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PRESIDENT TOPS POLL IN RCVS COUNCIL ELECTION

JILL Nute, the president of the RCVS, has topped the poll in this year's election for six places on the College Council.

Just over 4,000 members cast votes, 2,467 voting for Mrs Nute. Runner-up, and winning a second term with 2,346 votes, was former BVA president Peter Jinman. Chris Gray, standing for the first time, came third with 2,230, one ahead of Dr Jerry Davies, the current treasurer.

Fifth was Dr Bradley Viner, winning a second term with 2,123 votes, and sixth another first time candidate, Chris Tuffnell, with 2,088 votes.

These six take up or resume their places on the Council on Royal College Day (3rd July) and serve for four years.

The three unsuccessful candidates were: Nigel Swayne (1,673 votes), a sitting member who was seeking a third term; David McDowell (1,394 votes), who lost his seat last year after serving one term; and Tom Lonsdale, who came last for the 13th successive year, polling 389 votes.

Numbers voting increased from 17% to 18.2% of those eligible.

VN Council

In the VN Council election, 912 out of a possible 8,108 VNs cast their votes – an 11.2% turnout, up nearly 25% on last year.

Andrea Jeffery topped the poll and retained her seat with 604 votes; second was



Jill Nute.

Loiise Glysen, a new member, with 332. Caroline Williams (312) and Cheryl Ives (236) were the beaten candidates.

RCVS Day, which includes the AGM – when Professor Sandy Trees will succeed Jill Nute as president of the College – and the presentation of awards, will be held at One Great George Street in London on Friday 3rd July, from 10am.

The guest speaker will be Victor Simpson, on the role of the veterinary profession in monitoring wildlife health in the UK.

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BVA RAISING AWARENESS OF EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

THE BVA's young vet network has launched a campaign to raise awareness of the importance of written contracts of employment which set out employment rights, responsibilities and duties.

This is being done in association with the RCVS, the VPMA and the SPVS.

Written contracts of employment are not required by law but associations believe they are a benefit for both employers and employees.

Employers have a duty to provide "a written statement of particulars" of their main employment terms within two months of starting work.

Veterinary Practice contacted a number of the people who had complained recently (in comments about the need for a union) about not having employment contracts and found there was considerable confusion about what was required by law and what was not.

Several said the only written statement they had received from their employers was a letter confirming their appointment and, in most cases, giving the starting date and salary.

Some also included holiday entitlements (the least being three weeks). Almost none had received the written statement of particulars

covering all 15 points required.

Matthew Clayton, an expert in employment law, sets out the legal position on page 6 of this issue.

Student debt

The BVA has published the results of a survey conducted last year in conjunction with the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS). This found that one in three students are in difficult or severe financial situations, more than half have suffered from stress, over a fifth from depression, over a quarter from anxiety and one in 14 from an eating disorder.

Respondents who graduate in 2011 expect their debt on graduation to reach £29,400. The AVS expects this to be even higher for future students if universities succeed in lobbying for an increase in fees. Over two thirds (66.8%) of students feel unable to work to supplement their income.

The AVS believes there are opportunities for the veterinary schools and the profession to improve this situation and is to lobby with the BVA for: the EMS terms to be allowed within the tuition fee loans structure; robust financial guidance to be given to students during their first year at veterinary school; and an increase in student loan availability for veterinary students.

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