

BVA Scottish Branch AGM, Wednesday 19 May, 15.00-17.00

Zoom

Attendees

Romain Pizzi – BVA Scottish Branch President and BVZS
Kathleen Robertson – BVA Scottish Branch Senior Vice President
Emma Callaghan – BVA Scotland regional representative
Melissa Donald – BVA Scottish Branch past president
Robert Anderson – Honorary Secretary
Daniella Dos Santos – BVA Senior Vice President
Ronnie Soutar - FVS
Gareth Hateley – BVA Scottish Branch
Tricia Colville – BSAVA
Katie Mellanby – BVA Scottish Branch
Calum McIntrye – AVS Edinburgh
Hayley Atkin – Policy Officer
Vivienne MacKinnon – APHA
Lawrence Brown – BVA Scottish Branch
David Logue – Ayrshire
Freda Scott-Park – HIVSS
Elena Gafenco – Food Standards Scotland
Mary Fraser – BVA Scottish Branch

BVA Scotland members

Caroline Argo
Ian Futter
Giuseppe Ragona

Apologies

Biana Tamimi – Recent graduate representative
Liz Mullineaux – BVA Scottish Branch
Colin Mason – BCVA
Stephen Anderson - Moredun

Welcome and introductions

- 1) K. Robertson welcomed members to the BVA Scottish Branch AGM 2021.

Minutes of AGM 2020

- 2) The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 13 May 2020 were accepted as an accurate record.

Branch Constitution

- 3) K. Robertson directed members to the proposed constitution for 2021-22, reminding members that Councillors usually serve a term of 3 years renewable once. This was to take account for representation for divisions where a change of representative may not always be possible every three years.
- 4) General Councillors appointed in 2018 were also invited to renew their term by re-applying to Scottish Branch Council when BVA committee vacancy applications open in June.
- 5) The constitution was ratified and adopted for 2021/2022.

Branch Officers

- 1) K. Robertson was thanked for her tireless efforts to support the profession in Scotland throughout the pandemic, as well as her work to influence Scottish Government and key stakeholders on BVA's policy priorities.
- 2) Reflecting on her presidency, K. Robertson noted how rewarding the experience had been and made a special note of thanks to BVA staff for their invaluable support.
- 3) R. Pizzi was proposed by G. Hateley, seconded by T. Colville, and elected by Branch Council as Scottish Branch President 2021-2023.

Branch Council Membership

- 4) R. Pizzi updated that the following additions had been made to Branch Council membership since the previous AGM:

- Liz Mullineaux and Biana Tamimi were appointed by BVA's Nomination and Awards Group as a general councillor and recent graduate representatives
- Luke McBlain joined Council as AVS representative for Glasgow
- Emma Callaghan was successfully re-elected as BVA Scotland Regional Representative
- V. Halliday had stepped down as FSS rep, and Elena Gafenco was now representing Food Standards Scotland;
- At the Scottish Branch telecon in March 2021, members supported the principle of introducing a non-voting BVNA representative on Branch Council. BVA HQ will look to take this idea forward as part of a wider review of BVNA's involvement with BVA's governance and committee structures and keep Branch Council updated

5) Branch Council membership was ratified and adopted for 2021/2022.

Honorary Associates

- 6) R. Pizzi reminded Branch Council members that they were encouraged to suggest parliamentarians with a strong interest in veterinary issues and animal health and welfare as Honorary Associates for Scotland. Following the Scottish elections, it was noted that that John Scott MSP had lost his seat, Maureen Watt MSP did not stand for re-election, and all other Honorary Associates for Scotland had been successfully re-elected.
- 7) R. Soutar suggested that Fergus Ewing, former Cabinet Secretary could be put forward as a potential Honorary Associate to the BVA Nominations and Award Group.

Action: Branch Council members to suggest potential Honorary Associates for inclusion in papers for the Nominations and Awards group in August.

Update on BVA policy, media and lobbying.

8) Covid-19

Members were reminded of ongoing BVA support for the profession during the pandemic and invited to feedback any considerations as to how current Covid-19 restrictions are impacting the veterinary profession and/or animal health and welfare in Scotland. Key points to note:

- APHA was currently progressing 'Project Horizon' which was looking at new ways of working for staff;
- Scottish Government was currently reviewing physical distancing measures, members were encouraged to submit any feedback on how current physical distancing measures affect veterinary work to BVA Secretariat.
- In the aquaculture sector fish have grown larger than their usual size (due to Covid-19-related delays in production), so they may now be too large for mechanical slaughter equipment and this growth may have health impacts as we go into warmer weather. Fish veterinary colleagues would be keeping a watching brief on the situation.
- Veterinary students were still facing uncertainty as to what the next academic year would look like. It was anticipated that there would be a hybrid model of remote and in-person learning.
- EMS places were being booked well in advance, and there were concerns that students were now chasing numbers of weeks to fulfil the RCVS requirements to be able to graduate, as opposed to considering the quality of the placement.
- RCVS had recently announced that there would be no further reductions in EMS requirements for this academic year. It was thought that the majority of students would be able to meet their EMS requirements for this year, but for some this wouldn't be the case. AVS had been pushing for vet schools and RCVS to have contingencies plans in place for these circumstances.

9) Impact of EU exit

Members were invited to provide any feedback on how EU-exit has impacted them in their working lives or any resulting animal health and welfare issues that were causing concern. In discussion it was noted that:

- At present there was sufficient capacity for export certification, however there was a very real challenge around ensuring enough veterinary resource for import certification which will come into force in 2022.
- EU exit had significantly impacted wild-catch aquaculture and smaller producers

10) BVA policy priorities 2021/22

Members were invited to suggest policy priorities for the 2021/22 association year to help inform internal discussions between BVA Officers and the policy and media teams. BVA Policy Committee would then be invited to develop the shortlist into a final set of priorities for approval by BVA Council at the meeting in September. Suggestions included:

- Continue lobbying for a centralised microchip database and a single point of entry for existing databases.
- Continue lobbying for tighter controls on the use and sale of fireworks.
- Raise awareness of vet fees and value.
- Keep a watching brief on the implementation of the EU Animal Health Regulation and be live to any unintended consequences eg. ensuring this data does not negatively impact trade and ensuring the willingness of industry to make data available
- Include sustainability and climate change as an overarching priority (eg. as Brexit and Covid-19 have been in previous years) in light of shift towards plant-based diets and an increase in pet ownership.

Update on BVA Scottish Branch activity

11) General comments on BVA Scottish Branch activity 2020/21

In discussion it was noted that:

- The Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation (SSPO) would be a useful stakeholder to engage with going forward.
- The majority of BVA Scottish Branch members were listed as female. This was broadly representative of the profession and the 2019 RCVS survey of the profession where 58% of respondents indicated that they were female.
- The number of student members may slightly skew total membership figures, however retention rates of Scottish students after graduation were high.

Action: BVA Secretariat to contact SSPO and schedule initial meeting with Branch Officers

12) BVA Scottish Branch and SSPCA conference on veterinary forensics

R. Pizzi updated that in early December Scottish Branch would be teaming up with SSPCA to host a virtual conference exploring how vets can engage with veterinary forensics and animal cruelty cases. Members were invited to suggest additional ideas for speakers and programme themes. Suggestions included:

- Explore how practices can provide affordable care to owners to prevent neglect/cruelty cases
- Invite Scottish Government to present on the livestock worrying protocol for private vets that was being developed to clarify veterinary roles and responsibilities under the incoming Protection of Livestock Bill
- Engage with stakeholders with expertise in veterinary forensics, such as APHA, FSS, VDS and SRUC.

AOB

13) Provision of OOH and emergency care

F. Scott-Park reported that HIVSS practices has raised concerns that England-based practitioners were providing services to clients in the Highlands and Islands without ensuring appropriate out of hours or emergency care provision. It was emphasised that concerns should be reported to the RCVS.

14) RCVS under care review

M. Donald updated that the second stage of the RCVS under care review was now open and all members were encouraged to [participate in the survey](#).