



Association of Government Veterinarians AGM 2020 Wednesday 25th November 2020 18:00

1. Record of Attendees

Kate Sharpe	Jane Clark	Adrienne Conroy
John Marshall	Jane Gibbens	Liz Kelly
Kate Richards	Osiris Ointa	Joana Crisostomo
Mick Park	Levon Stephan	Nigel Gibbens
Anthony Ridge	Sheila Voas	Alan McPhee
Keith Meldrum	Catherine McVicar	

2. Acceptance of New Members

The following new members, proposed by Levon Stephan and seconded by Jane Clark, were accepted unanimously.

John Marshall	Victoria Westwood
Charlotte Inman	Osiris Ointa
Kate Richards	Catrina Prince
Jill Perkins	Sophia Hepple
	Greer Wild

3. Apologies for Absence

Katherine Grace	Richard Drummond
Amanda Carson	Julia Clark
Rebeca Garcia	Simon Doherty
Theresa Philips	

4. Minutes of the last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM (March 2019) are posted on the AGV website under 'Council Minutes and Accounts'.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. President's Address

As President of AGV and Chairperson, Kate Sharpe delivered the President's Address. A copy of the full statement will be posted on the AGV website.

Kate began by acknowledging the significant impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our work and lives before thanking Rebeca Garcia for her hard work and leadership as President of AGV. In particular, the impact on the profession of the AGV well-being survey led by Rebeca was highlighted.



During the past year, we successfully delivered two conferences jointly with the VPHA providing unique CPD of particular relevance to Government vets. Unfortunately, the pandemic resulted in the cancellation of the spring conference that was intended to celebrate the VPHA's 60th Anniversary. Happily, the conference was able to be delivered virtually in October and was a great success; in particular, we saw increased participation by veterinary undergraduates who were able to gain an understanding of the veterinary profession's roles across Government. Planning is underway for the 2021 conference schedule and it is hoped that the Autumn meeting may see a return to an in-person format.

Kate went on to describe the work of AGV members in contributing to BVA Council and Committee meetings including the BVA Policy Committee and Specialist Division meetings and workshops. The contributions of Adrienne Conroy and Jane Clark to the BVA Council and Policy committees respectively were acknowledged. This year the BVA has set up Working Groups on Good Veterinary Workplaces, Welfare at Slaughter, and Bovine TB that all include members of the AGV (Kate Sharpe, Liz Kelly and Jane Gibbens respectively). Kate highlighted the influence the AGV has been able to exert on BVA working groups citing the example of the bovine TB working group report that included recommendations to improve engagement between government vets and those in practice. Other important areas to which AGV members have contributed include the RCVS consultation on legislative changes, fireworks and the EMA categorisation of antimicrobials. The AGV has maintained its influence in Europe through Jane Clark's Presidency of EASVO.

Kate concluded her statement by thanking all AGV Council members who have worked tirelessly and at pace throughout the year, and the AGV members who have supported them, to deliver the activities of the AGV.

7. Treasurer's Report

Anthony Ridge delivered the Treasurer's report and began by stating that the AGV is financially healthy. The Treasurer's Statement of Financial Affairs for the calendar year 2019 is published on the AGV website. The accounts had been examined and certified correct by Arjen Brouwer and Jane Gibbens and the Treasurer expressed his gratitude for their time in doing this. The accounts for 2020 will extend to 31/3/21 and in future will reflect the financial year.

Total income from membership in 2019 was £1,691. Currently, there are 67 paying and 5 lifetime members AGV. Of the paying membership, 31 are paying the current subscription of £40 and the remainder are paying between £1 and £25.

We are currently financially stable with an account balance of £14,000. As a result of the cancellation of EASVO meetings and increased subscriptions it is expected that 2020 will result in a net surplus of approximately £1,000.

The accounts were accepted and Anthony Ridge was thanked for his work during the year.



8. Secretary's Report

Liz Kelly delivered the Secretary's report and began by remarking on what a strange year 2020 has been. We have seen an increased workload due to the coronavirus pandemic, contributions to BVA working group policy positions and the development of the UK/EU relationship that has been partially balanced by a reduction in Government consultations.

A membership report is available on the AGV website; overall, we have seen static membership numbers with 9 new members offset by members leaving for a variety of reasons. Discussions regarding AGV membership with senior Government vets and export OVs are ongoing and we are all asked to encourage our colleagues to join the AGV. Liz reminded us of Simon Doherty's (Ex-BVA President) comment that while we are a small division, we 'punch above our weight'. AGV membership offers the opportunity to comment directly on issues affecting the profession and to have these comments taken forward. We encourage members to submit more comments and responses to questions, for example the ongoing consultation on the RCVS legislation working party recommendations led by Jane Gibbens.

9. Report on RCVS Legislation Working Party

Jane Gibbens delivered a report on the RCVS Legislation Working Party (LWP). The LWP has conducted a review of existing Veterinary Surgeons Act with the aim of reforming the legislation to modernise and improve regulation. The LWP has produced a report containing 46 recommendations, which is currently undergoing a public consultation until January 27th 2021. The report and details of the LWP are available on the RCVS website. All AGV members are encouraged to read the LWP report and provide feedback to Jane on the proposed AGV response to the consultation; a draft will be circulated to all AGV members by December 18th 2020 and comments should be returned by January 8th prior to submission on January 26th 2020. Jane Clark emphasised the importance in responding to the consultation and that she will also be able to use any feedback in the BVA LWG-vet-led team working group and the BVA Policy Committee discussions.

10. Election of the AGV Council and Council Members

The nominations for Officers and Council members did not exceed the available posts. Officer posts and Council members were elected *en bloc*, proposed by Nigel Gibbens and seconded by Alan McPhee. All were elected unanimously without objection.

Officers

President	Liz Kelly
Senior Vice President	Kate Sharpe
Junior Vice President	Mick Park
Secretary	John Marshall
Treasurer	Anthony Ridge

Council Members

Adrienne Conroy	Joana Crisostomo
Katherine Grace	Jane Gibbens
Amanda Carson	Jane Clark



Nominations for Council

Kate Richards

Osiris Ointa

11. European Association of State Veterinary Officers (EASVO)

Jane Clark began by thanking a number of people; AGV members for ongoing financial support for AGV representation at the EASVO/FVE GAs; AGV council for valued input to FVE consultations; BVA and RCVS for their additional financial support during her EASVO presidency and; FSA for providing additional support (travel to London) to keep costs down.

Jane referred to her "Back To Office" reports from the EASVO General Assemblies that all AGV members receive and reported that the coronavirus crisis has meant that EASVO meetings have been conducted virtually and therefore at significantly reduced cost to EASVO and AGV. The annual fee payable by EASVO to the FVE has been reduced from over €7K to just over €4 with an associated reduction in voting rights. This is so important to EASVOs financial sustainability and, in turn AGV's payment an EASVO membership fee.

The meetings that were scheduled to take place in London and Prague in 2020 will be rescheduled for next year. As EASVO president, Jane has been able to contribute to FVE position papers on remote prescribing and telemedicine that will be put on the website.

Jane was thanked for her continued hard work in this area.

12. Any other business

A discussion around the purpose of AGV, including the professional and personal benefits of membership was introduced by Jane Gibbens. AGV members explored the reasons for joining the AGV and what could be done to increase membership numbers. There are currently 721 vets in Government (GVS, January 2020) and barely 10% are members of AGV. Benefits of AGV membership include representation among the veterinary profession and Government through the BVA (particularly for AGV members who do not belong to BVA), awareness of issues affecting the profession, opportunities for networking across government including identifying opportunities for career progression, and relevant CPD. Incorporation of AGV membership into performance review goals, the potential of Presidential 'themes' and the possibility of council membership or other AGV engagement counting towards any potential future RCVS revalidation were discussed. Overall, members valued the sense of community and identity, networking opportunities afforded by membership and the ability to influence the BVA. Suggestions for increasing membership included preparing a brief to include in 'new entrant's' packs, establishing mentoring or shadowing opportunities, emailing vets across government, advertising, social media (Twitter, Facebook, Vet Voices) and engaging directly with employers to improve their understanding of the benefits and encourage them to permit members the time off and support necessary for conferences and Council activities. Efforts to potentially expand the membership among private vets



and export OV's and to clarify the difference between AGV, GVS and VPHA were discussed. The possibility of learning from others such as the BSAVA how engagement and identity are fostered through local initiatives was also raised.

There was also some discussion of the value of having an annual 'theme' for the Presidency that could reflect the President's area of expertise or focus; this could encourage membership and make the presidency particularly attractive to those who wish to drive or enable specific initiatives in the profession.

13. President's Closing Remarks

Liz began by thanking all AGV members attending the meeting before going on to thank the Officers and Council Members, Anthony Ridge as Treasurer and webmaster, Mick Kelly and John Marshall for taking on Council roles and Kate Sharpe for all of her hard work.

14. Date of next meeting

The next AGM will be held **in the Autumn of 2020**, date to be advised. Future AGMs will revert to being held on an annual basis with change of officers at that time.

