Policy Committee meeting 6 September 2017 (teleconference)

Participants
Liz Mullineaux (chair)
Danny Chambers
John Fishwick (JVP)
Margaret Hosie
Rob Kelly
Huw Stacey

BVA staff
Hayley Atkin
Sally Burnell
Amelia Findon

Apologies
Paula Boyden
Daniella dos Santos
Fiona McFarland
Gudrun Ravetz
Kate Sharpe

Minutes of the last meeting
1) The minutes of the meeting held 21 June 2017 were accepted as an accurate record.

Updates
2) Policy Committee were updated on the recent activity of the BVA Working Groups on Surveillance, Farm Assurance, and Antimicrobial Resistance; activity around BVA priority areas; and the development of responses to current consultations in close liaison with specialist divisions.

Position on extreme conformation and brachycephalic dogs
3) Policy Committee considered a draft overarching position on extreme conformation, agreeing that:
   • The draft was currently dog-centric and should be revised to become cross-species, with examples of extreme conformation, and options for reporting treatment to correct conformational disorders, from both the companion and production animal sectors.
   • The draft should include an explanation of the cause of extreme conformation and associated disorders
   • The draft should encourage consultation with a vet prior to breeding

Action: Secretariat to liaise with relevant specialist divisions on further development of the draft.

4) Policy Committee considered the near final draft of the position on brachycephalic dogs, agreeing that images depicting extreme brachycephalic conformation should be incorporated.

Action: Secretariat to incorporate suitable images
Action: Secretariat to circulate near final draft to Ethics and Welfare Advisory Panel

Position on anthelmintics
5) Policy Committee considered the draft position on anthelmintics and Suitably Qualified Persons (SQPs), suggesting some minor amendments giving even greater focus to the importance of collaborative working between SQPs, farmers, and vets. The Sheep Veterinary Society (SVS) would be invited to comment on the revision.
Guidelines on use of formalin in aquaculture

6) Policy Committee supported the draft guidelines on the responsible use of formalin in aquaculture, subject to clarification on the role of formalin in ornamental fish keeping. It was noted that it would be necessary to check with the ruminant divisions for any unintended consequences for the use of formalin as a biocide in their sector prior to jointly issuing the guidelines with Fish Veterinary Society (FVS)

Action: Secretariat to amend draft position and forward to SVS.

Action: Secretariat to liaise with FVS and ruminant divisions and circulate final guidelines to Ethics and Welfare Advisory Panel

BVA policy priorities 2017-2018

7) Policy Committee supported the draft policy priorities 2017-2018 which had been developed in line with the BVA Strategic Plan, and taking into account specialist division input, horizon scanning, and other strategic priorities, such as Vet Futures and the animal welfare strategy.

Action: Secretariat to present priorities to Council on 21 September for approval.

New BVA Working Groups

8) In light of the agreed priorities for the coming year, and keeping in mind the need for all working groups to be tightly defined in scope and desired outputs, Policy Committee reviewed proposals made at the June meeting for potential new BVA working groups. It was agreed that, given the need to keep some capacity in reserve in order to respond to a number of issues arising from Brexit over the coming year, no further working groups would be formed at the current time. Instead:

- An overarching position on abnormal behaviours as a sign of stress across all species would be developed. The position would support the species-specific positions being developed as part of the Animal Welfare Strategy.
- An overarching position on the principles of responsible breeding across all species would be developed.

Action: Liz Mullineaux (abnormal behaviours) and Danny Chambers (responsible breeding) to develop first drafts for discussion at the meeting on 11 October.

9) It was agreed that the next meeting of Policy Committee should include agenda items on:

- The BVA position on the veterinary led team
- The forthcoming agriculture White Paper expected in the New Year

Action: Secretariat to incorporate agenda items

Any other business

10) A special note of thanks was made to Paula Boyden whose term of office had come to an end.

11) The next meeting would be 11 October 2017 11am-3pm at BVA HQ