

BVA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

The 2017 annual general meeting of the British Veterinary Association was held at W5 at Odyssey, Belfast, on 21 September, as part of the Association's Members' Day.

The members-only business section of the AGM was chaired by Philip Lowndes, Chairman of the BVA Board.

The meeting approved the report of the 2016 AGM, which was published in *Veterinary Record* on 29 October 2016 (vol 179, pp439-440).

The Chairman noted that the Association's annual report had been published in the 19/26 August 2017 edition of *Veterinary Record* (vol 181, pp211-216) and a copy had been made available on the BVA website at the end of August.

The meeting formally adopted the Association's accounts for 2016. The Chairman reported that the BVA Board had approved the accounts at its meeting on 3 August 2017 and a copy had been made available to BVA members on the website.

Financial report

Derek Thorpe, BVA Finance Director, reported that, in the year ending 31 December 2016, BVA had made an operating surplus before tax and donations of just over £150k, up significantly from the £91k surplus of 2015. The Association's total income for the year increased by 4% to just over £5.9 million with all key business areas yielding an above-cost return.

Total expenditure for the year increased by just under 3% to just over £5.75 million and BVA continued to invest substantial resources in policy and media activities, lobbying and campaigning on priority issues, such as animal welfare. Member-focused initiatives had progressed apace with the Vet Futures project in particular being implemented following the successful launch of the Vet Futures report at the end of 2015. Administrative expenditure decreased by 3%.

Capital expenditure totalled just over £15k, primarily on further developments of the membership database and IT for the Canine Health Schemes.

After allowing for tax and £14k donations to veterinary-related charities, and allowing for unrealised movements on the Association's investment portfolio, BVA's total reserves increased by almost £270k to just over £10.3 million. This included working capital reserves of over £2.7million, and BVA remained debt free.

D Thorpe said that the outlook for 2017 was that BVA was on course to make a small operating surplus, but that this was somewhat reduced as the Board had decided to invest the majority of this year's operating surplus into the Membership Strategy, which is seeking to increase both recruitment and retention rates.

Subscription rates

The membership subscription rates for 2018, as set out in *Veterinary Record*, 19/26 August (vol 181, p217), were approved. Rates for individual membership would increase by approximately 3 per cent, and by approximately 5 per cent for group membership.

The meeting also approved an aggregate remuneration of £178,654 for directors, including Officers, for the period 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018, with non-Officer Directors' remuneration making up £40,443 of the total.

Election of Officers

John Fishwick was elected as BVA President for 2017/18 and Simon Doherty as Junior Vice President. In accordance with the Articles of Association, Gudrun Ravetz, the outgoing President, serves as Senior Vice President for 2017/18.

On the recommendation of the Board, the meeting elected Stephen Anderson-Dixon as a non-veterinary director, taking up the position made vacant by the retirement of Derek Williams.

The meeting approved the appointment of the auditors Buzzacott to serve until the next AGM.

The meeting also approved the re-election of BVA's existing Honorary Associates and the election of new Honorary Associates approved by BVA Council. It also approved the election of Derek Williams, Martin Alder, and Jo Gibson as Honorary Members of BVA. The Chairman told the meeting that D Williams had been involved with BVA for around 40 years; that M Alder had had been editor of *Veterinary Record* for 26 years; and that J Gibson had given her time and talents to advance the veterinary profession in Northern Ireland.

The Chairman placed on record BVA's thanks to all Honorary Associates and Members for the excellent support they had given to the Association.

It was confirmed that the 2018 AGM would be held in September 2018 at a date and venue to be decided.

The Chairman thanked his fellow Board members for their hard work and support throughout the year. He particularly thanked Sean Wensley who was leaving the Board having served three years as a member of the BVA Officer team.

New Officers

The open session of the AGM was chaired by G Ravetz, the outgoing President. The induction of the new Officers took place during the open session.

Jonathan Statham spoke to the election of J Fishwick as President for 2017/18 and the election of S Doherty as Junior Vice President was endorsed by Mark Little. G Ravetz paid tribute to S Wensley as the outgoing Senior Vice President.

New President's address

Addressing the meeting following his induction as President, J Fishwick explained that he had chosen "Team Vet: Working Together" as the theme for his presidential year. He presented G Ravetz with the past presidents' medal.