Proposed veterinary union

There has been a significant level of correspondence in the veterinary press recently on the need for a veterinary union. This is not a new concept and is one that the BVA has discussed in the past. The BVA's Members' Services Group (MSG) – the committee charged with identifying potential new services for members – is considering the issue. Part of its ongoing remit is to provide professional fulfilment to all our members to enable them to have a good work-life balance in their chosen profession. The MSG has developed the Young Vet Network and the Recent Graduate Support meetings. These groups have been very well received by recent graduates, enabling them to network in a social forum facilitated by trained experienced members of the profession. The MSG has also overseen the provision of the BVA Legal Helpline.

It would be fair to point out that the BVA offers reduced membership fees to students and recent graduates up to eight years qualified. The BVA has actively chosen this course to encourage young members to be proactive within the Association. The BVA values this part of the membership and feedback from younger members.

The recent correspondence has shown, however, that there are still areas of concern within the profession that the MSG should be considering. Our next meeting is on May 6, and we will be discussing union functions generally and the services that are already provided to BVA members, and considering how these might be augmented. We will also discuss whether the BVA could provide its members with services more traditionally provided by unions.

I would be very pleased to hear the views of members in advance of the MSG meeting, not only on what is currently offered by the BVA, but also potential areas for developing further our support role for the veterinary profession.

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