

## Council Meeting and RCVS Knowledge Annual General Meeting

Thursday, 9 September 2021 at 10:00 am to be held remotely by Zoom – Council members are invited to attend the RCVS Knowledge AGM and update

<b>RCVS Knowledge</b>		
<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	Papers provided to Trustees by RCVSK	
<b>Update</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>RCVS Council Agenda</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationale<sup>2</sup></b>
1. <b>President's introduction and welcome to new members</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
2. <b>Apologies for absence</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
3. <b>Declaration of interests</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
4. <b>Minutes</b>		
i. Remote decision made 28 May – 1 June 2021	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Meeting held 10 June 2021 - unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
iii. Meeting held 10 June 2021 - classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4</b>
iv. Meeting held 28 June 2021 – classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 4</b>
v. Remote decision made 6 – 9 July 2021	Unclassified	n/a
vi. Meeting held 9 July 2021 (AGM) – unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
5. <b>Matters arising</b>		
a. Obituaries	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
b. Council correspondence	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
c. CEO update	Unclassified	n/a

<b>6. Matters for decision by Council and for report (unclassified items)</b>		
a. Discretionary Fund	Unclassified	n/a
b. Veterinary Schools Council/RCVS Memorandum of Understanding	Unclassified	n/a
c. Review of RCVS handling of Covid-19 pandemic	Unclassified	n/a
d. Council Culture Project – the way forward	Unclassified	n/a
<b>7. Notices of motion</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>8. Questions</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>9. Any other College business (unclassified)</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>10. Risk Register, equality and diversity (unclassified)</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>11. Date of next meeting (virtual)</b> Thursday, 11 November 2021 at 10:00 am	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>12. Matters for decision by Council and for report (confidential items)</b>		
a. Standards Committee update	Oral report <b>Confidential</b>	<b># TBC</b>
b. Estates Strategy – update	Oral report <b>Confidential</b>	<b># TBC</b>
c. Ratification of Vice-Chair, Preliminary Investigation Committee	<b>Private/ Confidential</b>	<b>1, 5</b>
<b>13. Any other College business (confidential items)</b>	Oral report <b>Confidential</b>	<b># TBC</b>
<b>14. Risk Register, equality and diversity (confidential items)</b>	Oral report <b>Confidential</b>	<b># TBC</b>
<b>15. Council Workshop – E&amp;SWG Sustainability</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b># TBC</b>
Dawn Wiggins Secretary, RCVS Council 020 7202 0737 / <a href="mailto:d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk">d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk</a>		

**<sup>1</sup>Classifications explained**

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
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**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others</li> <li>2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation</li> <li>3. To protect commercially sensitive information</li> <li>4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS</li> </ol>
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<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	9 September 2021
Title	May 2021 Council minutes
Summary	Minutes of the remote decision made between 28 May and 1 June 2021
Decisions required	To approve the unclassified minutes
Attachments	None
Author	Dawn Wiggins Secretary, Council <a href="mailto:d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk">d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 020 7202 0737

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

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## Council Meeting

### Minutes of the remote decision made via Boardpacks between Friday, 28 May and Tuesday, 1 June 2021

#### Members:

Dr M O Greene (President in the Chair)

Dr C J Allen

Mrs B S Andrews-Jones

Miss L Belton

Professor D Bray

Mr J M Castle

Dr D S Chambers

Dr N T Connell

Professor S Dawson

Dr M A Donald

Dr J M Dyer

Ms L Ford

Mr D J Leicester

Mrs C-L McLaughlan

Dr S Paterson

Mr M L Peaty

Mr M E Rendle

Dr K A Richards

Dr C L Scudamore

Dr N C Smith

Dr R S Stephenson

Dr C W Tufnell

Mr T J Walker

Professor J L N Wood

Ms J S M Worthington

\*Absent

### Occupational English Test (OET) language testing and temporary registration of Official Veterinarians (OVs)

1. At its meeting in March 2021, Council had agreed to approve the temporary registration of OVs in specific circumstances including if their degree was from a European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) accredited school and they had attained at least Level 5 International English Language Testing System (IELTS) which broadly correlated to the Home Office requirement for a skilled worker visa - B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) scale.
2. A difficulty had since arisen in that candidates were experiencing problems in accessing the IELTS test during the ongoing pandemic. It was not widely available online and in some countries was not on offer at all where they had any actual test sites open – and those might be at a considerable distance away and Covid restrictions meant that getting to those sites was a problem.
3. In the meantime, the College had been notified that the OET language test, that had been approved by the RCVS for the Statutory Examination for Membership in addition to IELTS, had become available online for candidates, and questioned whether it could be considered as an

alternative to IELTS for those seeking temporary registration as OVs (with all other requirements as before) and, if so, at what level? It was noted that there was no direct equivalent to IELTS Level 5, the nearest OET band was Band C that came out a little higher at Level 5.5 – 6.0 IELTS.

4. At its recent meeting, the Registration Committee had been asked to consider this matter and the recommendation from it was that OET Band C should be accepted. However, it was felt, given the sensitivity around this issue and the previous debates at Council, that it was a matter for Council as a whole to decide upon.
5. As a matter for note, there was time pressure around the decision as the Food Standards Agency (FSA) had notified the College that they had “triggered” the temporary registration provisions re: delivery of meat Official Controls in England and Wales as approved by Council to start with effect from 1 June 2021, and the College was being pressed by potential candidates.
6. It was commented that it seemed logical that if the College accepted the OET for the Statutory Examination for Membership then it should accept it for temporary registration, particularly if Band C was moving the level in an upwards direction; the College’s role was to uphold veterinary standards. However, it remained concerning that Level 5 IELTS be sufficient to work as a veterinary surgeon, as it only required partial command of the language and the ability to cope with overall meaning in most situations although you were likely to make many mistakes.
7. It was questioned if the acceptance of Level 5 IELTS could be re-visited, particularly as the General Medical Council (GMC) required a minimum of Level 7 IELTS in each category tested / Level 7.5 overall and the General Dental Council (GDC) required a minimum of Level 6.5 IELTS in each category / Level 7 overall as did the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) with the exception of speech and language therapists that had a minimum of Level 7.5 IELTS in each category / Level 8 overall – those regulators did not have different standards for the same register, even in extremis.
8. It was confirmed that the reduction from Level 7 to Level 5 IELTS for some applying for temporary registration, whilst not ideal, was a short-term measure to address the specific shortage of OVs working in food hygiene. It had additional checks and balances and would remain under close review, as discussed at the March Council meeting.
9. It was noted that it was unlikely that other regulators had the equivalent to Section 7 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act (VSA), which specifically authorised Council to allow temporary registration, and to make restrictions on what and where a temporary registrant could practise, and subsequently remove them if they failed to comply. The ‘Temporary Register’ was not the same as the full Register and it had been extensively used during the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak in 2001 and again when the Olympic Games had been held in London in 2012, so there was recent precedence – the requirements for this specific group for temporary registration was still at a higher standard than what had been in place for full registration prior to EU-exit.
10. A vote was taken. Council was asked to agree that OET Band C be acceptable as an alternative to Level 5 IELTS given the difficulties in obtaining access to IELTS tests:

For:	22
Against:	0
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	3

11. This was agreed by a majority vote.

12. Council was thanked for its prompt decision, and it was confirmed that the College would relay the agreement to the relevant parties forthwith.

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### Summary

Meeting	Council
Date	9 September 2021
Title	10 June 2021 Council minutes
Summary	Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 10 June 2021
Decisions required	To approve the unclassified minutes and classified appendix
Attachments	None
Author	Dawn Wiggins Secretary, Council <a href="mailto:d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk">d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 020 7202 0737

### Classifications

Document	Classification <sup>1</sup>	Rationales <sup>2</sup>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex A	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4</b>

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## Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held remotely by Zoom on Thursday, 10 June 2021

### Members:

Dr M O Greene (President in the Chair)	
Dr C J Allen*	Professor S A May
Mrs B S Andrews-Jones	Mrs C-L McLaughlan
Miss L Belton	Dr S Paterson
Professor D Bray	Mr M L Peaty
Mr J M Castle	Mr M E Rendle
Dr D S Chambers	Dr K A Richards
Dr N T Connell	Dr C L Scudamore
Professor S Dawson	Dr N C Smith
Dr M A Donald	Dr C W Tufnell
Dr J M Dyer	Mr T J Walker
Ms L Ford	Professor J L N Wood
Mr D J Leicester	Ms J S M Worthington

\*Absent

### In attendance:

Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C McCann	Assistant Registrar / Director of Operations (DoO)
Miss C H Middlemiss	(UK) Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) (Observer)

### Guests:

Ms E Butler	Chair, Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)
Dr D Dos Santos	Senior Vice-President, British Veterinary Association (BVA) (open session only)
Ms A Findon	Head of Policy and Governance, BVA (open session only)
Mr P Imrie	<i>Veterinary Times</i> (open session only)
Mr J Loeb	<i>Veterinary Record</i> (open session only)
Dr S Middleton	President, British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) (open session only)
Mr V Olowe	Member, ARC (open session only)
Ms J Shardlow	Member, ARC (open session only)

## President's introduction

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

## Apologies for absence

2. Apologies for absence were received from Dr Allen.

## Declaration of Interests

3. New declarations of interest were received from:
  - Professor Bray: was a friend and ex-colleague of Mr Farrar who would be joining Council at Agenda Item 19 (**Afternote: agenda item was postponed until 28 June 2021**);
  - Dr Richards: had been appointed to Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Vet School Short-Life Working Group;
  - Dr Smith: was now Branch Secretary of Prospect Union.

## Minutes

4. Council had had the opportunity to comment electronically on the unclassified minutes and classified appendix of the 18 March 2021 Council meeting, as well as the remote decision made on 15 April 2021.
5. A vote was taken to approve the unclassified minutes and classified appendix for 18 March and 15 April 2021:

For:	22
Against:	0
Abstain:	1
Did not vote:	1

6. Ms Worthington submitted an email vote as she was experiencing technical difficulties.
7. The minutes and classified appendix were accepted as true records of the meeting by a majority vote.

## Matters arising

### Obituaries

8. The President reported that there had been no written obituaries received.
9. The College had, however, been informed that Professor William 'Twink' Allen FRCVS had died at the weekend. Twink was well known to many, in particular within the equine reproduction field. He had previously worked at the University of Cambridge Department of Clinical Veterinary Medicine, and with the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association Equine Fertility Unit. He also delivered the lecture to colleagues and guests at Royal College Day in 2005.
10. The College had also been informed of the death of Dr Graham Milligan MRCVS: he retired as Vice-Principal (Clinical Affairs), Royal Veterinary College (RVC) in 2018 and sadly passed away in March 2021.
11. Council members were encouraged to have a moment of quiet reflection following the meeting, for all members of the professions who had passed since the last meeting.

### Council correspondence

#### RCVS Council Election 2021 and retiring members

12. Council had been informed of the outcome of the recent RCVS Council elections. It was noted that it was the last transition year under the Governance Legislation Reform Order, and, from July, Council would be at the final agreed number of members sitting on Council. In order of number of votes those members taking up their four-year terms at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held on Friday, 9 July 2021, would be Dr Danny Chambers, Dr Matshidiso Gardiner, Dr Colin Whiting and Dr Louise Allum. Congratulations were given to the successful candidates, and Dr Chambers on his re-election. Therefore, Council would be saying goodbye to Dr Allen, Mr Leicester, Mr Peaty, Dr Scudamore and Dr Tufnell, all of whom did not stand for re-election.
13. On the VN Council election, successful candidates were Mrs Susan Howarth for a further three-year term, and Mrs Donna Leigh-Lewis, who would commence her initial term at the AGM.
14. There would also be changes to Veterinary Schools Council appointees following the resignation of Professor Argyle in March, and the forthcoming retirement of Professor Dawson in July. Replacing them for the remainder of their terms to July 2024 would be Professor Timothy Parkin from the University of Bristol, and Professor Christopher Proudman from the University of Surrey.
15. Ms Butler, external member and Chair of Audit and Risk Committee, would retire from the Committee in July; her replacement was a matter for decision later in the meeting.
16. The President stated that retiring members had made immense contributions to the work of the College; a brief outline of which would be annexed to the minutes and a fitting farewell given to each in July.
17. Furthermore, Council had been notified of Dr Stephenson's recent resignation from Council for personal reasons and he was wished well for the future. As a result, Professor May was

welcomed back to Council for the remainder of Dr Stephenson's term, to July 2024, as he received the next largest number of votes in the 2020 RCVS Council election.

#### Annual General Meeting 2021

18. It had been agreed that the 2021 AGM on Friday, 9 July 2021, would be a hybrid event and the College would again use Attend2IT as its virtual platform. The expected timing was from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon; the programme was being worked on and once confirmed the Communications Team would send out details. Officers, the Chair of Veterinary Nurses Council, and minimal numbers of the College's staff would be situated at Belgravia House in a socially distant setting. The remainder of Council, guests, and attendees would join the meeting virtually. Officers were proceeding with caution whilst it was unknown if the UK would fully open later in the month.
19. The Honours and Awards part of the day had been postponed to later in the year, and details would be forwarded in due course.

#### Committee membership 2021-22

20. Following the RCVS Council Election 2021 results, membership of committees was in the process of being finalised and would be circulated by email shortly.

#### CEO update

21. The CEO updated Council on the following:

- Belgravia House had re-opened on a pre-bookable basis for a small number of staff in a socially distant setting; the Facilities, and Operations, Teams were thanked for their hard work in preparing the building in readiness. Opening the building would continue on this basis for the summer months and would be kept under review alongside government guidelines;
- work continued on the RCVS Strategic Plan, in particular around diversity, mental health, the Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP), and the Under Care review;
- a new independent support service had been launched entitled 'ProfCon Investigation Support (PCIS)' that would provide support to veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses who were under investigation by the RCVS following complaints about their professional conduct;
- the migration of temporary Covid-related decisions back to the 'parent' committees was ongoing and had been a smooth process to date;
- there was a Bill currently going through the Parliamentary processes regarding professional qualifications following EU-exit; most of the potential changes the College had already dealt with or had under consideration and it was hoped that regulation did not get linked with any future trade deals – details would go to Registration Committee in due course;
- work continued on the committee, sub-committee, and working group population for the next College year from July; Dr Richards would contact Chairs of committees shortly to discuss this.

22. There were no questions, and the report was noted.

## Matters for decision by Council and for report (unclassified items)

### Covid-19 Taskforce

23. It was noted that the transition of decisions continued to move back to parent committees. Council had agreed at its October 2020 meeting to decide on the continuance of the Covid-19 Taskforce on a meeting-by-meeting basis.

24. A vote was taken:

For:	24
Against:	0
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	0

25. The continuance of the Covid-19 Taskforce was agreed by a unanimous vote.

### Future format of meetings

26. The CEO reported that the paper before Council considered how there could be a 'sense of normality' going forward whilst maintaining a balance of some of the positives that had emerged during the pandemic, such as the efficiency of holding remote meetings; increased accessibility; reduction in environmental footprint; cost savings; and supporting diversity without the need to travel into London. One of the negatives was the difficulty of getting to know people, especially if there were new members on Council or committees.

27. The way staff worked was also changing and there was a new 'The Way We Work' Policy around that; in brief that the College trusted staff to decide what the best working practices were for them but this had to be balanced with the needs of the organisation. Regardless, should Council need to contact staff they would be there to deal with any query.

28. The paper was a rough rubric of how meetings were expected to work going forward; Council meetings and most committee meetings would need to be scheduled in advance but there would also be more smaller meetings on an ad hoc framework. The budget for 2021 had been set as one in-person Council meeting and one in-person committee meeting, so there was a slight change regarding that in the paper (which recommended two such meetings during the year), which may have a slight effect on the budget.

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

- this was a timely and important paper, and positive to see the proposed balance of online versus in person meetings. However, it did not exploit all potential opportunities that had been seen nor did it address some of the challenges for online meetings – the College had tried to conduct the same type of business, albeit with breaks, but it was difficult to maintain concentration over prolonged periods; explore how this could be better, in particular around

hybrid meetings. The current meeting had approximately 700 pages of papers to digest and would suggest more frequent, smaller meetings to improve efficiency; take the opportunity to go even further, be more radical than what was outlined;

- there should be discussion about decision-making; the number of papers, and pages to read, should be part of that; hybrid meetings were also a good idea;
- thinking of pre-pandemic meetings when the 'spider' phone was used for people unable to join a meeting in person, it was really hard to feel actually part of the meeting. However, technology had changed so take the opportunity to capitalise on that and reach out for inclusivity; it would also be a practical option if there were localised restrictions – make sure regardless of whether a person was in the room or off-site that there was the same visibility;
- balance should always be considered for in person / virtual meetings; suggest a 50 / 50 approach;
- the first committee meeting of the College year was vital to be in person to get the committee working together and to get to know people. Be brave enough to say if hybrid meetings did not work in order to try something else;
- there was a massive difference between virtual, and in-person meetings, and it depended upon what the content of the meeting was – make each meeting content-driven and not be too restrictive in advance;
- consider the meeting schedule and the pressure on people when meetings were close together; consideration should also be given to the amount of time allocated to read papers;
- when there were a large number of papers it was difficult to go through the nuances of each and make considered decisions; send round items earlier where possible and also consider not discussing things unless it was required and agree on consensus. The concern with having hybrid meetings was that the person(s) dialling in could get 'side-lined' – people needed to meet each other to be cohesive;
- some people may always choose to join virtually, and some may always choose in person attendance; this may have unintended consequences where in-person attendees may have more influence – could there be a rule to attend a minimum number of meetings in person? Suppers on the eve of meetings were effective in getting to know colleagues;
- hybrid meetings were good for those that struggled to travel, look at the frequency of meetings as good practice.

30. The CEO responded to the matters raised:

- a balance needed to be maintained of the number of meetings held and the number of pages to read per meeting: eight Council meetings per year had been felt to be too many and there had been email requests to reduce the number, which had been done; regarding the amount



of detail provided within the papers, there was variation between some who thought that there was far too much and those who were at the other end of the spectrum and stated that there was too little – in fact that there was ‘cherry picking’ of the information put to Council. This balance was kept under constant review;

- in preparation for potential hybrid meetings, work had been undertaken within Belgravia House to install mobile screens in most of the meeting rooms so that those dialling in would be prominent within the room; there would need to be some changes made to the Meeting Procedural Rules to enable voting when not physically present in the room, and that would be brought back to Council for agreement; the environmental impact and inclusivity issues were being considered in conjunction with this;
- advance scheduling of dates was required so that members could fix them in their diaries and plan work and travel – Council had previously discussed whether there should be a ‘committee week’ and this had been agreed as being a positive, although it was acknowledged that this put some pressure on both Council members and staff. The paper was to try and be more cost- and environmentally-efficient, whilst balancing the need for in-person and inclusive meetings;
- the social aspect was important to get to know colleagues, but those social opportunities should not be used as a way to conduct business as this could be a divisive and not promote real inclusion;
- action points to take away from the discussion in particular were:
  - o revise the Meeting Procedure Rules in time for the next meeting;
  - o the first Council meeting in the College year should be held in-person; if there was a specific need for an in-person / hybrid / virtual only meeting, committee Chairs should talk to the staff who provided administrative support;
  - o a broader conversation to take place on how to handle the business before Council.

31. A vote was taken to approve the recommendations as outlined in the paper:

For:	23
Against:	1
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	0

32. Dr Smith experienced technical difficulties so submitted a verbal vote.

33. The recommendations were accepted on a majority vote.

### **RCVS Delegation Scheme 2021**

34. The CEO outlined the paper; it was noted that this was an annual exercise to ensure the wording was up to date and it was important that the College maintained a strong delegation structure.

35. It was requested that any future update should include clarity around the appointment of the CEO and Registrar.
36. Clarity was given on Education Committee (point 42) in that two students would also sit on both the Education Committee and the Primary Qualifications Sub-committee; they were voting members, whereas the Chairs of sub-committees and working parties were non-voting observers on Education Committee.
37. It was agreed that those amendments would be made to the draft document before it was loaded to the website.
38. It was suggested that there were a lot of sub-committees and working parties not listed; they undertook a lot of the business, and without information, this might give the impression of secrecy, along with a lack of clarity around the working order and structure of things. It was confirmed that whilst they were not listed on the document, details were already on the College's website along with the information about to which committee each reported, as stated on the cover page of the paper. It was noted that Finance and Resources Committee agreed Terms of Reference for new groups below committee level, and by detailing only the main committees, the paper avoided additional pages to be reviewed by Council.
39. A vote was taken on whether to approve the recommended changes (inclusive of the suggestions made at the meeting), and that the quorum for standing committees be the majority of total number of members unless otherwise specified:

For:	24
Against:	0
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	0

40. The paper, with amendments, was unanimously agreed.

#### **Veterinary Schools Council (VSC) / RCVS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

41. The CEO highlighted that the paper was to clarify matters now that the VSC appointed three members to RCVS Council from across all UK vet schools, as opposed to previous appointments from each vet school. Those appointed members were not representative of a particular group and there was no mandate from the group – they were there to be part of the collective RCVS Council working for the professions as a whole. VSC had been involved in the drafting of the MOU and was happy with the wording.
42. Clarity was sought as VSC appointed individuals from the “recognised universities” acting jointly; VSC included Irish and Dutch veterinary schools that would not be recognised under the Veterinary Surgeons Act (VSA) 1966 and it was questioned whether the College should recognise that the appointees were from the UK schools and whether the Irish / Dutch schools had any say. It was confirmed that the Dublin and Utrecht Heads of Veterinary Schools were associate members of VSC and would not expect to be appointed to RCVS Council. Associate members were unable to put their names forward for election (by VSC to decide on appointees to RCVS

Council), but in the situation where a vote was required on members who were eligible for election then they would have voting rights.

43. It was suggested that there was still the question of whether Irish / Dutch members should be able to vote on who should sit on RCVS Council as they were not recognised universities under the VSA. It was confirmed that this had not been previously considered but, if Council required, the Registrar could look into it under the VSA purview. It was suggested that the VSC procedure for election could be appended to the document to provide clarity around appointments.
44. Council agreed that this matter should be looked into further before any vote was taken to approve the MOU.

#### **RCVS accreditation standards and methodology**

45. The Chair, Education Committee, gave an outline of the work undertaken to date and that it was now ready for public consultation subject to Council approval. She thanked everyone who had been involved so far.
46. Comments and questions included but were not limited to:
- it was disappointing that current methods seemed to be input designed and the move to output evaluation was welcome; vet school curricula were output designed and the teaching was on the desired outcome;
  - what were the practical arrangements of clinical teaching and was the public aware of the format of teaching i.e. that extra-mural studies (EMS) was done outside of vet schools? Further, that decision-making was a major part of veterinary work and should also be shown in the consultation;
    - o agree, this would be fed back into the consultation;
  - this had been a massive piece of work and was upstream regulation of universities, and a check that the number of failing UK veterinary schools would be at a minimum and standards in the UK remained high. In the current EMS policy, the significantly valuable contribution made by EMS and the providers offering it to future veterinary professionals should be explained. There should be enough flexibility across students and vet schools;
    - o the College had also pledged to run an EMS pilot scheme and there was a lot more running in the background;
  - this was a welcome direction. Re: the EMS pilot, vet schools felt pilots were important, but difficult to do under current regulations – the phrasing of the document should be considered, and adapted to allow flexibility as it currently stated '*...had to do (x) number of weeks...*'.
    - o whilst recognising that a pilot was difficult, the Committee was keen that EMS did not stop the process going forward;

- the rubric should be published alongside the consultation as information was only against four items, not the others, and was essential to provide a full view;
  - o the rubric was an exemplar extract and, although more could be worked up for the consultation, it would not provide schools with a prescribed list of evidence to achieve the standards, as this would inhibit flexibility. The rubric was a 'living' document throughout the review and was important to provide examples of what it *could* look like;
- was enough being done and could the accreditation process be used to attract vets from different areas as that was an issue for the veterinary profession? Could the College consider access to the profession?
  - o work was being undertaken on this issue as part of the overall process, but the College did not accredit students, it accredited veterinary programmes / degrees; accessibility was part of the remit of the College's Diversity and Inclusion Group, which was working with the Veterinary Schools Council (VSC) and Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) to consider all aspects of diversity to make the professions as inclusive as possible.

47. A vote was taken to approve the new RCVS accreditation standards and methodology for consultation:

For:	24
Against:	0
Abstention:	0
Did not vote:	0

48. Mr Rendle and Dr Smith submitted verbal votes as they were experiencing technical difficulties.

49. The new accreditation standards and methodology were approved for consultation by a unanimous vote.

### Legislation Working Party (LWP) – update on consultation

#### Main recommendations

50. Following the introduction of the paper by the President, the Chair, LWP, stated that it was pleasing to be able to provide the opportunity for Council to view the range of responses received. The LWP had reviewed the consultation report and had been keen to explore whether or not there were comments that the College had been surprised by and needed to go away and think about more, or anything that had been received differently to what was expected. It was clear there was support in many areas but that others had more mixed, or negative, feedback.

51. Since an earlier incarnation of the LWP, back in 2003, he said that it was re-assuring that, although views had evolved, the big themes remained the same and continued to form part of the discussions. The current LWP consisted of a group of people with different perspectives, each of whom had expected different feedback to come in. Some respondents had difficulty with the principle-based consultation that would lead to more detailed proposals in future, and had wanted

to discuss operational aspects, but that was not appropriate at this time; there was a perceived lack of trust from some respondents over giving the College more powers in certain areas.

52. In summary, having looked at the feedback in detail, there was nothing in the recommendations in principle that LWP would change. It had, however, asked the Registrar to look at limited licensure in detail and how it had the potential of being used against the College in the future, for example, with respect to inclusivity.

53. On the main recommendations within the paper, comments and questions included, but were not limited to:

- at paragraph 46: Standard of Proof: it was important to include the relevance of all wider public interests and that of the reputation of the profession (and the pride of being a regulated profession) but to also include a paragraph on *preserving* the reputation of, and confidence in, the profession – push back and reinforce the message of it being a privilege to be part of the profession;
- re: fitness to practise / public protection: it was important to frame how a veterinary professional worked, with the emphasis on well-being and support but, as a College, we needed to convey to the professions and the public that it was the best way to protect the public;
  - o when the consultation went out to the profession, it was looked at from a profession's point of view, but as a regulator there was also the duty to look from the public's point of view;
- 'veterinary team' rather than 'vet-led team' was preferable wording;
- 'vet-led' indicated the person who had overall responsibility for clinical aspects, but it should not be used as a basis for delegation of clinical tasks; 'veterinary team' was within a business context; this should be made clear;
- care should be taken about where the responsibility lay for diagnoses, particularly as there were some areas that could not be delegated – someone had to take responsibility for their, and the team's, actions;
- reaching out to professionals could be undertaken by vet nurses, under the instruction of a vet, who could work together in the animal's best interests. Use the National Health Service (NHS) as an example of how to work across multi-disciplinary teams;
  - o re: terminology around veterinary team vs. vet-led team: vets were the only professionals trained across the board to make diagnoses and decisions on medical and surgical processes. There should be a distinction between systems managed by others non-veterinary surgeons and how it was co-ordinated – the primary vet was the hub for the patient-led care, who would then 'call in' services and would pull it all together. As far as

systems went, that did not need to be vet-led, but the drawing together of other various professionals did;

- disagree re: limited licensure: that the veterinary degree recognised Day-One Competences as the 'only way in' was incorrect. When considering diversity and inclusion there were ways of assessing people to show competence and understanding – what would happen if a person was admitted to a veterinary course, but then their health changed? At what point would it be a question of limited licensure? The meaning behind it was to open access rather than empowering disabled graduates and, in effect, telling them they could not do it at the beginning. Instead, it would be better to facilitate and assess disabilities and get the student to self-declare what they could do, rather than have it decided by the vet school;
  - o limited licensure was being asked about in principle as to whether it was something the College could do as, under the current VSA, it was not possible to admit people to the Register that had various physical disabilities and was a balance of professional service needs and the public's needs for inclusivity. Limited licensure could hypothetically happen in a number of areas e.g. small animal / large animal; but in terms of discussion at LWP it was very much around broadening access for those with disabilities and not 'cherry pick' parts of the curricula that a person did, or did not, wish to do. The Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995 had provisions for disabled people, and the College had sought external Counsel opinion, which stated the College could provide for limited licensure under Section 13.3 of the Equality Act 2010 without 'opening the door' to direct challenges from non-disabled persons. However, the College had to be aware of indirect discrimination with specific characteristics so this could be looked into further. It was suggested that an in-principle provision should be kept in the recommendations but that further work would be needed to ensure that there were no unintended consequences;
- it was interesting that the concept that everyone qualified as a vet and then moved into specific roles as discussed in 2012 had not come back, it could be that limited licensure could 'fit' under that premise. Delivering a veterinary course was very expensive and was funded with assistance from the government; that was one reason – from a country's perspective – why it needed farm vets, etc., government-funded 'pet doctors' may not be seen as so important as feeding the public;
  - o limited licensure could be removed from the recommendations if Council wished. There would, however, need to be a position on a new Veterinary Surgeons Act (VSA) that presented how the profession matched societal expectations and not just to go along with the status quo;
- Council should also be aware of issues such as the fact that veganism, as a recognised belief, might impact on a student's desire to work with animals and that this would be covered by legislation;
- would like to see some under-pinning as a way of reassurance of future-proofing and ensuring longevity; legislation was a barrier, do not cause restrictions by using definitions.

Pick up how other professions may 'come into the fold' as part of the next stage of the process;

- the College was aware of the limitations of the current VSA and was the reason for doing the exercise; the idea was not to define everything at the moment but to keep the possibility so that when matters needed changing the College would have the power to do so, subject to consultation;
- there were some strong opinions in veterinary practice about powers of entry, and the disruptions to the working day – the police needed a warrant to enter a premises;
- it was understood that powers of entry were so that practice standards could be mandatory, which would be acceptable so long as there was not 'mission creep' and there was a lot of communication from the College to reduce the fear that it would go into a practice at any given moment;

### **Dr Tufnell left the meeting**

54. The discussion was brought to a close. A vote was taken to accept all of the main recommendations contained within the paper:

For:	22
Against:	1
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	1

55. The recommendations were agreed by a majority vote.

### **Interim recommendations**

56. The Registrar emphasised that the previous vote was for the 'bigger picture' leading towards seeking new legislation that would likely take a number of years before it could be passed through Parliament. As a responsible regulator, the College had also looked to see what could be done in the meantime, which was why this was also before Council for consideration. Three areas could be changed that did not require a change to primary legislation:

- 'mini'-Preliminary Investigation Committees (PICs): a smaller group of three people (currently five) at the same time as doing away with the existing Stage 1 – the Case Examiner Group (CEG) – where it was decided whether there was an arguable case;
- Charter Case Committee (CCC) / Charter Case Protocol (CCP): under the Charter this would allow an alternative way of dealing with cases that would cross the threshold of finding misconduct and a way of dealing with specific circumstances;
- Change the Standard of Proof from a criminal standard to a civil standard: undertaken by a Statutory Instrument not primary legislation.

57. Dealing with each in turn:

#### Mini-PICs

58. As Council was aware, there was a two-stage process to handling concerns raised. Stage 1 was consideration by the CEG (one vet, one lay, and one staff member) of whether there was 'an arguable case' and, if so, that should go on to the investigative committee (PIC) – Stage 2 – who would then decide on whether there was a 'realistic prospect' of establishing serious professional misconduct (SPMC) and, if so, to pass on to Disciplinary Committee (DC) for a full hearing. Approximately 80% of cases were dealt with at Stage 1; this took time and there were difficulties in explaining the threshold tests to the profession and to the public; it was also time-consuming from a process perspective. Furthermore, there was stress when a concern was referred to PIC, with fears from the veterinary professional that it was an inevitable step towards a disciplinary hearing and raised expectations in the minds of the complainants that would not be fulfilled if the matter was closed by the PIC.

59. In their own right, a mini-PIC of three members, as it would be quorate, could operate in the same manner as current PICs of five members. It was proposed that the mini-PICs would deal with 'simple' cases – i.e. those not requiring statements or legal opinion; and 'complex' cases – and all other cases would go to PIC of five members. With regards to the LWP consultation, there was broad support for the practicality of avoiding duplication and speeding up the process.

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

- it seemed it would lessen the toll on the professionals going through the process without compromising the system; comments on the consultation were regarding training, bias of members, and consistency of process;
  - o bias was a good point, and that it would not be a 'rigid' three people, but a mix of three or five members. The College had internal and external reviews that was used as part of the training / reviewing consistency;
- there was no need for urgency for the interim proposals and it would be better to take as a whole with the LWP regime;
- support anything the College could do to manage expectations for the public and to reduce the stress and fear for the vet / VN professionals, as well as cut down on the time taken; it was a very good idea;
- another way of looking at it was that if the College were to implement it, it would potentially be a time-saver and advantageous to everyone; it was an opportunity to see how it worked in practice and could be 'de-coupled' from the rest of the report; recommend that it should start as soon as possible;
- the consultation responses had a majority support for this suggestion.



61. A vote was taken to agree to a change to the PIC structure to introduce mini-PICs to take the place of the current CEG:

For:	22
Against:	1
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	1

62. The introduction of mini-PICs was agreed by a majority vote.

#### Charter Case Committee (CCC) / Charter Case Protocol (CCP)

63. There was a slight misunderstanding, this was an alternative way of dealing with cases that *had* crossed the threshold and was a more realistic way of dealing with them – it related to the ‘lower end’ of misconduct (so not where a suspension or removal was likely) e.g. relating to such matters as no Continuing Professional Development (CPD); lack of indemnity insurance; convictions. By the time those cases reached the full disciplinary hearing, matters generally had been put right / steps put into place / insight had been shown. Consideration was given to whether these cases should go through the entire process or whether there was another way of dealing with them under Charter powers that would be more proportionate.

64. It was noted that if a case went to the CCC which thought it was more serious, it could be referred back to PIC and onwards for a full hearing. This committee would produce:

- written decisions that were time-limited;
- decisions that would be publicly viewable.

65. To consider the impact of this committee, the cases from 2019 had been looked at under this proposal and it was found that three cases had been before Disciplinary Committee (DC) that could have been dealt with by that structure. At the moment, PIC was holding cases open, and this would be a pragmatic and much more transparent way of dealing with them – approximately 10 – 12 cases fell into that category.

66. There were comments in the consultation about ‘naming and shaming’, but they were cases that would otherwise have been put forward by PIC to a full DC hearing where the names were public record.

67. This interim recommendation could be set up fairly rapidly as it did not require changes to legislation. It would, however, require changes to documentation / require more external recruitment and training; the committee members would be separate from both statutory committees (PIC and DC).

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

- clarity was sought around ‘misconduct’ and ‘serious professional misconduct’ (SPMC), as both were mentioned in the paper;

- it was confirmed that misconduct was a shortened form of SPMC;
- did the College not have a statutory obligation to take the proposed CCC cases to a full DC hearing?
  - external Counsel, and also Queen’s Counsel, had confirmed that the proposal was a robust way of dealing with a limited range of cases and had emerged from LWP discussions of how the College could deal with cases differently;
- very supportive as it dealt with cases of conduct ‘disgraceful in a professional respect’; cases before DC that would not have sanctions of removal. It would be time effective, modernise the system, and protect the public without causing additional duress on the veterinary professional;
  - it was confirmed that consent was not required from the veterinary professional to go via this process albeit that it was anticipated this would be likely in a number of cases; if the individual had not shown insight and steps to remedy the issue then it would go forward to DC;
- it was a slippery slope with an assumption of guilt before the member had gone through the process.

69. A vote was taken to agree to the introduction of a new Charter Case Committee that had a limited range of disposal for disciplinary cases:

For:	19
Against:	1
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	4

70. The introduction of a new Charter Case Committee was agreed by a majority vote.

#### Change to Standard of Proof

71. In terms of health regulation, the RCVS was one of the last regulators using the criminal standard of proof. By moving to ‘balance of probabilities’ it would move to the civil standard. Those in favour of change tended to highlight the public interest and how it would be perceived by the public. A contrary view was that it was appropriate that any decision to remove someone’s livelihood should be considered at the highest / criminal standard and that, while noting that other healthcare regulators had moved to the civil standard, that by itself was no reason for the College to follow suit.

72. There was fear that a change of standard would mean many more cases going through the full DC process, however, it was stressed that the standard of proof issue only related to the *facts* of the case. SPMC was still going to be a matter of judgement. The other fear was how it was applied. When moving from the criminal standard to the civil standard it did not mean that there was no standard of proof, and the challenges remained along with the ‘inherent improbability’ of

an event i.e. the weighing up the likelihood that something had actually happened. In 2020, a review of Professional Conduct (ProfCon) cases from 2019 showed that two cases that did not go to DC potentially could have done so under the civil standard; three others were borderline. Responses to the consultation included the question of should the change be made now or as part of the fuller LWP changes; that was the decision before Council.

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

- the consultation gave Council a clear steer and was the most contentious area; it went out to the public and the profession so should be part of the overall LWP package and take consensus on board;
- overall fitness to practise (FtP) had signalled a direction of travel. The concern was if the College wanted to be a compassionate regulator it needed to take the profession with it; it should be very aware of the feedback received and concerns that had been raised. The perception was as important as the reality;
- the changes in human healthcare was understood e.g. what happened following the Shipman case, veterinary cases were very different; members made a declaration that the over-riding duty was to the animals under their care, and clients may ask a vet to do something that conflicted with that declaration. Working alone out of hours in a remote area may mean that a concern was the complainant's word against the vet's and if someone was to corroborate with the complainant in a vindictive manner it would mean two versus one; how would any tribunal deal with such a circumstance? Further, some clients blatantly use the complaints system to try to avoid paying fees, and it would be very concerning to take away a member's livelihood without the "so as to be sure" aspect of the standard of proof;
- the profession still appeared fearful of the disciplinary process, and this needed to be addressed;
- accept that the College needed to be seen as a compassionate regulator but be careful of reputational risk; communicate very carefully so as to not undermine the confidence in the College as a regulator.

74. It was confirmed that the standard of proof was already included in the overall package of recommendations by the LWP but was additionally in the interim measures if Council wished to change the standard now.

75. A vote was taken on whether to amend the standard of proof from the criminal standard to the civil standard as part of the pre-legislation changes:

For:	9
Against:	14
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	1

76. The vote was not agreed. Therefore, this item would remain as part of the overall LWP recommendations for seeking new legislation.

## Reports of standing committees – to note

### Advancement of the Professions Committee

77. There were no comments or questions, and the report and classified appendix were noted.

### Audit and Risk Committee

78. There were no comments or questions, and the report and classified appendix were noted.

### Joint Audit and Risk Committee / Finance and Resources Committee

79. There were no comments or questions, and the classified appendix was noted.

### Education Committee

80. The Chair, Education Committee, informed Council that there was an anomaly on the front page of the report and that the decision was delegated authority for Education Committee, and not for Council.

81. An update to the Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) figures were:

- to June, 1,809 members had registered interest in the adviser training
- four of the six modules had launched, of which:
  - o module one: 1,241 members had started, 640 had completed;
  - o module four: 75 members had started, 35 had completed.

82. Thanks were given to the Education and Communications Teams, and to the *Veterinary Record*, which had published several reports on the programme.

83. There were no comments or questions, and the report and classified appendix were noted.

### Finance and Resources Committee

84. There were no comments or questions, and the report and classified appendix were noted.

### Registration Committee

85. There were no comments or questions, and the classified draft was noted.

### Standards Committee

86. There were no comments or questions, and the reports and classified appendices were noted.

### Veterinary Nurses Council

87. There were no comments or questions, and the report and classified appendix were noted.

### PIC / DC Liaison Committee

88. The Chair, PIC / DC Liaison Committee, highlighted:

- the discussion regarding the Vice-Chair of the Committee. It had previously only been open to veterinary surgeon members but in the spirit of inclusivity had agreed that it should be open to all members of the Committee;
- Stage 1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had fluctuated in recent months: 82% March; 62% April; 76% May. It was hoped that the agreed mini-PICs would underpin and assist in speeding up the process of people going through the system;
- there was support for the ProfCon Investigation Support (PCIS) that had been launched to provide emotional support to veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses who were under investigation by the RCVS following complaints about their professional conduct.

89. It was commented that there was no doubt that staff worked hard but, as a body, Council had a duty to oversee the system and make sure the Royal College was acting efficiently and managed targets as a statutory responsibility. In the last four years, staffing had been a recurrent problem that affected the KPIs; it was suggested that the KPIs were not particularly ambitious; and, at Stage 2, no cases had met the KPI. For individual veterinary surgeons that had this process hanging over them it had a massive affect on their mental health and would like to ask the College to commit to more resourcing and staff to provide resilience amongst the team and become more ambitious with the targets.

90. It was noted that, whilst extra staffing was always welcome, not all issues around KPIs were down to staffing levels or performance; the process involved the respondent, the complainant, the second vet, and a multitude of others. From the beginning of 2021, there had been a 50% rise in enquiries and concerns received, and this was inevitably having an impact. Regarding the 0% of cases at Stage 2 reaching the KPI: to give context, the five cases it related to were interrogated in great detail by PIC / DC Liaison Committee; all were compared against a traffic-light system as to whether the delays were avoidable (red), unavoidable (green), or a combination of the two (yellow). Of the five cases, one was coded yellow and four coded green; explanations had been provided to the Committee.

91. The report and classified appendix were noted.

## Reports of statutory committees – to note

### **Preliminary Investigation Committee**

92. There were no comments or questions, and the report was noted.

### **RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee**

93. There were no comments or questions, and the report was noted.

### **Disciplinary Committee and RVN Disciplinary Committee**

94. There were no comments or questions, and the report was noted.

## Notices of motion

95. There were no notices of motion received.

## Questions

96. There were no questions received.

## Dates of future Council meetings

97. Dates for forthcoming Council meetings as agreed by the Officer Team were:

Friday, 9 July 2021 (AGM)  
Thursday, 9 September 2021  
Thursday, 11 November 2021  
Thursday, 20 January 2022  
Thursday, 17 March 2022  
Thursday, 9 June 2022  
Friday, 8 July 2022 (AGM)  
Thursday, 8 September 2022  
Thursday, 10 November 2022

98. The full schedule of meeting dates to the end of 2022 would be circulated shortly.

## Recommendation for the appointment of Officers – President and Vice-President (Senior) respectively, for confirmation at the AGM on 9 July 2021

99. The (current) Vice-President (Senior) took the Chair for this item whilst the President and Vice-President (Junior) left the meeting to ensure procedures and oversight were followed. Staff and guests also left the meeting in order for Council to have a confidential discussion if it so wished.
100. It was reported that Officer Team had recommended, in accordance with convention, that from the AGM in July, the incoming President to be Dr K A Richards, and that Dr M O Greene move to become Vice-President (Senior).
101. There were no comments, Council agreed the recommendations by a verbal 'aye'.
102. The President and Vice-President (Junior) returned to the meeting and were congratulated.
103. The President re-took the Chair.

### Any other College business (unclassified items)

104. Dr Chambers took the opportunity to thank retiring member Dr Tufnell for being his mentor when he first joined Council.
105. There was no other College business.

### Risk Register, equality and diversity (unclassified items)

106. The following item had been identified from the open session of the meeting:
- re: LWP recommendations: the reasons behind the main, and interim, recommendations.

### Dates of next meetings

107. The President reported that there would be a brief meeting of RCVS Council immediately after the AGM on Friday, 9 July 2021, thereafter the next scheduled meeting is Thursday, 9 September 2021\*.
108. The Vice-President (Senior) thanked the President for her leadership, wisdom and grace over a difficult year.

### Matters for decision by Council and for report (confidential items)

#### Estates Strategy

109. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 1 – 5.

#### Discretionary Fund

110. Council noted the expenditure incurred in 2021 to date. There were no questions, and the paper was noted.

#### Annual accounts 2020 and associated matters

111. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 6 – 10.

#### Veterinary Client Mediation Service – funding proposals

112. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 11 – 16.

#### Audit and Risk Committee

##### External recruitment – Member

113. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 17 – 19.

#### Appointment of Chair

114. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 20 – 24.

#### External recruitment – statutory committees

115. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 25 – 28.

#### Any other College business (confidential items)

#### Classified appendices

116. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 29 – 35.

#### Risk Register, equality and diversity (confidential items)

117. No matters had been identified from the confidential session of the meeting.

#### Council Workshop: Council Culture (confidential item)

118. It was questioned whether there would be enough time remaining in the meeting to give full value to the workshop. It was agreed to re-schedule this agenda item to later in the month and noted that this would have financial implications as the external facilitator would need to be re-booked.

**[\*Afternote: this was re-scheduled for Monday, 28 June 2021 between 10:00 am and 12:00 noon to be held in committee.]**

119. The President thanked Council and staff for contributions over the preceding year and noted that it was difficult to see all of the work undertaken until taking a step back. The meeting was brought to a close.

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## Annex A

**Retiring members at RCVS Day – main contributions** (membership is not exhaustive as some Boards/Working Groups were not added to the main committee lists.)

**Dr Caroline Allen: elected 2017 – 2021 (four years)**

- Advancement of the Professions Committee
- Standards Committee

**Mr David Leicester: elected 2018 – 2021 (three years)**

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Registration Appeals Committee
- Standards Committee

**Mr Martin Peaty: elected 2017 – 2021 (four years)**

- Finance and Resources Committee
- Registration Committee (also former Register and Registration Sub-committee)
- Standards Committee
- Primary Qualifications Sub-committee
- (Chair) Statutory Examination for Membership Board

**Dr Cheryl Scudamore: elected 2017– 2021 (four years)**

- Education Committee
- Finance and Resources Committee
- Primary Qualifications Sub-committee
- Specialist Recognitions Sub-committee
- Fellowship Board Credentials Panel for Meritorious Contributions to Knowledge
- Graduate Outcomes Mentor Task and Finish Group
- Mind Matters Initiative Taskforce

**Dr Christopher Tufnell: elected 2009 – 2021 (12 years)**

- President 2016 – 2017
- (Chair) Education Committee (also Chair, former Education Policy and Specialisation Committee)
- (Chair) Examinations Appeals Committee
- (Chair) Specialist Recognition and Advanced Practitioner Appeals Committee
- (Vice-Chair) Advancement of the Professions Committee
- Finance and Resources Committee
- Nominations Committee
- Planning and Resources Committee
- Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee
- Public Affairs Committee
- Registration Committee (also former Register and Registration Sub-committee)
- (Observer) Standards Committee
- Operational Board

- Covid-19 Taskforce
- Federation of Veterinarians of Europe representative on Co-ordination Group
- Graduate Outcomes Working Party
- (Chair) Graduate Outcomes Mentor Task and Finish Group
- Graduate Outcomes Extra Mural Studies/Clinical Education Group

**Professor David Argyle: university (Edinburgh) appointed 2012 – 2020 (eight years), Veterinary Schools Council appointed 2020 – 2021 (one year)**

- (Chair) Advancement of the Professions Committee
- (Chair) Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee
- Education Committee (also former Education Policy and Specialisation Committee)
- Nominations Committee
- Registration Committee (also former Register and Registration Sub-committee)
- Standards Committee
- Officer Team
- Post-nominals Sub-committee
- Recognised Veterinary Practice Sub-committee
- Brexit Taskforce
- Covid-19 Taskforce
- Science Advisory Panel
- Veterinary Futures Project Board

**Professor Susan Dawson: university (Liverpool) appointed 2011 – 2020 (nine years), Veterinary Schools Council appointed 2020 – 2021 (one year)**

- Treasurer 2020 – 2021
- (Chair) Education Committee (also Member, Education Policy and Specialisation Committee)
- (Chair) Finance and Resources Committee
- Advancement of the Professions Committee
- Nominations Committee
- Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee
- Registration Committee (also former Register and Registration Sub-committee)
- (Observer) Audit and Risk Committee
- Officer Team (and former Operational Board)
- (Chair) Primary Qualifications Sub-committee
- (Chair) Mind Matters Initiative Taskforce
- Accreditation Review Group
- Brexit Taskforce
- Covid-19 Taskforce
- Estates Strategy Project Board
- Fellowship Board
- Fellowship Board Credentials Panel for Meritorious Contributions to the Profession
- Graduate Outcomes Working Party
- Graduate Outcomes Extra-Mural Studies/Clinical Education Group
- (Observer) RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees

**Ms Elizabeth (Liz) Butler (external member, not on RCVS Council): appointed 2012 – 2021 (nine years)**

(Chair) Audit and Risk Committee

(Chair) RCVS Conduct Panel(s)

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<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	9 September 2021
Title	6 – 9 July 2021 Council minutes
Summary	Minutes of the remote decision made between 6 – 9 July 2021
Decisions required	To approve the unclassified minutes
Attachments	None
Author	Dawn Wiggins Secretary, Council <a href="mailto:d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk">d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 020 7202 0737

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Minutes	Unclassified	n/a

**<sup>1</sup>Classifications explained**

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

**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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

## Council Meeting

### Minutes of the remote decision made via Boardpacks between 6 – 9 July 2021

#### Members:

Dr M O Greene (President in the Chair)	
Dr C J Allen	Professor S A May
Mrs B S Andrews-Jones	Mrs C-L McLaughlan
Miss L Belton	Dr S Paterson
Professor D Bray	Mr M L Peaty
Mr J M Castle	Mr M E Rendle
Dr D S Chambers	Dr K A Richards
Dr N T Connell	Dr C L Scudamore
Professor S Dawson	Dr N C Smith
Dr M A Donald	Dr C W Tufnell
Dr J M Dyer	Mr T J Walker
Ms L Ford	Professor J L N Wood
Mr D J Leicester	Ms J S M Worthington

\*Absent

#### Amendments to Meeting Procedure Rules

1. Following temporary changes that allowed business to continue during the Covid-19 pandemic, Council considered the proposed amendments to the Meeting Procedure Rules 2019. Amendments took into account voting for Council, committees, and internal elections; allowed for remote participation at meetings; and clarified quorum requirements.
2. It was commented that Council should evaluate the sense of inclusion experienced by all, and the quality of discussions and decision-making to ensure they remained of highest quality. This was noted.
3. A vote was taken to approve the amendments to the Meeting Procedure Rules:

For:	20
Against:	0
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	5
4. The amendments were approved by a majority vote. Following the decision the Rules would be amended and uploaded to the RCVS website.

## Committee population and meeting dates 2021-22

5. The population and dates were noted.

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

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	9 September 2021
Title	9 July 2021 Council minutes
Summary	Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 9 July 2021.
Decisions required	To approve the unclassified minutes.
Attachments	None
Author	Dawn Wiggins Secretary, Council 0207 202 0737 / <a href="mailto:d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk">d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk</a>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a



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**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation</li> </ol>

## Council Meeting

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held remotely via Attend2IT platform (with College Officers in person) on Friday, 9 July 2021 at 10:00 am.

### Members:

Dr K A Richards (President in the Chair)

Dr L H Allum

Mrs B S Andrews-Jones

Miss L Belton

Professor D Bray\*

Mr J M Castle

Dr D S Chambers

Dr N T Connell

Dr M A Donald

Dr J M Dyer

Ms L Ford

Dr M M S Gardiner

Dr M O Greene

Professor S A May

Mrs C-L McLaughlan

Professor T D H Parkin

Dr S Paterson

Professor C J Proudman

Mr M E Rendle

Dr N C Smith

Mr T J Walker

Dr C M Whiting

Professor J L N Wood

Ms J S M Worthington

\*Denotes absent

### In attendance:

Ms E Butler Chair, Audit and Risk Committee (retiring)

Ms E C Ferguson Registrar

Ms L Lockett CEO

Ms C L McCann Director of Operations (DoO)

Dr C H Middlemiss Chief Veterinary Officer (UK)

Ms J Shardlow Chair, Audit and Risk Committee (incoming)

## Apologies for absence

1. Apologies of absence were received from Professor Bray.

## Declarations of interest

2. There were no declarations of interest received.

## Matter for decision by Council

### Appointment of the Presidential Team and Treasurer 2021/2022

3. Council was asked to approve the appointment of the new Presidential Team and Treasurer for 2021/2022 as follows:

President:	Dr Kate Richards
Vice-President (Senior):	Dr Mandisa Greene
Vice-President (Junior):	Dr Melissa Donald
Treasurer:	Dr Niall Connell

4. A vote was taken (electronically):

Yes:	20
No:	0
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	4

5. Mr Rendle submitted his vote in person; Mrs Andrews-Jones and Professor May submitted their votes by email as they experienced technical difficulties on the day.
6. The appointment of the Presidential Team and Treasurer 2021/2022 was agreed by a majority vote.

### Date of next meeting

7. The date of the next scheduled Council meeting was confirmed as Thursday, 9 September 2021 commencing at 10:00 am.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	9 September 2021
Title	CEO update, including progress against Strategic Plan
Summary	This paper offers a summary of activity against the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan
Decisions required	To note
Attachments	None
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

## Background

1. The RCVS Strategic Plan 2020-2024 was approved at the RCVS Council meeting in January 2020 and came into immediate effect. The full report, including all of the narrative, together with case studies from the previous plan's successes, can be found here:  
<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/news-and-views/publications/rcvs-strategic-plan-2020-2024/>
2. For each action, progress to date, responsibilities and next steps have been identified in the following table. It is to be noted that this is a five-year plan, so in some areas activity remains to be started. At its meeting in July 2020, the Officer Team felt it appropriate that an update be given to Council three times a year – in September, January and June – but information about a specific action can be made available to any Council member on request in between times.
3. Outside of those changes noted in the Strategic Plan table to follow, the following items are for note since the June Council meeting:
  - a. Hosted our AGM as a virtual event, welcoming new members of RCVS and VN Councils, thanking retiring members, and introducing the new Officer team
  - b. Awarding the Mind Matters Initiative Sarah Brown research grant to a team aiming to identify and address workplace stressors for vets with autism
  - c. Launching a survey into mental health issues among VN students, and a series of webinars for the whole veterinary team
  - d. Announcing a series of innovation workshops under our ViVet project
  - e. Opening a consultation on the RCVS undergraduate veterinary degree assessment standards and methodology
  - f. Publishing updated standards for how VNs are educated and trained
  - g. Carrying out a survey on the impact of Covid on vets and VNs
  - h. Launching a series of events to celebrate the VN Diamond Jubilee
  - i. Launching the VetGDP
  - j. Welcoming 38 new Fellows to the RCVS Fellowship
  - k. Issuing a joint statement, with the British Veterinary Association and the British Veterinary Nursing Association, to encourage government to put Afghan veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals associated with UK-affiliated charities on the emergency evacuation list
4. Meetings of the Covid Taskforce have been less frequent since the June Council meeting, and decisions are now moving back to the parent committees, as agreed by Council. The only decision made since the last meeting of Council has been with regards to extra-mural studies.

## A: Clarity

**Ambition:** to ensure that we have clarity of purpose and that our internal and external stakeholders and service-users understand our role in the world. We will endeavour to become a proactive regulator that remains a step ahead, even in the face of constant change and uncertainty. We will listen widely, consult meaningfully, make confident decisions, then communicate with clarity, appreciating that the final outcome may not suit everyone.

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
1. Continue, via the work of the Veterinary Legislation Working Party (LWP) and other groups, to review the regulatory landscape to ensure we develop world-leading, robust standards and approaches that are grounded in evidence and risk-based, in order to safeguard animal health and welfare, and public health, and maintain trust in the veterinary professions.	LWP/ Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LWP reported to Council in June 2020; Council agreed to consult on proposals, consultation opened 5 November 2020 and closed on 23 April 2021</li> <li>A review of the published evidence on effective accreditation methodology has been carried out, and shared with the working party and committees to inform the development of the new approach (available on request)</li> <li>A new set of veterinary education accreditation standards has been agreed, which accommodate different models of curricula and delivery and enable flexibility whilst driving quality improvement.</li> <li>A new accreditation methodology has been agreed, which is more outcomes-focused and adopts a risk-based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses to consultation were considered by Council at its 10 June 2021 meeting and recommendations will go to Defra w/c 30 August</li> <li>Following introduction of new VN accreditation standards in January 2020, we carried out a small-scale review to ensure they were outcomes-focused and to remove any duplication. Completed and approved by VNC 10 February. Updated Standards Framework available on the website.</li> <li>New veterinary education accreditation standards, methodology and rubric went to Council on 10 June 21 and were approved for wider consultation – went live 16/7 and closes 2/9, to be considered by EC in Sept.</li> <li>Day-One Competences and skills for veterinary nursing (to include the professional behaviours) being reviewed, with the consultation planned for autumn and a view to going to VNC in February 2022.</li> </ul>
2. Ensure that we are addressing what matters to our stakeholders and that we horizon-scan for issues that are beyond the scope of our immediate view. For example, regulation of new technologies, regulation of practices, review of our concerns and disciplinary process, and	APC/ LWP/ PICDCL EC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing work with ViVet, including events around creativity and reflecting on the impact of Covid-19 and the professions' response to it</li> <li>Regulation of practices falls part of A1 above</li> <li>Review of concerns/disciplinary processes consultation alongside LWP – see A1 above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A stakeholder event on workforce issues with sessions run by ViVet will take place in the autumn</li> <li>Regulation of wider vet team ongoing especially ref vet techs (working group reporting to Registration Committee)</li> </ul>

<p>regulation of the wider veterinary team and the environment in which they work.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lot of focus on ‘what matters to our stakeholders’ has been carried out during pandemic work</li> <li>• Stakeholder event took place online on 23 October 2020 to discuss current consultations and impact of Brexit</li> <li>• Updates to PSS published May 2021</li> <li>• Review of mental health impact of concerns process has been published, alongside updated action plan, with launch of ProfCon Investigation Support – 9/6/21</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horizon-scanning process to take place for Vet Futures #2 and VN Futures #2– inc impact of Covid-19</li> <li>• Under care review ongoing, with practitioner survey now completed and data gathering with SavsNet approved – all data to come to Standards in due course</li> <li>• Increasing challenges with the availability and implementation of EMS requirements in future recognised, and planning underway for an initial stakeholder event to look at the longer term solutions</li> </ul>
Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
<p>3. Review whether we can take a more proactive role around breaches of the Veterinary Surgeons Act involving unqualified individuals, or courses that purport to lead to registration but do not, both through education to end-users of veterinary services, and working more actively to support those wishing to raise concerns with the relevant authorities.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some work on this had started pre-Covid and will be revisited once resources allow</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review resources post-LWP consultation decisions/Under care/out of hours (UCOOH) review</li> </ul>
<p>4. Work with our partners overseas to ensure that the UK remains relevant in the veterinary world post-EU exit, including sharing knowledge, marketing our standards and services, and building an engaged diaspora of members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (MsRCVS) and registered veterinary nurses (RVNs). Ensure there is a global element to all that we do, and that our international members feel engaged and included.</p>	<p>APC/ FVE/ Brexit T/F EC?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing work via Advancement of the Professions Committee to consider global offering</li> <li>• Building relationships via MMI International, with first international roundtable on mental health hosted (March 2021), second planned (September 2021) and new organisations signed up to the joint statement on mental health with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)</li> <li>• Continuing to play a role in the International Veterinary Regulators Network and hosted a session on mental health as part of the June 2021 series of educational events</li> <li>• Continuing to play a role in the Global Veterinary Innovation Network, with key role in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop actions from o/s member research</li> <li>• Work ongoing to develop more permanent solution to loss of mutual recognition of professional qualifications – also engagement with government around the Professional Qualifications Bill and its likely impact</li> <li>• Run third EU graduates survey ref impact of Brexit (delayed til autumn due to UCOOH and Covid impact surveys – to avoid survey fatigue)</li> <li>• Continue to play strong role at the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) – reschedule London GA for summer 2022</li> <li>• Planning a further virtual IAWG for autumn 2021</li> </ul>

		<p>2021 educational programme (chairing and facilitating sessions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presented on Mind Matters at World Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress (March)</li> <li>Continuing to work with International Accreditation Working Group (IAWG) to harmonise standards – have agreed protocols for virtual joint accreditations</li> <li>Signed up to World Veterinary Association statement on global climate crisis</li> <li>Protocols for joint virtual visitations agreed with IAWG members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pick up work with OIE on twinning once pandemic resolving</li> <li>New RCVS accreditation proposals presented to IAWG and follow up discussion around future approaches to joint visitations planned for Sept.</li> <li>Ongoing conversations with Defra around workforce issues</li> </ul>
Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
<p>5. Build a closer relationship between the College, the professions and the public by continuing our outreach programme. Review how we gain input from stakeholders at all levels, including the development of an improved process for seeking input from members of the public.</p>	<p>APC/ Comms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder research published January 2020</li> <li>Feedback from practices sought as part of regular Covid-19 surveys</li> <li>Much of our face-to-face public outreach on hold again in 2021 due to Covid</li> <li>Stakeholder event held in October 2020</li> <li>New role established in Communications team to support student and new graduate engagement and planning work underway with Education and VN teams.</li> <li>New role of Head of Insight and Engagement established to support this work and also A6 below</li> <li>Scoping meeting held and four broad areas identified for consideration and development: 'customer' service, policy formulation and consultation, two-way communication and evaluation, reputation of and public trust in profession. Contacted other regulators, regulators, member associations, Royal Colleges, to discuss challenges and best practice in membership and stakeholder engagement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review information and advice gained from third parties and decide on best approach to formation of engagement groups and seeking/incorporating animal owner input.</li> <li>Project underway to review and improve public engagement at all levels</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and production of content for new student-focused area of the website underway, along with review/update of <i>RCVS Guide for New Members</i></li> <li>• New welcome videos produced for this year's freshers to explain role of College and help establish positive early relationships.</li> </ul>	
6. Establish clarity around a data-sharing commitment, and ensure that our views, our data & our insights are shared regularly in an easy-to-search way, for example, easy-to-find FAQ on key issues, insights gained from concerns & complaints data, and self-service facts and figures about the professions. Make available accessible & anonymised versions of the data we hold to all stakeholders to enable them to generate value and insights for the sector.	FRC/ Digital/ Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prototype of sharing mechanism for core data ready for review</li> <li>• FAQ on Covid have been well received, along with those for CPD, LWP, Practice Standards and VetGDP</li> <li>• Paper on data-sharing went to November 2020 meeting of Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) – policy needs further refining</li> <li>• New role of Head of Insight and Engagement established to support this work</li> <li>• New Research Officer hired to support this work and a broad range of other research across the organisation</li> <li>• FAQ around avoiding medicines pitfalls published spring 2021</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refine and agree data-sharing policy and return to FRC September 2021</li> <li>• Review data-sharing prototype and launch</li> <li>• Develop dashboard on key metrics – process of identifying key areas underway</li> <li>• Develop approach for mining concerns and complaints data for content for Academy</li> </ul>
<b>Action (numbering as per full plan)</b>	<b>Who?</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Next step/due date</b>
7. Plan and implement a cycle of review and improvement for our educational standards and processes, to ensure we continue to take a leadership role with our international partners.	Ed Cttee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched Day-One Competences 2/7/20</li> <li>• VN Standards reviewed and published and CertAVN developed with four Higher Education Institutions now delivering in a diverse range of areas</li> <li>• Working party, Primary Qualifications Subcommittee (PQSC) and Education Committee have agreed new accreditation standards and methodology. Council approved these for professional consultation in June 2021</li> <li>• Advanced Practitioner (AP) and CertAVP surveys completed. The AP Focus groups were</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AP and CertAVP survey reports received by Education Committee CertAVP focus groups will take place in the autumn.</li> <li>• Arranging a further virtual IAWG for September 2021</li> <li>• New Standards and methodology went to consultation with the wider profession in July 2021, closing 2/9. Findings to Education Cttee in September; accreditation panel training and further detailed guidance to be developed thereafter</li> <li>• See A1 for VN DOC/DOS details</li> </ul>

		<p>held in June and results will be discussed by EC in September.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosted virtual International Accreditors Working Group (IAWG) in June 2020.</li> <li>• Presented new standards and methodology to IAWG in July 2021. Initial impressions were positive. Will include in the consultation.</li> <li>• The VN Qualifications Team is in regular contact with HEIs and Colleges to provide support and understand Covid-related challenges and changes to provision</li> <li>• Education Team in regular contact with Veterinary Schools Council to mitigate impact of Covid on veterinary undergraduate education – many temporary amends made to policy to support schools and students during this time, being kept under review</li> </ul>	
<p>8. Ensure clarity of appeal across all the areas where we make decisions, modernising where appropriate; where appeal is not available, clearly justify why not.</p>	<p>Legal services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fellowship Board has reviewed Fellowship appeals process and some changes have been made</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit current processes; review best practice – process underway</li> </ul>

## B: Compassion

**Ambition:** to be a compassionate upstream regulator and a supportive Royal College by ensuring that high standards continue to be met while working in an empathetic way that respects all of our stakeholders and service-users as individuals. We will recognise that a compassionate approach involves helping members of the veterinary team build the skills and knowledge they need to meet our standards, which is ultimately in the interests of animal health and welfare.

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
1. Endeavour to ensure that the College is seen as approachable, helpful, fair and accessible to all.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Head of Insight and Engagement will help ensure consistency across the organisation in terms of how we communicate with members of the professions and the public</li> <li>All RCVS websites were compliant with key requirements of new Accessibility Regulations by September 2020 deadline</li> <li>Review of communications around registration renewal has taken place</li> <li>Good positioning of all external vacancies, providing insights into our role and key values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review data/identify training priorities</li> <li>Review public- and profession-facing documentation for 'Plain English'</li> <li>Publish regular data on meeting our KPIs</li> <li>Develop online version of Regional Question Times to take questions from members</li> <li>Tie-in with stakeholder mapping (A5, above)</li> <li>Review of key web content ongoing, including conversion of all PDF documents to web pages where possible, or provision PDF and web versions of key publications, eg <i>Diversity &amp; Inclusion Strategy</i>. to ensure improved accessibility</li> <li>Taking forward work of DIG to review all our process to ensure they are fair and do not discriminate, eg work underway with Fellowship regarding application process</li> </ul>
2. Enable our teams to deliver compassionate regulation by providing structures, training and support to ensure they can help vets and nurses meet the standards required in a compassionate way, and take ownership and communicate clearly when things don't go to plan. Recognising that, in order to achieve this, our team members must also feel well supported and that they are compassionately treated.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data from Survey of Professions</li> <li>Peakon staff engagement tool gives 'real time' view on how staff are feeling</li> <li>Launched e-cards to celebrate staff members who meet our values</li> <li>Created 'Opportunities Group' of mid-career staff to help understand where support may be needed, particularly for new managers</li> <li>Have rolled out Diversity &amp; Inclusion training for all staff</li> <li>MH for Managers training taken place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review data and identify priorities for staff training and review of materials – ongoing process</li> <li>Reviewing options for online learning system for staff – process coming to conclusion</li> <li>Review discussions data from Peakon and other staff meetings for training gaps</li> <li>Encourage and support managers in acting on findings/comments from Peakon tool</li> <li>Supervision / support for those taking stressful calls – process under development</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support sessions ref virtual working for staff have taken place</li> <li>• Training for staff dealing with people in difficult situations completed</li> <li>• Update for staff taken place on resources available via our Employee Assistance Programme</li> <li>• ProfCon Investigation Support service launched in June 2021</li> <li>• Staff invited to attend all appropriate Mind Matters sessions, for example, campfire chats, resilience training</li> <li>• Pronoun policy written and staff training underway</li> <li>• Stress management workshops completed to support staff back into BH</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virtual staff away day postponed from 2020 and will take place in autumn in person if possible</li> <li>• Revisit values ecards to promote recognition of being compassionate</li> </ul>
<b>Action (numbering as per full plan)</b>	<b>Who?</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Next step/due date</b>
3. Review our concerns process through the eyes of each of our stakeholder and service-user groups to ensure that it is fair, forward-thinking and compassionate, and set out a programme of quality improvement.	ProfCon MMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ProfCon Investigation Support Service launched June 2021 – keep under review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up client group – see A5 above</li> <li>• Package of modernising proposals is due for consultation – see A2 above</li> <li>• Review how we gather data, moving to a ‘live’ feedback model – consult with consumer organisations</li> </ul>
4. Help our regulated professionals to meet the standards expected of them by their peers, the public and society at large by launching the RCVS Academy, which will house a range of online educational tools to help veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses and other potential associates of the College understand what is expected of them in terms of meeting standards, and to support them acquiring relevant knowledge and staying up to date in a creative, accessible and inspiring way.	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idea well supported, with many groups asking for content - key will be getting the right structure in place and prioritising</li> <li>• Ideas for content have been listed</li> <li>• VetGDP Adviser Training now launched on RCVS Knowledge Moodle platform</li> <li>• VetGDP Adviser e-learning modules actively being used – 1,602 people have registered on it, and 386 have completed all modules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCVS Academy Manager has now started and learning needs analysis underway, with focus groups amongst members of the veterinary team being planned and Academy Champions being recruited among internal teams</li> <li>• Review transfer of video content for ‘Introduction to the UK Veterinary Professions’ course for overseas-qualified vets/VNs to the new Academy.</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
<p>5. Continue to support the mental health and wellbeing of members of the veterinary team, and our College staff, through the Mind Matters Initiative under its workstreams of 'prevent, protect and support' (see <a href="http://www.vetmindmatters.org">www.vetmindmatters.org</a>), and also help veterinary professionals to take account of the mental health of those with whom they come into contact.</p>	MMI/ APC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MMI has been adapting to the Covid world with online tools and Covid-specific advice and guidance</li> <li>• See <a href="http://vetmindmatters.org">vetmindmatters.org</a> for specific activities under Mind Matters</li> <li>• Mind Matters International work ongoing and visibility of RCVS leadership role in this area is strong within the global veterinary community</li> <li>• Sarah Brown Grants winner announced (Autism in the professions)</li> <li>• MH focus at International Veterinary Regulators Network in June</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link up with Diversity and Inclusion agenda both internally and externally</li> <li>• Student VN mental health survey launched in June, roundtable November, update at BVNA Congress, presentation of findings at MMI Symposium</li> <li>• MMI Symposium November 2021</li> <li>• MMI wellbeing App to be launched September 2021 (attending BEVA Congress to showcase)</li> <li>• MMI international event September 2021</li> <li>• Tender process for MMI training underway</li> </ul>
<p>6. Continue to foster a reflective learning culture amongst members of the veterinary team, so that they can continue to grow and develop in a supportive, no-blame environment.</p>	APC/ Ed Cttee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of 1CPD app January 2020 (with further updates) to enable reflective learning – recent webinars (winter 2020-1) supported this</li> <li>• Support of RCVSK QI work ongoing</li> <li>• Addressed via Edward Jenner Leadership MOOC modules</li> <li>• Speech to World Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress (March 2021) on learning culture and the role of the regulator</li> <li>• VetGDP will help promote and develop a learning culture for new graduates, implemented via the VetGDP Advisers and evaluated via our QA process – campaign to recruit advisers launched in November 2020 and currently 1,810 registrations; virtual meetings carried out with students from each vet school and live webinars for the profession and employers delivered</li> <li>• VetGDP Adviser e-learning specifically covers how to develop a positive learning culture, guide reflection and coaching techniques and support for new graduates – over 1,600 vets have already started the e-learning modules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to deliver communications campaign and support members of the profession in completing 1CPD. Use of 1CPD becomes mandatory Jan 22</li> <li>• Evaluation data collection for VetGDP to explore impact – to be considered by EC and Council early 2022</li> <li>• New VetGDP Subcommittee has been established to oversee programme delivery and monitor quality. First meeting planned Oct</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Campaign regarding reflective approach ongoing, running from launch of 1CPD to direct email communications campaigns, including suite of videos, social media campaigns, media coverage and recent well-attended webinars. Current stage includes direct email campaign to target those who have not yet engaged with 1CPD and offer 1-2-1 support to encourage them to do so.</li></ul>	
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## C: Courage

**Ambition:** we will have the courage to take a leadership role within the professions, to ensure that the pervading culture is healthy, sustainable, inclusive, innovative and respectful; through this, will develop confident veterinary professionals.

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
1. Continue to seek culture change within the wider professions around help-seeking behaviour to support both mental and physical health, learning culture, leadership, innovation, sustainability and diversity.	DIG MMI APC Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DIG published strategic plan</li> <li>See B5 for MMI progress</li> <li>See B6 for learning culture</li> <li>Leadership – strategic plan in place but requires review. New Inclusive Leadership Manager currently being recruited</li> <li>New plan in place for ViVet</li> <li>Sustainability WG established, working with Fellowship Science Advisory Panel (FSAP) and Practice Standards Group to look at Core / Award goals</li> <li>EDI to be included in next PSS levels</li> <li>BAME Student WG ongoing</li> <li>Staff-level EDI plan underway</li> <li>VetGDP Adviser e-learning modules specifically focus on learning culture and the need to support graduates' help-seeking behaviour and see this as a positive thing to be actively welcomed when supporting new graduates. Modules also cover wellbeing of new grads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FSAP to define sustainability project (Net Zero Surgery)</li> <li>Continue development of Edward Jenner – awaiting NHS to restart the programme. 'Summer School' planned for six key topics on leadership</li> <li>Inclusive Leadership Manager starts September 2021</li> <li>BAME Student WG report and recommendations to be finalised over the summer and report to DIG early autumn</li> <li>Work of Environment and Sustainability Working Group drawing to close</li> </ul>
2. Celebrate the art as well as the science of veterinary medicine and ensure that wider professional skills are properly and credibly supported.	APC/ RCVSK Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-clinical skills have been highlighted as part of the Graduate Outcomes review and now reflected in Day One Competences</li> <li>Professional skills focus within the VetGDP, including training for VetGDP Advisers</li> <li>MMI developed new webinar programme, celebrated Neurodiversity Week, and delivered other materials to support the impact of Covid</li> <li>VN Diamond Jubilee celebrations launched and underway, with some webinars/podcasts already published, social media engagement underway and other activities being planned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop materials for Academy</li> <li>Planning well in hand for Honours and Awards hybrid event in September to celebrate this year's RCVS, MMI and Knowledge award winners.</li> <li>Wider cultural project to celebrate history and development of modern veterinary practice – tie in with new building?</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
3. Work with other stakeholders to retain skills and talent within the professions, by developing return-to-work options that build confidence in those who have had a career break, for whatever reason.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial conversations started with Defra, British Veterinary Association, Veterinary Management Group and others to better understand recruitment and retention needs but this has been impacted by Covid</li> <li>Initial conversations with MMI ref a return-to-work network founded on issue of insurance, needs picking up</li> <li>VetGDP is available for those returning to the profession, upon request (not mandatory)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research regarding workforce and recruitment/retention underway and summit on workforce issues planned for autumn, with sessions led by ViVet innovation team</li> <li>Re-recruitment fair?</li> <li>Materials for the Academy</li> <li>Review our policies to ensure return to work is as accessible as possible</li> <li>Will be reviewing Period of Supervised Practice for RVNs during 2021</li> </ul>
4. Ensure a pathway for career progression for vets and nurses via postgraduate/post-qualification accreditations and qualifications – to meet the needs of vets and nurses at all stages of their careers.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review has started ref AP and CertAVP for vets - surveys completed and findings reported to Education Committee. The AP focus groups took place in June and results and next steps will be discussed by Education Committee in September</li> <li>Advanced qualifications framework for VNs published and we now have four HEIs accredited with a further two accreditations booked. A range of focused qualifications are now available (for example, anaesthesia, oncology, emergency and critical care, dentistry, coaching and mentoring and evidence-based nursing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish recommendations on vet quals/status</li> <li>VN career progression linked to LWP proposals</li> <li>Review development routes for general practitioners</li> <li>CertAVP focus groups planned for autumn 21</li> </ul>
5. Develop extra-mural studies (EMS) and work experience opportunities at the College, together with more opportunities for veterinary professionals and members of the public to become engaged with the work of the regulator at first hand and gain an understanding of its complexities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet the RCVS Days, stakeholder days on hold</li> <li>New online EMS programme developed and piloted, jointly with the Veterinary Policy Research Foundation</li> <li>EMS student attending placement with RCVS w/c 19 July. Will spend time with Ed/PSS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Next round of EMS opportunities due to be marketed soon</li> <li>Develop modules for Academy eg virtual hearing? Some kind of gamification of this?</li> <li>Lunch and learns with practices – remotely?</li> </ul>
6. Create an innovation funding pot to enable the professions to help solve regulation and professional standards issues that matter to them.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have approval of the small bursaries pot – for individuals' personal development aligning to strat plan – not yet launched due to Covid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we better understand the questions that are on professionals' minds?</li> <li>Launch bursary scheme once travel and in-person CPD more feasible</li> </ul>



Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
7. Continue to develop the Fellowship into a learned society that reflects the varied achievements of the veterinary profession; encourages the advancement of standards; and, develops public awareness of veterinary medicine and science, for example, via the development of a Fellow on the Public Understanding of Veterinary Science.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fellowship communication platform launch (May / June)</li> <li>• Engagement with Sustainability WG underway</li> <li>• Unconscious bias training of Fellowship Board and Credential Panellists (March)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fellowship strategy being finalised and published by the Board</li> <li>• Communications and marketing plan to support the work of the Fellowship, including public outreach</li> <li>• Restoration policy under development</li> <li>• Discussion forum ready for launch</li> <li>• New newsletter launching shortly</li> <li>• Fellowship Week to take place in September</li> </ul>
8. Review new ways of reaching consensus and driving change within our leadership and governance structure.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unconscious bias training took place after September Council meeting</li> <li>• Culture action plan for Council approved at November meeting</li> <li>• Pack for potential Council/VNC members updated</li> <li>• Views gathered from Council members on how induction can be improved</li> <li>• Paper on in-person/virtual meetings approved by Council June 2021</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-to-one interviews taken place with Council members and independent facilitator – discussion took place at separate meeting in June</li> <li>• Culture action plan work ongoing – proposal for development of inclusive working groups to Council in September</li> <li>• Review impact of 2018 LRO on Governance (see also D1)</li> </ul>
9. Work with the BVA and the BVNA to evaluate the success of the first action plans for Vet Futures and VN Futures respectively, assess whether the ambitions remain relevant, and develop new action plans accordingly. Work with the FVE and our European colleagues to support the delivery of Vet Futures Europe.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan agreed with BVA that we review research and ambitions, then develop second action plan</li> <li>• Evaluation of first action plans started but to be completed – interrupted by Covid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we capture what the professions have learned from Covid, and keep the good stuff? – session to review at Council meeting in September</li> <li>• Case studies on successes under development</li> <li>• Interim VNF report, on target, to be published Sept 2021</li> <li>• VNF events scheduled for BVNA Congress 2021 to help plan phase two activities</li> </ul>

## D: Confidence

**Ambition:** in order to deliver our Strategic Plan we must not only have the mandate that is secured by the Veterinary Surgeons Act and our Royal Charter, but also the confidence to succeed that will be brought by the right underpinning – the governance, people, finance, communications and IT structures that are crucial to our success.

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
1. Review the bedding-in of the 2018 Legislative Reform Order to ensure that our Council and committee structure is efficient, effective, and transparent, and provides the right level of strategic oversight coupled with skills-based input to allow the College to function to the best of its abilities.	Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are not mandated by govt to do a review (unlike for the 2013 LRO) but it is good practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal review in 2021 and more formal five-year review in 2023</li> <li>Need to scope informal review for action second half of 2021</li> </ul>
2. Review the structure of all of our groups operating below committee level, to ensure the right mix of skills are available to tackle the tasks at hand and that each group has clear membership, purpose, principles, time-frame and sense of what success will look like.	FRC/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process has started, with more transparency over ToFR, membership and composition – all now online</li> <li>Delegation scheme (to committee level) updated annually</li> <li>CPD working groups consolidated</li> <li>Skills matrix updated with new Council members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring together all groups into one document, with ToR, membership, quorum, etc – this is in process and draft being used as part of review of committee roles for 2021-22</li> <li>Improve transparency around terms of office</li> <li>Parent committees to review all groups and sunset where appropriate – action for agendas for November 2021 committee round</li> </ul>
3. Develop and embed a meaningful dashboard to help ensure that appetite for risk is clear, risk is managed and any early warning signs are addressed.	ARC/ FRC/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Magique risk management tool now in place for all areas, clear ownership, regularly updated</li> <li>Risk Workshop took place with Council in October 2020</li> <li>Departmental risk registers reviewed on a cycle by Senior Team and Audit and Risk Committee</li> <li>Better signposting to committees of where risk registers can be found on BoardPacks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold risk workshop with Senior Team to reflect on findings of Council workshop</li> <li>Make 'any items for the risk register' agenda items more meaningful</li> <li>Business continuity planning meeting to be held at the end of August to reflect on Covid experience</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
4. Collate and review our member and service-user feedback on an ongoing basis, against key performance indicators, and work with RCVS Knowledge to employ a quality improvement and innovation methodology to ensure we are providing services that meet the needs of our audiences and society at large.	ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have gathered a list of sources of current feedback</li> <li>Data tile on RCVS.me (RCVS intranet) for internal use showing current and historical information on membership, which provides a useful reference tool for trends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of data held and future data requirements underway</li> <li>Develop QI process – Education team developing via Education QI manager and also to link to Head of Insight and Engagement</li> <li>Customer journeys under development in order to identify communication gaps</li> </ul>
5. Ensure our financial systems are customer-focused, fraud-resistant and efficient, and improve communication and clarity over where money is spent and its impact.	FRC/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have gathered data ref fraud prevention activities across the organisation</li> <li>We are reviewing the systems and reporting processes of our accounting systems so deliver more transparency over how money is spent and on a timely basis</li> <li>No issues raised by 2020 audit</li> <li>Regular cyber-security training for staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review data/prioritise areas for improvement</li> <li>Ensure database upgrades include a flexible customer interface</li> <li>Strengthening the Finance Team for improved division of duties, speed of response and succession planning – review of all roles taken place, all now appointed</li> </ul>
6. Put in place a People Strategy that develops our talent, diversity, leadership and culture, across the staff team, Council and committee members, examiners, assessors and all others who work on behalf of the College.	Exec O/ HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in place - Black Lives Matters took priority in 2020</li> <li>Diversity and Inclusion training for all staff</li> <li>Diversity and Inclusion Group strategy includes internal and external audiences</li> <li>Talent &amp; Leadership (T&amp;L) framework conversations taken place ref competencies</li> <li>Recruitment policy developed</li> <li>Agreements with BAME recruitment experts</li> <li>New 'Where we work' policy designed to support remote working</li> <li>People systems developed to support new employees into the organisation</li> <li>Pay policy developed and communicated</li> <li>People Strategy approved by CEO and Officers</li> <li>Pronoun policy in place, training underway</li> <li>Learning management system agreed – content under review</li> <li>Stress Management sessions completed to support staff returning to BH in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshed internal communications strategy agreed by Senior Team January 2021 – engagement sessions already taken place</li> <li>Video recorded to communicate plans to all employees by end July</li> <li>Next phase of D&amp;I strategy to be approved</li> <li>Where we work policy in place</li> <li>Use McKinseys succession planning model to evaluate internal talent in the autumn</li> <li>Provide data ref current position on gender and other diversity strands by end of Q3</li> <li>Pilot mentoring scheme</li> <li>Complete T&amp;L toolkit</li> <li>Recruitment training for legal, best practice and systems to take place before year end</li> <li>Crucial conversations training material to be designed to support pay and performance</li> <li>Leadership training designed to support T&amp;L framework</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competencies agreed for all College roles – wider framework in progress</li> <li>Salary benchmarking taking place by end 2021</li> </ul>	
7. Develop and implement a technology strategy that puts digital first, is collaborative, and focuses on simplification and convergence.	Exec O Digital/ FRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current strategy is coming to an end, new one needs to be developed</li> <li>Covid-19 has meant work has been rather short-term of late, but the existing strategy put us in good shape to work remotely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New strategy in draft and being considered by internal stakeholders before being put before Finance and Resources Committee</li> <li>Work ongoing to support return to in-person and hybrid meetings</li> </ul>
8. Purchase a new property that aims to serve the needs of the College for the next twenty years, while not putting an undue future financial commitment on our members.	Estates/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sale of BH completed</li> <li>Membership of the Estates Strategy Group has been refreshed and it will continue to work as per strategy and reporting to RCVS Council at each meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future building needs under review to ensure appropriate for the 'new normal'</li> <li>Paper to June 2021 Council ref new building priorities was approved – limiting factor is range of available buildings</li> </ul>
9. Put in place a communications strategy that will focus on clarifying what we are, and what we are not, and be stronger about calling out those who seek to undermine the College; own our shortcomings and be clear about where and how we will change; and be bolder about celebrating our successes and our unique contribution to animal health and welfare, and public health. Empower our wider team to become communications ambassadors for the College.	Comms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marcoms Officer and Media &amp; Publications Officer now recruited to support expanding workload of coms team. Further recruitment under review</li> <li>New system being built to consolidate and guide the use of RCVS brand assets, style and language guidelines and web/print accessibility.</li> <li>Trial period for additional social media monitoring/commenting role for Committee Chairs and Officers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisit planning meetings with all teams to identify departmental long-term aims and activities</li> <li>RCVS comms survey of key stakeholders (including professions, public etc) to establish preferences and gain feedback</li> <li>Use feedback to devise coms strategy to support strategic ambitions, departmental activities and stakeholder requirements</li> <li>Produce social media guidance</li> </ul>
10. Develop and implement a corporate social responsibility strategy that befits an organisation that works in the public interest.	FRC/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Environment &amp; Sustainability Working Party to consider both profession-facing and internal issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment policy going to September FRC</li> <li>Environmental impact of any new building will be key – Chair of ESWG on ESG</li> <li>Covid has been positive in reducing impact of travel, both overseas and domestic</li> <li>Recent push to encourage staff to make more use of volunteering days to support social responsibility of the organisation</li> <li>Green policy under development as part of move to meet Investors in the Environment Bronze Award</li> </ul>



<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	9 September 2021
Title	Discretionary Fund 2021
Summary	To update RCVS Council about the expenditure approved and incurred from the Discretionary Fund since 1 January 2021.
Decisions required	None to note
Attachments	Annex A – Discretionary Fund Summary
Author	Corrie L McCann Operations Director c.mccann@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0724

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex A	Unclassified	n/a

**<sup>1</sup>Classifications explained**

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

**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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

## Background

1. The Discretionary Fund is an allocation in the budget for expenditure on items not provided for in the budget to allow new ideas within a budget year and enable strategically important changes to be fast tracked.
2. Financial controls in place cover the commitment and approval of expenditure from this budget and the spend against the budget is reported to each Council meeting. The provision in the 2021 budget for the fund is £150,000.

## Approved expenditure in 2021

3. In 2021 five applications have been approved, amounting to £115,588.
4. All applications include VAT.
5. Details of the applications are shown in **Annex A**.



Council Sep 21 AI 06a Annex A

Discretionary Fund			Discretionary Fund				Unspent balance carried forward 31.12.21		
Ref number	Date received	Dept	Description	Unspent balance carried forward 31.12.20	In 2021 Budget	Approved 2021	Spend to	Adjustments (write backs etc)	Unspent balance carried forward 31.12.21
				£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>APPROVED 2021</b>									
1	19.04.21	Prof Con	To assess data on remote consultations		150,000	25,800			25,800
2	13.05.21	Exec	Survey to investigate impact of the pandemic on vets and nurses			39,888			39,888
3	22.06.21	VN	VN anniversary			23,500			23,500
4	05.08.21	APC	Project and Policy EMS funding			1,400			1,400
5	24.08.21	PSS ESG	To develop environmental sustainability requirements to be introduced into the Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) Develop ESG part			25,000			25,000
									<i>Original application £46,344 negotiated down to £39,888 incl VAT.)</i>
<b>Approved 2020</b>									
1		Prof Con	Implications and costs re change in standard of proof in DC cases	13,740	150,000	115,588	0	0	115,588
2		Education	Vet GDP e learning modules	23,430					23,430
									0
				37,170		0	0		37,170
<b>Approved 2019</b>									
1		Education	Review of RCVS accreditation standards and processes	64,398					64,398
2		Leadership	The 2019 Surveys of the Veterinary and Veterinary Nursing Professions	0					0
3		Education	Evaluate AP status	16,500					16,500
4		HR	cascade enhancements	3,995					3,995
5		IT/Digital	Phone handsets	9,278					9,278
6		Exec	LWP VN prescriber role	12,600					12,600
7		Review under care		73,818					73,818
				180,590	0	0	0	0	180,590
<b>Approved 2018</b>									
1			Conservation of artwork	(0)					(0)
2			Graduate outcomes project	0					0
3			Recruitment of Cttee members	0					0
4			VN Futures	50,000					50,000
5			Council and cttee collaboration system						0
				50,000	0	0	0	0	50,000
<b>Totals</b>				<b>267,760</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>115,588</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>383,348</b>

Balance available for new projects is £34,412

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	9 September 2021
Title	Memorandum of Understanding with Veterinary Schools Council
Summary	At its June meeting, Council was asked to consider a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Veterinary Schools Council (VSC) to help clarify the role of VSC-appointed Council members and to outline a process of engagement with the VSC going forward. This paper answers two questions raised at that meeting, and asks Council to now confirm agreement with the MoU.
Decisions required	Approval of the MoU between RCVS and VSC
Attachments	Annex A – proposed MoU between RCVS and VSC Annex B – byelaws of VSC
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO <a href="mailto:l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk">l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk</a> 0207 202 0725

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex A	Unclassified	n/a
Annex B	Unclassified	n/a

## Memorandum of Understanding with the Veterinary Schools Council

### Background

1. The Legislative Reform Order that was laid in 2018 specifies that RCVS Council shall include 'three persons appointed by the recognised universities acting jointly'. This replaces a situation where each veterinary school with an RCVS-recognised veterinary degree had two appointees on Council. There was a gradual reduction to the current situation, cutting down from two appointees from each school to one, then three across all schools.
2. The current vehicle for 'acting jointly' is the Veterinary Schools Council (VSC), the representative body for veterinary schools in the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands, established in 2014.
3. Both RCVS and VSC identified the need for an MoU to formalise a commitment to address any confusion that existed about the role of VSC appointees on RCVS Council and committees, and to develop stronger communication channels going forward.
4. The proposed MoU at Annex one has been approved by the VSC. It was brought to RCVS Council at its June 2021 meeting, at which a member of RCVS Council asked whether nomination for, and voting on, VSC appointees to RCVS Council was restricted to UK veterinary schools, or if it also extended to representatives of non-UK schools that were associates of VSC.
5. The questions were posed to the VSC and the Byelaws to be found in Annex two were provided by way of answer, which confirm that both nomination and voting is restricted to full VSC members, ie those from UK schools.
6. Further detail on the rationale for the wording of the proposed MoU can be found in the original paper (agenda item 6d (pp 65-68) in the online bundle: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/rcvs-council-papers-june-2021/>).
7. It was recommended at the June 2021 meeting of Council that the wording of the MoU be reviewed periodically.

### Decision required

8. Given the clarification provided by VSC, is RCVS Council now content to adopt the MoU?

## Annex A – proposed MoU with the VSC

1. The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (as amended by the Legislative Reform Order 2018) states that RCVS Council shall include ‘three persons appointed by the recognised universities acting jointly’.
2. The body that currently appoints these individuals is the Veterinary Schools Council (VSC).
3. The expertise brought to Council by these individuals is valued by RCVS Council, and it is noted that they are not representatives of the VSC – ie they do not speak with the voice of the VSC, nor are they expected to consult with the VSC on behalf of the College, although they may discuss any relevant issues that arise that are in the public domain.
4. The individuals will normally sit for four-year terms and can sit for a maximum of three four-year terms.
5. The Officers of the VSC and the RCVS will have Joint Officers meetings, as appropriate, to discuss issues of relevance to both organisations.
6. The College commits to consult with the VSC on appropriate matters, such as the setting and altering of accreditation standards and their assessment, and other appropriate RCVS business.
7. VSC commits to open dialogue and consultation with RCVS on appropriate matters, such as developments in curricular evolution and delivery.
8. In addition to the three formal appointees, other individuals with educational expertise may be co-opted onto relevant RCVS committees, subcommittees and working groups. Guidance may be given by VSC in terms of suitable individuals, but they will not be VSC appointees. Clarity will be ensured about the role of those individuals and the classification of papers for those meetings.
9. There may be situations where a VSC representative is required on a working group – where they are required to consult and be a voice for VSC. Where this is the case, the RCVS commits to make expectations clear and ensure clarity around classification of papers.
10. This MoU was agreed by both parties on XXX and will be reviewed on or before XXX.

Annex B – VSC byelaws (updated August 2021)

**Veterinary Schools Council Limited** – company number 08787249

**Company Byelaws**

*Full Membership*

- 1.1 For the purposes of full membership eligible institutions are normally those that are fully accredited to award Privy Council approved degrees in the UK.
- 1.2 All full members must commit to adhere to the Veterinary Schools Council Core Values which will be established by full members of the company.

*Associate Membership*

- 2.1 Associate membership is open to vet schools based outside the UK and vet schools in the process of being quality assured by the RCVS with the view to becoming fully accredited to award Privy Council approved degrees in the UK
- 2.2 Associate members will have the same rights as full members but they will be unable to vote in matters relating to, or stand for positions in, the management of the limited company or in matters relating to nominations to RCVS Council.
- 2.3 Associated members will pay a flat yearly rate set by full members of the company.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	9 September 2021
Title	Pandemic response reflection
Summary	This paper summarises our approach to handling the pandemic and invites reflection on what went well and how we might have handled things differently.
Decisions required	Does Council have any thoughts on how the pandemic was handled thus far and suggestions for what might be done differently if we re-enter restricted phases?
Attachments	Annex A: summary of temporary decisions made during the pandemic
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex A	Unclassified	n/a

## Pandemic response reflection

### Background

1. This paper summarises our approach to the Covid-19 pandemic so far, so that any lessons learned can be identified and acted upon, should the course of the pandemic change and restrictions be reintroduced. Such reflection will also help us to improve our general business continuity planning, and response to any future crises.

### What we did

2. Our approach to handling the pandemic started in late February with the first major decision being to cancel the President's reception in early March. Governance and decision-making structures evolved over time and, inevitably, we were mainly in reactive mode at least in the early stages. We did anticipate issues where possible, with horizon-scanning a key part of Taskforce meetings, and a huge amount of interaction with stakeholders was the hallmark of our approach. In general terms we moved through emergency, ongoing response and recovery phases and continue to be in the latter at this stage.
3. Some key elements of our approach were as follows:
  - a. Initially three meetings a week of Officer Team, moving to one (as opposed to pre-pandemic 10 per year)
  - b. RAG-rated table summarising all temporary policy decisions plus other covid-related areas, kept up to date at least weekly during first 12 months, regularly thereafter – c100 line items. A huge number of decisions have been made over the period (approx. 30, summarised in annex one), particularly in the Education area and with respect to the 'what can I do?' flowcharts. The development of the flowchart approach was seen as very positive by the majority of the profession as it allowed scope for clinical judgement. Decisions have overall now moved back to parent committees for the 'recovery' phase.
  - c. Regular stakeholder meetings – frequency changing during the period – with Defra/FSA/FSS/four CVOs/BVA/BEVA/BSAVA/BCVA/MEG/SPVS/VMG and VSC – following first few months, arrangement was set whereby the load of these was shared amongst Officers (with senior staff attending all)
  - d. Setting up of Covid Taskforce, with governance around its decisions and longevity switching to Council in October 2020 – the Taskforce last met in July 2021 and it is the recommendation of the Taskforce that it is wound down following the September meeting of Council (with an option to re-mount if the course of the pandemic changes)
  - e. All Council and Committee meetings moving online, with changes to governance to accommodate this
  - f. Regular surveys of practices, together with surveys of individuals (remote prescribing and the current impact survey)
  - g. Establishment of a Covid risk register
  - h. Setting up of a Covid hub on the website to house all information, including regularly updated FAQ
  - i. Regular communications to the professions via RCVS Connect, RCVS News, the media and social media, including messages of reassurance from the President



- j. CEO regularly attending forums and meetings with other CEOs of similar organisations to ensure our response is in line with best practice – in fact we were often ahead in our thinking
  - k. Initially three meetings a week of Senior Team, moving to one
  - l. Staff communications co-ordinated through either Director of People or CEO to avoid confusion and aid clarity
  - m. Rapid movement to working at home – pre-lockdown
  - n. Focus on staff support, with regular surveys, wellbeing and stress management sessions, highlighting resources available, positive and supportive message from management, team-building activities (such as sponsored runs etc), downtime encouragement (afternoon tea hampers), support with kit and flexible working hours, change to work-from-home policy to ‘where we work’ policy, now support with return to office and ongoing anxiety management
  - o. A meeting of the business continuity team will take place on 31 August to review what may need to change in our business continuity plan
4. The general approach seems to have been successful and was called ‘the gold standard’ by the Audit and Risk Committee. There were some questions amongst Council about the Covid Taskforce, with a focus on remote prescribing decisions, which were switched to Standards Committee in October 2020. The setting up of such a group was common in many other organisations – in fact the RCVS was somewhat ahead of the game in doing so – however, on reflection, a more detailed ‘role spec’ may have been helpful as part of the establishment process. Since the decisions have been further scrutinised by Council (autumn 2020) there have been very few comments and no overturning of decisions made by the Taskforce.
  5. From a staff perspective, it has been recognised that a small team of people did a huge amount of work during the pandemic and in the future there may need to be a greater spreading of the load. Some departments introduced shift patterns for some teams during the busiest period and it was recognised that this could helpfully have been introduced earlier.
  6. It seems that some of the work that College has done has been misattributed to other organisations, so work will be carried out on some blogs and case studies to better reflect what has been achieved during this difficult period.

#### Stakeholder feedback

7. Key stakeholder organisations were asked for feedback on the approach taken, particularly with respect to communication and engagement. The feedback was given on the basis that it would not be attributed to a particular organisation, although specific comments will be acted on as appropriate.
8. On the whole feedback has been positive, with organisations really appreciating the accessibility of the College team – Officers and Senior Team – and willingness to listen and engage. The setting up of the Taskforce was also appreciated. The flowchart was also seen as a very useful tool by many. We were praised for having a pragmatic approach, reacting quickly and collaborating well with the British Veterinary Association (BVA).

9. There were some negative comments with regards to policies themselves, particularly from some who felt that the College worked too closely with the BVA and not enough with some of the other species-focused associations. This is something we would need to aim to rectify if the course of the pandemic changes again or in the event of future such crises.
10. There was also a comment that the College seemed to be doing more to prioritise public health than enable veterinary businesses to do as much as possible. In actual fact prioritising public health, and animal health and welfare, was our primary aim, and in retrospect a set of publicised principles may have been helpful in giving clarity to our focus. Some also felt that our responses were too focused on one area of clinical practice and not the full breadth of the profession (including non-clinical roles), which will be something to consider in the future.
11. Comments with regards to a lack of parity between the way in which VNs and vets were treated, for example, around education, will also be borne in mind in the future.
12. There were some comments that we did not react quickly enough – but equally some accusing us of ‘knee-jerk’ reactions. In reality, the speed of decision-making was often driven by external factors such as waiting for guidance from government. There was also comment with regards to changes in policy not always filtering through the RCVS staff teams quickly enough, which is something we have addressed.
13. We ran a survey over summer asking individual vets and nurses for their views on the impact of the pandemic on them. The response rate has not been huge – potentially due to general fatigue in the professions at this point – but it should yield a useful snapshot of this historic period and provide us with evidence to support any further requests for government to consider the veterinary professions differently when developing guidance. The headline results will be available further into September.

#### Decisions/considerations

14. While no decisions need to be made at this stage, it seems a logical breathing point at which to review what we have done so far, so that lessons can be learned for any future planning and action. Committees are being tasked with reviewing temporary policy decisions and deciding which should be extended or continued more permanently, which should be reversed and which need further consideration before a decision can be made.
15. Meanwhile, more over-arching questions Council might wish to consider, are:
  - a. Did we have the right governance structure in place?
  - b. Did we have the right people doing the right things?
  - c. Did we navigate our role well – ie leave things to other associations that we should have, take the lead on the issues we should have?
  - d. Did we collaborate appropriately?
  - e. Did we react quickly enough?
  - f. Did we have the right horizon-scanning mechanisms in place?
  - g. Did we do enough to support the veterinary team?
  - h. Did we do enough to support our own staff team?

16. Finally, it is acknowledged that the professions are still struggling with the pandemic fallout, in terms of burnout, self-isolation, illness, reduced teams, increased caseload and an increase in complaints from animal owners, together with the ongoing impact of EU Exit. this review of action so far does not signify any change in focus during this vital ongoing recovery stage, or sense that Covid is no longer a major issue.

## Annex A – list of temporary decisions made during the pandemic

NB this list refers only to temporary decisions to change RCVS policies and procedures that have been made by the Taskforce. Our FAQs include a broad range of guidance and advice for the professions on other issues relating to the pandemic, which are reviewed on a regular basis.

Topic	Temporary change
Remote prescribing	Allow without physical examination under certain circumstances
Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) assessments	Move to virtual (in-person now restarting)
Extra-mural studies	Reviewed many times during the pandemic, <a href="#">current minimum amounts here</a> and joint guidance with other organisations given
Internal rotations	Practices not currently required to be PSS accredited – other QA processes in place
Ambulatory practice (University of Edinburgh)	Alternative arrangements in place for farm animal practice
VN clinical placements/teaching and assessments	Different agreements in place with different providers
VN education accreditation and quality monitoring	Temporarily virtual
Vet final exams and assessments	Different agreements in place with different schools
Overseas vet registrations	Moved to online process
Overseas VN registrations	Moved to online process
UK vet graduations	More flexibility than usual process – ie can be registered in bloc or individually
Student VN enrolment period	Extended free of charge to some students
Vet retention fees	Allowing paying by instalments
VN retention fees	Extend payment window
Advanced Practitioner/ Specialist Fees	Extend payment window
PSS Fees	Pay by instalments
Vet school visitations	Allowing online
Statutory Membership Examination	Various decisions ref: how exam held, English language testing (timing and format), evidence of good standing, option to defer taking exam
Disciplinary Hearings	Allowing some online
What work can be done	Various iterations
How RCVS meetings are held	Various changes
Return to Belgravia House	Various changes
Covid Taskforce	That we have one
Council elections	Nominations submitted electronically; votes electronically

Topic	Temporary change
Council internal elections (eg Officers, Cttee Chairs)	Votes gathered electronically
Covid surveys	Frequency, content of practice surveys and survey of vets and nurses
Abattoir experience	Currently virtual experience allowed for students
VN patient-based assessment	Virtual assessment replaces OSCE
CPD policy	Currently no change but had been reduced during 2020
Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice	Virtual synoptic exam allowed
E-certifications for registration	Given as a trial to overseas registrants initially, then widened to all overseas registrants and UK graduates from 2020 and 2021 cohorts

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	9 September 2021
Title	Council culture project – taking things forward
Summary	This paper offers a reminder of the culture project that was approved in November 2021, with progress to date, linked to the 12-step process outlined by Mike Farrar to Council on 28 June 2021. It also proposes a mechanism for getting to the next phase.
Decisions required	Is Council happy to approve the proposed next steps?
Attachments	Annex A: culture project and progress to date Annex B: slides from Mike Farrar presentation to Council 28 June 2021 – <b>confidential</b>
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex A	Unclassified	n/a
Annex B	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 3, 4</b>

**<sup>1</sup>Classifications explained**

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

**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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

## Council culture project – taking things forward

### Background

1. Following a period of difficulty, somewhat exacerbated by the pandemic, there was felt to be a need to get the Council culture back on track to ensure it can deliver effectively for the College. Papers were submitted to RCVS Council in October and November 2020 and a plan approved – this can be found in annex one.
2. Some action was taken in delivery of the plan, but it was early on suggested that we might benefit from an external expert to help Council understand its role and purpose. Mike Farrar CBE (MF) was selected to do this work and he recommended one-on-one interviews with all Council members as the starting point. At this juncture it was decided to pause work on the rest of the programme pending the outcome of those interviews. MF summarised the views of Council and proposed a 12-step approach in a Council workshop on 28 June (delayed from 10 June due to a heavy agenda for that day's Council meeting). The slides can be found in Annex B. This is a **confidential** annex as Council members were reassured during the one-on-one interviews that the information would remain confidential to Council.
3. The 12-step approach is not dissimilar to the original culture plan, which was reassuring. There were some differences, and some additional actions have been added to the plan in Annex A – these are highlighted in yellow.
4. The President, then JVP, had spoken to all members of Council regarding committee allocations and used the opportunity to seek feedback on the MF session from relevant members. All felt it had been a useful session and appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the future general direction of travel.

### Next steps

5. Key to the success of delivery of the remainder of the project is developing a mechanism whereby all Council members who wish to be engaged in this work can be, diversity and inclusion is respected, staff members are brought in as appropriate, and Council members are able to take ownership of the deliverables. The original plan left much of the work to Officers and Senior Team, but given feedback from the MF session this seem a less productive route in terms of rebuilding wider engagement.
6. The following process is proposed:
  - a. Council is split into five groups, with Senior Team members added to these groups
  - b. Each group will be asked to look at one of the following:
    - i. Review and update of Code of Conduct for Council and Committee members
    - ii. How we can better understand and utilise the skills of all Council, committee and senior staff members and encourage greater understanding and respect
    - iii. How we can improve the election process to ensure greater clarity on the role and function of Council and encourage appropriate individuals to stand



- iv. How we can improve the induction and ongoing training for Council and committee members
  - v. How can we improve the visibility of Council and committee activity to the professions and the public
- 
- c. Council members can choose their first, second and third choice of topic and will be allocated to the appropriate group, with second and third choices being used if the first-choice group becomes full – priority will be given to the first choices of the newer members of Council. We would aim to spread the lay members across the groups to gain maximum benefit from their expertise.
  - d. In addition, all groups will be asked to consider a short statement that summarises the purpose of Council (as opposed to the purpose of the College itself).
  - e. Each group will be asked to choose a group leader who will be responsible for organising the work of the group, with support of the staff members. The groups can seek external input at specific meetings if that is appropriate – eg people from other regulators or Royal Colleges who have successfully managed similar issues.
  - f. The group leader will report into a Steering Group that comprises all five group leaders plus the Officer Team, Registrar and CEO to discuss progress and work together to produce a set of recommendations that will go to Council at large for review/decision.
  - g. It is envisaged that all meetings will be held remotely unless the members of a group are together in-person for some other reason.

#### Time frame

- 7. We have taken a long while to come to this stage, for a variety of reasons, but it is now important that work is carried out quickly so that decisions can be made, action taken and we can move on. The following timetable is envisaged:
  - a. Decision made about process at September meeting of Council
  - b. Organisation of groups by end of September
  - c. Groups meet three times before end of the year (early Oct, early Nov, early Dec)
  - d. Groups choose leaders at first meeting
  - e. Group leaders report in to Steering Group meeting by end December with recommendations
  - f. Proposals come to Council on 20 January 2022 (backstop is 17 March 2022, depending on progress made by end of the year and the need for more work/revisions)

#### Decision required

- 8. Is Council content with the proposed mechanism and timetable? If not, comments and suggested improvements are welcomed.

## Annex A - Council Culture Action Plan as approved in November 2020

Last updated 27 August 2021

Items/comments in yellow were added in response to Mike Farrar's 12-step plan

Theme	Action	Next steps	Ownership	Estimated timing	Progress/next steps
Role and purpose of College and Council	1. Improved information to potential Council/VNC nominees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review existing materials, input from Council/VNC members welcomed</li> <li>Redraft</li> <li>Officers to sign off</li> </ul>	Council secretary/ VNC Secretary	Needs to be ready for mid-November when nominations open	New information was produced including a one-page summary 'job description'
	2. Improved induction for Council/VNC members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review existing materials, input from Council/VNC members welcome</li> <li>Take soundings from most recent intake</li> <li>Include feedback from those who sit on other boards/Councils</li> <li>Redraft</li> <li>Officers to sign off</li> <li>Review benefits of buddying system and provide training, if required</li> </ul>	Council secretary/ VNC Secretary	Some changes made for August 2021 round but more needed for summer 2022	Feedback gathered. Some improvements made to 2021 round but more work required to include more pre-recorded elements as they are too information dense. Buddies in place for 2021 intake.
	3. Refresher training for existing Council/VNC members on role of Council members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review some potential trainers (online)</li> <li>Develop content for session</li> <li>ARC to review content</li> </ul>	HRD/CEO/Registrar, working with ARC	Aim to deliver in January 2020 – afternoon session for Council?	This was delayed pending the work of Mike Farrar – need to add work around the purpose of Council (as opposed to the College) and development of some kind of purpose statement – step 1 of MF process

	4. Develop better retiring/ reappointment process for lay members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build into the appraisal cycle</li> </ul>			Ref step 9 of MF process
	5. More training for Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify potential trainer</li> </ul>			Ref step 11 of MF process

Theme	Action	Next steps	Ownership	Estimated timing	Progress/next steps
Team building and culture	6. Shared work around our values and Nolan principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a series of training sessions, external speakers and other interventions to better embed our values into all that we do</li> <li>• Schedule to be approved by Officers with input from Council</li> </ul>	CEO/HRD working with Council	This will be a six-month or so plan, starting in January	This has been delayed – likely to form part of training recommendations
	7. Social spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite Council members and staff to turn on their cameras and share lunch together at a future Council meeting (bandwidth allowing)</li> <li>• Encourage a bi-monthly social hour for Council and staff – perhaps on a specific theme</li> <li>• Suggestions from Council welcome</li> </ul>	Council secretary/HRD	Ad hoc	Used Zoom to improve number of people visible on screen. Encouraged people to join early for chat. Will hold supper before September Council. Plan Christmas virtual event. Suggestion of breakfasts with staff prior to Council focusing on work of different departments

	8. Cross-team working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim to develop at least one workshop-based afternoon session for 2021</li> <li>Any ideas for topics gratefully received</li> </ul>	Council secretary/CEO working with Council	Ongoing	Session after September Council on UN sustainability goals
	9. Reaching consensus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research different methods of achieving this – trainers, research papers, what other organisations do, and other resources</li> <li>Any suggestions from Council welcome</li> <li>Trial some new ways of working</li> <li>Seek Council feedback on new approaches</li> </ul>	CEO/President, working with Council	Early 2022?	Need to identify an external speaker for this – workshop?
	10. Clarity over expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Code of Conduct for Council members – is it still fit for purpose? What do other organisations do? Consult with ARC and others</li> <li>Redraft if necessary and bring back to Council for sign off</li> </ul>	Registrar/President, working with Council	Early 2022	To be work of one of Council working groups
	11. Council and committee member appraisals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review how handled in other regulators</li> <li>Evaluate success of approach used by PIC/DC/ARC and others</li> <li>Bring recommended approach to Council for sign off</li> </ul>	President/HRD working with Cttee chairs	Aim to have in place by June 2021	How best to achieve this? Also relates to step 4 of MF process

	12. Better understand background, experience and potential contribution of all Council members and senior staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update the skills matrix process</li> <li>• Encourage people to back up their views with evidence</li> <li>• Engender greater respect across the different groups</li> </ul>			To be work of one of the Council groups
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Theme	Action	Next steps	Ownership	Estimated timing	Progress/next steps
Risk mitigation	13. Improve collaborative system security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and improve password policy for BoardPacks</li> <li>• Review and improve shared document security and confidentiality (possibly with purchase of new system such as SecureDocs or an upgrade to existing system)</li> <li>• Review how and where documents are shared</li> <li>• Improve training on use of collaborative systems</li> </ul>	FRC/IT	Early 2022	This is for the IT team – but comments on the existing system welcome

	<p>14. Improved training ref paper classification</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer training to committee secretaries ref paper classification to ensure better consistency of usage</li> <li>• Ensure Committee Chairs approve any classification</li> </ul>	<p>Registrar/HRD/ Senior Team</p>	<p>ASAP</p>	<p>Training for committee secretaries and a secretary handbook under development; explanation of principles added to induction training</p>
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