

# Constitution of the Fish Veterinary Society

June 2012

## THE SOCIETY

1. The Society shall be called The Fish Veterinary Society (FVS) and shall be a specialist non- territorial division of the British Veterinary Association (BVA).
2. The purpose of the Society shall be to provide a forum for all Members who have an interest in promoting the health and welfare of aquatic animals.
  1. To support and promote scientific advances in health, welfare and conservation of fish.
  2. To promote the advancement of veterinary knowledge and skill in the maintenance of the health and welfare of aquatic animals.
  3. To foster research into the husbandry, cause and prevention of diseases in, aquatic animals in captive and wild states.
  4. To exchange information and encourage other forms of collaboration between this and other Societies in allied scientific disciplines.
  5. To promote the international exchange of veterinary knowledge of fish through organizing meetings, special interest groups, the circulation of information through various publications, including scientific papers, précis, and abstracts.
  6. In promoting and supporting the interests of our members, and the fish under their care, the FVS is committed to developing and maintaining channels of communication with UK and devolved governments, parliamentarians and the media.
  7. To represent the interests of our members, and the fish under their care, in relevant national, EU and global policy making and legislation
3. The Society shall organise scientific meetings; the Annual General Meeting shall coincide with a scientific meeting. Additional meetings may be arranged if 20% of the voting members request them, or if the Committee considers it appropriate.
4. The Society shall make appropriate use of internet capabilities for communication including organising listservers/web fora for discussion of cases etc. In addition a web site will be provided and developed for dissemination of information.
5. Attendance at scientific meetings shall be un-restricted on payment of the agreed meeting fee. Society sponsors shall have two free tickets per meeting. Committee members and speakers shall receive complimentary meeting attendance.
6. Attendance at Annual General Meetings shall be restricted to Full, Associate and Life Members.

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY

There shall be the following membership categories

7. Full (Voting) Members:
  1. Full membership is open to all qualified veterinary surgeons that are registered with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) or equivalent overseas. All applications must be approved by a majority of the Committee. Where the vote is tied, the President shall have a casting vote. The applicant may be supplied with the result of the vote but not how votes were cast.
8. Associate (Non-Voting) Members
  1. Associate members are welcomed by the Society. This class of membership will include students, fish pathologists, Veterinary Nurses, and interested parties from other disciplines and from countries other than the United Kingdom.
  2. Associate members shall not be eligible to hold office and shall only have voting rights on matters unconnected with British Veterinary Association policy making. They may be co-opted to the committee, without voting rights. The total numbers of associates shall at no time exceed 49% of the total membership.
  3. Associate membership is available free of charge to veterinary students and other bona fide students (eg aquaculture) at the discretion of the Committee and is available at the full rate to fish pathologists, fish health consultants and other suitably qualified individuals holding an appropriate degree.
  4. All applications must be must be approved by a majority of the Committee. Where the vote is tied, the President shall have a casting vote. The applicant may be supplied with the result of the vote but not how votes were cast.
9. Honorary Life Members
  1. A person who is otherwise eligible to be a member of the Society may be proposed and seconded by Full Members and announced as an Honorary Life Member at an Annual General Meeting by a majority of the Committee. Where the vote is tied, the President shall have a casting vote.
  2. An Honorary Life Member will not be required to pay a subscription but will be entitled to vote at any of the Society's meetings provided that they are otherwise eligible for Full Membership.
10. Corporate or Supporting membership
  1. This shall be permitted at the discretion of the Committee. These to be admitted at the prevailing annual subscription. They will have no voting rights.
11. Final decisions regarding eligibility for membership will be at the discretion of the FVS Committee.
12. The above categories may be admitted at the prevailing annual subscription.
13. Members become lapsed if their subscriptions are more than three months overdue, or having been sent two reminders by the Treasurer.

14. Membership of an individual may be terminated by firstly the agreement of a majority of the the Committee (where the vote is tied, the President shall have a casting vote), followed by the agreement of a majority of Voting Members at the next AGM provided that there is a quorum (a quorum shall comprise those present at the meeting who are eligible to vote). Where the vote is tied, the President shall have a casting vote.

## **MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY**

15. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Society shall be held once per calendar year, such meetings to be held within Europe, the venue to be selected by the Committee bearing in mind the wishes of its members. Normally the meeting shall be held linked to the Scientific meeting of the Society.
16. All members shall be given at least three weeks written notice of the time and place of the Annual General Meeting when it is to be held other than linked to the Scientific meeting.
17. The following business shall be transacted at the Annual General Meeting:
  1. Receive Officers reports
  2. Report of the President
  3. Report from the Secretary
  4. Receive the Treasurer's report and accounts and if thought fit, approve the accounts
  5. Confirm the membership subscription rate for the following year.
  6. Election of Committee Members for the ensuing period as set out in below.
  7. Review and update of regulatory or legislative matters as appropriate where not dealt with elsewhere
18. Only Full Members (paid up) shall be eligible to vote and a quorum shall comprise of a minimum of ten Full Members present at the meeting.
19. A motion would be passed if the majority of the votes cast are for the motion. On the request of 33% or more of the members present a vote on any subject shall be held by secret ballot. In such a case the votes shall be scrutinised by two Full Members together, one of whom at least shall not be a member of the Committee.
20. Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM's) may be called at the discretion of the Committee, or by the President at the written request of not less than five Full members of the Society, specifying the business for which the meeting is called. No business shall be transacted at an Extraordinary General Meeting, other than that for which the meeting is called. The venue to be selected by the Committee in consultation with those requesting the meeting. The Secretary shall be obliged to call such a meeting within six weeks and shall give all members three weeks' notice of the date, place and reason for the meeting.
21. Eligibility for attendance at a EGM shall be as for the Annual General Meeting
22. Only Full Members (paid up) shall be eligible to vote and a quorum shall comprise those present at the meeting who are eligible to vote. Proposals for alterations in the rules of the Society must be notified in writing to the

Honorary Secretary twenty eight days before a General Meeting (AGM or EGM). If agreed at an EGM, shall be subject to ratification at the next Annual General Meeting.

23. The Society shall organise Scientific Meetings. Where possible two days of meetings will be organised per year, either as a single meeting, or two one day meetings.

## OFFICERS

24. The business of the Society shall be conducted on behalf of its members by the Committee which shall be answerable to the Membership.
25. A Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting from among Full Members of the Society as follows:
26. Officers shall be:
  1. President,
  2. Senior Vice-President,
  3. Junior Vice-President,
  4. Secretary,
  5. Treasurer / Membership Secretary,
  6. Publications Officer.

Contact details of Committee members to be published on the web site.

27. Committee Members shall be elected for two years at the Annual General Meeting by all those present who are Full Members. Serving periods may be modified by the Committee in the interests of the Society, and shall be notified to the next AGM. Incumbent Secretary, Treasurer and Publications Officer may continue to serve without a time limit if willing and no nominations are received.
28. Contested elections for these positions will be decided by a simple majority of those eligible to vote at an AGM.
29. The Committee shall meet (in person or via conference call) at least twice per year and be responsible for the routine administration of the Society including admission of members and setting of subscriptions. The responsibility of the individual Committee Members shall be as follows:
  1. The President – who shall preside at all meetings, or shall nominate an alternative Committee Member if he or she is unable to attend.
  2. The Junior Vice-President – who shall provide support for the President and shall act as stand-in when required.
  3. The Secretary- who shall keep the minutes of meetings, and be responsible for the safe custody of the Society's records. The Secretary will present a report at the Annual General Meeting and be responsible for the organisation of meetings including Scientific meetings.
  4. The Treasurer / Membership Secretary, – who shall maintain a register of members, notify members of subscriptions due, receive all monies on behalf of the Society, pay any expenses authorised by the Committee, and keep appropriate accounts. Accounts will be made up to 31st December each year and examined by an FVS

member who is not a Committee Member. Accounts to be then agreed as accurate by the Committee and signed off by the Treasurer and President. The accounts will be submitted for approval to the Annual General Meeting each year.

5. The Publications Officer- who shall be Editor of the Fish Veterinary Journal and be responsible for organising the publication of any other literature on behalf of the Society.
30. The Committee shall have the authority to co-opt Members to the Committee for their expertise, special knowledge etc related to a single issue or ongoing work.
31. If any Officer or Committee Member prematurely vacates office, the Committee has the authority to co-opt a replacement until an election can be held to fill the vacancy at the following AGM.

## **EXPENSES**

32. Committee members shall be entitled to reclaim reasonable expenses when these are incurred on the business of the Society. Guidelines for reclaiming expenses are provided in the annex to the Constitution. For interpretation when necessary the Committee will advise the Treasurer of appropriateness of claims.
33. The Committee shall have the discretion to make such payments as are deemed necessary to the smooth operation of the society. Sourcing expert web management advice, contribution towards Secretarial time etc. These shall all be open to Members scrutiny at the AGM.

## **OTHER (CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES)**

34. Notice of any proposed alteration or amendment to the Constitution shall be submitted to the Secretary 28 days before an AGM. Such proposals shall be included on the Agenda for the AGM and circulated to members via the email distribution system and the website at least 14 days before the said meeting.
35. Proposals for major changes to the Constitution shall be submitted to an Annual General Meeting for discussion. Such proposed alteration or amendments shall be included on the Agenda for that AGM. Comments shall be sought from attending members and all members invited to comment by email. Comments shall be made to the Secretary and a proposed final submission shall be offered to the next AGM.
36. In the best interests of the Society discussion on changes shall be 'in the open' via the website forum. Members are expected to raise substantive changes there for all members to access, rather than at an AGM for a small group.
37. Nothing in these rules shall over-ride or run counter to the Memoranda, Articles or Bylaws of the British Veterinary Association.

## **DISSOLUTION**

38. If, upon the winding up or dissolution of the Society there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Society, but shall be transferred either to some charitable institution or institutions having objects considered appropriate by the Society. Such institution or institutions to be determined by the members of the Society at or before the time of dissolution.