

Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 10 November 2016 at the RCVS, Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

Dr C W Tufnell (President in the Chair)

Mrs E Acaster

Professor D J Argyle

Mr C T Barker

Mr D J Bartram

Ms A K Boag

Dr K Braithwaite*

Professor E Cameron^

Mr D F Catlow

Dr N T Connell

Dr J V Davies*

Mr R Davis

Professor S Dawson

Dr M A Donald

Mrs J M Dyer

Professor G C W England

Mr N P Gibbens

Miss L V Goodwin

Dr C J Gray

Dr M O Greene

Professor T R C Greet

Professor R A Hammond*

Professor M E Herrtage*

Mrs L V Hill

Mr D C Hutchison

Mrs A K Jeffery

Mrs R J Jennings*

Mr P C Jinman

Mr T J King

Professor S A May

Dr J R Molyneux

Mrs S Paterson

Professor S W J Reid

Dr K A Richards

Mr P B Robinson

Dr K S H Salmon

Col N C Smith

Dr C P Sturgess

Dr P B Viner

Dr T H Witte*

Professor J L N Wood

*Absent

^Not in attendance

In attendance:

Mrs E K Cox

Chair, Veterinary Nurses Council

President's introduction

1. The President welcomed members and guests and outlined the order of the meeting. He thanked the facilities team for their hard work in turning the Council Chamber round from the Drinks Reception the previous evening to its current meeting set up, as well as staff on the front door and the RVC students who acted as waiting staff for the evening.

Apologies for absence

2. Apologies have been received from:

- Dr Braithwaite
- Dr J V Davies
- Professor R A Hammond
- Professor M E Herrtage
- Mrs R J Jennings
- Dr T H Witte

- Ms E Butler, Chair ARC

- Professor E Cameron was not in attendance.

Declarations of interest

3. The following declarations were noted:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Mr P C Jinman | Trustee of Horses for Homes; Had been elected as Vice Chair of the Farmers Club in 2017, thereafter Chair in 2018; |
| Dr S Paterson | Clinical Director of UK Vet Partners |

Minutes of previous meetings

Minutes of the meetings held on Thursday, 2 June 2016 and Friday, 15 July 2016

4. Council accepted these minutes as true records of the meetings at the closed meeting of Council in September, and confirmed again in public forum.

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 29 September 2016 (held in committee)

5. Council accepted these minutes as a true record of the meeting.

Matters arising

Obituaries

Professor Bob Michell

6. The President gave a brief tribute to the former President of the RCVS, and stated that Professor Michell had been instrumental in his standing for election to RCVS Council as he had put him forward to be on a RCVS Working Party during his first year of practice.

7. The 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme of WWI, where 67 members of the College died, was also recognised and the President read out an extract from 'Veterinary Journal, December 1916':

'EXPERIENCES OF A VETERINARY OFFICER AT THE FRONT

During one of the recent bombardments I was ordered to a village under shell fire to attend some horses, and afterwards went on to where they were cleaning up the scene of a recent fight. The dead bodies of both English and Germans were lying about everywhere, and the piles of rifles and equipment were being collected by the Salvage Corps. The place was still being shelled, and the stretcher-bearers were bringing in the wounded. At nightfall I returned to the village where my billet was. About 10.45 the Germans started shelling us, and we all made for the cellars.

One of my brother officers, a very popular man in the regiment, collected four of his men, and was placing them in a cellar just opposite Headquarters, where I happened to be. I saw him order his men to descend the cellar steps, and he himself prepared to follow, when suddenly a shell descended full in the entrance and killed the whole lot. He was one of the best of fellows, and his death in my presence was a great shock to me. I myself did not go to a cellar, but went to my Aylwyn Hut, where I sat on the edge of the bed and chatted with two other veterinary officers, who, stationed close by, had come into the village on business, and were unable to return on account of the whole of the road being heavily shelled.

Suddenly a shell burst within thirty yards of the hut, and killed twelve horses outright, a fragment coming right through the roof. The concussion knocked the three of us down to the ground, but did not make us unconscious, although we were dazed for a time.

One of my comrades wanted to go out of the hut, but I persuaded him that to go out into the darkness would be madness, especially to attempt to travel along the road, and eventually we all sat and waited until daylight. The three of us suffered very much from shell shock, and were for a time involuntarily trembling, our nerves being greatly upset...'

8. Council observed a 2-minute silence in recognition of armistice and all colleagues that had passed since the last meeting.

Council correspondence and matters for report

New Fellowships awarded

9. As noted at the September meeting, the President publically recorded his congratulations to the newly awarded Fellows (on Council) at the next open meeting of Council, and stated that 29 out of the 44 new Fellows were welcomed at the incredibly successful inaugural Fellowship Day held on 19 October at the Royal Institute:

- Fellowship by Meritorious Contributions to Clinical Practice:
 - Dr C P Sturgess

- Fellowship by Meritorious Contributions to Knowledge:
 - Professor D J Argyle
 - Professor S Dawson

- Fellowship by Meritorious Contributions to the Profession:
 - Professor M E Herrtage
 - Col N C Smith

Council Election 2017

10. A notice would shortly go in to RCVS News, and had already been sent to the six retiring members at the 2017 AGM. The deadline for submission of nominations was **5:00 pm on Tuesday, 31 January 2017**.

Elections of Vice President, Chair Education Committee and Chair Standards Committee

11. Notices of these elections had been sent to Council electronically and would be agenda items at the March 2017 Council meeting. Attention was drawn to the closing date which was also **5:00 pm on Tuesday, 31 January 2017**.

RCVS Day 2017

12. Arrangements were still being worked on for the next RCVS Day. It was confirmed:

Date: Friday, 7 July 2017

Venue: Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), 66 Portland Place, London W1B 1AD

CEO update

13. The CEO took the opportunity to reflect on the work the College had undertaken over the last three years and that for a relatively small profession it made a big impact and had done so for many years. Of the action points in the last Strategy Plan, it was noted that 34 out of 35 had been completed and the final one would go forward into the new Plan so that it was not forgotten.
14. The last year had been successful but also challenging: Vet Futures had provided a 'road map' for the future and allowed the College to select issues to work on for the next three years; Brexit had meant that there was a lot of work to undertaken and conversations to be had, for example with the British Veterinary Association (BVA) to present a united front on issues identified, and with the meat hygiene industry representatives whose workforce was predominantly overseas veterinarians. The importance of the commitment to work with partners across Europe to maintain a level of influence was noted.
15. The Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) had had a complete overhaul and there had been a 35% increase in applications in 2016, Dr Molyneux and all of the team were recognised for making the Scheme a success.

16. The high levels of staff engagement had been maintained and the latest Great Place to Work Survey had shown that the RCVS was still above 90% for the third year running, which was a fantastic result.

17. The CEO invited questions or comments on the report, these included but were not limited to:

- re: Ethical Review Committee pilot: please do not close this after the pilot ended, even if it had not been used a lot, there was still nowhere else to deal with this matter;
- it was disappointing that the RCVS was not represented on the working body of Federations of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) and questioned if this could be changed?
 - o it was noted that the working relationship with FVE was currently very strong and that the RCVS was part of some of its groups, this would, however, be reviewed;
- it was questioned whether the PSS IT issues had been resolved?
 - o it was noted that the system – monikered ‘Stanley’ – was the element of the Scheme that was causing most difficulty; it was functional and working, just not very well. There was a consultant currently working with Skillwise and the ambition was to fix the issues within the next six weeks. Council would be updated on the progress of this project.

Matters for decision by Council

RCVS Strategy Plan 2017 - 2019

18. The CEO introduced the new Plan and highlighted that it was more ambitious, innovative and forward-looking. There had been a number of streams into the Plan: committee and staff away days and the Council meeting that was held in September. There was, however, no agreement on the new Vision Statement as it was difficult to encapsulate where the College wanted to be in a few words. He asked that the Plan not be held up because of this but that the vision should be reconsidered and brought back to a future meeting.

19. It was noted that there were 39 action points (40 by re-considering the Vision), 15 of which would be focussed on in 2017, commencing in January.

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

- re: Section D: Global Reach: public health must not be forgotten and should rise up the agenda;
 - o this was agreed;
- keep a working public document that is simple which says ‘this is what we do’;

- there was a general reference to disillusionment in the profession and the availability of guidance for vets on potential opportunities and options;
 - o it was noted that it was not a missing action, rather that it was a VF action lead by the BVA, and that information on the careers hub could be used to provide direction. The timeline of 2017 was not articulated in the Plan but was in the VF report;
- the differences between veterinary nurse and veterinary surgeon education and training, and the capabilities of new graduates immediately they go into practice, was discussed. The skills of new graduates were acknowledged, however, it was emphasised that schools were not producing the end 'product' but that some input from practices was required and that, potentially, there needed to be a philosophy change within the profession to recognise this. It was noted that Education Committee had its own strategic plan that focussed on graduate outcomes, technical controls, and communication skills;
- that blame culture existed within the profession was highlighted. It was suggested that fear was generated both from within the profession and from clients, and it was hoped that Alternative Disputes Resolution (ADR) could help graduates in exposure to blame from both the profession and the public;
 - o the CEO responded that he also hoped that the latest ADR project would be a success as it was based in mediation and that in taking part the veterinary surgeons concerns of losing their rights to practise would be reduced; and that the solicitors in charge of the project had KPIs of 6-weeks completion times. The extra meeting of the PIC/DC Liaison Committee in January should provide information from the new ADR scheme; and the solicitors as part of their ADR remit would provide 'textured information' around complaints and support to vets in practice. This would all help to influence the culture.

21. A vote was taken to agree the Plan as a whole before looking to the actions in the Operational Plan for 2017. It was unanimously agreed.

- re: Operational Plan 2017: it was commented that it was disappointing not to see improving the support for overseas graduates in the UK was not on the list for 2017, and the College needed to be mindful of overseas graduates in, and looking to work in, the UK – even if people *could not* work in the UK, they should *want* to work in the UK, and the College should be pro-active in keeping its membership;
 - o the CEO agreed that the College would be active in keeping the membership, and that it was included under number one in the Plan under Brexit (Section D: Global Reach).

22. A vote was taken and Council agreed unanimously the Operational Plan for 2017.

CPD policy

23. The Chair of Education Committee, Professor Dawson, introduced the paper, which outlined the results of the consultation on the proposals for an outcomes-based Continuing Professional Development (CPD) model that had been agreed by RCVS Council at its meeting in June 2016.

In response to the consultation outcomes, Council was being asked to support the recommendations made by Education Committee and VN Council to pilot the new outcomes-based CPD proposals.

24. 3357 members of the professions responded to the CPD consultation. Whilst, overall, a small majority agreed with each of the proposed changes, respondents had expressed concerns about the additional time that it would take to reflect on CPD and a worry about bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork. The consultation responses had also shown that there is a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding about the proposals and about the current CPD requirements.
25. Whilst accepting that the evidence that outcome-based CPD systems are the most effective at improving practice and patient health outcomes is strong and the RCVS is right to show leadership in this area the CPD Policy Working Party, Education Committee and VN Council had all agreed that it is equally important to listen to the professions and address its concerns.
26. Education Committee and VN Council had supported the recommendation of the Working Party that the RCVS should recruit a group of volunteers from the professions that would be willing to pilot the proposed CPD system and drive the associated IT system forward. It would be important to find volunteers from different areas of the profession and to include veterinary surgeons and nurses who are less used to reflecting on their CPD and not instinctively in favour of the outcome-based proposals. The pilot work would be used to test the proposals, refine them to ensure that they are not burdensome and to develop case studies to inform the professions about the benefits and ease of the new system.
27. Council agreed that the recommendations to undertake pilot work were appropriate given the responses to the consultation and hoped that this would reassure the professions that the RCVS wishes to engage with them to dispel any misunderstandings and to develop a workable outcomes-based CPD system. It was noted that once the pilot and case studies are completed a decision would be taken, based on the outcomes of the pilot, on whether the outcomes-based CPD system should be mandatory for all registered veterinary surgeons and nurses
28. RCVS Council supported the next steps as recommended by the Education Committee and VN Council and agreed that RCVS should move forward with a pilot of the outcomes-based CPD proposals.

RCVS Statutory Examination for Membership

29. The Chair of Education Committee introduced the statutory membership examination review. She thanked the education team for the excellent focus group report and invited Council to approve the recommendations that had been made by Education Committee, following consideration by the Examination Board and the Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee.
30. The statutory membership examination had changed very little in the past 30 years and was no longer in line with current veterinary schools' assessment of their students. A wide range of stakeholders had taken part in the focus groups and all had agreed that the design and delivery of the examination needed to be revised and updated. Recommendations from the focus groups had been grouped into pre-exam, exam and post-exam changes. Primary Qualifications Sub-

Committee (PQSC) and Education Committee supported the pre-exam and exam proposals but felt that the post-exam proposals should be considered as part of any wider review of Professional Development Phase (PDP).

31. The recommendations that Council was invited to accept were summarised. The pre-exam recommendations would put in place tools to help ensure that exam candidates would be in the best position to be successful in the assessment and there would be more engagement with applicants and candidates. Changes to the structure of the examination included use of MCQ and short answer questions and OSCEs. The importance of retaining a live animal component in the examination was recognised and it was proposed that there would be a mini clinical examination as well. It was proposed that delivery of the examination should be contracted out to a veterinary school or to a consortium of schools. At the moment the vet schools host the exam but are not involved in setting the exam content or appointing the examiners. Finally, it was proposed to allow candidates to opt out of sitting an IELTS English language test if English was their first language.
32. Paragraph 69 was referred to which noted that the UK's withdrawal from the EU might increase applicants to the statutory membership examination. There was reference to British students, studying at other EU veterinary schools, who were aware and concerned that they might have to sit the statutory examination in order to register when the UK left the EU. It was recommended that their concerns about future registration should be addressed.
33. The CEO said that RCVS intended to work with EAEVE and suggested that students or vets, who had started their courses at other EU schools before the referendum, would be able to register. There would be students who had been offered a place but had not started their course by the date of the referendum so any cut-off date would have to be clearly defined.
34. Referring to comments from overseas vets about not feeling welcome in the UK it was felt that this perception needed to be addressed.
35. Council was unanimous in accepting the pre-examination and examination recommendations for the statutory membership examination.

RCVS Delegation Scheme 2016

36. The Registrar outlined the paper, highlighting changes to:
 - Operational Board: to include the newly appointed Deputy CEO;
 - PIC/DC Liaison Committee: to take into account the committee's evolution over time and to have one member of the Presidential Team as Chair for 3-years for continuity; and
 - Veterinary Nurses Council: to bring up to date following the new Supplemental Charter 2015.
37. Re: Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC): paragraph 34: it was questioned that this referred to Schedule 2 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, rather than the Legislative Reform Order (LRO) 2013. The Registrar confirmed that the VSA implied the LRO and the committee was constituted accordingly.

38. Re: PIC/DC Liaison Committee: paragraph 36, bullet point 1: it was noted that 'processors' should read 'processes'.
39. Re: VNC: paragraph 44, bullet points 3 and 4: clarification was sought on the maximum number of veterinary surgeons. It was confirmed that this was two veterinary surgeons.
40. A vote was taken and Council unanimously agreed to accept the proposed changes.

Fellowship Rules

41. The Registrar introduced a paper asking Council to approve rules for the Fellowship to replace the old byelaws that were no longer valid following the introduction of the new Charter. The rules covered both the original thesis and meritorious contributions to learning routes, along with the new meritorious contributions to the profession, meritorious contributions to knowledge and meritorious contributions to clinical practice routes.
42. It was noted that there was no process for appeal written into the rules, however it was explained by the CEO that this was deliberate and came as a result of the recommendations of the Fellowship Working Party. The award of a Fellowship is now an application process rather than an examination and therefore appeals would not be entirely appropriate. It was confirmed that this was also the view of the Fellowship Board and had been discussed at its meeting in September. Currently, unsuccessful applicants are given feedback and guidance to inform and encourage re-application at a future point.
43. Council enquired whether there was a process in place for retirement and was informed that Fellowship status was held for life. Fellows must be members of the RCVS and therefore any inappropriate conduct would be dealt with using the processes that apply to all members.
44. It was agreed that the Fellowship Board should be asked to give further consideration to whether or not an appeals process should be introduced and report to Council at its next meeting.
45. A vote was taken and Council approved the Fellowship rules.

Reports of committees – to note

Audit and Risk Committee

46. On behalf of the Chair, Mr Davis presented an update from the Audit and Risk Committee. The committee minutes were made available to Council members and some of the key topics were highlighted:
47. At the meeting, the CEO gave an update report to the committee. It was noted from the update that the College was aware of the risks of Brexit and had created a Taskforce to tackle any challenges.

48. The risk register was checked regularly and the committee discussed how the Senior Team had taken this on board. Risks were being discussed not only by each committee but also by departments as well.
49. A recommendation was made by the Chair of the committee for the Director of Operations to consider a cost improvement plan – this was being actioned.
50. The team was joined by a representative from the College's auditors, Deloitte, for the audit planning. The auditors test a number of areas and make recommendations to the College.
51. Deloitte proposed a further increase to their fees and the CEO challenged them on this. Fees were increased last year due to changes required to charity Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) reporting. As a result, Deloitte agreed to hold their fees at last year's level if the audit process was streamlined.
52. Deloitte had informed the College of the Modern Slavery Act, although this does not affect the College directly, the Director of Operations would check with contractors and suppliers to ensure there were no non-compliant businesses.
53. Larger businesses would be required to publish any gender pay differences and eventually all businesses would be required to do this. The CEO suggested the College should publish this information; Council members agreed and suggested this would encourage the profession to do the same.

[Note: the SPVS survey publishes this information, and the difference was 17% in the last survey.]

54. The CEO reassured Council that the College had always paid the London Living Wage to the cleaning team and regularly checked that any increases were passed on. He also noted that the Fawcett Society had calculated that as from the date of the Council meeting (10 November 2016) until the end of the year, women were effectively working for free due gender pay differences.
55. The report was noted.

Education Committee

56. The Chair reported that the CPD audit was still a matter of concern for the Education Committee. 1397 members were contacted as part of the most recent CPD audit with an initial deadline for response of 14th October. Due to a poor response rate this deadline had been extended to the 2nd December. As of last week the response rate was now at 65% which was an improvement but still disappointing.
57. Concern was expressed that some staff members had received verbal abuse from a small minority of the profession when chasing CPD records. The President echoed that this was unprofessional behaviour and entirely unacceptable.

58. It was reported that Veterinary Nurses Council had passed the details of 6 veterinary nurses to the Professional Conduct department for repeatedly not responding to the RCVS regarding the CPD audit. In addition, the details of 27 Veterinary Surgeons had also been passed to the Professional Conduct department in this regard. The Professional Conduct department has had greater success in securing a response from these members and, in a number of cases, it was found that members were participating in CPD but were not keeping appropriate CPD records.
59. It was apparent that there was disunity between the membership renewal process and members keeping their contact details up to date. It was confirmed that failure to do so could potentially be a disciplinary offence but there needed to be a proportionate response to this issue.
60. The report was noted.

Standards Committee

61. The Chair of the committee, Mr Catlow, presented the report and highlighted:
- the revised guidance on clinical and client records in Supporting Guidance Chapters 5 and 11;
 - additional guidance for recipient welfare regarding feline renal transplants, including requirements for active lifelong care for the recipients and requirements round the competency of the vets involved in the transplant procedures;
 - the committee had committed to running a consultation on the subject of telemedicine and was looking for feedback from the profession and the public – its potential was recognised but it was imperative that it was conducted within a legal and regulatory framework; and,
 - veterinary fees and whether the College could do more – it was considered that existing obligations about fees and consent should be emphasised, including out of hours care, and could be done within the guidance.
62. Furthermore, at the Operational Board meeting held the day previously, it had been agreed that the committee would undertake a review of the current RCVS guidance on alternative and complementary medicines and therapies in January 2017.
63. It was commented that the proposed practice poster outlining mutual responsibilities in the veterinary professional / client relationship, to promote the value of veterinary care and clarifying mutual expectations was an excellent idea and should be rolled out as soon as possible. The CEO confirmed that this had originated from a veterinary surgeon contacting the RCVS and it was being trialled first with vets before being rolled out.
64. It was suggested that the committee should give further consideration to the proposed amendments to Supporting Guidance, Chapter 5 (Communication between professional colleagues) and Chapter 13 (Clinical and client records) as follows:
- (i) Chapter 5, paragraph 5.8: consider amending 'should' to 'must':

*5.8 Where different veterinary surgeons are treating the same animal, or group of animals, each ~~should~~ **must** keep the other informed of any relevant clinical information, so as to avoid any danger that might arise from conflicting advice, or adverse reactions arising from unsuitable combinations of medicines.*

- (ii) Chapter 5, paragraph 5.9: consider amending the last part of this paragraph, which deals with multiple treating veterinary surgeons, to clarify what information each veterinary surgeon should keep the other treating veterinary surgeon informed of/whose work is referred to by 'their work'. Paragraph 5.9 currently states:

5.9 Even where two veterinary surgeons are treating different groups of animals owned by the same client, it is still advisable for each to keep the other informed of any problem that might affect their work.

- (iii) Chapter 13: consider including additional guidance to address the situation where there was a desire for multiple parties to have access to an animal's records, for example, where there were multiple stakeholders with an interest in the veterinary treatment of a horse, greyhound or other companion animal.

65. It was agreed that those matters would now be put to the committee for consideration and the report was noted.

Veterinary Nurses Council

66. The Chair of VN Council, Mrs Cox, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2016. She highlighted a few key points from the minutes and then provided an update on other recent related activities.
67. The updated Day One Skills list and the new professional behaviour tool have been embedded within the Nursing Progress Log (NPL). The updated NPL was ready ahead of schedule, in time for issue to the new cohorts of students enrolling in the autumn, and had been well received. The surge in student enrolments in early autumn had been addressed by the recruitment of a temporary member of staff to assist with processing.
68. VN Council reviewed information on changes which would be required to the current accreditation procedures in order to comply with the standards for membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), in particular the information required on post visitation forms and the criteria and process for appointment of a student panel member for accreditation visits. It was suggested that a recent graduate, not from the centre being visited, would be more appropriate than a student for these visits.
69. VNC had discussed the report of the recent CPD consultation and were surprised to find that one of the groups most resistant to the introduction of a reflective stage were the newly qualified VNs. It was suggested that this group may not yet have learnt the benefit of reflection within practice, and with clinical governance and morbidity and mortality meetings becoming more commonplace in practice, reflection will become more readily accepted.

70. VNC had been very pleased to receive and approve a suggestion from Professor Reid that new RVNs should be formally admitted as associates of the Royal College after making their professional declaration at admissions and graduation ceremonies, using a form of words similar to that for newly registered veterinary surgeons. This formal acceptance had already been used at four ceremonies and was a welcome message to the VN profession on its recognition by the RCVS. Mrs Cox wished to place on record the thanks of VN Council to Professor Reid for his proposal.
71. The VN Futures report was launched at the Vet Futures summit in July and had received some very positive press coverage, as well as good feedback from the profession. The One Health suggestions have been particularly well accepted. A stakeholder action day was held in September with all actions now assigned to development groups. The Schedule 3 working party had met once in September.
72. BVNA congress took place in early October, at which the Golden Jubilee award and VN Futures were promoted, as well as presentations on professionalism and the behavioural tool. The Practice Standards team held its first awards ceremony at BVNA congress and highlighted the important role of VNs both in the process and the implementation.
73. There were no comments or questions and the report was noted.

PIC/DC Liaison Committee

74. The Chair of the committee, Dr Viner, introduced the report and informed Council that the committee membership was now totally independent from Council on both PIC and DC and that its function is slowly evolving. It was noted that the disciplinary process was a core function of the College and important to get right, also that it was independently run from but funded by the College.
75. The changes to the committee's delegation was made earlier in the Council meeting and was considered important for continuity purposes.
76. It was further noted that one key role was the monitoring of the KPIs and how they functioned. Three steps had recently been put into place that was hoped to improve them:
- Second ADR trial: it was hoped that a significant number of people would be removed from the disciplinary process and put through the new ADR trial instead; when the public called the College they were 'triaged' to see which route could be best for them, although it was highlighted that ADR was still voluntary so the person raising the issue could still raise a concern even if the College thought it would be better to go through the ADR trial, and the vet(s) could still refuse to take part in ADR;
 - Injection of funding: to employ paralegals on a contract basis to streamline the process;
 - Restructuring of PIC: to process the cases quicker.

77. It had been agreed to hold an additional meeting in January 2017 to discuss how those steps were working.
78. It was noted that cases were considered at Stage 1 by a 3-person team and questioned whether by splitting the PIC committee to 5 people per meeting if it would be the same 3 people with only 2 additional members further considering the cases? The Registrar confirmed that although the committee was divided, it was not into 2 rigid teams – A and B – and that there would be a mix of people used; where particular expertise was required this could be catered for.
79. It was questioned where the KPIs were in the Council papers. It was confirmed that these were in the papers to the committee and also that the standards were on the RCVS website, but could be sent on to Council if desired.
80. The report was noted.

Reports of statutory committees – to note

81. In the absence of the Chairs for each statutory committee, the Registrar was able to reply to any comments or questions.

Preliminary Investigation Committee

82. It was noted that the number of unclassified cases in the table at paragraph 7 had changed significantly and questioned whether this would change? It was confirmed that it was just where the cases were in the disciplinary cycle and would be classified eventually.
83. The report was noted.

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

84. There were no comments or questions relating to this report.
85. The report was noted.

Disciplinary and RVN Disciplinary Committee

86. There were no comments or questions relating to this report.
87. The report was noted.

Notices of Motion

88. There were no notices of motion.

Questions

89. No questions had been received.

Date of next meeting

90. The date of the next meeting was Thursday, 2 March 2017 at 10:00 am (reconvening in the afternoon).

91. **Please also note:** there is an extra meeting booked to those previously notified, this additional date is **Thursday, 28 September 2017** and would likely be held in committee dependent on the nature of the business at that time.

Farewell to Director of HR, Ms Lesley Evans

92. The President gave a tribute to Ms Evans at her last Council meeting before taking early retirement; it was noted that whenever he spoke to a past President or Member of Council they always asked to be remembered to her, which showed the high esteem she was held in. On behalf of Council, the President presented her with flowers and a gift and their grateful thanks for her work over the years.

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