

## **BVA SCOTTISH BRANCH AGM**

**Wednesday 13 May 2020 at 3pm**

**Zoom meeting**

### **Scottish Branch attendees**

Kathleen Robertson – Branch President  
Melissa Donald – Branch SVP  
Emma Callaghan – Regional representative  
Romain Pizzi – BVZS  
Ronnie Soutar – FVS  
Grace Webster – PVS  
Stephen Anderson – Moredun  
Jenny Helm – Glasgow  
Sue Tongue - SRUC  
Vivienne MacKinnon – APHA  
Vikki Halliday – FSS  
Freda Scott-Park – HIVSS  
Sheila Voas – Scotland CVO  
Mary Fraser – Branch Council member  
Lawrence Bowen – Branch Council member  
Katie Mellanby – Branch Council member  
Mick Park – Branch member  
Craig McKerracher – Branch member  
Ngaire Dennison – Branch member

### **BVA attendees**

Daniella Dos Santos – BVA President  
Amelia Findon – BVA Head of Policy & Governance

**Apologies:** Gareth Hateley (Branch Council member), Robert Anderson (Hon Sec), Sue Murphy (Edinburgh), James Risk (BEVA), Sandy Duncan (VPHA), Hayley Atkin (Scottish Branch secretariat)

### **Matters arising**

1. The President of Branch reported on the useful meetings earlier in the day with NFU Scotland colleagues and with the Scotland CVO and APHA. The discussion had focused on activity in response to the Covid-19 pandemic including financial support for veterinary practices and concerns around the sustainability of rural veterinary practice in Scotland.

### **Minutes of the last meeting**

2. The minutes of the Branch AGM 2019 were proposed, seconded, and approved by Branch Council.

### **Branch constitution 2020-21**

3. Members were reminded that the constitution, as approved by the BVA Board, had been ratified at the AGM in 2019. Since then it had been proposed that the membership of Branch Council should be increased to include the immediate past president of Branch. It had also been proposed that it was unnecessary for the Honorary Secretary of Branch to hold Officer status

as this created a requirement for the role to always be filled but with little discernible benefit to Branch.

4. Branch supported both the proposed changes to the constitution. The constitution for 2020-21, subject to the agreed amendments, was proposed, seconded, and ratified by Branch.

### **Branch Officers**

5. Members were reminded that the constitution of the Scottish Branch stated that there should be a President and a Vice President. A member should be elected to serve one year as (Junior) Vice President followed by two years as President and one year as (Senior) Vice President. It was noted that the President of Branch had served for one year and would continue for a further year. M Donald had completed a one-year term as Senior Vice President and therefore a Junior Vice President should be elected to serve for one year. M Donald was thanked for all her efforts in support of Scottish Branch and would remain on Branch Council as immediate past president for a two-year term.
6. It was reported that a nomination for the role of Junior Vice President had been received from R Pizzi. The nomination was proposed by R Soutar (FVS), seconded by V MacKinnon (APHA) and endorsed by Branch.

### **Branch Council**

7. Members were reminded that the composition of Branch Council was the Officers, immediate past President, Honorary Secretary, up to 6 general BVA Scottish Branch Council members, plus one representative of each of the following organisations, each of whom shall be a member:
  - each Scottish territorial division;
  - each specialist division with a significant Scottish interest; (NOTE: All specialist divisions should be given the opportunity to attend);
  - the University of Glasgow's School of Veterinary Medicine;
  - the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies;
  - Scotland's Rural College;
  - the Moredun Group;
  - APHA;
  - the Scottish Government;
  - the Food Standards Scotland;
  - the Highlands and Islands Veterinary Services Scheme;
  - Association for Veterinary Teaching and Research Work
  - the Animal Welfare Foundation
  - a recent graduate
8. Since the 2019 AGM:
  - An AWF representative had been identified but not confirmed by AWF. It was agreed that in the meantime R Pizzi would act on behalf of AWF.
  - M Erskine had stood down as the recent graduate representative due to competing time commitments. The vacancy would be advertised alongside other BVA committee vacancies during the summer.
  - E Hill had stood down as the representative for Sheep Veterinary Society and a replacement would be sought.

- V Halliday had joined as the FSS representative
- 9. It was noted that although nominated Branch Council members usually served for a term of three years, renewable once, the term was flexible to avoid gaps when divisions and other represented groups were unable to nominate new members. Such flexibility was at the discretion of Branch and ratified at the AGM annually.
- 10. The proposed membership of Branch Council 2020-21 was proposed, seconded, and ratified by Branch.

**Action: Secretariat to contact relevant groups with a view to filling current vacancies.**

### Honorary Associates

11. The President of Branch drew attention to the list of current Honorary Associates in Scotland. Branch was invited to make any additional suggestions for recommendation to the BVA Nominations and Awards Group before the end of June. It was noted that there was also a small number of non-parliamentary Honorary Associates in Scotland and these would be circulated for completeness via Glasscubes.

**Action: Secretariat to circulate complete list of Honorary Associates in Scotland (Parliamentary and non-parliamentary)**

### Covid-19

12. It was reported that since mid-March BVA resources had been redirected for focus on providing support and guidance for the profession in relation to Covid-19, including:
  - [Advice for veterinary professionals](#)
  - [Coronavirus resources including a social media toolkit](#)
  - [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
  - [Advice for animal owners](#)
  - Lobbying on appropriate and comprehensive financial measures to support veterinary businesses.
  - A programme of webinars for the profession, and weekly veterinary coordination meetings with representatives of the specialist divisions and BVA Branches.

It was noted that BVA's efforts had been greatly appreciated by the profession, in particular the weekly webinars.

13. BVA Officers were currently working with Policy Committee, with input from the divisions and Branches, on the next iteration of the BVA guidance for veterinary professionals in light of the Prime Minister's announcement on 10 May and subsequent publication of the Covid-19 Secure guidelines for England. In discussion Branch members made the following points:
  - It would be extremely helpful, professionally and personally, to have some certainty on likely next steps for Scotland in terms of easing the restrictions.
  - It was important to ensure the messaging around any easing of restrictions was simple, clear, and easily understood if buy-in from the public was to be achieved.
  - The science around Covid-19 transmission and risk had been poorly reported by some outlets, which had contributed to the confusion

14. It was reported that in April BVA had been invited by the Animal Welfare Committee, which advised Defra and the devolved administrations in Wales and Scotland on matters of animal welfare, to propose a list of animal welfare issues arising from the Covid-19 pandemic in the short, medium, and longer term. Following consultation with the specialist divisions and Branches, and with BVA Council and Policy Committee a long list had been submitted. In discussion Branch members made the following points:

- Re-establishing the messages around preventive healthcare would be a challenge for the medium and longer term, particularly in relation to companion animal vaccination. It could be useful to develop a set of FAQs to support veterinary practices in addressing client queries.
- Covid-19 had forced a move to remote consulting, with some sectors more prepared than others for the change. In aquaculture remote consulting was the norm but this was not the case for companion animal veterinary services where more significant short and long-term adaptations to ways of working would be necessary.
- It would be helpful to have clarity from the College on next steps on remote prescribing, recognising that the current allowance was temporary and due for review by the end of June. It was important not to make any permanent changes in response to the current crisis.
- Farm Assurance schemes had been carrying out remote assessments successfully.
- The Covid-19 pandemic had created a particular set of issues for veterinary undergraduates around EMS and future employment prospects. There were also concerns around the capacity of employers to mentor new graduates. Branch members were encouraged to contact the secretariat with any examples of less usual career trajectories to help showcase the principle that uncertainty could sometimes lead to exciting opportunities in a wide range of veterinary sectors.

**Action: Branch members to contribute case studies where appropriate.**

### **Any other business**

- 15. Shared services with specialist divisions:** R Soutar (FVS) reported that there was still some interest amongst some divisions in exploring options for shared services with BVA. Recognising that an earlier project to establish consensus had not been successful it was agreed the matter would be taken up with FVS separately.

### **Action: BVA/FVS to organise joint officers meeting**

- 16.** A particular note of thanks was recorded to H Atkin (BVA secretariat) for her ongoing efforts in support of Scottish Branch. A note of thanks was also recorded for F Scott-Park for her work as the Branch representative for the Highlands and Islands.