

**Manifesto for the Future of the BVA ... Peter Jinman's Address at the BVA AGM - Sunday
6 October - prior to his election as BVA President, 2002/03**

I have been an active member of this association from the first year that I qualified. I made my first step by attending regularly the Cotswold Division meetings when I was working in Broadway in Worcestershire. Not only did I attend, I actively participated and when the AGM came around found myself Secretary of the division. That was due to the actions of one man known to you and sadly no longer with us, Tim Eaton. When I moved to my current practice in Herefordshire it was not long before I found myself Secretary of the local clinical club and then representative on the Midlands Counties Veterinary Association and then their representative on the BVA Council. As an active backbencher it was not long before the Presidents of the day decided that the only way to shut me up was to put me on various committees. This was bound to fail as a tactic so they tried to disband the committee structure around me!! Gone were Salaries and Appointments, Large Animals, Education, etc. and in came Veterinary Services Advisory Committee and Company Services Advisory Committee but my name appeared again. I even tried to escape by proposing and carrying through the dismembering of the Midlands Counties into the new divisions of Shropshire, Wyvern, and Warwickshire. This temporarily meant that I was no longer on Council but the phone soon rang and I found myself on the new Veterinary Policy Group. Finally the invitation came to be junior vice president and via that to the present day election. Enough of history, I am interested in the future.

The BVA of today faces many of the same problems that have always been part of the veterinary way of life. Reading the old Veterinary Records soon teaches you that there are always recurring problems and themes and many of them involve government and regulation.

Today the problems facing the association are of three different forms: -

The structure of the association and how it interacts with all its constituent parts.

A very different government world of open consultative government both in the UK and in Europe that requires representatives to attend stakeholder meetings or respond quickly to consultative white or vaguer green papers and an ever-growing plethora of non-governmental organisations that require consultative input.

A society that requires instant comment and instant response to news that is almost reported before it happens.

There is a need to build a new structure that can incorporate the huge amount of knowledge that is held by the so called 'specialist divisions' and yet keep the feet on the ground input from the territorial divisions.

There is a need to encompass the modern technology that can reduce the need for the expensive face to face meetings or at least reserve them to the still necessary minimum.

There is a need to increase the professional way in which the political lobbying, now so much a part of the modern political scene, is carried out.

Overall there is a need for one clear voice to present the veterinary profession of this country whether it is speaking to the English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Ireland, Channel Island or Manx Governments. That is in addition to Europe or the rest of the world!

I propose that there is a need to seek a radical review of the structure and function of the BVA. The aims and objectives as clearly laid out in the Articles of the Association are still as true today as they were when written down in 1925 ... the difference is the society in which they are to be aspired to has changed so radically as has the growth of knowledge that has acted as the key to the development of the various divisions.

I propose that there is a need for an expanded management board with representation to reflect the specialist divisions and with a service commitment of at least three years and paid or at least compensated.

I propose that there is a need to form a political action committee to build the bridges to the political parties of the various devolved administrations, UK and European parliaments and to explore the joining or using of professional advisors in this area.

I propose the establishing of an intranet, provision of suitable computers and training for all officers and staff.

I propose an independent review of the pay and conditions of the officers to reflect the considerable change in the workload, especially on those in practice so that there should be no barrier to the future chances of obtaining the candidates of choice to serve the association.

I propose a review of the process of selection or election of officers to reflect the needs and transparency of a democratic process.

This will all require financing so an in depth review of the structure of the finance of this association will be required.

I appreciate this will take time but all journeys start with the first step.

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