Attendees

Sarah Carr – BVA Welsh Branch President
Les Eckford – Elected regional representative
Dinika Procter – BVA Welsh Branch Junior Vice President
Jane Clark – APHA/AGV
Kate O’Sullivan – BSAVA
Dai Grove-White – Liverpool
Kate Hovers – AWF
Ifan Lloyd – Wales AHW Framework Group
Gwen Rees – Bristol
Collin Willson – VPHA
Tricia Sutton – SVS
Tom Bailey – BVZS
Becky Norton (AVS)
Peter Jones – Welsh Branch member
Karen Davies – Welsh Branch member
Phil Thomas – Welsh Branch member
John Fishwick – BVA President
Simon Doherty – BVA Junior Vice President
Sally Burnell – BVA Director of Policy Media and Strategy
Amelia Findon – BVA Head of Policy and Governance

Apologies were received from: Fenella Johnson (recent graduate), Neil Paton (past president), Rob Davies (past president), Nikki Hopkins (BCVA), Jim Hopkins (Wales VSC), Hamish and Jan Cormie.

1. Sarah Carr, President of Branch, welcomed members to the meeting. A special note of thanks and welcome was given to the BVA Officer team.

Minutes of the AGM 2017

2. The minutes of the AGM 2017 were accepted as an accurate record. It was reported that there were no outstanding actions.

Welsh Branch activity – review of achievements

3. The President of Branch reminded members of Branch activity and achievements over the last year, including:

Brexit:

- The April reception and briefing on the impact of Brexit on animal health and welfare and public health in Wales, at the National Assembly for Wales, and subsequent letter to Michael Gove outlining concerns about the impact of Brexit on the veterinary workforce in Wales, coordinated by Llyr Gruffydd AM and signed by 29 AMs.
- Sarah Carr’s blog for the BVA website, following the 18 April debate in the House of Commons led by Ben Lake MP (Plaid Cymru, Ceredigion) on the ‘Effect of the UK leaving the EU on the veterinary profession in Wales’.
- Ifan Lloyd’s involvement in the Welsh Government’s regular Brexit roundtables.
• Responses to Welsh Affairs Committee Brexit: Agriculture, Trade and repatriation of powers inquiry and National Assembly for Wales: Wales’ future relationship with the EU.

Exercise Blackthorn
• Les Eckford’s role in ‘Exercise Blackthorn’, designed to test the UK’s readiness for a major disease outbreak, and associated blog.

Welfare at slaughter
• A call on Wales (letters to Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths AM, and Peredur Hughes, Chair Wales AHWS Group) to introduce compulsory CCTV in slaughterhouses, and resulting statement from the Welsh Government hinting at future legislation.

Other Welsh Branch Activities
• Welsh Branch had held teleconferences prior to each BVA Council meeting in order to prepare Welsh Branch input
• Welsh Branch representatives had taken part in the Medic Mentor sixth formers event in Cardiff, and the Bristol University careers fair.
• Sarah Carr had given evidence to the RSPCA Cymru panel on an animal-offenders register for Wales.
• Neil Paton represented Welsh Branch on the Welsh Government review of the code of practice on snares.
• Les Eckford and Sarah Carr had attended a stakeholder meeting on the RVC/ Aberystwyth veterinary degree collaboration project.

Stakeholder groups
• Ongoing close involvement in the work of a range of stakeholder groups including the Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group and Animal Welfare Network Wales (AWNW). AWNW had drafted and submitted a code of practice for Animal Welfare Establishments to Welsh Government, via a working group on which Welsh Branch had been represented. The AWNW’s Animals, Land and You campaign, promoting responsible pet ownership, had kicked off with a successful two-day event at the winter fair, highlighting the issue of livestock worrying. Welsh Branch were currently represented on the AWNW Greyhound Welfare Working Group, looking at veterinary presence at all races.

Wales territorial divisions
4. North Wales division
It was reported that North Wales had recently held an AGM, at which the future of the division had been discussed. The division had been struggling to find volunteers for official roles, but it was generally felt that the model of a membership based clinical club was still viable. It had been agreed that the formal committee structure would be abolished and a structure for delivering cost effective CPD meetings, organised by member practices, would be developed. The division’s social media presence would be rejuvenated via the North Wales Facebook group.

5. South Wales Practitioner Group
It was noted that the South Wales Practitioner Group had been inactive for some time and it was generally agreed that there was little point in devoting resources to reviving the group. Instead, other routes for member engagement should be explored, including an improved social media presence for South Wales, and the possibility of CPD delivery and meet the members events.

BVA Young Vet Network
6. It was noted that there were currently four BVA Young Vet Network groups in
Wales – North Wales, South East Wales, South West Wales, and Herefordshire and Powys, with a total of 12 meetings held over the past year. There were 3 YVN Facebook groups in Wales, with more than 200 followers in total. The “BVA South Wales Recent Graduates” Facebook group had regularly signposted to other events and interesting content including BVA calls for information and vets.tv videos during Mental Health Awareness weeks.

Member engagement

7. It was agreed that face-to-face member engagement should be a priority for Welsh Branch going forward:

- Two meet-the-members events would be organised – one in South Wales (likely Swansea) and one in North Wales (likely Abergele). The approach taken at previous events of combining CPD with a contentious issue had worked well, and could be replicated.
- There would be a BVA Welsh Branch reception at the Gwaredu BVD stand at the Royal Welsh Show on 25 July at 4.30pm. It was agreed that attendees would be given an opportunity to suggest priority issues for Welsh Branch via a suggestions card, and would be incentivised to attend by a prize draw to receive a voucher for CPD at the Wales VSC (50% donated by WVSC and 50% paid from the Welsh Branch budget). BVA would invite Honorary Associates to the reception, and Branch Council would share the details of the event via their own networks.
- The possibility of a Branch presence at the Winter Fair would be explored
- There was also an opportunity to collaborate with BSAVA Wales on a 2 day CPD conference in Aberystwyth in June 2019. Members would be kept updated

Action: Branch Council to propose venues and potential agenda items for meet-the-members events in North and South Wales, via the secretariat

Action: Branch Council to promote the BVA Welsh Branch reception at RWS as widely as possible in support of communications from BVA HQ

Welsh Branch policy priorities for 2018-2019

8. Members were invited to consider policy priorities for Welsh Branch to help inform the development of BVA policy priorities for 2018-2019. In discussion the following suggestions were made:

- Campaign around value of public health and meat hygiene work with the aim of encouraging more interest in this area of work amongst undergraduates
- Links Group
- Workforce issues/shortage
- Aber/RVC collaboration
- Responsible pet ownership
- Continuation of the Breed to Breathe campaign
- AMR – in particular measuring/prescribing benchmarking/exclusion of Wales from VARSS data
- Responsible use of medicines more broadly, and in particular anthelmintics
- Cascade, in particular as a perceived cause of less than responsible prescribing of AMs
- Online pharmacies and prescription fraud
- Livestock worrying

Action: Branch Council members to make any further suggestions via the
secretariat

Branch Council 2018-2019

9. Members were reminded that Branch Council was composed of the Officers and one representative from each of the following:

- 13.1. the North Wales territorial division;
- 13.2. the South Wales Practitioners Group
- 13.3. a representative of the major specialist divisions (NOTE: All specialist divisions should be given the opportunity to attend);
- 13.4. the Young Vet Network/a recent graduate;
- 13.5. the BVA Animal Welfare Foundation
- 13.6. the University of Bristol Faculty of Veterinary Medicine;
- 13.7. the University of Liverpool Faculty of Veterinary Medicine;
- 13.8. APHA;
- 13.9. the immediate past president of Branch
- 13.10. the Wales Veterinary Science Centre
- 13.11. the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group

10. Following consideration of the membership demographics information provided, it was agreed that it was important to bring new members to Branch Council, in particular recent graduates. It was agreed that applications to join Branch Council would be encouraged as part of the wider BVA exercise in July to fill forthcoming vacancies on other BVA committees and groups. The specification would be kept broad with a view to encouraging a wide range of applicants.

Action: Secretariat to draft role description and promote vacancies

11. The composition of Branch Council was ratified for 2018/2019

Branch constitution

12. The Branch constitution was ratified and adopted for 2018/2019.

Honorary Associates

13. Members were invited to consider the current list of BVA Honorary Associates in Wales. Suggestions for parliamentarians with a strong interest in veterinary issues and animal health and welfare for recommendation to the Nominations and Awards Group (NAG) were welcomed via the secretariat. It was noted that Ben Lake MP (Plaid Cymru, Ceredigion) was likely to be proposed as a new Honorary Associate

Action: Branch members to make suggestions as appropriate via the secretariat

Any other business

14. It was suggested that European issues / BVA activity via the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) could feature on future Branch Council agendas and updates at the AGM

15. Sarah Carr, President of Branch, thanked members for their attendance and contributions.