

## Meeting Procedure Rules 2021

### Citation

1. These rules may be cited as the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Meeting Procedure Rules 2021.

### Application and interpretation

2. These rules apply, except where otherwise stated, to general meetings and meetings of the Council and of committees, sub-committees, boards and other bodies transacting College business. The person chairing a meeting of a sub-committee, board or other body shall have discretion to modify the rules in their application to that meeting.
3. In these rules, "member", otherwise than in the expression "Council member", means a person participating in, or who is to participate in, any meeting to which these rules apply.

### Voting

4. All questions relating to any business to be transacted at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of the members voting. The person chairing a meeting shall have a casting vote in addition to that person's original vote, whether or not the original vote has been used.
5. Immediately before a question is put to a meeting the text of the question to be voted upon shall be read out, unless it has been made available in writing to those who are to vote.
6. In the case of Council meetings, voting in relation to general Council business will ordinarily be carried out via electronic means (for example via Boardpacks), by Council members present at the time. Voting will be one vote per person (except for the Chair where necessary – see paragraph 4). Voting will therefore ordinarily be by means of 'open' ballot. This means that whether a member has voted for / against or has abstained in any given motion will be collated following the meeting and such information held for a period of 28 days after the approval and publication of the minutes of Council meetings, after which period it will be destroyed. During the meeting, however, only the numbers voting will be disclosed. The Chair, at their discretion, may modify the Rules for voting / recording and provide for voting by an alternative means e.g. show of hands either in person or remotely / email confirmation, etc. This could apply, for example, in the event of malfunction of the electronic system and / or its non-availability.
7. For the purposes of elections to the offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Chairs of standing committees, voting will be by secret electronic ballot. The Chair has no casting vote in relation to these elections. The Chair, at their discretion, may modify the Rules for voting / recording and provide for voting by an alternative means e.g. show of hands either in person or remotely / email confirmation, etc. This could apply, for example, in the event of malfunction of the electronic system and / or its non-availability.

8. Voting in the case of other committees, and sub-groups, should be by electronic means (for example via Boardpacks) or at the Chair's discretion a show of hands either in person or remotely / by email.

#### **Remote participation in meetings**

9. Some or all of the members of Council, any committee, sub-committee or working party may take part in a meeting by means of video-conferencing as a standard method of participation. However, in exceptional circumstances, participants may attend via telephone conferencing, at the discretion of the person chairing the meeting. Such participants shall count as present for the purpose of any vote.

#### **Minutes**

10. Minutes shall be taken of every meeting of the Council and of its committees and sub-committees.

#### **Chairing of general meetings**

11. The President shall take the chair, but in the President's absence the chair shall be taken by whichever of the Vice-Presidents first took office as a Vice-President or President. If the President and the Vice-Presidents are not present the members present shall choose one of their number to take the chair.

#### **Convening of Council meetings**

12. The meetings of the Council shall be convened by the Secretary or Registrar. At least ten days' notice shall be given of every Council meeting, unless the President directs that a shorter period is permissible.

#### **Quorum for Council meetings**

13. The quorum of the Council shall be nine members present.

#### **Business of Council meetings**

14. The agenda for a meeting shall state clearly the business to be transacted.
15. A Council member who wishes to raise any subject for discussion or move a motion at any Council meeting shall, as soon as possible after receipt of the notice of the meeting, and in any case not later than three days before the date of the meeting, give notice of it to the Secretary or Registrar. That subject or motion shall then be added to the agenda of the meeting; except that no motion which in the opinion of the person chairing the meeting is the same in substance as a motion previously rejected by the Council shall be moved within six months of the date of the meeting at which it was rejected, except with the agreement of the Council.
16. No business shall be transacted other than that stated on the agenda for the meeting, except with the leave of the Council as a matter of urgency.

#### **Adjournment of Council meetings**

17. If no quorum is present within fifteen minutes of the time fixed for the commencement of a Council meeting, or the meeting ceases to be quorate during its course, it shall stand adjourned to a date and time to be fixed by the Chair, with the agreement of the members present.

18. Each meeting of the Council shall have power to adjourn to a future date and time, by agreement of the members present.
19. No business shall be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than that left unfinished at the adjournment of the immediately preceding session of the meeting, with the exception of urgent business designated as such by the President, and of which notice shall have been given to each Council member.

#### **Chairing of Council meetings**

20. The chair at Council meetings shall be taken by the President, but in the President's absence the chair shall be taken by whichever of the Vice-Presidents first took office as a Vice-President or President. If the President and the Vice-Presidents are not present, the members present shall choose one of their number to take the chair.

#### **Convening of committee meetings**

21. At least ten days' notice shall be given of every committee meeting, unless the Chair of the committee directs that a shorter period is permissible. The agenda for the meeting shall state clearly the business to be transacted.

#### **Quorum for committee meetings**

22. The quorum for a meeting of a committee shall be a majority of voting members of the committee, unless otherwise specified for any particular committee.

#### **Chairing of committee meetings**

23. The Chair of a committee shall take the chair at every meeting of a committee if present. If the Chair of the committee is not present, the Vice-Chair of the committee shall take the chair. If neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair of the committee is present, the members present shall choose one of their number to take the chair.

#### **Rules of debate**

24. The rules of the debate shall be as follows, but subject to the discretion of the person chairing any meeting to regulate the proceedings as they think fit.
25. No motion shall be discussed before it has been seconded, and no member shall speak more than once to any motion, except with the leave of the Chair. The seconder of a motion may choose not to speak until later in the debate. The mover of the motion shall have the last word in the debate, but shall only answer points made by previous speakers and shall not introduce new material in the debate. No motion may be withdrawn, except by leave of the Chair. The withdrawal of a motion shall not preclude it from being moved on a later occasion.
26. All speeches shall be directed to the Chair. No speech shall last for more than five minutes, except with the leave of the Chair.
27. Amendments to motions must be relevant to the motion and within the scope of the motion. An amendment shall be for one of the following purposes:

- to omit words;
- to omit words and insert or add others in substitution;
- to insert or add words;
- in the case of a meeting of the Council, that the subject-matter of the motion be referred to a committee.

28. No amendment shall be discussed before it has been seconded. Only one amendment may be discussed at any one time, unless the Chair considers that this will assist the meeting. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall then become the substantive motion before the meeting, and may be further amended. The mover of an amendment shall have no right of reply to the debate on that amendment, but the mover of the original motion shall have the right of reply to the debate on the amendment. The seconder of an amendment may choose not to speak until a later stage in the debate on the amendment, but shall have no right of reply to the debate on the amendment.

29. A member who has not spoken in the debate may move the closure of the debate by moving either that the question be now put, or that the meeting do proceed to the next business.

30. A motion to close the debate must be seconded. Neither the proposer nor seconder of a closure motion shall speak to the closure motion and there shall be no debate on it. If a proposal that "the question be now put" is carried, the question before the meeting shall then be put to the meeting forthwith, save that the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply to the debate before the question is put. If it is agreed to proceed to the next business the original debate shall be closed without any question being put.

31. A member may raise a point of order at any time during the meeting and shall be heard forthwith. A member wishing to raise a point of explanation in relation to a previous speech by that member in the debate shall raise it as a point of order. The ruling of the Chair on a point of order shall be conclusive and shall not be questioned in any way, except by way of substantive motion.

Approved by Council 9 July 2021