

Summary report of the Zoos Expert Committee (ZEC) October 2021 meeting

Video conference, 28 October 2021

Items discussed:

- Three new members were introduced to the Committee: Professor Hannah Buchanan-Smith, Dr Alison Cronin, and Rebecca Moore.
- ZEC discussed the update of the Standards of Modern Zoo Practice (the Zoo Standards). ZEC had held roundtable discussions throughout 2021 to review the Zoo Standards. At this meeting, ZEC agreed that the draft Zoo Standards could now be published for a targeted consultation. The Committee discussed how the new standards could be implemented once published.
- ZEC discussed the criteria used to grant exemptions and dispensations under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981. The Hazardous Animals List in the Zoo Standards was also discussed. Discussion on these topics will continue following completion of a local authority survey on exemptions.
- Defra updated members on the progress of the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill through Parliament, where the status of ZEC and the new conservation standards had been debated. Defra updated the Committee on its Primates as Pets reforms and suggested how ZEC could use its expertise to help develop new primate keeping standards.
- ZEC discussed the future role of the ZEC Handbook.
- There was an update on the work of the Elephant Welfare Group report. The final report had been submitted to Defra in summer 2021. The Minister would soon formally write to ZEC to ask the Committee to consider the report's findings.
- The Minister, the Rt Hon the Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park, joined for part of the meeting and invited members to share the most important issues for zoos at this moment in time.

Further information

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