MINUTES OF VMD MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2018

1. Apologies for absence and announcements
   1.1 Apologies were received from David Corner and Linda Simmons.
   1.2 The Chair welcomed newly appointed Non-Executive Director David Catlow to the Board.

2. Declarations of interest in the matters to be discussed
   2.1 None

3. Minutes of the last meeting
   3.1 The minutes were agreed.

4. Matters Arising
   4.1 None.

5. Focus topic: Residues strategy
   5.1 Eric Crutcher from the Residues Surveillance Unit attended to answer queries on the bi-monthly reports published on gov.uk. He explained that there are different types of Reference Points, depending on whether the substance detected was authorised (MRL), or unauthorised/prohibited. For the latter, Reference Points for Action have been set for three substances, but for others laboratories across the EU worked to their own ALARA limits (as low as reasonably achievable). He added that the information on gov.uk is being revised to explain the different types of Reference Points.

5.2 It was noted that several investigations into positive results concluded that the substance was naturally occurring. He explained that these are hormonal substances which, as the analytical methods have become increasingly sensitive, are now being detected at extremely low concentrations (ALARA is a fraction of one part per billion). The accepted convention in the EU is that these are low-level naturally occurring substances which are only now being detected. Nevertheless the European Commission requires the (unannounced) follow-up investigations to take place to ensure that this is the case.

6. CEO’s Report
   6.1 Members reviewed the CEO’s Report and congratulated the VMD on holding a successful initial meeting with Canadian veterinary medicines counterparts which had established mutual interest in undertaking joint work, and on receiving an award from the British Poultry Council for the VMD’s work on antibiotics stewardship.
7. Delivery against the Business Plan 2018/19  
7.1 Members reviewed delivery against the business plan and were impressed by what has been achieved during a very busy time. It was noted that the staff engagement index from the annual people survey had remained around the same but the VMD’s overall ranking had dropped and this would be investigated further.  
ACTION

8. Finance Reports  
8.1 There continues to be an underspend on R&D studies due to several factors and the strategy going forwards is to find more evidence gaps and concentrate on filling them. A one off transfer from the R&D budget to the VMD capital budget to cover the costs of IT development has been approved by Defra.

9. Management Board Work Plan  
9.1 The work plan was noted and it was agreed that if the CVO is unable to attend the next meeting in March then EU Exit will be the main focus topic.

10. Any Other Business  
10.1 VMD reported that a member of staff who had been dismissed recently has requested a tribunal.

11. Future meetings  
11.1 The next meeting will be held on 28 March 2019.

Veterinary Medicines Directorate  
December 2018