

## Veterinary Nurses Council

### Agenda for meeting to be held on Wednesday 6 May 2020 at 10.30am

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of interest**

#### Confidential and private items (closed session)

- |    |   |                      |     |
|----|---|----------------------|-----|
| 3. | <b>RVN Disciplinary Committee recruitment</b> | Private/Confidential | 1,5 |
| 4. | <b>CPD Referral Group</b>                     | Confidential         | 1   |
| 5. | <b>Policy and Public Affairs update</b>       | Oral report          |     |
| 6. | <b>Risk Register</b>                          | Oral report          |     |

#### Open session

- |     |   |                                      |           |
|-----|---|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| 7.  | <b>Obituaries</b>   | Oral report                          |           |
| 8.  | <b>Minutes of meeting held on 12 February 2020</b><br>Classified appendix of meeting held on 12 February 2020 | Unclassified<br>Private/Confidential | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| 9.  | <b>Matters arising</b><br>Any matters arising not listed below  |                                      |           |
| 10. | <b>CEO update</b>   | Oral report                          |           |

#### Matters of note

- |     |   |                |              |
|-----|---|----------------|--------------|
| 11. | <b>Reports from RCVS Committees</b>                 |                |              |
|     | 11.01 VN Preliminary Investigation Committee Report | Paper attached | Unclassified |
|     | 11.02 Standards Committee                           | Oral report    |              |

12. **VN Futures** Oral report
13. **Communications report** Oral report
14. **VN Council membership** Oral report
15. **Any other business**
16. **Date of next meeting**  
Wednesday 17 June 2020 at 10.30am  
Wednesday 9 September 2020 at 10.30am

Annette Amato  
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April 2020  
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<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	6 May 2020
Title	Minutes of meeting of VN Council held on 12 February 2020
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 12 February 2020
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential/Private</b>	1,2,3,4,5

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

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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**

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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>



## Veterinary Nurses Council

### Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2020

<b>Members:</b>	Mrs Belinda Andrews-Jones	
	Miss Alison Carr	
	Ms Elizabeth Cox	- Vice-Chair
	Mr Dominic Dyer	
	Dr Joanna Dyer	
	Ms Lucie Goodwin	
	Mrs Susan Howarth	
	Mrs Andrea Jeffery	
	Mrs Katherine Kissick	
	Miss Racheal Marshall	- Chair
	Professor Susan Proctor	
	Mr Matthew Rendle	- Vice-Chair
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mrs Annette Amato	- Committee Secretary
	Mr Luke Bishop	- Senior Communications Officer
	Dr Niall Connell	- RCVS President
	Mrs Julie Dugmore	- Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Ms Eleanor Ferguson	- Registrar
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	- Examinations Manager
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	- Chief Executive
	Mr Ben Myring	- Senior Policy and Public Affairs Officer
	Mrs Jenny Soreskog Turp	- Senior Education Officer

#### Apologies for absence

1. There were no apologies for absence.

#### Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

#### Obituaries

3. No written obituaries had been received, but the College had been notified that Mr Christopher House, who served as a member of VN Council from 2009 to 2013 as the Lantra

industry group representative, has died. Council stood to observe a minute's silence for all members and associates of the College who had passed away since the last meeting.

### Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2019

3. The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2019 were accepted as a correct record.

### Matters arising

4. **Reference documents.** Following a request at an earlier meeting for accessibility to reference documents, a reference area had been created in Boardpacks, where Council members access the agendas and minutes. The VN Council Documents area in the Knowledge section of Boardpacks now contains the VNC membership and Terms of Reference, the list of standing items for meetings and the current VNC Strategy Plan. The Risk Register will be added to this section once it has been updated.

5. **VN Education Committee (VNEC) membership.** The Chair and Director of Veterinary Nursing would bring forward proposals for the selection of VNEC members to the next meeting of Council.

Action: Chair and Director of Veterinary Nursing

6. **Fees for newly registered RVNs.** The Chair confirmed that she had discussed the issue of annual fee notices issued to newly registered veterinary nurses, following concerns reported at the previous meeting, with the Director of Operations. It had been reiterated that nurses registering in the second half of the fee year pay a lower fee than those registering in the first part of the year to account for the fact that they are registered for a shorter time during that year. The acknowledgement of the application to register explains clearly that the fee paid for initial registration covers the current year and that the nurse will be contacted again regarding renewal for the forthcoming registration year.

### CEO update

7. The CEO provided an oral update on some key activities since the previous meeting.
8. The Practice Standards campaign in November 2019 had gone very well, with mostly positive feedback.
9. The RCVS had attended two external events; the London Vet Show in November and the Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons (SPVS) and Veterinary Management Group (VMG) Congress in January, at which the RCVS Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) stream had included a series of talks on diversity and inclusion, chaired by Claire Balding. The RCVS also had a stand at the Congress, promoting its latest and upcoming projects and initiatives including CPD policy changes, the Practice Standards Scheme and the RCVS Leadership initiative.

10. The VN Futures Career Progression Working Group had developed a series of webinars focused on the value of veterinary nursing, and MMI would be sponsoring a number of webinars looking at work recovery, eating disorders and OCD. It had also sponsored sessions at the Webinar Vet's Virtual Congress on mentorship and perfectionism, which were available as recordings free of charge. MMI had also recently launched the application period for the 2020 Sarah Brown Mental Health Research Grant. The RCVS Knowledge team will be providing a workshop to provide further guidance on completing grant applications.
11. The reports of the surveys of the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, undertaken in 2019, had recently been published, with executive summaries for each of the survey reports giving an overview of some of the key statistics, and findings from each also being displayed in infographic form.
12. The 1CPD App had been successfully launched at the end of January with a very positive response.
13. The CEO thanked Council for its comments on the Strategic Plan at the November meeting. The final printed version is now being prepared and will be circulated when ready. The Senior team held an Awayday meeting the previous week to discuss how to resource the new plan. A member commented very positively on how well the plan reads, how inclusive it is of all elements of the professions and its evidence-based nature.
14. There was some general discussion on the potential impact of Brexit, including the effect of possible workforce changes in practice and the indirect impact on nurse roles. It was noted that the RCVS and BVA are working closely together and both organisations are responding to queries, as directed to them.

#### **VN Education Committee (VNEC)**

15. Susan Howarth, Chair of the VNEC, presented the report of the meeting held on 8 January 2020 and highlighted a few points in the report.
16. The University of Wales Trinity St David had not submitted any further appeal against its terminal accreditation status decision. Students will be required to pass the RCVS pre-registration examination on completion of their degree, before being permitted to enter the veterinary nurse register.
17. The Director of Veterinary Nursing intends to provide information for the RCVS website on funding and apprenticeships, with the relevant links included.
18. The Director of Veterinary Nursing and Qualifications Manager had carried out a week-long roadshow at the end of November to obtain feedback from users of the Nursing Progress Log to inform development of the new in-house recording tool, with generally positive and useful feedback. The IT developers are now working on the new recording tool.

19. The Committee had granted provisional accreditation to the University of Glasgow for its BSc(hons) veterinary nursing programme, in addition to the BSc degree in veterinary nursing. The reason the two programmes had not been accredited at the same time was due to a misunderstanding that had now been clarified.
20. The Committee had received a number of reports on audits and action plan monitoring.
21. The university which had been judged to be non-compliant due to non-submission of required documentation in response to its action plan, had been written to following the VNEC meeting with a deadline date for response. A satisfactory response had now been received.
22. Expressions of interest had been made by a number of institutions intending to apply for accreditation for delivery of the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing, covering a wide variety of programmes. Two accreditation visits had very recently been carried out and the reports would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.
23. The Committee had agreed the terms of reference for the Pre-registration Examination Board, which would be chaired by Professor Elizabeth Mossop.

### **Continuing Professional Development**

24. **CPD Audit 2019.** Council had been provided with the initial findings of the 2019 CPD audit at its previous meeting. Responses had been received from 95% of the veterinary nurses included in the audit, with 75% of respondents being compliant with the CPD requirement of 45 hours over three years, and 21% not currently compliant. The Senior Education Officer presented a paper showing a full analysis of the responses, together with information on some of the issues raised during the audit process.
25. Following the decision taken by VN Council that any RVN who was non-compliant for a successive three audits should be referred to the Referral Group, 43 RVNs would be referred to the group following the 2019 audit.
26. Council noted and approved the suggestions for the 2020 CPD audit. It was commented that with the move to outcomes-based CPD, in time the 15 hours per year requirement may become irrelevant.
27. Council congratulated the developers of the 1CPD App which had received very positive feedback.

### **CPD Referral Group.**

28. The minutes from the meeting of the CPD Referral Group on 10 January 2020 were noted. In response to a query from the Practice Standards Scheme regarding the process for dealing with non-compliance now that the new annual requirement has been introduced, the



group will be reviewing the process.

29. Council noted the report on the follow-up of non-compliant veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons and the actions taken, and also noted information on new referrals for non-compliance.

#### **CPD Policy Working Party.**

30. Council noted the minutes of the CPD Policy Working Party held on 30 January 2020. There had been a high level of engagement with the new 1CPD platform, and in the first week over 6,000 people have accessed 1CPD either by downloading the app or using the website. The videos on how to reflect have been especially popular.

### **Reports from RCVS Committees**

#### **Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)**

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

#### **Standards Committee**

32. Belinda Andrews-Jones provided a brief update on the meeting of the Standards Committee on 10 February.
33. Subject to some minor amendments, the Committee had approved wide ranging edits to the PSS modules as proposed by the Practice Standards Group, relating to all aspects of the Scheme. The Committee had also agreed that where changes are made to the Core Standards, these should be reflected in the supporting guidance and/or signposted as appropriate.
34. The Committee had approved a change to the Social Media guidance in order to better advise the profession of their responsibility in relation to comments on social media platforms including anonymous online forums, including additional guidance on discriminatory comments. Supporting case studies had also been approved.
35. Subject to some minor amendments, the Committee had approved draft guidance on the ownership of wildlife to be included in Chapter 11 (communication and consent) of the supporting guidance.
36. The Committee had been advised that work on a new framework to help the profession better understand recognised veterinary practice, and to make their own judgements about recognised veterinary practice (RVP) in the course of their day-to-day practice, is progressing well. The small group will then report to the wider Working Group (which includes a veterinary nurse), before a final proposal is considered by Standards Committee.

### **VN Disciplinary Committee**

37. There had been no meetings of the VN Disciplinary Committee since the previous meeting of Council, and no new cases had been referred.

### **VN Register report**

38. Council noted a report showing statistics on the total number of registered veterinary nurses, including the number of new registrations, removals and restorations annually for the calendar years 2014 – 2019. Figures were also provided for the number of student enrolments for the past six academic years. The current number of RVNs is over 18,000.
39. It was commented that there had been a gradual decline in the number of overseas-qualified veterinary nurses entering the register in recent years, which it was likely to be attributable to the decision to exit the EU.

### **Communications report**

- 40.. The Senior Communications Officer reported on a number of recent and forthcoming activities.
41. RCVS activity at the BSAVA Congress in April would include a dedicated VN Futures stream with sessions chaired by the VN Council Vice-Chair.
42. There would be two Veterinary Nurses' Days, on 12 and 13 May, held at London Zoo, to welcome newly registered nurses to the profession.
43. There had been a record number of nominations (thirteen) for the two available places on VN Council, and eight nominations for the three available places on RCVS Council. The accompanying information with candidates' biographies and statements was currently in preparation, and members of the professions were being asked to submit questions to be put to the candidates.
44. Preparation of the current edition of *RCVS News* is ongoing, and the next edition of *VN Education* would be published in the next few months.
45. As reported by the CEO, the reports of the surveys of the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, undertaken in 2019, had recently been published, with full information and infographics on the RCVS website.
46. A press release was being prepared on an information day for prospective VN Disciplinary Committee members, to be held at the RCVS on 26 February 2020. It was hoped that this would encourage a number of applicants.
47. The launch of the 1CPD App, as reported previously in the meeting, had taken place successfully. Phase 2 of the project will focus on the experiences of reflection and use of the

1CPD platform.

48. A query was raised, in connection with the ever increasing number of RVNs, whether this could be flagged as a positive message. It was felt that it could only be a positive in relation to the market need and this was not clear. It was also noted that it is not known how many RVNs are currently on the Register but not practising, and this question is not asked at the point of annual renewal. It was suggested that many RVNs may be working part-time.

#### **VN Council election**

49. As previously reported, there had been a record number of thirteen nominations received for the available two places on VN Council. The election results would be known in time for the next VNC meeting in early May.

#### **Policy and Public Affairs update**

50. There were no items to report.

#### **Awarding Organisations update**

51. The Director of Veterinary Nursing reported that, as recently announced by City & Guilds, it had decided to withdraw veterinary nursing from its portfolio of qualifications, and would be accepting no new student registrations from September 2020. Following concerns expressed by the centres delivering its awards, City & Guilds had changed the certification end date to 31 August 2023, a positive decision which will allow new students a three year period to complete their award. The RCVS will continue to audit and monitor the City & Guilds programmes and affiliated centres until the certification and date.
52. One member expressed concern that students were anxious about the change. It was confirmed that the RCVS had put out a press release regarding the announcement, as well as an FAQ document on the website, and that centres were also providing information to their students. It was agreed that the FAQs would be updated when new developments occur.
53. This paragraph is available in the classified appendix at paragraph 1.

#### **Period of Supervised Practice (PSP) review**

54. The Director of Veterinary Nursing reported that the review had commenced, but there was nothing to report at present.

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

55. Wednesday 6 May 2020, at 10.30am.

#### **Any other business**

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56. The Chair of VNEC drew attention to the continued need for accreditation visitors, especially employer representatives and student visitors. There are currently no FE student visitors and there is a vacancy on the VNEC for a FE student member.
57. It was reported that there had been a slight delay in the preparation of the RCVS Accreditation Standards for publication, but these would be published shortly.

**Presentation to Andrea Jeffery**

58. The Chair made a presentation on behalf of RCVS Council to Andrea Jeffery, who had been unable to attend RCVS Day July 2019. This was to mark her retirement as a member of RCVS Council after nine years' service, during which time she served as a member of the Advisory Committee, Education Committee, Education Policy and Specialisation Committee, RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee and the Science Advisory Panel.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	6 May 2020
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Chair's Report to VN Council
Summary	This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC)
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Sandra Neary Professional Conduct Officer <a href="mailto:s.neary@rcvs.org.uk">s.neary@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 020 7202 0730</p> <p>Gemma Crossley Head of Professional Conduct <a href="mailto:g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk">g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 020 7202 0740</p>

<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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# Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

## Chair's Report to VN Council

### Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council, there has been one meeting of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee, which took place on 25 February 2020. The meeting scheduled to take place on 31 March 2020 was cancelled, as no new cases had been referred and no decisions were required on the ongoing cases. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 19 May 2020.

### RVN Concerns received / registered

2. Between 30 January 2020 and 22 April 2020 there were four new Concerns received against RVNs. Of these four new Concerns:
  - All are currently under investigation by the Case Examiner Group (a veterinary nurse and lay member on RVN PIC and a Case Manager);

### RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. There has been one new concern considered by the RVN PIC between 30 January 2020 and 22 April 2020. A decision in this case was adjourned pending further investigation and referral of the matter to another statutory authority for their consideration.

### Ongoing Investigations

4. Two concerns are currently under investigation and will be returned to the RVN PIC for a decision in due course.

### Health Concerns

5. One RVN is currently being managed in the context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

### Performance Concerns

6. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Performance Protocol.

### Referral to Disciplinary Committee

7. The last report stated that one case had been referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. The case was listed for a Disciplinary hearing but it has since been postponed due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The hearing will be re-listed in due course.