

Council Meeting

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

Agenda

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| 1. President's introduction | Oral report |
| 2. Apologies for absence | Oral report |
| 3. Declarations of interest | Oral report |
| 4. Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2019 | Refer to Council minutes |
| 5. Matters arising | |
| a. Obituaries | Oral report |
| b. Council correspondence and matters for report | Oral report |
| 6. Matters for decision or note by Council (unclassified items) | |
| a. CEO update | Unclassified |
| b. Under care/out of hours review – update | Oral report |
| c. Brexit – update | Oral report |
| d. Discretionary Fund | Oral report |
| 7. Report of committee – to note | |
| a. Veterinary Nurses Council | Unclassified |
| 8. Presentation | |
| 1CPD app | Oral report |
| 9. Notices of motion | Oral report |
| 10. Questions | Oral report |
| 11. Date of next meeting | Oral report |
| Thursday, 23 January 2020 at 10:00 am (reconvening in afternoon 2:00 – 4:00 pm) | |
| 12. Matters for decision by Council and for report (confidential items) | |
| a. Estates Strategy | Oral report |
| b. 2020 Budget | Confidential |
| c. RCVS Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024 – update | Confidential |

13. **Any other College business** Oral report

14. **Risk Register, equality and diversity** Oral report

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Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 3 October 2019 at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

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

*Absent

^Not in attendance

In attendance:

E C Ferguson	Registrar
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C McCann	Assistant Registrar / Director of Operations (DoO)

Guests:

Ms S Burnell	Director of Policy, Media and Strategy, British Veterinary Association (BVA) (open session only)
Dr S Doherty	Senior Vice-President, BVA (agenda item 12a only)
Mr A Hinge	Barrow Hill Vets (agenda item 12a only)
Professor C Proudman	Head of School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Surrey (open session only)
Ms S Kenny	RVC student undertaking Extra-Mural Studies with Mr Loeb, Veterinary Record (open session only)
Mr A Ridge	Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) (agenda item 12a only)

- his principle interest was Coach House Vets Ltd;
- he was a Director of Catdogfish: an organisation that aimed to help people be better pet 'parents'. It had no plans to be, and was not, a telemedicine service. No payment was received from the company but he was a 17% shareholder;
- Affordable Pet Care Company: this company was setting up a telemedicine and telehealth service called 'Vet in my pocket', from which the practice (Coach House Vets Ltd) had received a single payment of £900 in 2018, and nothing further. He was not a shareholder of the company and had never discussed matters of a confidential nature with them;
- Coach House Vets Ltd: was in discussions with the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) on the basis of providing intra-mural rotations for them.

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2019

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

Matters arising

Obituaries

7. There had been no written obituaries received. However, the College had been notified of the passing of Dr Jenny Poland OBE, who was best known by staff and students at the RVC in Camden Town where she worked; and also by the veterinary community for her outstanding work in establishing the Unit for Continuing Education at the RVC. Amongst other things, she pioneered the development of postgraduate education for veterinary surgeons in practice; and the innovative adoption of cutting-edge technologies including the use of ISDN to run international telephone and later video conferences.
8. 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

9. The President reported:

Contacts and Calendar Booklet 2019 – 2020

10. The booklet had been sent out and Council members should have received their copy in the post. If the booklet had not been received, contact the Council Secretary for a replacement.

Fellowship Day 2019

11. This year's RCVS Fellowship Day took place on Friday, 20 September 2019 at The Royal Institution in London, where 30 new Fellows were welcomed to the Fellowship.

CEO update

12. The CEO reported that there was no paper before Council due to the short time between Council meetings and that she intended to change the format of the report in the New Year to include some operational business of the College as well as strategic matters. She highlighted:
- two recent Mind Matters (MMI) events: a student round-table, including some from Dublin and Utrecht to discuss mental health; and, a Research Symposium with speakers from the UK, Netherlands, Canada, USA and our own Council member, Dr Dyer;
 - Fellowship Day: that included a student competition to showcase their research; research from our Fellows; and a welcome to the new Fellowship Board Chair, Professor John Innes;
 - RCVS honours and awards: the nomination period for College honours was now open and available for members at all stages of their careers. In particular, Honorary Associateship of the RCVS was open to all non-veterinary professionals that worked to support the veterinary professions;
 - MMI / Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons (SPVS) wellbeing awards: were now open for entries;
 - ViVet Innovation Seminar: there had been good involvement from students and speakers, as well as a useful debate on whether the veterinary professions should be 'client-centric'.
13. The Communications, Events and Innovation Teams, were thanked for their help and support for all of the events that had taken place. Council added their thanks to the staff involved.
14. There were no questions and the report was noted.

Matters for decision by Council (unclassified items)

Accreditation of the veterinary degree from Surrey Veterinary School

Please note the declarations at the beginning of the Council meeting. Mr Peaty left the room.

15. The Chair, Education Committee, introduced the paper. PQSC and Education Committee recommended to Council that the decision be made to recommend to the Privy Council Office (PCO) (as required by Section 5 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act (VSA) 1966); that the course of study and degree of Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Science BVMSci (Hons) from the University of Surrey, should be recognised as a qualification suitable for holders to be admitted to the Register of the RCVS and practise as veterinary surgeons in the UK.
16. It was commented that there was a list of recommendations within the University's visitation report and a response from the University, but no action plan – it would be an appropriate and useful approach to take. It was further commented that there was no lay representation on the visitation team and questioned whether it could be considered for the future.

17. It was noted that there would be annual reports as well as a review process regarding the minor recommendations outlined in the report. Furthermore, a review of the accreditation process would shortly take place, so the comments would be taken into consideration at that time.

18. A vote was taken on whether to recommend to the PCO that the course of study and degree of BVMSci (Hons) from the University of Surrey be recognised as a suitable qualification:

In favour:	24
Against:	0
Abstentions:	2

19. Council agreed the recommendation by a majority vote.

Mr Peaty returned to the room.

Veterinary Council of Ireland Mutual Recognition Agreement

20. The Chair, Education Committee, introduced the paper. Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) was keen to explore a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) with the College following EU-exit; similar to those with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC); with some slight differences as the VCI was not currently part of the International Accreditors Working Group (IAWG).

21. It was questioned whether the small number of Dublin graduates not UK citizens not currently registered would retrospectively come under the MRA, as there were no dates included on the paperwork; the current EU services agreement only covered EU citizens or those married to an EU citizen. It was noted that to register with the College the requirement was the recognition of a degree under the Mutual Recognition of Primary Qualification (MRPQ) process; so this would need to be considered.

22. It was further questioned whether the VCI would reinstate its visitation of UK schools as this was last done in 1996 and they had relied on European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) visitors since then. It was noted that the VCI had requested the wording of the MRA and it was confirmed that they were happy to rely on RCVS visitors going forward.

23. A vote was taken whether to approve the MRA:

In favour:	27
Against:	0
Abstentions:	0

24. Council unanimously agreed to the Mutual Recognition Agreement with the VCI.

Reports of Committees – to note

Advancement of the Professions Committee

25. The minutes of the meetings held on 7 May and 10 September 2019 were before Council. There were no questions and the reports were noted.

Audit and Risk Committee

26. In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, Professor Bray introduced the minutes from 25 April, and draft (confidential) minutes of 10 July 2019. He highlighted the impressive work of the executive around risk within the organisation; and there was good work undertaken on individual departmental risk registers.

27. There were no questions and the reports were noted.

Education Committee

28. The Chair, Education Committee, introduced the minutes. She highlighted:

- the first version of the new Continuing Professional Development (CPD) recording platform (app) was now available on Google and iOS app stores. There were 250 people, both vets and veterinary nurses, signed up to use the app from the beginning of October; and the app would be refined over the next few months;
- there would be a working group to review the accreditation process and membership would be representative of the different current curricular models;
- there would be a full review of the Statutory Examination for Membership process; this had been discussed at the recent Statutory Examination Board meeting and a report would be submitted for the November Education Committee meeting;
- Advanced Practitioner status had been running for five years and the Committee had agreed that the status should be reviewed with a further report to the Committee in the New Year.

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

Finance and Resources Committee

30. The Treasurer introduced the paper and stated that it had been the first Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) meeting, it having been established since the Operational Board had been disbanded; so the Committee's functions and how to manage its agenda were discussed. It was highlighted that:

- resource management would need to be taken into account for projects across the College; when decisions from other committees to start a project were made, FRC would need to be informed so that it could take an overview of various resourcing needs across the organisation as a whole;

- quarterly management accounts would be before the Committee; and it was also responsible for the Register and Registration Sub-committee (RRSC);
- there was a new risk management system (Magique) in place that made it easier to view risks and mitigations College-wide.

31. How risk overlapped between FRC and Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) was discussed, and how risk was discussed at a more 'granular' level not dealt with elsewhere, so that Council's focus could be on the bigger issues.

32. The report was noted.

Standards Committee

33. The Chair, Standards Committee, introduced the report. She thanked Council for its comments since the last Council meeting referring to the Under Care/Out of Hours review that had been taken into account at the Committee meeting. She also highlighted work undertaken around Scottish Equine ID; and, that case studies were being finalised prior to going up on the RCVS website.

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

PIC / DC Liaison Committee

35. The Chair, Liaison Committee, introduced the two reports before Council. She highlighted at the most recent meeting the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) at Stage 1 of the disciplinary process was back up to 92%; and the ongoing relationship with the Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS) had been reviewed both at this committee and, also, at FRC for the financial implications. It was the last meeting for Ms Soames, Head of Professional Conduct, who would be leaving the College in October; and Mr Green, who would be stepping down as Chair of Disciplinary Committee; they were thanked for their hard work by the Committee, and by Council. Council further wished that their congratulations on the latest KPI figures should be conveyed to the Professional Conduct team.

36. It was noted that at Stage 2 of the disciplinary cases, the KPI had reached 100% for complex cases but questioned what the percentage was for simple cases, and also Stage 3 of the process. The CEO suggested that the KPIs could be part of the bigger overview of business coming forward in the CEO report in the future.

37. The reports were noted.

Reports of statutory committees – to note

38. In the absence of the Chairs of the Committees, the Registrar was able to answer any questions from Council.

Preliminary Investigation Committee

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

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

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

Disciplinary Committee and RVN Disciplinary Committee

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

Notices of motion

42. There were no notices of motion received.

Questions

43. There were no questions received.

Date of next meeting

44. The date of the next meeting is Thursday, 7 November 2019 at 10:00 am (reconvening in afternoon 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm).

Risk Register, equality and diversity

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

[Pages 9 to 17 confidential to Council Members ONLY]

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

Summary

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

- 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.

The pages to follow cover a range of areas; but in terms of highlights, since the September 2019 meeting of Council (for which the last written report was produced), we have:

- Agreed a Mutual Recognition Agreement with the Veterinary Council of Ireland, to ensure graduates from the Republic of Ireland can register to work in the UK post-EU Exit
- Recruited around 250 vet and vet nurse volunteers to test an early version of the new 1CPD app
- Made a number of appointments, including a new Committee Liaison Officer to help cope with the increased number of committee and Council meetings post Legislative Reform Order, and a new Mind Matters Officer
- Developed guidance to support our new continuing professional development (CPD) policy, and a communications strategy to support implementation from January 2020
- Held a Practice Standards Scheme Awards Ceremony
- Held the second biennial ViVet Innovation Symposium, in Manchester
- Held two major Mind Matters events, a Veterinary Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Roundtable, and our second biennial Veterinary Mental Health Symposium
- Worked with Defra on time-limited guidance to support export certification in the event of no-deal Brexit
- Held our biannual VN Day, welcoming 175 new VNs to the profession and bestowing nine Diplomas in Advanced Veterinary Nursing
- Welcomed new chairs to the Preliminary Investigation and Disciplinary Committees
- Launched the VN retention fee period
- Approved the University of Surrey's veterinary degree
- Attended and held events and workshops at the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) Congress
- Welcomed 30 new Fellows at the fourth RCVS Fellowship Day, and welcomed John Innes as new Chair of the Fellowship Board
- Opened the nomination period for the 2020 RCVS Awards
- Joint Officers meetings have been held with the British Veterinary Association and with RCVS Knowledge (RCVSK), the latter including a review of the Memorandum of Understanding between RCVSK and RCVS
- Launched the fourth year of the Mind Matters and Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons Vet Wellbeing Awards

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 draft of the new proposed plan will be discussed at the November 2019 meeting of Council.

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. The Education team is working with the Communications Department to ensure information is easily accessible and we launch the new approach effectively in January 2020.

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 2020 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 before the end of the year, with relevant actions being carried into the new Strategic Plan.

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 (APC) 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. The 1CPD app is now being tested by 250 vet and vet nurse volunteers, and feedback will help finalise the development of the tool ready for launch in January. We have met with the Major Employers Group and they are supporting the RCVS around effective messaging and communications ahead of the launch. A presentation on the new app will be made to Council at the November meeting.

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, on 23 November. Meanwhile, a Mind Matters Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Roundtable took place on 23 September 2019, in conjunction with the Veterinary Schools Council and the AVS, and recommended next steps will be discussed shortly

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, Fellowship Day and the ViVet Symposium. We ran another successful Fellows of the Future student competition at Fellowship Day 2019 (20 September), with eight students from five of the UK vet schools shortlisted, and another competition at the ViVet Symposium for both vet and VN students.

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.

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 in the middle of 2020 with any changes in meeting frequency likely to take effect from January 2021.

A review of groups operating below committee level is now being embarked upon, and committees will be asked to review those groups that report to them (boards, subcommittees, taskforces, working parties...) with a view to improving their efficiency and ensuring they are still relevant.

Further training and development opportunities for Council members are now being planned, such as unconscious bias training, training for committee chairs 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

Another successful Fellowship Day was held on 20 September 2019, which featured John Glen, the inventor of the anaesthetic propofol, as the keynote speaker. Once again, the event included a section to showcase the work of Fellows and the 'Fellows of the Future' competition where students could present their research; and, Fellows in Focus to explore the breadth and depth of Fellowship interests and expertise. Videos of all talks will be available online in due course.

The Fellowship Board 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 was held for the new Chair of the Board. Professor John Innes was elected and took office at Fellowship Day. In addition, two members have also been added to the Board, to be responsible for projects and engagement.

An online Directory of Fellows was launched at Fellowship Day, which will help raise the profile of the Fellowship and highlight the ways in which Fellows can contribute 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 approved by 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. A new cohort of the programme will open on 18 November 2019 and the following cohort will open on 27 January 2020.

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. The information panels used at RCVS Day can currently be seen on the walls at Belgravia House and we have developed a series of short videos of those included in the initiative, which will be released on social media over the coming months

Director of Leadership and Innovation, Anthony Roberts, gave the keynote speech on leadership development and the impact of Jenner programme on wellbeing and career fulfilment at the 2019 VetForum event in October.

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 second Innovation Symposium was held on Tuesday 1 October at the Lowry in Manchester.

The Symposium focused on precision veterinary medicine. It looked at how the growth of data-driven practice and rapidly developing technology, such as real-time low-cost genomics, artificial intelligence and big data, will affect the veterinary professions, how their role might change and the opportunities available. Featuring a wide range of inspirational speakers, the day explored the potential of emerging technology to improve the lives of veterinary professionals and the services they provide.

The ViVet Symposium 2019 also hosted the final of the Student Veterinary Innovation Competition, which saw three finalist teams present their innovative veterinary proposals in front of a panel of industry professionals.

The Symposium was recorded on the day and videos, along with a write-up of the day, will be available soon on the ViVet website www.vivet.org.uk.

The ViVet team also recently attended, and chaired the first day of, the inaugural Digital Veterinary Summit in London on 9-10 October 2019. The event, organised by Kisaco Research, had a mission to showcase the emerging technology coming from innovators seeking to optimise customer engagement, facilitate preventative action, enhance clinical processes, and increase compliance through the use of technology for both companion animals and livestock.

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 agreed the statement, with minor modifications, at its September meeting. Meanwhile the President published a blog on the case for a diverse and inclusive workforce on 15 August and wrote an update for the October issue of *UK Vet*

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, was approved by the Standards Committee. The checklist – which uses the mnemonic ‘SUPERB’ – is being produced in poster format and, after a ‘soft launch’ at BVNA Congress in October, a copy will shortly be mailed to all veterinary practice premises in the UK, alongside announcements in RCVS News and in the veterinary press. All Schedule 3 related guidance and advice will be available via 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 in early 2020, 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.

As updated at its last meeting, 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. An oral update will be given to Council at the November meeting.

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 were 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 – an additional workshop took place on 24 October which brought the Graduate Outcomes Working Party together with representatives from VSC and students, to consider these areas further.

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.

Meanwhile, at its October meeting, RCVS Council approved a mutual recognition agreement with the Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI), to ensure that graduates from both countries will be recognised, pending the passing of appropriate visitations, regardless of the outcome of Brexit. The Registrar and President from VCI will attend the College on 31 October to sign the agreement.

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. When appropriate, we will update 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. A promotional video was produced to help boost attendance and, at the time of writing, over 30 delegates are expected to attend the next event in Manchester on 29 October 2019.

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

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 at its October meeting.

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. These issues are on the agenda for discussion at Education Committee in November

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.

At the October meeting of the APC it was agreed that the RCVS apply for observer status of the World Veterinary Association (WVA), 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 will 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 2019 and we await the results.

A staff away day took place on 6 September and the agenda included discussion around the building move, Great Place to Work, strategy and values, and working patterns. Following the meeting we have reviewed our guidance on remote working to better set out our principles around this. We are also currently reviewing our benefits package and a paper around the potential addition of Death in Service payment will be discussed by the Finance and Resources Committee at its November meeting.

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

We have appointed an advisor to help with the sale of Belgravia House and to support the purchase of a new building. Broad parameters for the purchase have been agreed by Council and the process is now underway, with photography of the building having taken place. An update on progress will be reported in the confidential session of the November 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

Excellent feedback has been received from testers of the 1CPD apps and positive changes based on this already implemented to the next releases. Particular focus is currently on completion of the "web" / "browser" version of this tool, which will sit alongside both the Android and Apple mobile apps at launch in January 2020.

Further work continues to improve the performance of the ProfCon2 system, with additional time secured from the supplier to pursue further improvements across all aspects of system usage.

Self-service Direct Debit management has now launched into My Account, with significant uptake already occurring.

We are pursuing the fastest affordable path to delivering a complete unified communications approach to all staff. This will leverage the investments we have already made into our cloud capability and deliver significant improvements to capability, cost, flexibility and resilience (in addition to significantly decreasing the complexity and risk of any office move from a voice / telecoms perspective).

The Digital team has also been working very closely with RCVS Knowledge (RCVSK) to improve the basis of its digital platforms. Reviews and improvements to its existing cloud infrastructure as well as migration of additional capability from Belgravia House into Microsoft Azure and Amazon AWS have delivered improvements to cost, security, performance, resilience and backups. This work will continue over coming months as we support RCVSK's move toward digital best practice.

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 is continuing apace on the digital marketing campaign to promote the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme to animal owners through the production of videos, social media and print resources and a dedicated campaign website. The campaign was trailed at BVNA Congress and is scheduled for launch at London Vet Show this year, running for around eight weeks in the first instance. Practice engagement in the campaign will be driven through a combination of email communications, direct marketing and face-to-face promotion.

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 discussed potential options and those that will be taken forward include:

- Encouraging members of the profession and the public to email committee chairs with topics they feel would be relevant for discussion, for consideration
- Holding debates on key issues with the profession (one was held at the Innovation Day, for example)
- Making our Officer Team more available at conferences and events for conversation with members of the professions and the public, and promoting this opportunity
- Consideration of a 'virtual suggestions box' on the website

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 plan for a review of the impact of our First-Rate Regulator Initiative was agreed by the Operational Board in September 2018, and a series of research activities took place 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; and, research amongst our key stakeholder organisations.

This will be fed into the development of our Strategic Plan and also published separately.

In addition, mechanisms for capturing better data around the experience of those making complaints are being developed.

Meeting	Council
Date	7 November 2019
Title	Veterinary Nurses Council Report to Council
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 11 September 2019
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary 0207 202 0713 a.amato@rcvs.org.uk

Veterinary Nurses Council

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2019

- Members:**
- * Mrs Belinda Andrews-Jones
Miss Alison Carr
 - * Ms Elizabeth Cox
Miss Jane Davidson
 - * Mr Dominic Dyer
Dr Joanna Dyer
Ms Wendy Drinkwater
Ms Lucie Goodwin
Mrs Susan Howarth
Mrs Andrea Jeffery by teleconference
Mrs Katherine Kissick
Miss Racheal Marshall - Chair
 - * Professor Susan Proctor
 - * Mr Matthew Rendle - Vice-Chair

- In attendance:**
- Mrs Annette Amato - Committee Secretary
 - Mr Luke Bishop - Senior Communications Officer
 - Mrs Julie Dugmore - Director of Veterinary Nursing
 - Ms Eleanor Ferguson - Registrar
 - Mrs Victoria Hedges - Examinations Manager
 - Mrs Lily Lipman - Senior Practice Standards Manager
 - Ms Lizzie Lockett - Chief Executive
 - Mr Ben Myring - Policy and Public Affairs Manager
 - Mrs Jenny Soreskog Turp - Senior Education Officer

Apologies and welcome

1. Apologies for absence were received from Belinda Andrews-Jones, Elizabeth Cox, Dominic Dyer, Susan Proctor and Matthew Rendle. The Chair welcomed Jane Davidson to her first meeting of Council.

Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

Obituaries

3. Obituaries had been circulated for Louise O'Dwyer RVN and Lorraine Allan MRCVS. Council stood to observe a minute's silence for all members and associates of the College who had passed away since the last meeting.

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2019

4. The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2019 were accepted as a correct record.

Matters arising

5. **Online Leadership Programme.** It was reported that the two courses of the first open programme had attracted 2,268 and 2,794 learners respectively. Approximately two-thirds of the learners have been veterinary surgeons, and a fifth veterinary nurses. It is not possible to provide exact figures as the demographics and research questions are optional.

Update on operational matters

6. Council noted the CEO update reports which had been provided to RCVS Council at its May and September meetings. In response to queries, the CEO confirmed the following:
7. Training for the pilot of the reflective practice model – Schwartz Rounds - has taken place with representatives of a group of veterinary schools and practices; and it was intended that there would be a live Schwartz Rounds event at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Congress in April, with further activities going forward.
8. It was noted that the Extra Mural Studies (EMS) placements at the RCVS and the Mind Matters student mental health roundtable had only been open to veterinary students, and it was requested that thought be given to expanding these to include VN students where possible. The CEO said that if the vet student roundtable (23 September) was successful, then a VN version was planned. The Director of VN said she would look into EMS opportunities at the RCVS although this was more tricky for VN students in terms of where it would fit into their studies.

Action: Director of Veterinary Nursing
9. The CEO amplified on the activities of the Diversity and Inclusion Group, and it was noted that this group included veterinary nurse representation through the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) and the RCVS Director of VN. The CEO offered to share the work plan with any Council members who wished to see it, and to consider ways in which Council could assist.
10. A brief update was provided on the Estate Strategy, and it was confirmed that Katherine Kissick is the VN Council representative on this group.

VN Education Committee (VNEC)

11. Susan Howarth, Chair of the VNEC, presented the report of the meeting held on 24 July 2019, and

highlighted the following points:

12. The Committee had considered a number of accreditation and re-accreditation reports, and had granted accreditation or reaccreditation to the following programmes, subject to action plans and quality monitoring.
 - Royal Agricultural University - FdSc Veterinary Nursing delivered by Plumpton College
 - University of Chester – FdSc Veterinary Nursing delivered by Reaseheath College
 - Hartpury University
 - Bachelor of Science Degree with Honours with integrated placement year in Veterinary Nursing
 - Bachelor of Science Degree with Honours with integrated placement year in Equine Veterinary Nursing
 - Bachelor of Science Degree Ordinary with integrated placement year in Veterinary Nursing
 - Bachelor of Science Degree Ordinary with integrated placement year in Equine Veterinary Nursing
 - Diploma in Professional Studies in Veterinary Nursing
 - Diploma in Professional Studies in Equine Veterinary Nursing
 - Middlesex University – BSc(Hons) Veterinary Nursing and BSc(Hons) Veterinary Nursing with foundation year
13. The Committee had granted accreditation to Harper Adams University for the post-qualification Certificates in Advanced Veterinary Nursing to be run in four separate disciplines, with a Level 6 Graduate Certificate and a Level 7 Postgraduate Certificate in each discipline.

Reports from RCVS Committees

Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

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

Standards Committee

15. The Registrar provided a brief update on the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 9 September. Further amendments have been made to the equine ID regulations, following changes to legislation in Scotland. The Committee had approved the publication of a number of case studies first discussed last autumn, and had reviewed feedback on further case studies relating to informed consent and Schedule 3. It was hoped that these would be published shortly.
16. The Committee had also approved a poster which aimed to try to guide the process of Schedule 3. Discussions had been held in relation to “out of hours” and “under care” as part of the recently-announced review.

VN Disciplinary Committee

17. Council noted the report of the Disciplinary hearing held on 20 and 21 May.

Practice Standards Scheme (PSS)

18. The Senior Practice Standards Manager presented an update report on the Practice Standards Scheme, and added that since 2015 there had been a 22% growth in the number of practices in the scheme. The RCVS has employed an external digital marketing agency to create a public-facing campaign, with a view to raising awareness of the Practice Standards Scheme amongst the animal owning public. It was hoped that this would be rolled out with a pilot at the BVNA Congress in October. The PSS Awards ceremony would also be held at the BVNA Congress on 11 October, and the PSS Lead Assessor would be running a Stanley workshop refresher session.
19. In regard to a point raised on the issue of including veterinary nurses as Practice Standards Assessors, the Registrar reiterated that this had been agreed in principle but that further work needed to be done as to how it would work in practice, and would require a change to the current rules. This issue had not been forgotten and was on the agenda for future meetings of the Practice Standards Group, which in turn reports to the Standards Committee and then to RCVS Council. It was noted that at present, there is a full complement of PSS assessors. Council requested that an indication of the timelines involved in this process should be provided, together with regular updates, so they were kept in the picture.

Action: PSS Manager

Communications report

20. The Senior Communications Officer reported on a number of recent and forthcoming activities.
21. **Recent activities.** During the summer, the RCVS had attended public-facing events including the Royal Highland Show and Countryfile Live in Yorkshire. At Countryfile Live, the RCVS stand had included a student veterinary nurse from the nearby Askham Bryan College, who had been a real asset to the event.
22. **Forthcoming events.** Three major College-led events were due to take place in the next few weeks; RCVS Fellowship Day on 20 September, the Mind Matters Initiative Research Symposium on 24 September, and the ViVet Innovation Symposium on 1 October.
23. The RCVS stand at the BVNA Congress in October would promote the PSS Awards, the Schedule 3 delegation poster and the new CPD policy and App. Veterinary Nurses Day would be held at London Zoo on 17 October, and the guest speaker would be Hayley Walters RVN, recipient of the Golden Jubilee award in 2014.
24. The nomination period for the 2020 RCVS Awards was due to be launched in the next week. The next edition of *VN Education* would be published in December.
25. The Comms team had taken on a new member, in the role of Marketing Communications Manager.

VN Futures

26. The VN Futures Manager delivered a presentation on the work of the VN Futures project, and responded to questions. The CEO added that Vet Futures had been embedded into the RCVS Strategic plan, and it was intended to build VN Futures into the new Strategic Plan, which was under development.
27. It was noted that many actions had been set at the start of the project and that the Board was now focusing on fewer key areas. The first major achievement had been the introduction of the new post-registration framework, which would be promoted and publicised on the RCVS and VN Futures websites. There was a general discussion on how best to engage the profession and it was noted that BVNA had created a Facebook page for VN Futures.

Risk Register

28. There were no additional items identified for addition to the Risk Register.

Date of next meeting

29. Wednesday 13 November 2019 at 10.30am