

Minutes of 8th Council Meeting

Date: 13th May 2008, Telephone Conference, 9.00 a.m.

Present: Kevin Isaacs, Sionagh Smith, Mark Stidworthy, Ken Smith, Sue Newband

1. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 26th January 2008

The minutes of the meeting on 26th January 2008 were approved without changes.

2. Actions arising from those minutes not elsewhere on the agenda

RCPATH representative – The issue of a BSVP representative on the SAC Veterinary Pathology had been raised by KS at the last SAC meeting on January 29th 2008. This required a formal nomination for the representative to be made to the SAC with name of a proposer and seconder. This could be taken by KS to the next meeting. KI and MS would be jointly nominated as an interim measure, and the issue would be raised for volunteers at the BSVP AGM. ACTION: KS to take nomination back to SAC.

Wiki - Link to Wiki Veterinary Pathology were to be added to BSVP website, but as yet KI had no information on how to achieve this. Currently there were 2 access routes, one via the website (www.vetschools.ac.uk) requiring a free login and password, and another by email. ACTION: KS to provide KI with information and KI to add link as appropriate.

Paperwork – all application forms, letterheads etc needed to be adjusted to include the Secretariat's address as the primary one for all correspondence. ACTION: KI to adjust any material and forward to SN.

3. Honorary Secretary's report

Membership update – Website currently has out of date version of application form and address for prospective members. There was discussion on the necessity to maintain differentiation on pricing for Modules and meetings, so that member benefits were retained. It was not always clear whether applicants for Modules had paid their membership subscriptions, and module organisers may need to check with SN whether a separate member application had been submitted. ACTION: KI to update version on the website.

Charity status – There had been previous discussion about whether the Society should continue in its attempt to seek charity status. Having reviewed some other recent successful applications, it seemed possible that the BSVP Constitution and the Charity Commission application could be adjusted so that they satisfied the criteria needed for charity status. This could include additional provision for support for research, grants such as travel expenses and conference attendance grants for trainees, replacement of terms such as “political” and “advocacy” in the aims and objects of the Society, and replace careers and job areas with appropriate links. ACTION: MS to discuss with Charity Commission whether the application could be successful if changes were made. KI to provide sections of altered wording based on examples provided by SN's research.

Monthly bulletin/Email – There was a need for more regular communication with members, and a monthly email bulletin was suggested. A standard format could perhaps be established with fixed topics plus any additions, and requests for member information. ACTION: MS to consider format content, and SN to distribute.



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Liaison with Secretariat – Transition to the secretariat holding member information and dealing with correspondence etc, had been largely achieved. Some work was needed to clarify how records were maintained up to date for Secretariat use whilst also remaining accurate for MS. ACTION: SN to copy all applications and send paper copy to MS after member data entered. MS to maintain second copy of database independently.

4. Honorary Treasurer's report

2006/2007 Accounts – These had been independently reviewed and were correct. Work would now start on completing 2007/2008 figures. ACTION: SN to coordinate and KS to oversee completion of 2007/2008 accounts.

Current status – On May 13th, the Society held £9498.46 in current and £4117.56 in instant access savings accounts. There was a continued need to start building a gradual surplus to ensure a safety buffer zone, and to allow investment in meetings and other activities with more financial risk. The Secretariat was now an additional and continuing financial cost that needed to be supported by the Society.

Liaison with Secretariat – This had been a great success, and the oversight of the Society's finances was now a much more manageable task for the incoming Treasurer.

5. Education report

Module 3 status report – Date 19/20th June. Speakers were confirmed, and notes were arriving ready for printing. Currently only 8 applications, but several others were thought to be imminent, and it was thought that the Module would run. A blank space in the programme had allowed a timetable rearrangement to increase time for discussion. Several enquiries had been received about free attendance for those helping out at Modules. However, it was not felt that the very welcome but relatively limited help provided on the day of Modules warranted free attendance, particularly with the Secretariat now sharing some of this burden. However, residents or others who wished to take on the burden of being a full Module organiser would receive free registration at that Module, or could bring that forward if necessary for their CPD budget purposes.

Module 4 status report – A set of speakers had been established, and some back up, by MD and SS. Dates were set for Sept 8/9th and the venue Moredun Research Institute. ACTION: Continue to ensure that organisation stays on track.

Modules 5 and beyond – Module 5 likely to be in June 2009. ACTION: Consider who could be suitable organisers.

Getting feedback from speakers – Informal feedback was obtained from speakers was obtained immediately after meetings by the Education Coordinator. There were no current plans to formalise this as it was felt that this could be an additional burden that was unnecessary. Feedback from participants would continue on the current formal basis.

Appointment of new Educational Coordinator – Three names had been suggested but none was currently prepared to commit now. ACTION: There was some flexibility to wait at this time and see whether a candidate could reach a decision. It may be necessary to canvass the entire membership for a volunteer.



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Liaison with Secretariat – Transfer of educational material from SS to SN had been proceeding well. There was now a need to agree a list of functions/duties/details for organising a Module, based on previous experience, and on BSTP experience. ACTION: SS and SN to agree a standard list of actions for the handover to a new Education Coordinator.

6. BSVP Secretariat

Contract – The contract between BSVP and SN had been agreed, and SN was now the formal provider of secretariat services to the Society.

Liaison with Council – SN would provide a report of her activities between each Council meeting in advance of each meeting, to enable Council to review these during the meeting. She would attend if required by Council.

7. BSVP at AVTRW Scarborough March 2008

Feedback – It was agreed that the process of organising this meeting, and the day itself, were not felt to have been entirely positive. In future, the Society would promote the AVTRW meeting via its website, and would not seek to undermine it by organising conflicting events, but would not formally take any part in its organisation.

Future plans for Spring meetings/Trainees days – In the future, the Society would consider organising a 2 day meeting aimed at trainees, with a focus on research and analysis skills, management and career development issues. ACTION: Revisit this later in the year.

8. Changes to Council at AGM

A volunteer had been found who would accept the nomination for Honorary Treasurer. It was currently unknown whether potential candidates for Honorary President and Education Coordinator would accept nominations. ACTION: Council members to continue persuasive roles on a personal level as appropriate. If definite candidates could not be identified, a general appeal to the whole membership would be needed.

9. Website

Statistics – Council viewed statistics for the website, that showed hits and visits had stabilised.

Content - KI reported that more input was needed from members, Council and trainees, so that there was more material in total, and also more turnover reflecting developments in the Society and in the veterinary pathology community. Suitable material could include meeting reports, for example reports on Module content from attendees. It would also be helpful to identify a BSVP member willing to become an editor of the BSVP's online content, and another (or the same individual) to be a "web content finder", seeking out suitable material to add or link to the BSVP's site (such as meeting notifications). ACTION: MS to include request for volunteers in monthly update.

Adverts – Future placement of adverts could be affected by the outcome of the Charity Commission application, in the meantime, adverts would be considered on an individual basis.

10. Annual meeting

The date for the AGM had been set for November 8th, and the venue would be Nottingham Vet School. Sandy Bjornson and Steven Spencer had agreed to help as scientific organisers, with Peter Brown agreeing to be local organiser. After discussion it was agreed that the topic of veterinary

