrs C-L McLaughlan

Dr S Paterson

Mr M L Peaty

Dr C L Scudamore

Professor K Smith\*

Col N C Smith

Dr C P Sturgess

Dr C W Tufnell\*

Mr T J Walker

Professor J L N Wood\*

Ms J S M Worthington

\*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)

### Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from:

- Dr C J Allen
- Professor D J Argyle
- Professor E Cameron
- Professor K Smith
- Dr C W Tufnell

- Professor J L N Wood
  - Miss C H Middlemiss (Observer)
2. Professor Bray was not in attendance.

### Declarations of interest

3. A declaration of interest was received from:
- Professor S A May: was now appointed to the Home Office, Animals in Science Committee.

### Council correspondence and matters for report

#### Obituaries

4. No written obituaries had been received.
5. Council, Members, guests and staff stood and observed a minute silence for all members of the College who had passed away since the last meeting.

#### British Veterinary Union Petition

6. The President reported that the College had been alerted to a petition started by the British Veterinary Union (BVU) (part of Unite the Union) that stated: *“We urge the RCVS not to authorise prescription of POM-V remotely without physical examination of the patient/herd.”* As of the evening prior to the meeting, the petition had been signed by 1,219 individuals.
7. The President invited Dr Shams Mir and Dr Suzanna Hudson-Cooke from the BVU on to the stage to hand over the petition.

### Matters for decision by Council

#### Approval of the Presidential Team and Treasurer for 2019/2020

8. The Registrar asked Council to approve the appointment of the new Presidential Team and Treasurer for 2019/2020 as follows:

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| President:               | Dr N T Connell  |
| Vice-President (Senior): | Ms A K Boag     |
| Vice-President (Junior): | Dr M O Greene   |
| Treasurer:               | Dr C P Sturgess |

9. The Presidential Team and Treasurer appointments were approved.

## Date of next meetings

10. The dates of the next Council meetings were confirmed as:

Thursday, 5 September 2019 at 10:00 am

Thursday, 3 October 2019 at 10:00 am

Dawn Wiggins  
Secretary, Council  
020 7202 0737  
[d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk)

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Meeting</b>            | Council   |
| <b>Date</b>               | 5 September 2019  |
| <b>Title</b>              | CEO Update  |
| <b>Classification</b>     | Unclassified  |
| <b>Decisions required</b> | None  |
| <b>Attachments</b>        | None  |
| <b>Author</b>             | Lizzie Lockett<br>CEO<br><a href="mailto:l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk">l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk</a> |

## Summary

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

- Learning culture
- Leadership and innovation
- Continuing to be a First-rate Regulator
- Global reach
- Our service agenda

This paper outlines progress under each heading; we also update the profession on progress on a regular basis by *RCVS News* (electronic) and social media, and via the veterinary and veterinary nursing media. Going forward, now there is an increased number of Council meetings, it is proposed that this lengthy update be produced for every other meeting, with a summary of key highlights produced at every meeting.

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

- Expanded our public outreach by attending the Royal Highland Show and BBC Countryfile Live North for the first time
- Held a strategy day for Officers and outgoing and incoming Committee Chairs in Bristol, together with the first meeting of the new Officer team
- Put out a call for vets and nurses to volunteer to test an early version of the new OneCPD app
- Reviewed our recruitment process and made a number of appointments in new roles, including a Marketing Communications Manager, an Education Quality Improvement Manager (as recommended by ENQA), and a new Committee Liaison Officer to help cope with the increased number of committee and Council meetings post Legislative Reform Order
- Launched self-service direct debit management for all vets and nurses (due w/c 2 September)
- Announced our new continuing professional development (CPD) policy to help improve compliance rates
- Opened voting for a new Chair of the Fellowship Board, along with a new governance structure
- Working with the British Veterinary Association and Defra, succeeded in gaining a recommendation from the Migration Advisory Committee that veterinary surgeons return to the Shortage Occupation List, which has now been approved by the Home Office
- Announced a review of 'under care'
- Hosted a successful RCVS Day, which included a focus on diversity and the launch of a campaign to celebrate leadership role models
- Launched a new series of ViVet innovation events
- Completed the data-gathering stage of the Surveys of the Veterinary and Veterinary Nursing Professions
- Published our Annual Report 2018
- Bestowed our first Sarah Brown Mental Health Research Grant
- Rolled out the new Council and Committee collaboration tool to the majority of committees

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**

The implementation of our outcomes-based CPD policy, which includes reflective practice, is now underway – see A7 for detail – and the Education team is working closely with RCVS Knowledge to ensure that clinical audits and significant event analysis are included as options in the new OneCPD App, and are promoting the range of different types of CPD beyond attending conferences and reading the vet/VN press.

A podcast on blame culture has been recorded as part of the RCVS Knowledge digital Quality Improvement event, which will be available soon.

A further podcast considering the benefits of learning culture and compassionate regulation was recorded for Blunt Dissection and has currently received 2,800 hits.

#### **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**

Working with the Point of Care Foundation (POCF), the charity that delivers Schwartz Round training and support in the UK, we have launched 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 and is being run under the Mind Matters Initiative. The first round of training has taken place and Rounds will be starting soon in the pilot practices. A Schwartz Rounds Live event will take place at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress to showcase how the approach works.

#### **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)**

Following the RCVS/BVA #petsneedvets social media campaign last year, further work is being scoped out in this area, potentially to include additional information for animal owners that builds on the practice/client relationship poster and leaflets produced earlier this year (see E4, below).

#### **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.



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. A paper including the report and our draft responses was discussed by Council at its March meeting. Thereafter Mind Matters Taskforce members were invited to comment on the report and recommendations before publication. Some comments have now been received and the report will be published soon.

**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 were agreed by Council at its March meeting. Evaluation of key activities is underway. A Risk Register for MMI was presented at the 10 July meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee. The Advancement of the Professions Committee now oversees the work of MMI. A new Chair, Professor Susan Dawson, has taken over from Professor Stuart Reid, who has stepped down from Council; Professor Reid will continue to support the Initiative as Veterinary Schools Council representative on the Taskforce. As MMI comes to the end of its initial five-year period, a review report will be published and an event is planned to mark this anniversary.

**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)**

In March, Council supported the recommendations of Education Committee to implement an outcomes-based approach to CPD. To ensure that an effective IT recording platform is available to support the implementation of this policy, the new CPD requirements will be implemented using a phased approach from January 2020, at which point the IT platform and supporting guidance will be available, and members will be able voluntarily to sign up. The new requirements will become mandatory from January 2022. In preparation for the launch, we are recruiting volunteers to test the new OneCPD recording App between October 2019 and December 2019, to ensure that it is fit for purpose. We will also be gathering feedback from major employers.

**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, including the British Small Animal Veterinary Association. 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 (PDP). The Graduate Outcomes consultation results have indicated strong support from the profession for mentorship within the PDP, and initial proposals emerging for a new, redesigned PDP are centred on support for graduates through mentorship.

**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)**

Our public outreach programme of events in recent years (expanded this summer to include the Royal Highland Show and BBC Countryfile Live North) has afforded us the opportunity to speak to hundreds of school pupils about the realities of a career in veterinary science. Meanwhile, we will be establishing a veterinary careers working group, in liaison with the Veterinary Schools Council, to determine how best to produce and disseminate the most appropriate and useful veterinary careers information for school pupils.

This will also work alongside activity within the Diversity and Inclusion Group to address broadening the pool of prospective veterinary students.

Mind Matters financially supported a one-day mental health and wellbeing course for students, in partnership with the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS) – VetKind – which took place in autumn 2018, the course will be re-run this autumn. Meanwhile, a Mind Matters Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Roundtable will take place on 23 September 2019, in conjunction with the Veterinary Schools Council.

The Graduate Outcomes consultation included a section on ‘clinical education for general practice’, which explored how the profession felt about where clinical education should take place for students, to ensure they are prepared for their future careers. The results indicate strong support for the majority of clinical education to take place in general practice, and the Working Group is currently considering options on how this can be realised in future.

**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 have once again invited these representatives to our key events in 2019, including Royal College Day and Fellowship Day. We will be repeating the successful Fellows of the Future student competition at Fellowship Day 2019 (20 September).

For the first time, we sought the assistance of veterinary and veterinary nurse students at our public outreach events over the summer, to help provide information to school pupils on applying for vet/VN courses, which was a well received initiative.

Vet Futures Student Ambassadors are involved in the next ViVet Symposium (1 October). and a meeting is currently being arranged with AVS reps to understand how we can rejuvenate the Ambassadors project more broadly.

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 – see A9.

VN Futures attended the inaugural SVN Fest held at Royal Veterinary College in Camden to help student veterinary nurses (SVNs) learn more about VNF and encourage involvement.

We have written an article for the British Small Animal Veterinary Association Student Companion magazine, aimed at informing students and new graduates about the current PDP and available support in their transition into the workplace. This article also references the work we are planning through Graduate Outcomes to improve the PDP further and provide more support. This is due to be published shortly.

In terms of our EMS placement programme at the College, we have recently hosted a student from Liverpool, who worked in the policy team carrying out various tasks in relation to the LWP and Brexit. This follows a previous successful placement with a student from the RVC, who had a similar week but also spent some time in the Education Department working on a project related to European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) accreditation standards, which was tailored for them as they had some previous experience as a student rep in that area. Other placements are in the process of being organised, and there has been some interest from students from most schools in the first wave of applications. It has been suggested that it might be possible to try and combine placement weeks from several schools at once in order to have a group of students working together, but this needs further discussion with the school EMS co-ordinators.

Plans are underway to create a My Account area on the RCVS website 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/BVA/Veterinary Schools Council) meets regularly to assess progress, and evaluation of the impact of priority activities will take place during 2020, the final year of the current five-year Vet Futures Action Plan.

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 (BVNA)). Work is underway to improve the presence of VN Futures online, through the development and build of a separate website and exploration of a dedicated Facebook presence, 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 legislative reform order (LRO) completed its passage through Parliament with a debate in the House of Lords on 1 May 2018. The Order was subsequently signed by the Defra Minister, Lord Gardiner, on 2 May and came into force on 1 July 2018.

A process of reviewing the committees that support Council, and the work of the Operational Board, then took place, and an updated Delegation Scheme was agreed by Council at its June 2019 meeting, including the winding down of the Operational Board and the setting up of the new Finance and Resources Committee. The composition of all committees, subcommittees and working groups has now been agreed, and the new calendar of meetings put in place for the current presidential year. The new set up will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Further training and development opportunities for Council members will now be prioritised following the recruitment of the new HR Director, who is working with the Director of Leadership and Innovation to develop and deliver proposals.

All new and existing Council members were asked to update the Skills Matrix in order to support appropriate deployment of skills in committees and working groups. A recent meeting of those Council members who joined in summer 2018, together with lay members of the Veterinary Nurses Council, sought their views on the induction and embedding process, so that we can continue to learn and improve.

A new Governance Officer has been recruited and is now working within the Operations Department to manage items such as the skills matrix, terms of reference, contracts register, trademarks register, risk register, secretariat function for Audit and Risk Committee and Finance and Resources Committee, etc.

### **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. The activities of the Fellowship are now overseen by the Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC).

The Fellowship Board has recently made governance changes, including to its size and composition, as well as the processes for appointing and electing individuals to the Board. An election is currently being held for the new Chair of the Board, who will take office at Fellowship Day 2019. In addition, two members have also been added to the Board, to be responsible for projects and engagement.

An online Directory of Fellows is being developed to help raise the profile of the Fellowship and to highlight the ways in which Fellows can contribute back to the veterinary profession and wider society.

### **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 2017 meeting, including 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 worked with the NHS Leadership Academy to develop a MOOC to provide a gateway programme for veterinary professionals wishing to improve their leadership skills. This proved very popular, with well over 5,000 enrolments across the programme's modules. Participants included veterinary surgeons and nurses drawn from over 130 countries, demonstrating its universal relevance. The programme made finalist in the prestigious EFMD (European Foundation for Management Development) Excellence in Practice Award, which recognise collaborative management and leadership programmes across the globe. An evaluation project for the MOOC will shortly be underway.

An initiative called 'Inspiring Veterinary Leaders' designed to showcase the diversity of leadership and leadership roles in the professions, was launched at RCVS Day 2019 and has been widely promoted across social media: [www.rcvs.org.uk/inspiringleaders](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/inspiringleaders). The information panels used at RCVS Day can currently be seen on the walls at Belgravia House.

**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, focusing on Precision Veterinary Medicine.

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

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.

Following the Operational Board's decision last October to set up a Working Group to progress these issues, the first meeting of the Diversity and Inclusion Group was held on 23 April. A second meeting took place on 20 August when an action plan was drawn up, including a draft RCVS statement on diversity and inclusion. The Group is chaired by the President and reports via the APC, which will consider the statement at its 10 September meeting. Meanwhile the President published a blog on the case for a diverse and inclusive workforce on 15 August.

Diversity was also the theme at RCVS Day, with the outgoing President's guest speaker, Tricia Mundy, speaking on the topic.

## 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 by the Legislation Working Party (LWP) 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. The LWP has made considerable progress, including a growing list of recommendations for legislative reform, and hopes to be able to report to Council in early 2020. The recommendations are likely to include several items focused on bolstering the VN role. The RCVS website now has summaries of each LWP meeting, and a blog by the LWP chair Professor May has been published.

One of the key findings of the 2017 VN Schedule 3 survey 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. 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 RCVS News, and subsequently covered in the veterinary and VN media.

A further series of case studies addressing more challenging questions has been drafted and the content for a useful checklist for veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses to use in practice has been developed and, following a period of review and amendment, will be considered by the Standards Committee on 9 September. The checklist – which uses the mnemonic ‘SUPERB’ – will be produced in poster format and a copy mailed to all veterinary practice premises in the UK. All Schedule 3 related guidance and advice will be available via [www.rcvs.org.uk/schedule3](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/schedule3)

### **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) was 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 considered the recommendations and congratulated the RCVS on its work, and indicated that they are minded to wait for the outcome of the LWP so that they can consider all the College’s reform recommendations in the round.

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. This has been published and is now available on the UK government website.

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)**

Following its lengthy and detailed consideration of the implications of new technologies the recommendation of Standards Committee was that there should be a detailed review of a number of areas of the Code / Guidance including the interpretation and application of 'under care' and the provision of 24/7 care, as well as a number of anomalies that had arisen within the current guidance. In June 2019, Council considered these recommendations, along with independent legal advice, and agreed that there should be a wide-ranging review engaging all sectors of the veterinary professions.

The work in carrying out the review was referred back to Standards Committee, who will be considering how this might proceed and the timetable for the process at its meeting in September.

A 'call for evidence' will be the first stage of the process of obtaining views leading to the working up of the terms of proposed new guidance, if appropriate, which would be considered by Council and, once approved in principle, would be subject to formal consultation.

**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 final report of the results from the Graduate Outcomes consultation has been received, and considered by the Graduate Outcomes Working Party. In order to review the feedback from the profession in detail, the group initially split into three subgroups to consider the data for Day One Competences (D1C), the Professional Development Phase and EMS/Clinical education for general practice. The results provided a clear direction of travel for D1C and PDP, and proposals for workstreams as a result have been agreed by the full working party and will be presented to Education Committee in September. The consultation feedback for the EMS and Clinical Education sections is less clear, and as a consequence these proposals are still under development.



## 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 Future Veterinary Capacity and Capability Project (FVCCP), which aims to ensure that workforce needs continue to be met, regardless of which Brexit scenario becomes reality. Efforts are currently focused on ensuring that the best quality evidence can be compiled showing the scale of the shortage of veterinary surgeons and the reasons for low retention rates in order that any improvements can be tracked.

Following lobbying by the RCVS, BVA and Defra, the Home Office has indicated that it will accept the Migration Advisory Committee's recommendation that veterinary surgeons be added to the Shortage Occupation List. This will streamline the process for veterinary surgeons with overseas nationality to gain a UK work visa (including, in the event of Brexit, citizens of the European Union). We continue to await a final decision, and publication of the delayed Immigration Bill.

### **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)**

We continue to assist prospective and existing registrants with overseas qualifications who have concerns about their ability to practise in the UK after Brexit. We will shortly be updating the RCVS website with detailed information about how registration eligibility for EU graduates will change in the event of a no-deal Brexit.

The RCVS/Veterinary Defence Society (VDS) 'Introduction to the UK veterinary professions' course for overseas vets and VNs was held on 11 June in London and was well received by the delegates who attended. The next course will be held on 29 October 2019 and a promotional video is currently in production to help boost attendance.

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

We have carried out a survey amongst non-UK practising members of the College in order to better understand the benefit of membership to them, how well engaged they feel with the College and whether they may be likely to return to work in the UK. The data are currently being analysed and will be discussed by the APC in due course.



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

Subsequent to the Commonwealth Veterinary Conference (CVC) in Bangalore, a paper was considered by the APC outlining a series of options pertaining to objectives D5-D9 for further exploration. In due course APC will consider more detailed papers on each of these options. Where appropriate, APC's recommendations will be referred to the Finance and Resources Committee and/or RCVS Council.

#### **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, and given the current review of RCVS undergraduate veterinary education accreditation, the global market for RCVS accreditation is not currently a high priority.

However, in the light of the aforementioned CVC visit and discussions that took place there, a scoping discussion was held at APC, and in due course more detailed proposals will be drawn up for further discussion. One related option under consideration is the possibility of delivering the Statutory Examination overseas.

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

At its May 2019 meeting, APC considered a paper that noted expressions of interest in the UK's Practice Standards Scheme from representatives from various Commonwealth countries. Options for marketing the Scheme abroad will be drawn up for consideration by the Committee.

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

Opportunities to work within the OIE regulatory body twinning programme are being explored. OIE is identifying candidate countries, and discussions have begun with Australia and South Africa concerning their experience as 'parent' organisations in the hope that we can learn from them. APC will have the opportunity to consider a formal proposal once further progress has been made.

Observer status of the World Veterinary Association (WVA) is also being considered, as they are developing a 'global vision of veterinary medicine education' and increasingly engaging more with statutory bodies or bodies with mixed competence. Observer status would give the College an opportunity to engage in WVA's work and better understand whether, in the longer term, full membership would be beneficial.

#### **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)**

Some opportunities are being flagged via the Vet Futures 'My Vet Future' careers hub, which is being led by BVA/Vet Record. Others may come out of our pilot work, in the future.

### **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. Preparations for this are now underway, with a conference venue (Church House, Westminster) booked and options for evening events being explored. We also plan to host a meeting of the International Accreditors Working Group alongside this event.

## **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**

The Great Place to Work survey was completed by staff in August 2018 with a response rate of 89%, with positive changes in the areas on which we focused, such as corporate social responsibility, and reward and communication, and some decreases in other areas. More recently, on 8 May, we were ranked 28<sup>th</sup> Best UK Workplace (medium category) and awarded a Laureate for being within the top 50 consistently for the last five years. The 2019 survey opens shortly.

We also came within the top ten best places for women to work in the UK (medium-sized) for the second year running, and signed the Time to Change Pledge to support better mental health and wellbeing in the workplace in the spring.

A staff away day will take place on 6 September and the agenda will include discussion around the building move, Great Place to Work, strategy and values, and working patterns.

### **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 decision has been made to sell Belgravia House and an agency selected to support this. A tendering process for an agency to support the purchase of a new building is currently underway, and Council has approved broad parameters for the purchase. An update on progress will be reported in the confidential session of this meeting of 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**

As already mentioned, the oneCPD app is in testing with staff and members.

The Digital Team has worked closely with Professional Conduct team and have now largely resolved the immediate problems with performance which were present in the new ProfCon2 application at launch.

Continued efforts to improve our members' experience of the College have delivered a number of improvements, particularly, during the last two months, where we have developed and launched a number of self-service capabilities into the MyAccount area.

Self-service Direct Debit management launches in the first week of September; and our new Council and Committee Collaboration System is now in use across almost all committees and has received a positive response from all stakeholders so far.

#### **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 expanded our portfolio of public outreach events this year by exhibiting for the first time at both the Royal Highland Show and BBC Countryfile Live North, bringing our total number of summer events since 2016 to seven (comprising 28 days).

Work continues 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. We intend to trial this campaign with RCVS-accredited practices from early autumn and launch it publicly in late autumn.

The vet-client relationship poster that we mailed to all veterinary practices in March was converted into a leaflet for our public outreach summer events and distributed widely to all visitors to our stand. We will also look at ways to make this poster available through digital channels, for example, a video version for practice websites, social media channels and waiting room display screens.

#### **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 is ongoing and 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 and the Operational Board have discussed potential options for a mechanism and this now needs to be actioned.

#### **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**

An outline plan for a review of our First-Rate Regulator Initiative was considered by the Operational Board in September 2018. A series of research activities is now underway to support this, including

additional questions to the regular Surveys of the Professions around relationship with, and views on, the RCVS; animal-owner research around awareness of the RCVS, Practice Standards Scheme and Veterinary Client Mediation Service; research amongst the public about trust in the professions; research amongst our key stakeholder organisations. In addition, mechanisms for capturing better data around the experience of those making complaints are being developed. This research is in various stages of completion and will be drawn together, along with a summary of audits into our complaints process, during the autumn.