

Summary report of the Zoos Expert Committee (ZEC) January 2022 meeting

Video conference, 27 January 2022

Items discussed:

- ZEC discussed and agreed a proposed workplan for 2022/23.
- ZEC discussed the update of the Standards of Modern Zoo Practice (the Zoo Standards). The Committee discussed the need to monitor whether standards across the industry are being raised following implementation. Possible options discussed included the auditing of zoo inspection reports.
- ZEC discussed new ways in which the Committee might better communicate with, or share guidance with, the zoo sector.
- Defra updated members on the progress of the Animals (Penalties Notices) Bill, which could provide a penalty notice system for the zoo licensing regime.
- Defra provided an update on the progress of the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill and its amendments during Committee stage in the House of Commons.
- Defra provided an update on its recent invitation to tender for a project to develop recommendations for the standards to underpin the new primate licensing scheme. Plans to formulate a steering group to provide oversight for the group were outlined. Defra also outlined plans to support those who will undertake primate inspections, including training opportunities.
- Defra provided an update on the results of a recent Local Authority survey to identify the number of exemptions to have been granted under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 since the Act came into force in 1984. Defra reported that the response rate was low and that the survey may need wider distribution.
- Senior officials in Defra joined the meeting to provide Committee members with an overview of the wider context of the Animal & Plant Health & Welfare Directorate in Defra.
- The Committee agreed plans to review the Elephant Welfare Group's 10-year report which was submitted to Defra in summer 2021, including setting up a subcommittee to undertake the main work of the review.

Further information

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