

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Standards Committee
Date	23 October 2024
Title	Standards Committee Minutes
Summary	<p>Minutes of Standards Committee meeting held remotely on Wednesday 23 October 2024, at 10:00am</p> <p>The Committee's attention is drawn to paragraphs 1-19 of the classified appendix.</p>
Attachments	Classified appendix
Author	<p>Stephanie Bruce-Smith</p> <p>Senior Standards and Advice Officer</p> <p><a href="mailto:s.bruce-smith@rcvs.org.uk">s.bruce-smith@rcvs.org.uk</a></p>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Minutes	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	1, 2 and 3

**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"> <li>1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others</li> <li>2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation</li> <li>3. To protect commercially sensitive information</li> <li>4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS</li> </ol>
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ol>

## Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held in-person and remotely on Wednesday 23 October 2024

**Members:** Linda Belton (Chair)  
Sinéad Bennett  
Derek Bray  
Olivia Cook  
Linda Ford  
Alice McLeish  
Christopher Loughrey  
Sue Paterson  
Matthew Rendle  
Tim Walker  
Will Wilkinson

**In attendance:**

<b>RCVS</b>	Lizzie Lockett	CEO
	Gemma Kingswell	Head of Legal Services (Standards)
	Beth Jinks	Standards and Advisory Lead
	Stephanie Bruce-Smith	Senior Standards and Advice Officer
	Ky Richardson	Senior Standards and Advice Officer/Solicitor
	Bri McLachlan	Standards and Advice Administrator
	Sarah Iddon	Head of Legal Services (PSS)

### AI 1 Apologies for absence, declarations of interest, minutes from the meeting of 24 September 2024.

1. Apologies were received from C Loughrey and W Wilkinson.
2. No new declarations of interest were made.
3. The minutes from the meeting of 24 September 2024 were agreed.

### Matters for decision

#### AI 2 (a) Under care - confidential

4. The minutes of this agenda item discussion can be found in the classified appendix at paragraphs 1-2.

## AI 2 (b) LONOs

5. The Committee was reminded that at its meeting in September it had agreed to restructure Chapter 23 so as to separate out legal obligations from best practice guidance and to add further explanation as to why certain complaints need to be directed to other statutory authorities such as the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) in the first instance. It also agreed that the FAQ relating to RVNs be reworded to focus on what RVNs can do in terms of practice names and to consider the broadening of tasks for RVNs when working independently.
6. The Committee was informed that the wider role of RVNs when working independently will be revisited at a later stage and that the FAQ relating to RVNs has therefore been removed at this stage.
7. The Committee was asked to consider the following areas of Chapter 23:
  - a. References to other statutory authorities, where it has been clarified that they are the responsible bodies and that their interests must be considered alongside RCVS interests; and
  - b. References to there being meaningful involvement of the vet surgeon who has requested the LONO in the business, to avoid the name being used to serve as completion of a tick box exercise which could be considered misleading under the Veterinary Surgeons Act.
8. The Committee asked whether the various guidance regarding the role of the senior appointed veterinary surgeon could be collated in one place and it was noted that while the veterinary surgeon requesting the LONO may not always be the senior appointed veterinary surgeon, more awareness could be raised about the role of the senior appointed veterinary surgeon generally, and what is involved when a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse accepts responsibility as a business owner.
9. The Committee approved the updated guidance and FAQs.

**Action: Head of Legal Services (Standards)**

## AI 2 (c) Industrial action – oral update

10. The minutes of this agenda item discussion can be found in the classified appendix at paragraphs 3-9.

## AI 2 (d) Chapter 8 review

11. The Committee was informed that Chapter 8 relating to the euthanasia of animals has been reviewed as part of a proactive ongoing general review of the supporting guidance. The amendments seek to make the guidance easier to understand and follow. The main amendments include:

- a. Rearranging the guidance under appropriate headings to make it easier to understand and follow;
  - b. Updating language to make it more accessible and in line with how the Standards and Advice team would advise; and
  - c. Referencing further sources of advice.
12. It was noted that general feedback had been received on the proposed updates to the guidance following the September meeting, and that these suggestions had been implemented except for some formatting suggestions which will be considered after the content of the guidance has been agreed.
13. The Committee provided the following comments and feedback:
- a. The obligations set out in paragraph 8.7 regarding the scanning of microchips felt onerous. It was explained that the guidance has been included off the back of Tuk's law for situations where a vet is asked to euthanise an otherwise healthy animal. In these situations, vets are required to scan the microchip. It was agreed that the wording should clarify that there is only a requirement to scan the microchip in these specific situations by adding back in the wording "in these circumstances".
  - b. Paragraphs 8.6 and 8.7 are repetitive and wordy and should be condensed.
  - c. The guidance should clarify in relation to conscientious objections that animal owners should be redirected to another veterinary surgeon.
  - d. It was agreed that paragraph 8.16 regarding licensed premises should be removed given that few enquiries have been received about it, and if it is read as standalone guidance, it may be confusing.
  - e. It was agreed that paragraph 8.5 regarding considerations to be made when considering euthanasia could also signpost to RCVS Knowledge guidance regarding ethical considerations around quality of life assessments, and including wording similar to the American guidance which states that the quality of life includes that an animal functions well and feels well, and has capacity for natural behaviours that are species specific.

**Action: Senior Standards and Advice Officer**

## [AI 2 \(e\) Five Yearly Review of PSS Standards and Awards - confidential](#)

14. The minutes of this agenda item discussion can be found in the classified appendix at paragraphs 10-14.

## [Matters for report](#)

### [AI 3 \(a\) Disciplinary Committee Report](#)

15. The report was noted.

### AI 3 (b) PSS Report

16. The report was noted.

### AI 4 Risk and equality

17. The Committee did not note anything new in relation to risk and equality.

### AI 5 Any other business and date of next meeting on 3 December 2024

#### APHA – sampling for notifiable diseases

18. The minutes of this agenda item discussion can be found in the classified appendix at paragraphs 15-17.

### Vice Chair vote

19. The Committee was informed that O Cooke and S Bennett had put their names forward for Vice Chair and it was agreed that a poll be circulated to the Committee after the meeting.

**Action: Standards and Advisory Lead**

### Subcommittee reports

20. It was noted that the usual Subcommittee reports were not included this month as there were no updates since the previous month. The Committee was asked to consider how it would like to receive updates from the subcommittees going forward, given that it meets six times a year. For example, would it like to see Subcommittee reports at every other meeting or staggered through meetings.

21. The following was agreed:

- a. An outcome-focused rather than structured approach, with a minimum of an annual report from each Subcommittee and additional reports provided ad hoc as required.
- b. The Chair of each Subcommittee presenting annually with a brief overview of their work, answer questions and ask the Committee for information or resourcing.
- c. It was noted that meetings may need to start with Subcommittee reports where the Chairs are to be presenting for logistical reasons.

**Action: Head of Legal Services (Standards)**

22. The Committee was introduced to B McLachlan as the new Standards and Advice Administrator.

23. The Committee was informed of positive feedback received from a vet regarding the updates to Chapter 10, noting that one veterinary surgeon had called it “an excellent addition to the guidance”.

24. The date of the next meeting on 3 December 2024 was noted.

#### Table of actions - unclassified

<b>Paragraph</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>9</b>	Update LONOs guidance and FAQs	<b>Head of Legal Services (Standards)</b>
<b>13</b>	Implement comments and feedback on Chapter 8	<b>Senior Standards and Advice Officer</b>
<b>19</b>	Create Vice-Chair poll and circulate to Committee	<b>Standards and Advisory Lead</b>
<b>21</b>	Amend Subcommittee reporting process	<b>Head of Legal Services (Standards)</b>