

Finance and Resources Committee Meeting

Thursday, 29 February 2024 at 10:00 am to be held online via Microsoft Teams and in person at the Royal College of Nursing

Agenda Item	Classification	Rationale
1. Apologies for Absence	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
2. Declaration of Interests	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 20 November 2023		
3a. Unclassified Minutes	Unclassified	n/a
3b. Confidential Appendix	Confidential	1,2,3,4
4. Minutes of Remote Decisions (October 2023)	Unclassified	n/a
5. Minutes of Remote Decision (25 – 29 January 2024)	Confidential	3
Matters to note		
6. Update from the Director of Operations		
6a. Status of Audit		
6b. Expenses and Remuneration		
6c. Fraud and Data Protection	Oral report Confidential	3
6d. Facilities		
6e. Recruitment		
6f. Estate Strategy		
7. Reports on Committees	Oral report	
8. Corporate Risk Register Update	Confidential	1,2,3,4
9. Management Accounts	Confidential	1
10. RCVS Investment Portfolio Update	Confidential	1,2,3,4
Matters for decision		
11. Financial Loss Payments	Confidential	1,4

12. Proposal for Financial Support to Refugees Sitting the Statutory Membership Exam	Confidential	3
13. Any Other Business (AOB)	Oral report	
14. Date of the next meeting: Tuesday, 14 May 2024 (including join meeting with ARC)	Oral report Unclassified	n/a

Finance and Resources Committee – Terms of Reference

1. The Finance and Resources Committee shall be responsible ensuring the finances, resources and framework of the College governance system is fit for purpose, thus enabling the Council and committees to deliver against the College's objects. It shall comprise the Treasurer (Chair), nominated representatives from Education, Standards, Advancement of the Professions, Preliminary Investigation Committee/Disciplinary Committee Liaison and Registration Committees and VN Council, together with two lay members of Council and two veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse members of Council (ie two in total). The CEO, Registrar and Director of Operations will be non-voting members.
2. The representatives from the Committees will be selected by the Committee as soon as possible after RCVS Day and will hold the role for a three-year period or until they come off the Committee that they are representing, or off Council.
3. It shall make recommendations to Council as appropriate.
4. It will be chaired by the Treasurer, and its functions will include, but not necessarily be limited to:
 - a) Presenting an annual budget to Council for approval and recommending proposed fee changes;
 - b) Laying down procedures for budgeting and financial control;
 - c) Approving expenditure from the Discretionary Fund;
 - d) Seeking the approval of Council for expenditure from the College's reserves;
 - e) Managing the assets and investments of the College;
 - f) Working with the executive team to ensure management of organisational risks, maintenance of a risk register and delivery of appropriate internal audit reviews, with oversight provided by the Audit and Risk Committee;
 - g) Overseeing the appointment of professional advisers to the College, over £50,000;
 - h) Acting as Project Board for substantive projects, where applicable under the project protocol, unless another dedicated group exists;
 - i) Approving rates of travelling and subsistence expenses, and remuneration for work carried out on the College's behalf;
 - j) In consultation with the APC and the Fellowship Board, deciding fees for application and ongoing membership of the Fellowship;

- k) Advising Council on corporate governance matters, including the terms of reference and composition of committees (but not individual membership);
- l) Approving the setting up of subcommittees, working parties and other such bodies, and determining their composition (but not individual membership), by considering proposals made by sponsoring committees, Officers or senior staff members (Council to ratify members of long-term groups as part of the annual cycle, sponsoring committees to agree terms of reference);
- m) Approving the disbanding of subcommittees, working parties and other such bodies, as appropriate; and,
- n) Keeping under review the rules and arrangements for Council elections (the operation of the annual elections themselves being overseen by the Registrar, as returning officer).

Summary	
Meeting	Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)
Date	29 February 2024
Title	Finance and Resources Committee Meeting Minutes – 20 November 2023
Summary	Minutes of the FRC meeting held online via Microsoft Teams on Monday, 20 November 2023.
Decisions required	The Committee is asked to approve the unclassified minutes and the confidential appendix.
Attachments	Confidential Appendix
Author	Huda Haid Governance Officer h.haid@rcvs.org.uk

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Appendix	Confidential	1,2,3,4

¹Classifications explained	
Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are

	general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.
²Classification rationales	
Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) meeting held online via Microsoft Teams on 20 November 2023

Members:

Mrs B Andrews-Jones	Veterinary Nurses' Council Representative
Mr J M Castle	RCVS Council Member
Miss L S Belton	RCVS Council Member
Dr M M S Gardiner	Treasurer & Chair
Mr T M Hutchinson	RCVS Council Member
Mrs S D Howarth	Education Committee Representative
Professor S A May	RCVS Council Member
Mrs C-L McLaughlan	Standards Committee Representative
Dr S Paterson*	Advancement of the Professions Committee Representative
Dr K A Richards	PIC/DC Liaison Committee Representative
Mr T J Walker	RCVS Council Member

In attendance:

Ms E Ferguson	Registrar/Director of Legal Services
Ms H Haid	Governance Officer
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C McCann*	Director of Operations
Ms S Tetsola	Head of Finance
Mr A Quinn-Byrne*	Governance Manager

* Denotes absence

Apologies for Absence

1. Apologies were received from Dr S Paterson, the Director of Operations and the Governance Manager.

Declarations of Interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest to record.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

3. The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 September 2023.

4. Further confidential information is contained in paragraphs 1-4 of the classified appendix.

Update from the Director of Operations

5. The Head of Finance and CEO delivered this update orally on behalf of the Director of Operations who was not present at the meeting on this occasion.
6. The CEO covered the following topics for the Committee to note:
 - **Facilities:** Despite WeWork going into bankruptcy in the US and Canada, it was business as usual in the UK. The College had not received any communication from the workspace provider to indicate otherwise so far. The College had appropriate contingency plans in place to ensure that it was not reliant on the use of the office space should it need to move out.
 - **Recruitment:** Since the last meeting, there had been four leavers, two new starters in RCVS Knowledge and eight new starters in the RCVS. Of the eight new starters in the RCVS, one included an apprentice in the Academy Team.
 - **Estate Strategy:** The Hardwick Street HQ was no longer occupied by tenants. The appointed project managers had been assisting the College with getting expert help for the handling of particular aspects of the refurbishment project. All planning permissions had been approved. One had restricted the use of the flagpole to the display of a union flag only, and not to the display of the College coat of arms because it was considered a form of branding and marketing – this may be appealed. All ongoing work was continually being reported to the Hardwick Street Refurbishment Group. Finally, a staff-led Technical Group had been set up which included individuals with specialist skills around IT, branding, archiving etc.
7. There were no further comments or questions from the Committee.
8. Further confidential information is contained in paragraphs 5-6 of the classified appendix.

Reports on Committees

9. There were no oral Committee reports to record.

Corporate Risk Register

10. Confidential information is contained in paragraphs 7-9 of the classified appendix.

Management Accounts

11. Confidential information is contained in paragraphs 10-11 of the classified appendix.

RCVS Investment Portfolio Update

12. Confidential information is contained in paragraphs 12-18 of the classified appendix.

Mandatory Practice Regulation Working Group

15. The CEO introduced a paper that outlined the need for a new Mandatory Practice Regulation Working Group (MPRWG), its draft Terms of Reference (ToR), composition and mode of operation.
16. Some form of mandatory practice regulation was a key recommendation of the Legislative Working Party (LWP) proposals for future veterinary legislation. Its development was a potentially very complex area, interlinking with the professional standards structure, the Register of Veterinary Practice Premises, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate's inspection scheme and the Practice Standards Scheme. It was therefore proposed that a Working Group was set up to develop proposals, so that the College could be ready when the window for legislative change opened.
17. The new working group would be distinct from the Practice Standards Group (which dealt with the detailed standards of the scheme) in that it would be more strategic and consider more holistic issues, such as structure, governance and powers. The purpose of the MPRWG would be to make a proposal to Council for mandatory practice regulation of some kind.
18. FRC was asked to approve the setting up of the MPRWG, the budget for which would come out of the Discretionary Fund.
19. Comments and questions from the Committee included the following:
 - It was agreed that it was important to get the scope of the WG's work right from the start based on what the RCVS would like to regulate, what it *can actually* regulate, as well as the practical implications.
 - What was Defra's interest in this area? Defra was likely hearing from MPs, who would receive pressure from their constituency members around veterinary service provision and regulation. This was also an area that the public assumed the RCVS already regulated and were often surprised to find that this was not the case.

- The setting up of the MPRWG for 12 months now would cross over into the presidential year, was it anticipated that the Chair would stay the same? The answer was in the affirmative and this would be made clear.
 - It was noted that a consumer representative would be part of the MPRWG's composition and that key stakeholders would include the organisations represented by the Practice Standards Group (PSG). Would a member from the Public Advisory Group (PAG) be standing as a consumer representative member on the MPRWG? The answer was no. It would instead be a consumer champion who had good understanding of consumer expectation as the PAG was not set up to make policy decisions. However, once the scope of the WG has been determined and appropriate plans had been developed, the PAG could be brought in to review them from an end-user perspective.
 - The MPRWG's ToR should be reviewed as the group matures.
 - It would be important to consider whether PSS could survive the introduction of this kind of regulation.
 - As the scope of the regulation was unclear and to be decided, it might be worth having Defra engage with the MPRWG from the start, so that the aims of both parties were aligned. In answer to this question, it was noted that Defra's involvement could raise conflict of interest issues. However, it might be appropriate to have regular check-ins with them at certain points in the MPRWG's work.
 - If we were to introduce a new category of regulation, this could go against the devolution settlements of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. On this point, it was noted that this would be true for any new legislation. The regulation would not be separate to the new Veterinary Surgeons/Services Act but rather within it. Therefore, if this was a concern, then it would have to be addressed for the introduction of the whole legislation.
20. The Committee was curious about and looked forward to hearing the outcomes of the MPRWG's work in the future. The Committee unanimously supported and approved the setting up of the MPRWG.
21. The time by which Council was to be informed of the Committee's approval was queried. It was confirmed that this would be done at the earliest opportunity following the meeting.

Appointment of Vice-Chair

13. With support from all members present, Mr T J Walker had been appointed as Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2023/24 presidential year.

Any Other Business (AOB)

14. Confidential information is contained in paragraphs 19-20 of the classified appendix.

Date of the Next Meeting

15. The next FRC meeting would be held on Thursday, 29 February 2023 at 10:00 am, in person.

Summary	
Meeting	Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)
Date	29 February 2024
Title	Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee’s Remote Decisions on BoardEffect - October 2023
Summary	Minutes of the FRC’s remote poll decisions taken on BoardEffect in October 2023. One relating to the recommendation of an agency to undertake a Survey of the Professions for 2024 (3 - 9 October 2023) and the other relating to the contract for the live invigilation of the Statutory Membership Exam (17 - 19 October 2023).
Decisions required	None – for record and information only.
Attachments	None
Author	Huda Haid Governance Officer h.haid@rcvs.org.uk

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

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Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee's (FRC) Remote Decisions on BoardEffect in October 2023

Survey of the Professions 2024 (3 – 9 October 2023)

1. The RCVS required approval from the Committee for a recommended research agency to conduct a Survey of the Professions. The recommended agency, the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), had conducted all the previous surveys for the RCVS. A paper with two accompanying annexes (a proposal from IES and another research agency) had been circulated to the Committee for consideration via email on 3 October 2023, along with a poll link to vote on BoardEffect by 5 October 2023.
2. On the 5 October 2023, a total of seven Committee members had managed to vote with five 'yes' votes and two 'no' votes. Since a quorate majority had not been established, the voting deadline had been extended to 9 October 2023.
3. On 9 October 2023, the Committee approved the recommendation for IES to undertake the survey of behalf of the RCVS with a total of seven 'yes' to two 'no' votes.

Contract for the Live Invigilation of the Statutory Membership Exam (17-19 October 2023)

4. At a meeting held on 11 May 2023, the Committee approved a move to the live invigilation of the Statutory Membership Exam (SME) based on initial quotes from one company. Since then, the Education Committee and Vet Nursing Team had explored three companies to get the best value. A decision had also been made to combine the SME and Vet Nurse exams together to save the College money. Findings had been presented to the Education Committee and Veterinary Nurse Education Committee and it was agreed that a company called TestReach offered the best value. Overall, the total cost per candidate was less than the estimate previously approved by FRC, and full details had been provided to the Committee in an email sent via BoardEffect on 17 October 2023. The Committee was asked to approve the decision to award TestReach the contract in a BoardEffect poll by 19 October 2023. The Committee was assured that the agreement would be subject to due diligence checks on TestReach to be undertaken the College Finance Team.
5. On 19 October 2023, the Committee approved the decision to proceed with TestReach with a total of six 'yes' votes and one abstention.