



Rules of the Association

Submitted for approval by BSAVA Board on 20th May 2026.

BSAVA is a Company Limited by Guarantee No. 02837793 and is also a registered Charity No. 1024811.

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Membership.....	4
3. Regions and Committees	9
4. Council and Council Representatives	12
5. General Meetings – Procedures & Practicalities	16
6. Board & Officers – Operational Procedures.....	20
7. Committees and Working Groups	24
8. Conflicts of Interest & Conduct in Decision Making	28
9. Communications and Technology Use	31
10. Elections and Voting Processes (Beyond Legal Requirements)	34
11. Finance Related Operational Rules	36
12. Volunteer Management Framework.....	38
13. Document Control.....	41
Appendices	43
Appendix 1 - Membership Categories	43
Appendix 2 – BSAVA Code of Conduct	45
Appendix 3 – The Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles)	46
Appendix 4 – BSAVA Scheme of Delegation of Board Authority	47

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Rule Book

These Rules provide the operational framework for the day-to-day governance and management of the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (“BSAVA” or “the Association”). They sit beneath, and are subordinate to, the Articles of Association, providing practical detail on procedures, conduct, membership, and internal operations in support of the Association’s charitable objects.

The Rules are intended to ensure clarity, consistency, and accountability in how the Association functions, and to support Trustees, Directors, Council, volunteers, members, and staff in understanding the processes that guide BSAVA’s work.

1.2 Relationship to the Articles of Association

In accordance with Article 48.5, these Rules must not conflict with the Articles of Association. Where any inconsistency arises, the Articles take precedence. Any amendments to the Articles themselves require approval at a General Meeting of the Association.

1.3 Authority to Create Rules

Under Article 48.1, the Board of Trustees (“the Board”) may make such reasonable and proper Rules or byelaws as it considers necessary or expedient for the proper conduct and management of the Association. The Rules therefore derive their authority from the Articles and remain subject to the overarching governance framework established by them.

1.4 Amendment of Rules

a. By the Board:

The Board may add to, amend, or revoke these Rules in accordance with Article 48.1, where it considers such changes necessary for effective governance or operational clarity.

b. By Members in General Meeting:

Under Article 48.3, members in a General Meeting (including the Annual General Meeting) may alter, add to, or repeal any Rule by passing an appropriate resolution with the required notice.

c. Notification to Members:

Although not required for validity, the Association will notify members of significant changes to the Rules and maintain an up-to-date version on the BSAVA website. This may be done at the next Annual General Meeting or General Meeting, whichever is sooner.

1.5 Responsibility for the Rules

Until such time as amendments are made by a General Meeting, the Board retains full responsibility for maintaining, updating, and interpreting these Rules, ensuring they remain aligned with the Articles and the strategic needs of the Association.

1.6 Language

The language of all Rules, policies, official correspondence, negotiations, examinations, and all other Association business shall be English.

2. Membership

2.1 Admission of Members

2.1.1 Application Process

Individuals or organisations seeking membership must apply using the form or digital process prescribed by the Board. Applicants must provide accurate personal and professional details as required, including contact information sufficient for inclusion in the statutory register of members. By applying, applicants agree to be bound by the Articles of Association, these Rules, and all BSAVA policies applicable to members.

2.1.2 Eligibility and Required Qualifications

Eligibility criteria for each class of membership shall be published by the Board and may be amended from time to time. Where relevant, applicants for voting (guarantor) membership must meet any professional requirements determined by the Board, which may include eligibility for registration with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons or equivalent bodies. All applicants must demonstrate good moral and ethical standing.

2.1.3 Approval Process

All applications for membership are subject to approval. The Association may refuse an application where it considers such refusal to be in the best interests of the Association. Admission takes effect once approved and the required subscription payment has been received where applicable.

2.2 Membership Categories

2.2.1 Classes of Membership

The Board may establish classes of membership with differing rights and obligations, which shall be recorded in the register of members and published in accordance with the Rules. Categories may include but are not limited to:

Voting (Guarantor) Members

All members who are guarantors of the Association shall have a vote at any General Meeting based on one member one vote. To qualify for a voting membership, candidates for membership shall meet the following criteria:

- a) Have a good moral and ethical standing
- b) Be licensed, or be eligible to be licensed, to practice veterinary medicine and surgery in the United Kingdom or the equivalent organisation within their own country, unless specifically and individually relieved of this obligation by Board, or be named on the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeon's Register of Veterinary Nurses.

Only members who are guarantors of the Association can vote at a General Meeting. The subcategories of voting members are defined in Appendix 1.

Guarantor members promise to contribute a sum specified in The Articles of Association (currently £1), if the charity is dissolved, towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of the charity.

Non-Voting Members

All members who are not guarantors of the association shall not have a vote at any General Meeting. To qualify for non-guarantor membership, candidates shall meet the following criteria:

- a) Have a good moral and ethical standing
- b) Meet the eligibility criteria listed in Appendix 1. Non-guarantor members cannot vote at a General Meeting. Non-guarantor members can hold most positions within the Association, except Director.

Honorary and Honorary Associate Members

The Association may confer Honorary Member status on individuals who qualify for membership by guarantee and who, in the opinion of Board, have made exceptional contributions to small animal veterinary care or research in its widest context. Honorary Members shall have none of the liabilities of members save for those required by the Companies Act and shall not be entitled to vote unless they also qualify as members by guarantee. They shall have such other privileges as conferred on them by Board and recorded in Appendix 1. To become an Honorary Member a person must be nominated by 2 members by guarantee and be elected with a two-thirds majority at a quorate Board meeting.

Life and Life Associate Members

The Association may confer Life Member status to members (by guarantee) or former members (by guarantee) of the Association who have made exceptional contributions to the Association. Life Members shall have none of the liabilities of members save for those required by the Companies Act and shall not be entitled to vote unless they also qualify as voting/guarantor members. They shall have such other privileges as conferred on them by Board and recorded in Appendix 1. To become a Life Member a person must be nominated by 2 full members and be elected with a two-thirds majority at a quorate Board meeting.

Past Presidents from January 1st following their 60th birthday shall be granted life membership.

Patrons

Board shall have the power from time to time to invite such persons or persons as it shall think fit to be the Patron or Patrons of the company. Such person or persons shall not in that capacity be a Board member. Patrons shall have none of the liabilities of members save that imposed on members by the Companies Act and shall not be entitled to vote in a General Meeting unless they are also voting/guarantor members.

The Board may amend, add or withdraw categories as necessary, providing reasonable notice to members.

2.2.2 Rights and Privileges

Voting rights attach only to members who are guarantors of the Association as recorded on admission. All members shall be entitled to access member benefits and services specific to their

category as determined by the Board. Honorary, Life, and Patron categories carry privileges as conferred by the Board but no voting rights unless they also qualify as guarantor members.

2.2.3 Obligations of Members

All members, regardless of category, must uphold the objects of the Association and act in a manner that supports its reputation and effective operation. Members must comply with these Rules, the Articles, and the Code of Conduct (Appendix 2). Members must notify the Association of any changes to contact details required for statutory records.

2.2.4 Review of Categories

The Board shall periodically review membership categories and their associated rights, obligations, and eligibility criteria to ensure alignment with the Association's strategic objectives. Revised criteria will take effect following notification to members.

2.3 Membership Fees

2.3.1 Entrance and Subscription Fees

Entrance fees and annual subscription rates shall be set by the Board and published annually. Notice of any proposed change to subscription levels will be provided to members at least one month prior to implementation, consistent with established practice.

2.3.2 Payment Terms

Annual subscriptions become due immediately on joining and thereafter on the annual renewal date. Payment may be made through any method approved by the Board.

2.3.3 Concessionary Rates

The Board may from time to time offer concessionary, reduced, or hardship subscription rates. Eligibility criteria for such reductions shall be published and may be updated from time to time.

2.3.4 Non-Payment Procedures

Members whose subscription remains unpaid after the due date will receive at least one written reminder. If payment is not received within the timeframe determined by the Board, membership may be terminated under the provisions of the Articles ("any sum due... is not paid in full within such period as the Board may determine"). Members removed for non-payment may reapply at any time.

2.4 Termination of Membership – Operational Steps

2.4.1 Grounds for Termination

Membership may be terminated in accordance with the Articles where:

- a. The member resigns by written notice;
- b. Any sum due from the member is unpaid within the period determined by the Board;
- c. The Board resolves that continued membership is not in the best interests of the Association.

2.4.2 Operational Process

a. Non-Payment:

- Reminder notices shall be issued in accordance with Section 2.3.4
- If fees remain unpaid after the final deadline, the member will be notified of removal from membership

b. Behaviour or Conduct Concerns:

- Concerns may be raised under the Member Conduct procedure (Section 2.5)
- If the Board proposes termination under the Articles, the member will receive at least 21 days' written notice of the Board meeting and the reasons for the proposed termination

c. Consideration by the Board:

- The member may submit written representations for consideration
- The member may not attend the meeting at which termination is decided

2.4.3 Appeal Process

Following a Board decision to terminate membership, the member will be informed in writing within 21 days. Appeals may be made by written submission to a Board or Council meeting (as determined by the Articles). The decision of that meeting shall be final.

2.5 Member Conduct

2.5.1 Code of Conduct

The Board shall maintain a Code of Conduct (Appendix 2) outlining expected standards of professional behaviour, integrity, and respect. Compliance is a condition of membership.

2.5.2 Expectations of Behaviour

- Members must treat fellow members, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders with courtesy, professionalism, and respect
- Members must not act in a manner that could reasonably be expected to damage the reputation of the Association
- Members representing BSAVA must conduct themselves to the highest professional standards

2.5.3 Complaints Procedure

Concerns regarding member conduct may be reported through the Association's complaints process available on the Contact us page on www.bsava.com. Complaints will be handled confidentially and fairly, following procedures approved by the Board. Where necessary, the Association may seek external professional or legal advice.

2.5.4 Sanctions

The Board may impose sanctions proportionate to the severity of the issue, including:

- Formal advice or warnings

- Suspension of specific privileges
- Temporary suspension of membership
- Recommendation for termination of membership under the Articles

2.5.5 Appeals

Members may appeal sanctions through the written appeals process described in Section 2.4.3, unless the Articles specify otherwise.

3. Regions and Committees

3.1 Purpose and Status of Regions and Member Groups

Under the Articles, Regions and approved member groups form the structure through which members are represented on Council.

- A Region is defined in the Articles as “one of the geographical regions into which the Board may from time to time divide the United Kingdom for administrative purposes.”
- Council Representatives are “representatives nominated and elected by the members of each Region and other member groups as defined by the Council from time to time.”

Regions and member groups therefore act as:

- Operational units supporting local engagement and activities
- Electoral constituencies for representation on Council

This section provides the Rules necessary for operational clarity under Article 48.

3.2 Establishment, Structure and Boundaries of Regions

The Board holds authority to define the number of Regions and their geographical boundaries, consistent with the Articles’ definition of “Region”. The Board may periodically review and amend Region boundaries to reflect membership distribution, strategic needs, or operational requirements. Any changes to Regions shall be notified to Council and subsequently to members.

The Board may also approve the creation of special member groups where these support representation or engagement (e.g. thematic groups, student bodies).

3.3 Role and Responsibilities of Regional Committees

While the Articles do not prescribe internal regional structures, the Rules may define them under Article 48.1 to support good governance.

Each Region may establish a Regional Committee responsible for:

- Organising local CPD and member engagement activity
- Acting as a channel for two-way communication between BSAVA and members within the Region
- Supporting the election of the Region’s Council Representative(s)
- Ensuring that regional activity aligns with BSAVA policies, brand standards, and governance expectations
- Maintaining appropriate records of meetings and financial activity where applicable

3.4 Election and Appointment of Regional Representatives

3.4.1 Council Representatives

In accordance with the Articles:

- Council Representatives must be elected by the members of the Region or member group they represent
- Elections must be held in a manner that ensures fairness, transparency, and accessibility for eligible voting members

Rules governing the election are as follows:

- Each Region shall elect at least one Council Representative at an Annual Regional Meeting (ARM), or other meeting convened for the purpose
- Only members eligible to vote under the Articles (guarantor members) and present at the meeting may vote
- The elected individual must meet the eligibility requirements for Council Representatives (i.e., be a voting member of the Association)
- Nominations and elections shall follow procedures issued by the Volunteer Development Committee to ensure consistency and compliance

These provisions reflect the Articles' requirements for election and representation.

3.4.2 Regional Committee Officers

To support regional functioning, Regions may elect:

- a Regional Chair
- a Regional Secretary
- a Regional Treasurer

Rules for their election:

Officers are elected at the Region's ARM by majority vote of voting members present. Results must be reported to the Association, the Volunteer Development Committee (VDC) may review nominations for compliance with BSAVA policies where appropriate.

3.5 Meetings, Reporting and Communications

3.5.1 Meetings

Regional Committees shall meet as needed to carry out their responsibilities effectively. The ARM shall be held annually to receive reports and conduct elections. Meetings may be held in person or by electronic means consistent with BSAVA policies.

3.5.2 Reporting

Regional Committees shall:

- Provide updates and issues of regional relevance to Council via the Council Representative
- Report to the CEO or Volunteers Manager where required for governance or volunteer matters
- Ensure timely communication of CPD and engagement activities to members

3.5.3 Communication Standards

All regional communications must:

- Align with BSAVA brand guidelines and social media policy
- Use approved channels and formats
- Provide timely and accurate information to members

3.6 Creation or Closure of Regions or Member Groups

The Board may create, merge, or dissolve Regions in accordance with its authority to define the UK's administrative division for Association purposes. Council may define, amend, or dissolve additional member groups entitled to elect Council Representatives, as permitted by the Articles' definition of Council Representatives.

Any creation or closure of a Region or member group must be communicated promptly to affected members. Where closure affects the right to elect a Council Representative, an alternative arrangement for representation must be provided to maintain compliance with the Articles.

4. Council and Council Representatives

4.1 Purpose and Status of Council

Council is the Association's advisory body, established under the Articles as a forum through which members' views are brought to the Board and through which certain advisory functions are exercised. The Articles provide for Council's composition but delegate responsibility for its detailed operation to the Rules.

Council operates to:

- Represent the perspectives, experiences, and priorities of members, Regions, and relevant communities across the profession;
- Provide where appropriate member insight, feedback, and constructive challenge to support the Association's strategic direction, activities, and member offer;
- Contribute member and professional perspectives on issues, initiatives, and topics affecting members and the wider profession

4.2 Eligibility for Council Membership

Eligibility is determined in alignment with the Articles' definitions:

4.2.1 Council Representatives

A Council Representative must:

- Be a member of the Association;
- Be elected by the Region or member group they represent;
- Meet any additional eligibility requirements determined under these Rules.

4.2.2 Other Members of Council

Council also includes:

- A minimum of two Past Presidents;
- Chairs of Council established committees (as determined by Council);
- An independent Chair of Council (as defined in the Articles).

The composition of Council shall reflect the representative needs of the Association and may be updated from time to time in accordance with the Articles and Rules. Individuals must meet eligibility requirements defined by the Rules and must be members unless the Articles specifically allow otherwise.

4.3 Nomination and Election of Council Representatives

The Articles specify that Council Representatives are "nominated and elected by the members of each Region and other member groups as defined by the Council from time to time."

These Rules establish the procedures for that process.

4.3.1 Nomination

Nominations for Council Representative must be made by an eligible voting member of the relevant Region or group. Nominees must confirm willingness to serve and must meet the eligibility criteria in Section 4.2. Nominations shall be submitted according to the timetable set by the Region or member group.

4.3.2 Election

Elections for Council shall occur at an Annual Regional Meeting (ARM) or equivalent meeting of member groups by simple majority vote of those present. Only voting members (members by guarantee) present at the meeting may vote. The election result shall be recorded and communicated to the Association.

4.3.3 Confirmation

The Volunteer Development Committee (VDC) may review nominations and election outcomes for compliance with BSAVA policies and may request re-elections where necessary to protect the interests of the Association.

4.4 Terms of Office

Council Representatives serve a three-year term, renewable by re-election. The maximum number of consecutive terms a Representative may serve is two, after which a one-year break is required. Terms of office for Past Presidents, Chairs of committees, and the Chair of Council shall follow periods established by Council, provided they do not conflict with Articles or charity law. Vacancies occurring midterm may be filled through a byelection or appointment by the Region until the next scheduled ARM.

4.5 Responsibilities and Expectations of Council Members

Council members are expected to:

- Act in the interests of the Association and its charitable objects;
- Engage actively with members in their Region or group to bring forward member perspectives, experiences, and emerging issues relevant to the profession;
- Attend Council meetings regularly and engage constructively and professionally in Council activities and discussions;
- Comply with Association policies, including those relating to conduct, confidentiality, and conflicts of interest;
- Represent BSAVA professionally when acting in their role.

4.6 Council Meetings

Council shall meet at intervals determined by the Association to support member representation, organisational insight, and engagement on matters relevant to the Association and the wider profession.

Formats for meetings, along with the agenda and topics for discussion shall be determined by the Chair of Council working with Council members, the Board and Executive Leadership Team. As a representative advisory council, operational and business plan detail shall be shared at strategic intervals and not as a standing agenda item.

Meetings shall normally include members of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and may also include Board members, volunteers, staff, advisers, or external contributors where appropriate.

Council meetings and engagement activities are intended to support representation, engagement, discussion, and organisational learning and are not formal decision-making meetings of the Association unless expressly stated otherwise in the Articles or Rules.

Meetings may be held:

- In person,
- Electronically, or
- In hybrid format,

provided that all participants are able to communicate effectively throughout the meeting, consistent with the Articles' provisions for electronic meetings.

4.6.1 Chairing

Council meetings are chaired by the Chair of Council, an independent individual as defined in the Articles. In the absence of the Chair, Council shall appoint a temporary chair for that meeting.

4.7 Quorum

No quorum requirement shall apply to Council meetings unless Council is exercising a function expressly delegated under the Articles or Rules requiring a formal decision. As the Articles do not define quorum for Council, these Rules establish that a Council meeting requiring quoracy is quorate when at least two thirds (66%) of voting Council members are present in person or electronically.

If a meeting is not quorate:

- It may proceed for discussion only;
- No decisions may be made;
- The Chair shall schedule a reconvened meeting.

4.8 Voting Procedures

Each Council member has one vote; decisions are made by simple majority unless the Articles or these Rules specify otherwise. The Chair of Council does not vote except where a casting vote is required to break a tie. Proxy voting is allowed only where the Rules expressly permit it and only by another eligible member from the same Region or member group. Voting may be conducted electronically if secure and auditable.

4.9 Reporting Lines

4.9.1 Reporting to the Board

Council shall:

- Provide feedback and recommendations to the Board on matters affecting members;
- Report concerns or matters requiring Board attention through the Chair of Council.

4.9.2 Reporting to the Membership

Council shall:

- Communicate key outcomes and decisions to members through approved Association communication channels;
- Ensure Regions and member groups receive timely updates;
- Support transparency by sharing summaries of Council activities where appropriate, subject to confidentiality.

5. General Meetings – Procedures & Practicalities

The Articles of Association (Articles 10–20) set out the legal framework for convening, holding, and conducting General Meetings, including Annual General Meetings (AGMs), other General Meetings, notice requirements, voting rights, electronic and hybrid formats, proxies, and polls.

These Rules provide operational detail to ensure that General Meetings are conducted efficiently, transparently, and in accordance with the Articles.

5.1 Annual Cycle and Planning

An Annual General Meeting shall be held once in every calendar year, in accordance with the Articles, and normally planned on a repeating annual cycle to allow members predictable notice. The Board will prepare an annual timetable covering:

- Preparation and approval of the Annual Report and Accounts
- Appointment of auditors
- Officer and Director nominations requiring member approval
- Scheduling and notice periods for the AGM

The Association shall aim to publish a provisional AGM date at least six months in advance, with formal notice issued in accordance with Article mandated notice periods.

5.2 Meeting Format (In Person, Hybrid or Online)

The Articles empower the Board to choose the format of any General Meeting, including electronic or hybrid meetings.

Under these Rules:

The notice of meeting must clearly state the meeting format, including:

- Physical venue (if applicable)
- Electronic platform(s) to be used
- Access instructions for members
- Arrangements for those attending electronically to speak and vote

Hybrid or electronic meetings must:

- Allow real-time two-way communication
- Ensure that all members attending electronically can hear, speak, and vote where entitled
- Use secure systems ensuring only eligible members participate

The Association may change the meeting format if necessary (e.g., due to venue issues or technology outages), provided that members are informed as soon as possible and the Articles' notice provisions are respected.

5.3 Registration and Verification

To ensure integrity and accurate voting:

- Members must register attendance through the process specified in the meeting notice
- Verification of identity and membership status may require:
 - Member number
 - Email address linked to the membership record
 - Photo ID for physical entry
 - Authentication through a secure digital platform
- Only members eligible to vote (i.e., guarantor members) will be given voting credentials, whether physical (e.g., voting cards) or digital (e.g., unique links or QR codes). Directors who are not guarantor members will not be eligible to vote
- Guests, observers, and staff may attend only where invited by the Board or as specified in the notice and may not vote

5.4 Speaking Rights and Order of Business

The Chair of the meeting shall manage debate and ensure orderly participation. Members wishing to speak may do so:

- By raising a hand (physical or digital)
- By submitting a request through the platform's Q&A function

The Chair may limit speaking time to ensure fairness and efficient conduct of business. The standard order of business at an AGM normally includes:

- Welcome and apologies
- Minutes of previous meeting
- Presentation of Annual Report and Accounts
- Appointment of auditors
- Elections/appointments required by the Articles
- Resolutions
- Member questions

The Chair may alter the order of business where helpful, provided all Article required actions are completed.

5.5 Proxy Submission – Practical Guidance

The Articles provide the legal framework for proxy appointment. These Rules specify operational steps:

Proxy notices must be submitted using the Association's approved form and delivered by the method stated in the meeting notice. Proxy forms must be received by the Association by the deadline set out in the notice (normally 48 hours before the meeting, unless the Articles specify otherwise). Members appointing a proxy must ensure:

- Proxy details are completed clearly and accurately
- Instructions on how to vote on specific resolutions are included if desired

The Association will acknowledge receipt of proxies where technologically feasible. Proxy holders attending electronically must verify their identity and will be issued digital voting credentials corresponding to the appointing member's entitlement.

5.6 Polling Arrangements and Technology Protocols

The Articles detail the legal basis for polls, demands for polls, and how they are taken.

Under these Rules:

5.6.1 Polling Process

Polls may be taken:

- Electronically
- Using paper ballots
- Through a certified secure hybrid system

Where an electronic system is used, the platform must:

- Ensure anonymity of votes
- Issue one vote per entitled member or proxy
- Allow clear results to be produced and auditable

Scrutineers may be appointed by the Chair to oversee the process.

5.6.2 Technology Requirements

Electronic platforms must support:

- Realtime voting
- Secure member authentication
- Recording of quorum
- Reliable connectivity

If electronic voting fails for a significant number of members, the Chair may:

- Suspend the meeting
- Switch to an alternative voting method

- Adjourn to a later date under Article compliant notice procedures

5.6.3 Results

The result of a poll is deemed to be the resolution of the meeting. Results shall be announced by the Chair during the meeting or, for complex polls, communicated in writing shortly after.

5.7 Minutes and Post Meeting Reporting

Minutes of General Meetings shall be prepared by an appointed minute taker and approved by the Chair. Minutes must record:

- Attendance (or quorum confirmation)
- Resolutions and voting outcomes
- Key decisions and matters raised

Minutes shall be made accessible to members via the Association's secure communications channels once approved. Outcomes affecting members (e.g., subscription changes, elections) shall be communicated promptly.

6. Board & Officers – Operational Procedures

6.1 Purpose of this Section

Articles 23–33 set out the legal composition, powers, appointment mechanisms, and proceedings of the Board. These Rules provide *operational detail* to support the effective functioning of the Board and its Officers, including expectations for transitions, induction, training, and the support of volunteer trustees.

Trustees of the BSAVA are also directors of the association and should ensure that they are aware of the duties and responsibilities of both roles.

6.2 Role Descriptions for Officers

The Articles define four Officers of the Association:

- Junior Vice President
- Vice President
- President
- Senior Vice President

These Rules clarify the operational responsibilities of each Officer.

6.2.1 President

The President acts as the lead ambassador of the Association, providing strategic leadership in partnership with the CEO and other Officers. They represent the Association to external bodies on behalf of the Board and work to ensure continuity by supporting the Vice President and Junior Vice President.

6.2.2 Vice President

The Vice President supports the President by sharing leadership duties as delegated, undertaking representational duties where the President is unavailable. They prepare for progression to the presidency through active engagement in Board work.

6.2.3 Junior Vice President

The Junior Vice President supports the President and Vice President through delegated responsibilities. They undertake induction activities to prepare for future Officer roles and participate actively in Board strategy and committee oversight.

6.2.4 Senior Vice President

The Senior Vice President provides continuity and institutional memory following their presidency. They advise the Officer team and Board based on prior leadership experience, and support external and internal engagements as requested by the President.

6.3 Handover and Succession Processes

6.3.1 Officer Handover

Each Officer shall observe 1-2 Board meetings ahead of assuming their Trustee role. Where necessary Officers shall prepare a structured handover document outlining ongoing priorities, key stakeholders, current commitments, and strategic issues.

6.3.2 Presidential Progression

As set out within the Articles:

Junior Vice President → Vice President → President → Senior Vice President

6.3.3 Emergency or Unexpected Transitions

If an Officer is unable to continue in post before completing their term, the Board will follow Articles 27–28 in filling the vacancy. These Rules provide that:

- The next Officer in the succession line will assume duties where appropriate
- A temporary appointment may be made by the Board
- A permanent appointment must be confirmed at the next General Meeting as required by the Articles

6.4 Responsibilities of Member and Non-Member Trustees

Articles allow the Board to appoint up to four Member Trustees and up to three Non-Member Trustees.

Non-Member Trustees shall:

- Provide independent scrutiny, challenge, and expertise not otherwise available within the membership
- Support good governance through objective assessment of risks, controls, and strategy
- Serve on committees or working groups as appropriate
- Act in accordance with the same charity trustee duties as all Directors
- Maintain independence by avoiding conflicts of interest, and by not holding volunteer roles elsewhere in the Association that could compromise neutrality

6.5 Induction and Training

6.5.1 Induction of Trustees and Officers

Upon appointment or election, all Directors (including Officers and) shall receive an induction covering:

- The Articles of Association
- The Rules and policies governing the Association
- Charity law and trustee duties
- Financial responsibilities, including understanding of reserves, risk, and audit
- Key strategic priorities and operational structures

- An introduction to staff leadership, primarily the CEO and senior staff

6.5.2 Ongoing Development

To maintain high governance standards, Trustees are expected to participate in periodic refresher training on charity governance, aiming to attend at least one training session per year relevant to their role. Trustees must maintain awareness of regulatory changes affecting the charity sector.

6.6 Expectations of Directors and Officers

All Directors are expected to:

- Attend Board meetings regularly and participate constructively
- Maintain confidentiality as required under Articles and policy
- Declare conflicts of interest in accordance with Articles 35–36
- Uphold the Nolan Principles (Appendix 3), as well as the BSAVA Code of Conduct (Appendix 2)
- Respond promptly to communications requiring Board action
- Support collective responsibility for Board decisions

Officers have additional expectations related to leadership, representation, strategic horizon scanning, and supporting volunteer development.

6.7 Volunteer and Trustee Support Processes

6.7.1 Support for All Trustees

The Association will provide access to relevant policies, indemnities, and insurance, along with administrative support for governance activities. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed in line with the BSAVA Expenses Policy.

All Trustees will be provided with clear role descriptions and expectations.

6.7.2 Support for the Presidential Team

To ensure effective functioning, the Association may provide administrative support from staff, along with policy briefings or external advice where required.

6.7.3 External Representation

Trustees representing the Association publicly shall seek guidance from the President and CEO where necessary, maintaining high professional standards and ensuring their statements align with Board approved positions.

6.8 Conduct and Accountability

All Directors must act in the best interests of the charity and comply with Articles 6, 23, 35, 36, and the Charities Act 2011. Directors who breach conduct expectations may be subject to internal review or removal under Articles 27–28. Officers must model exemplary behaviour and uphold the values of the Association.

7. Committees and Working Groups

7.1 Purpose of Committees and Working Groups

Article 34 of the Articles of Association authorises the Board to delegate any of its powers or functions to committees, provided that:

- Delegations are recorded
- The Board may revoke or amend them at any time
- Committees report back fully and promptly to the Board

These Rules set out the operational framework for Standing Committees, Working Committees, and Working Groups to ensure good governance, transparency, and consistency across the Association.

7.2 Categories of Committees

7.2.1 Standing Committees

Standing Committees are permanent committees established by the Board to support core governance, oversight, or organisational functions. Standing Committees may include (but are not limited to):

- Finance, Audit & Risk Management (FARM) Committee
- Volunteer Development Committee (VDC)

Standing Committees exist on an ongoing basis, subject to periodic review. As Standing Committees carry specific delegated powers from the Board, they are required to include a minimum of two trustees.

7.2.2 Working Committees

Working Committees are committees with defined but ongoing operational remits that support particular workstreams or strategic priorities. Working Committees generally remain active for several years, depending on strategic need.

7.2.3 Working Groups

Working Groups are time limited groups created to deliver specific, predefined outcomes or tasks. They:

- Operate for a fixed period
- Are dissolved once their objectives are met
- Provide recommendations or deliver defined outputs

7.3 Terms of Reference (TORs)

Each committee or working group must operate under a written **Terms of Reference** approved by the Board. TORs must include:

- Purpose and scope

- Delegated authority and limitations
- Composition and appointment method
- Chairing arrangements
- Decision making processes
- Reporting requirements
- Budget or resource parameters (if relevant)
- Review frequency
- Intended end date (if applicable)

7.4 Composition and Appointment

7.4.1 Chairs

Chairs of Standing Committees are appointed by the Board, normally following recommendation from the VDC and consistent with Articles governing director appointments where applicable. Chairs of Working Committees and Working Groups are appointed by the CEO or Board (depending on delegation arrangements), with VDC involvement in volunteer selection where appropriate.

Chairs must be members of the Association unless otherwise permitted by the Board where specialist expertise is required.

7.4.2 Members

Committee membership shall:

- a. Be determined by the Board or through delegated authority as stated in the TOR
- b. Include a mix of volunteers, Directors, and staff where appropriate
- c. Require members to act in accordance with BSAVA policies, confidentiality standards, code of conduct and conflict of interest rules
- d. Include at least one Director for committees exercising delegated authority on governance or statutory matters

7.4.3 Appointment Process

Appointments may be made through open advertisement, targeted recruitment, or invitation, depending on the committee's needs. The BSAVA is keen to grow its engagement with members through volunteering opportunities. An open advertisement approach will always be the default unless it is considered that this will not achieve the committees needs due to specific skills or experience required. The VDC may support volunteer recruitment and ensure fairness, transparency, and suitability.

All appointments must be confirmed by the entity holding authority under the TOR.

7.5 Meeting Requirements

Committees and working groups must:

- Meet as often as necessary to fulfil their responsibilities, normally no fewer than three times per year for Standing Committees
- Allow virtual or hybrid attendance where appropriate
- Keep accurate minutes of decisions and discussions
- Confirm attendance and quorum arrangements as defined in their TOR
- Maintain confidentiality of discussions unless otherwise directed by the Chair or Board

7.6 Decision Making and Quorum

Unless the TOR specifies otherwise, decisions are made by simple majority of those present. In the event of a tie, the Chair shall have a casting vote unless the TOR provides alternative arrangements. Each committee must specify its quorum in its TOR. Quorum must be proportionate to size and ensure decisions are taken responsibly.

7.7 Reporting Expectations

In accordance with Article 34.3, committees must report fully and promptly to the Board.

These Rules require that:

- Standing Committees report to the Board at each Board meeting, or more frequently where necessary
- Working Committees report to the CEO and/or Board according to their TOR schedule
- Working Groups submit progress updates and a final report or deliverable upon completion of their remit

Reports should summarise:

- Key activities
- Decisions made within delegated authority
- Risks or issues requiring Board attention
- Recommendations for Board decision (where applicable)

Chairs may be invited to attend Board meetings to present reports or participate in discussions.

7.8 Sunset, Renewal, and Review Processes for Working Groups

Every Working Group must have a defined end date or trigger for closure. On completion of its remit, the Working Group will be dissolved automatically unless the Board approves an extension. A Working Group may be converted into a Working Committee if its role evolves into an ongoing operational need.

TORs for Working Groups must be reviewed annually for relevance, progress, and alignment with strategic priorities. The Board retains the authority to close or amend any group at any time in accordance with Article 34.2.

7.9 Review of Committee Structure

The Board shall conduct a review of all Standing and Working Committees at least every three years. The review shall consider effectiveness, membership, workload, strategic alignment, and governance compliance. Recommendations may include continuation, modification, merger, or dissolution of committees.

8. Conflicts of Interest & Conduct in Decision Making

8.1 Purpose of this Section

Conflicts of interest arise when personal, financial, professional, or organisational interests could improperly influence, or be perceived to influence, a person's ability to act solely in the best interests of the Association. Articles 35–37 establish the legal duty to declare, manage, and record conflicts.

8.2 Principles

All members involved in BSAVA governance, including Directors, Officers, committee members, Council members, and volunteers, must:

- Act solely in the best interests of the Association
- Avoid situations in which a conflict of interest may arise
- Declare potential conflicts in accordance with Articles 35 and 36
- Act transparently to preserve trust in the Association's decision making

8.3 Declaring Conflicts of Interest

8.3.1 Annual Declaration

All Directors, Council Representatives, committee members, and working group members must complete an annual Conflict of Interest Declaration. The declaration must list all relevant financial, professional, personal, or organisational interests, including:

- Employment or consultancy roles
- Directorships or committee membership in other organisations
- Gifts or hospitality connected to veterinary or industry bodies
- Close personal relationships that could be relevant

Annual declarations are retained by the Association and reviewed by the CEO or delegated staff.

8.3.2 In Meeting Declarations

At the start of each Board, Council, committee, or working group meeting, the Chair shall ask attendees to declare any conflicts relevant to the agenda; declarations must be recorded in the minutes. Individuals must update their declaration as soon as circumstances change (as required under Articles 35 and 36).

8.4 Management of Conflicts in Meetings

8.4.1 Chair's Responsibility

The Chair of the meeting is responsible for determining the appropriate management of a declared conflict, following Articles 35 and 36.

8.4.2 Required Actions

Depending on the nature and severity of the conflict, actions may include:

- Full participation allowed (minor or nonmaterial conflict)
- Participation in discussion allowed, but recusal from voting
- Withdrawal from the meeting for the relevant item (required under Article 36.1 for loyalty-based conflicts and in all cases where personal benefit is involved)
- Reassignment of responsibilities if a conflict prevents effective engagement

Conflicted individuals must not be counted in quorum for the affected item where Articles 36 or 37 require their exclusion.

8.5 Recording Procedures

All declared conflicts (annual or meeting specific) must be recorded in:

- The central Register of Interests
- The minutes of the meeting at which the conflict was declared

Minutes must record:

- The nature of the conflict
- Any actions taken (e.g., recusal or withdrawal)
- Confirmation that quorum and voting requirements were satisfied without the conflicted individual

Where the Articles allow a decision to remain valid despite a conflicted individual's presence (Article 37), the rationale must be clearly documented.

8.6 Examples of Conflicts (for Guidance Only)

The following examples are illustrative and not exhaustive:

8.6.1 Financial Conflicts

- A Director employed by a company bidding for a BSAVA contract
- A committee member receiving honoraria or payments related to a subject under discussion

8.6.2 Professional Conflicts

- A Council Representative who is also an officer of another veterinary association where interests may not align
- A member of a Regional Committee who is also a paid speaker at the event

8.6.3 Personal or Relational Conflicts

- Family member or partner applying for a grant or contract overseen by the committee
- Close personal relationship with a candidate in a volunteer selection process

8.6.4 Loyalty or Organisational Conflicts

- Serving on another organisation's committee where policy positions may conflict with BSAVA's stance
- Loyalty to an employer or commercial partner influencing decision making

8.7 Managing Conflicts Outside Meetings

Examples of situations where conflicts may arise include but are not limited to:

- Procurement decisions
- Recruitment or volunteer appointment processes
- Publication and editorial decisions
- Grant allocation or awards

Where such conflicts arise individuals must notify the Chair, CEO, or committee lead immediately, and may not take part in related discussions or decisions. Decisions must be escalated where necessary to ensure independence.

8.8 Training and Awareness

To support compliance all Directors and key volunteers shall receive information on conflict of interest management as part of induction, which shall be re-circulated periodically. Guidance materials shall be made available to committees and working groups where appropriate.

8.9 Breaches of Conflict of Interest Procedures

Breaches may include failure to declare, deliberate concealment, or disregarding recusal instructions. Where a breach occurs it must be reported to the Chair of the Board (or Chair of Council, if relevant). The matter may be referred to the Board under Articles 27–28 regarding potential removal or disciplinary action. Records of the breach and any action taken must be maintained.

9. Communications and Technology Use

9.1 Purpose of this Section

The Articles establish the legal basis for electronic communication, notice delivery, and the conduct of electronic and hybrid meetings. These Rules define the practical protocols and expectations that ensure consistent, secure, and effective communication with members and within the Association.

9.2 Approved Communication Platforms

9.2.1 Platforms for Electronic Meetings

The following are approved for hosting electronic or hybrid meetings (Board, Council, committees, working groups, or General Meetings):

- An approved video conference platform supporting real time participation, voting (where applicable), and secure authentication
- A webinar or livestream platform for meetings where attendees have limited interaction rights
- A secure polling or voting application, where required under Articles related to voting

Platforms must meet the following criteria:

- Ability for members or participants to hear, be heard, and vote (where entitled)
- Secure and auditable access control
- Reliable connectivity suitable for the expected number of participants
- Compatibility with accessibility needs

The Board will periodically review and update approved platforms.

9.3 Member Communication Preferences

Consistent with Article 44, members may choose their preferred communication channel, subject to operational constraints.

Members are encouraged to maintain a valid email address for primary communication. Where a member does not provide an email address, the Association will communicate via post, but electronic access to some documents may be required for full participation. Members may update their communication preferences at any time through the member portal or by contacting the Association. Certain essential communications (e.g., notices of General Meetings, membership renewals, regulatory communications) may be delivered using the method permitted under Articles 44–46, regardless of marketing preferences.

9.4 Use of the Member Portal and Website

9.4.1 Member Portal

The member portal is the Association's primary digital interface for:

- Updating membership details

- Accessing member only documents
- Registering for events and CPD
- Receiving notifications regarding meetings or voting

Members are responsible for:

- Maintaining accurate personal and contact information
- Safeguarding login details
- Informing the Association promptly of any issues accessing the portal

9.4.2 Website Access

The Association may publish key documents on the member only section of the website in accordance with Article 44, including but not limited to:

- AGM and General Meeting papers
- Minutes of approved meetings
- Governance documents
- Policy updates

Where documents are posted online, members will receive a notification of availability, consistent with Article 44 requirements.

9.5 Document Access Protocols

To protect confidentiality and ensure proper governance, sensitive documents (e.g., draft Board minutes, confidential committee papers) may be shared only via secure digital channels approved by the Association. Access to governance documents may be restricted to members or specific volunteer roles. Public facing documents shall be published openly unless restricted for legal or strategic reasons.

When electronic documents are provided as “notice” under the Articles, they must remain accessible until the conclusion of the relevant meeting.

9.6 Technology Standards for Meetings

To support effective participation:

9.6.1 Participant Responsibilities

Members attending virtual or hybrid meetings must:

- Ensure stable internet access
- Join using the access credentials provided
- Maintain professional conduct, including muting when not speaking
- Avoid recording the meeting unless explicitly authorised

- Use their full name or membership identifier for identification purposes

9.6.2 Chair and Organiser Responsibilities

Meeting organisers must provide clear joining instructions and support, ensuring that security settings (e.g., waiting rooms, host controls) are used appropriately; testing technical systems before the meeting if necessary. Organisers should provide guidance for speaking, voting, and raising questions.

9.7 Standards for Online Behaviour

Whether in General Meetings, Board or Council sessions, committee meetings, or other virtual gatherings:

- Participants must treat others with respect and courtesy, as expected in physical meetings
- Abusive, harassing, or disruptive behaviour may result in removal from the virtual meeting room
- Chat functions, Q&A tools, and other digital interactions must be used responsibly and according to the Chair's instructions
- Screensharing or files sharing is permitted only with the Chair's or organiser's approval
- The Association's Code of Conduct applies to all virtual and online interactions

9.8 Technical Issues and Contingency Protocols

If significant technical failures occur preventing meaningful participation, the Chair may:

- Pause or briefly adjourn the meeting
- Change the voting method
- Adjourn to a later date under the Articles' notice requirements

Members experiencing difficulties should contact the provided technical support channel. Where a technical issue affects only an individual member, the meeting will normally continue unless the Articles' quorum or voting integrity is affected.

9.9 Records and Retention

Records of electronic notices, meeting access logs, and digital voting results shall be retained securely. Electronic communications will be stored in accordance with data protection and document retention policies. Meeting recordings (where permitted) will be retained only for minute taking and then deleted unless otherwise approved.

10. Elections and Voting Processes (Beyond Legal Requirements)

10.1 Purpose of this Section

The Articles of Association set the legal requirements for voting, polls, notices, proxies, and decision making at General Meetings (Articles 10–20) as well as the appointment and removal of Directors and Officers (Articles 23–28). These Rules provide additional operational procedures, ensuring that elections across the Association are fair, transparent, and consistent.

10.2 Annual General Meeting Timetables

The Association will publish an annual election timetable, covering the election of Officers at the Annual General Meeting (Article 23.2)

10.3 Nomination Requirements and Forms

10.3.1 Nomination Documentation

All nominations must be submitted on the Association’s approved form, which requires:

- Full name and membership number
- Eligibility confirmation
- A brief supporting statement
- Confirmation of willingness to serve
- Any declarations relevant to conflicts of interest

10.3.2 Eligibility Checks

Eligibility for elections (e.g., Officer posts, committee chairs, Council Representatives) must be verified by staff or the Volunteer Development Committee (VDC).

10.3.3 Nomination Windows

A nomination window of at least 21 days shall be provided for roles requiring member voting.

10.5 Voting Methods and Security Arrangements

10.5.1 Permitted Voting Methods

Voting may be conducted:

- By show of hands (as per Article 18)
- By poll demanded under Article 18
- Through secure electronic voting during hybrid or electronic meetings (as enabled by Articles 12 and 18);
- By proxy, following Article 19

10.5.2 Security and Integrity

The Association must ensure that voting processes:

- Issue one vote per eligible member
- Authenticate members' identities
- Maintain anonymity of votes cast
- Retain audit trails in accordance with Articles 42–46 on communication and document records

10.6 Proxy Voting Procedures

Proxy forms must follow the Article compliant format. Completed proxies must be delivered by the deadline stated in the meeting notice (normally 48 hours before the meeting). Members may instruct proxies on how to vote on each resolution. Proxy holders must verify their identity when attending virtually or in person, proxy appointments must be logged and checked before the meeting begins. Any revocation of a proxy must comply with Article 19.7.

10.7 Disputes and Challenges

Any dispute relating to an election must be submitted in writing within 14 days of the result. Disputes shall be reviewed by the CEO in consultation with the Chair. Where appropriate, the matter may be referred to the Board or, if related to Council representation, to Council.

10.8 Record Keeping

All election records must be kept securely for a minimum of one year. Records include:

- Nomination forms
- Instructions to proxies
- Ballots or electronic voting logs
- RO reports

Confidentiality must be maintained for all personal data collected.

11. Finance Related Operational Rules

11.1 Purpose of this Section

This section provides operational guidance for financial practices within the Association. The Articles establish high level duties relating to financial management, the application of funds, and permissible payments. These Rules ensure clarity on day-to-day procedures, particularly regarding expenses, budgeting, and financial controls.

11.2 Expense Claims

Individuals may claim reasonable expenses incurred while carrying out authorised BSAVA duties. Claims must follow the approved process, include receipts, link clearly to BSAVA activity, and be approved by the appropriate authority. Staff, volunteers and officers are expected to use cost-effective travel, claim subsistence appropriately, and book standard accommodation. Full details are provided in the BSAVA Expenses Policy.

11.3 Approval Thresholds and Budgeting

11.3.1 Delegated Financial Authority

The Board shall approve delegated financial limits as set out in the BSAVA Scheme of Delegation (Appendix 4).

11.3.2 Budget Planning

The annual organisational budget shall be prepared by the CEO and Finance team. Budgets must align with the strategic plan and be approved by the Board. Committees must operate within their agreed budgets and may not incur unapproved expenditure.

11.3.3 Financial Reporting

In alignment with Articles 40–41, the Finance team will provide:

- Management accounts to the Board
- Reports to the Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee (FARM)
- Annual statutory accounts for member approval

11.4 Reserves Policy

The Board shall maintain a Reserves Policy, reviewed at least annually. The policy must set:

- Minimum and target reserve levels
- Circumstances in which reserves may be used
- The process for rebuilding reserves following use
- Financial risk
- Strategic priorities
- Legal obligations

- Sustainability of operations

FARM shall review and provide assurance on the adequacy of the Reserves Policy.

11.5 Payments to Directors and Officers

All payments must comply with Article 6, which prohibits Director remuneration except as expressly authorised and subject to checks and safeguards.

These Rules provide additional clarity:

11.5.1 Permitted Payments

- Reasonable expenses (Article 6.2.1)
- Presidential compensation allowed under Articles 23.6–23.7, subject to strict conditions

11.5.2 Approval Requirements

Any payment to a Director for loss of earnings or services requires:

- Review by unconflicted Directors (Articles 23.7.1–23.7.4)
- Clear written documentation of justification
- Minute taking to record compliance

11.6 Financial Controls and Audit

Consistent with Articles 40–41 and the role of FARM:

Financial controls must follow Charity Commission and good governance standards. All payments require dual authorisation. FARM must monitor:

- Internal controls
- Risk management
- Audit findings
- Financial sustainability

The Board must review FARM reports and take action where required.

11.7 Procurement and Contracting

Procurement must follow principles of transparency, fairness, and value for money. Contracts above a Board set threshold require Board approval. Conflicts of interest must be declared and managed.

11.8 Fraud and Irregularities

Any suspected fraud must be reported immediately to the CEO and Chair of FARM. The Association will follow the procedures set out in the Anti-Fraud Policy. Serious incidents shall be reported to the Charity Commission where required.

12. Volunteer Management Framework

12.1 Purpose of this Section

Although the Articles of Association do not prescribe volunteer related rules, the BSAVA relies heavily on volunteers across governance, committees, regions, and events. These Rules establish a coherent framework for volunteer recruitment, oversight, and support, drawing on established practice within BSAVA's existing governance structures.

12.2 Recruitment and Onboarding

12.2.1 Recruitment

Volunteer recruitment is overseen by the Volunteer Development Committee (VDC), which is responsible for encouraging volunteer participation and supporting their development. Recruitment may occur through:

- Open calls for volunteers via BSAVA communications channels
- Direct invitations where specific skills are required
- Regional engagement through Regional Committees

12.2.2 Onboarding

New volunteers shall receive a structured induction, including:

- Overview of BSAVA's governance and structure
- Expectations of the role
- Conflicts of interest and conduct requirements (aligned with Articles 35–37)
- Access to relevant policies
- Introduction to staff contacts and committee Chairs

Where volunteers join committees, the Chair and CEO will ensure they are briefed on committee remit, TORs, and meeting norms.

12.3 Expectations, Values and Conduct

Volunteers must uphold BSAVA values and act in a way that maintains the Association's reputation. All volunteers must:

- Demonstrate professionalism and courtesy
- Adhere to confidentiality rules
- Attend meetings regularly, give advance apologies where necessary
- Participate constructively in discussions
- Declare conflicts of interest
- Uphold standards of public life

Volunteers acting in governance roles (Board, Council, committees) must additionally comply with relevant Articles and Rules for those bodies.

12.4 Support and Supervision

12.4.1 Support Structures

Support for volunteers is provided through:

- Committee Chairs or Regional Chairs
- The VDC (for volunteer development or escalation)
- The Volunteers Manager, who acts as the central coordinator for volunteer processes
- Committee Minutes Secretaries and other BSAVA staff

12.4.2 Supervision

Committee Chairs are responsible for setting expectations, monitoring participation and providing feedback. Chairs will ensure that volunteers are aware of requirements and timelines.

12.5 Recognition and Reward

Volunteers contribute significant time to BSAVA, and recognition is essential.

Recognition approaches may include:

- Public thanks at events or meetings
- Certificates or acknowledgments in publications
- Eligibility for roles such as Council Representative, committee Chair, or Officer positions (as supported by the Rule Book)
- Opportunities to represent BSAVA externally

Honoraria are only available where explicitly permitted under the Articles (e.g., President under Articles 23.6–23.7).

12.6 Volunteer Problem Solving Procedures

Where concerns arise regarding a volunteer's performance or conduct, these Rules provide a process consistent with governance practice.

12.6.1 Early Resolution

Committee or Regional Chairs should first:

- Seek guidance from the Volunteers Manager
- Discuss concerns informally
- Offer constructive feedback
- Agree improvement expectations and timeframes

12.6.2 Formal Review

If issues persist the Chair may refer the matter to the Volunteers Manager who may take it to VDC for review. Volunteers may be asked to step back from activities temporarily whilst a resolution is reached. The matter may be escalated to the Board if governance duties are impacted.

12.6.3 Removal

The Board retains authority to remove individuals from volunteer posts where required to protect the interests of the Association.

12.7 Out of Pocket Expenses

Where such attendance is required the Association will supply free registration and reimbursement of expenses of attendance as defined in its expenses policy.

12.7.1 Restrictions

Volunteers attending events for personal CPD (not in a volunteer capacity) are not eligible for reimbursement. Enhanced travel or accommodation costs will not normally be reimbursed unless justified.

12.8 Volunteer Wellbeing and Safeguarding

BSAVA recognises its responsibility to support volunteer wellbeing, following the general principles of:

- Ensuring volunteers feel valued and respected
- Providing support for accessibility needs
- Ensuring safe, inclusive working environments
- Supporting volunteers experiencing difficulties in their role

The Volunteers Manager will maintain a list of the support options available. The Association's approach to safeguarding is set out within the BSAVA Safeguarding Policy.

13. Document Control

13.1 Purpose of this Section

This section sets out how the Rule Book is managed, updated, approved, and communicated. It ensures compliance with:

- Article 48.1 – the Board’s authority to make Rules
- Article 48.3 – the members’ power in General Meeting to alter Rules
- Article 48.4 – the requirement to bring Rules to the notice of members
- Article 48.5 – Rules must not conflict with the Articles

13.2 Ownership and Authority

The Board holds responsibility for maintaining and updating the Rule Book under Article 48.1. The General Meeting retains authority to alter, add to, or repeal Rules under Article 48.3. No Rule or amendment may conflict with the Articles; in case of conflict, the Articles take precedence (Article 48.5).

13.3 How the Rule Book Is Updated

13.3.1 Proposing Amendments

Amendments may be proposed by:

- The Board
- A Board committee (through the Board)
- Council (as advice to the Board)
- Members through a resolution at a General Meeting

13.3.2 Approval Process

- a. Routine updates require Board approval under Article 48.1.
- b. Substantive changes may be put to a General Meeting if the Board considers this appropriate, or if required under Article 48.3.
- c. Once approved, the update becomes effective immediately unless a later date is specified.

13.3.3 Recording the Change

All updates must be:

Entered into the master version of the Rule Book and logged in the Document Control Register, showing:

- Version number
- Date of approval
- Approving body (Board or General Meeting)

- Summary of changes

13.4 Version Control and Publication

13.4.1 Version Control

The Rule Book must include:

- A version number
- Date of last approval
- Summary of changes since the previous version

13.4.2 Publication Requirements

In accordance with Article 48.4, the Association must “adopt such means as they think sufficient to bring the rules... to the notice of members.”

Operationally, this means:

The current Rule Book will be published on the BSAVA website in a member accessible area, consistent with prior practice. Members will be notified when changes occur. Archived versions may be stored for reference but must be clearly marked as superseded.

13.5 Member Notification of Changes

To comply with Article 48.4, any amendment must be communicated clearly to members.

The Association will notify all members electronically (email or portal message) following approval of changes, providing a summary of the amendments. There will be a clear indication of when the changes take effect.

The Association will ensure that the updated Rule Book is accessible online. Where changes are approved at a General Meeting, notification may be included within post meeting communications.

13.6 Review Cycle

Although not mandated by the Articles, good governance requires regular review.

The Rule Book shall undergo a formal review at least every three years, led by the Board or a delegated committee. Interim reviews may be undertaken when:

- Significant governance changes occur
- Legislative or regulatory requirements change
- Lessons learned from operations suggest updates

Council and relevant committees may be consulted as part of the review process. The Board shall confirm whether amendments are required and initiate the approval process under Section 13.3.

13.7 Retention and Archiving

All versions of the Rule Book must be retained in accordance with BSAVA's document retention policy. Superseded versions must be archived but not circulated to members. The current version may be used as the authoritative operational reference.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Membership Categories

BSAVA represents vets and vet nurses, as well as vet students and overseas veterinary professionals. The categories of membership are listed below and information on the benefits of each category of membership can be viewed on the BSAVA website - <http://www.bsava.com/Membership/Memberbenefits.aspx>

Membership Category	Eligibility	Member by guarantee and able to vote at General meetings	Possible additional roles within the Association
Full	Veterinary surgeons in their fourth or subsequent years since graduating with a primary veterinary degree entitling them to membership of the RCVS, or the equivalent organisation within their own country.	Yes	All volunteer and director positions
First Year Qualified	Veterinary surgeons in their first year since graduating with a primary veterinary degree entitling membership of the RCVS, or the equivalent organisation within their own country.	Yes	All volunteer positions
Second Year Qualified	Veterinary surgeons in their second year since graduating with a primary veterinary degree entitling membership of the RCVS, or the equivalent organisation within their own country.	Yes	All volunteer positions
Third Year Qualified	Veterinary surgeons in their third year since graduating with a primary veterinary degree entitling membership of the RCVS, or the equivalent organisation within own country.	Yes	All volunteer positions
Postgraduate	Veterinary surgeons undertaking full time studies in the UK or Republic of Ireland and is verified with an annual certificate signed by their supervisor.	Yes	All volunteer positions
Senior (closed to new applicants)	Member of, or be eligible for registration with, the RCVS or a veterinary practitioner listed on the Supplementary Register.	Yes	All volunteer and director positions
Retired 70+ non-practising	Be over the age of 70 years and have been a member by guarantee for at least 5 years before the date of application and be no longer licensed to practice veterinary medicine or veterinary nursing as	Yes	All volunteer positions

	defined by being listed as Retired on the relevant professional register in their own county.		
Vet Nurse	Be licensed to practise veterinary nursing in the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland, unless specifically and individually relieved of this obligation by Board.	Yes	All Volunteer positions
Honorary (Associate)	Elected by Council with a 2/3rds majority in recognition of an exceptional contribution to small animal veterinary care or research. Associate status is conferred on those individuals who do not qualify for membership by guarantee	NO (unless also qualified to be a member by guarantee anyway)	None
Life (Associate)	Elected by Council with a 2/3rds majority in recognition of an exceptional contribution to the Association. Automatic for Past Presidents after they have passed 60. Associate status is conferred on those individuals who do not qualify for membership by guarantee	NO (unless also qualified to be a member by guarantee anyway)	None
Student Member	Studying for a primary veterinary degree in the UK and ROI and have a valid university email address.	No	University representatives and committee memberships
Overseas Student Member	Studying for a primary veterinary degree at an institution outside the UK and ROI.	No	University representatives and committee memberships
Student Vet Nurse	Be a matriculated student enrolled on a course studying towards a qualification that enables registration on the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeon's Register of Veterinary Nurses.	No	University representatives and committee memberships
Overseas Member	Be licensed to practise veterinary medicine and surgery in a country other than the United Kingdom and have permanent home and work addresses outside the United Kingdom, unless specifically and individually relieved of this obligation by Board	No	University representatives and committee memberships

Appendix 2 – BSAVA Code of Conduct

CODE OF CONDUCT – BSAVA VOLUNTEERS

It is the responsibility of BSAVA Volunteers to:

- Act in accordance with the governing document of the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) and the law.
- Act in the best interest of BSAVA, considering what is best for the organisation and its beneficiaries and ensuring actions do not bring BSAVA into disrepute.
- Support the mission, vision, and values of BSAVA, ensuring my actions align with the organisation's strategic goals.
- Represent BSAVA accurately and responsibly in all communications, whether internal or external, ensuring that I reflect the views and policies of the organisation.
- Manage conflicts of interest effectively, registering, declaring and resolving conflicts of interest. Not gaining materially or financially from involvement with BSAVA unless specifically authorised to do so.
- Respect confidentiality, understanding and maintaining confidentiality in relation to BSAVA, its board, and the individuals involved with it, while never using the confidentiality as an excuse not to disclose matters that should be transparent.
- Raise concerns or complaints regarding BSAVA'S operations or conduct in accordance with BSAVA's established grievance or whistleblowing procedures.
- Maintain a sound and up-to-date knowledge of BSAVA and its environment, understanding how BSAVA operates and the environment in which it functions.
- Attend meetings and other appointments or provide apologies, considering other ways of engaging with the organisation if regularly I am unable to attend meetings.
- Ensure financial integrity by understanding BSAVA's financial position, monitoring resources, and advising on matters related to financial sustainability where applicable.
- Prepare fully for meetings and all work for BSAVA, reading papers in advance, seeking clarification on any points of confusion, challenging constructively and avoiding unnecessary conflict.
- Actively engage in discussion, debate and voting in meetings, contributing positively, listening carefully, challenging constructively and avoiding conflict.
- Foster collaboration and positive working relationships within the Council and/ or the Advisory, and Management Committee, encouraging teamwork and mutual respect.
- Make decisions collectively and accept the majority decision, supporting collective decision making and standing by the board's decisions. Not acting individually unless specifically authorised to do so.
- Work considerately and respectfully with other, respecting diversity, acknowledging different roles and boundaries, and avoiding causing offence.
- Review this Code of Conduct periodically and ensure my actions remain in alignment with its principles. I will hold myself accountable to these standards.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Please return to the Volunteers Manager for retention in line with our Data Protection Policy.

Appendix 3 – The Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles)

The 7 principles of public life that all members, volunteer and directors are expected to follow when involved in the activities of the Association (Based on Nolan 1995).

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix 4 – BSAVA Scheme of Delegation of Board Authority

BSAVA Scheme of Delegation shows what matters are reserved for Board and the authority the Board has delegated to committees, other volunteers or staff under the powers of the Articles of Association. It ensures a proper level of delegation from the Board of Trustees so that there is effective input into decision-making. It also ensures that Trustees can fulfil their legal and constitutional duties, through levers which enable them to delegate, check and if necessary, withdraw the delegated authority if it is considered in the interests of the charity and its beneficiaries.

This Scheme of Delegation should be read alongside the Articles of Association, the Board Manual, Role Descriptions and Terms of Reference for:

- Board
- Board Committees which are Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee (FARM) + Volunteer Development Committee (VDC)

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) are the direct reports of the CEO.

Where matters are delegated to the CEO, this empowers the CEO to delegate further to staff or volunteers (except where shown). In these instances, the CEO stays accountable to the Board for exercise of the powers delegated.

Where matters are not specified as delegated, they are reserved to the Board. The Board is not entitled to give away any of its authority permanently and keeps the right to revoke, at its sole discretion, any or all the powers it delegates if, for example, the Board is concerned that:

- delegated powers are not being used effectively in the interests of our charitable objects and beneficiaries
- the use of delegated powers is damaging the interests or reputation of the organisation
- delegated powers are being used against the letter or spirit of the organisation's agreed policies and procedures.

This Scheme of Delegation supplies the framework for decision-making and action but there will be instances where it is not clear by whom an issue should be decided, or differences arise. The Board expects every volunteer or member of staff to work constructively together to arrive at prompt, clear pragmatic solutions within the spirit of our values, our strategy and the Code of Conduct, to maximise the positive impact of our work. This Scheme of Delegation also shows the key sources of advice to the Board to help the exercise of its functions.

1. Strategic Decisions

Decision Area	Reserved to Board	Delegated Authority
Approval of strategy and business plan	Yes	-
Approval of annual budget and major financial plans	Yes	-
Approval of new or significantly changed policies (e.g., safeguarding, risk management)	Yes	-
Approval of organisational structure changes affecting LT roles	Yes	-
Approval of major contracts or projects above £X threshold	Yes	-
Appointment and dismissal of CEO	Yes	-
Setting of Board committee structures and Terms of Reference	Yes	-

2. Financial Authority

Decision Area	Reserved to Board	Delegated Authority
Expenditure within budget	No	CEO up to £100,000, LT up to £50,000
Expenditure outside budget (reported to Board)	No	CEO up to £25,000, ELT up to £1,000 and £1,000-£5,000 with Head of Finance
Approval of grants, sponsorships, or donations	No	CEO up to £49,999, Board £50,000 or more
Management of investments (within agreed policy)	No	CEO / Head of Finance with quarterly reporting through FARM

3. Operational Management

Decision Area	Reserved to Board	Delegated Authority
Day-to-day management of operations	No	CEO and ELT
Implementation of agreed strategy and work plans	No	CEO and ELT
Routine recruitment and management of staff	No	CEO and ELT
Performance management of CEO	Yes	Board (via Chair or sub-committee)

4. Risk Management and Compliance

Decision Area	Reserved to Board	Delegated Authority
Approval of risk appetite and oversight of major risks	Yes	-
Management and monitoring of Strategic Risks	No	FARM
Day-to-day management of operational risks	No	CEO and ELT
Escalation of significant risks to Board (above defined thresholds)	No	CEO and ELT via FARM

5. Communications and External Relations

Decision Area	Reserved to Board	Delegated Authority
Approval of major public positions or statements on behalf of BSAVA	Yes (for policy positions)	CEO for routine communications

Media responses to routine queries	No	CEO, President, Communications Lead
------------------------------------	----	-------------------------------------

6. Committees and Sub-Committees

Decision Area	Reserved to Board	Delegated Authority
Creation and dissolution of Board Committees	Yes	-
Approval of Committee Chairs and membership	Yes (on recommendation)	VDC
Committee work within agreed Terms of Reference	No	Committee Chairs with reporting to Board

Notes on Use:

- All delegated authorities are subject to operating within approved policies, budgets, and strategic plans.
- Any uncertainty about authority must be referred upwards to the next appropriate level (e.g., from ELT to CEO, from CEO to Board).
- The Scheme of Delegation must be reviewed annually and updated if organisational changes occur.
- All Board members, Committee Chairs, senior managers, and new staff should be briefed on the Scheme of Delegation upon appointment.