Veterinary Products Committee

PUBLISHED MINUTES

A summary of the minutes of the Veterinary Products Committee Meeting held on 12 February 2026 at the VMD, Woodham Lane, New Haw, Addlestone, Surrey.

Chair – Helen Ballantyne
Secretary – Chris Abbott

Members
Dr A Beckett
Dr M Bowen
Mr B Buckle
Prof M Clark
Dr S Frosini
Prof K Ganapathy
Dr M Hawes
Mrs F Kidd
Prof D Killick
Dr D Mackay
Mr R Soutar
Prof J Statham
Dr A Thomsett
Dr J Tulloch
Prof J Weeks

Officials: may be present for all or part of the meeting or for specific agenda items.

VMD

Mr G Hall	Dr J Haycock
Dr B Berrocal-Gonzalez	Dr B Santa-Olalla
Dr G Clarke	Dr C Crowther
Mr L Reynolds	Mr R Jones
Dr S Reynolds	Mr C Harris

Apologies
Dr D Bartley
Mr M Jelley

Published minutes

1. Announcements and apologies for absence

2. Declaration of interests

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2025

4. Matters arising from the minutes
   4.1. VMD briefings
   4.2. Appeal update
   4.3. Horizon scanning

5. VMD briefing: SPCs - requirements and aims

6. Consideration of an application: ref no. 02484/2025

7. UK Pharmacovigilance Report

8. Evaluation of VMD assessment reports: Results

9. Special Imports

10. VMD briefing: Residues surveillance

11. Legislation update

12. Horizon scanning

13. Items for information

14. Any other business

15. Date of next meeting

1. **Announcements and apologies for absence**

1.1. The Chair reminded members and officials that all papers, unless otherwise indicated, and discussions of the committee are confidential. No information relating to the proceedings of the committee or papers presented to the committee may be divulged to any third party.

1.2. The Chair welcomed five new members to their first meeting: Dr Amy Beckett (veterinary surgeon (food safety)), Dr Siân-Marie Frosini (clinical microbiologist), Dr Martin Hawes (pharmacologist), Dr Alex Thomsett (veterinary surgeon (pigs)), and Dr John Tulloch (statistician/epidemiologist). They have been appointed for four year terms.

1.3. Apologies for absence had been received from Dr Bartley and Mr Jelley.

2. **Declaration of interests**

2.1. The Chair reminded members of the procedure for declaring interests at VPC meetings. Interests declared were minuted under the individual items.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2025**

3.1. The committee had cleared the minutes of the October meeting by correspondence and the Summary minutes were available on the VPC website (Veterinary Products Committee - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)).

4. **Matters arising from the minutes**

4.1. **Minute 4.1.1 VMD Briefings**

4.1.1 VMD officials would provide briefings on SPCs and residues surveillance during the meeting.

4.2. **Minutes 5 Appeal outcome**

4.2.1 VMD updated Members about the appeal considered at the last meeting.

4.3. **Minutes 10.2 Horizon Scanning**

4.3.1 Horizon scanning issues would be considered further under that item on the agenda.

5. **VMD briefing: SPCs - requirements and aims**

5.1. Assessors from the VMD's Pharmaceuticals team explained the purpose of Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC) documents. Applicants are required to supply a draft SPC for review during the assessment of a marketing authorisation application for a new product which reflects studies they have carried out and data they have provided. It contains essential information about the product in regard to its ingredients, target species, indications, dosage, contraindications and special warnings for users and the environment. Once an SPC is approved as part of a marketing authorisation it forms the totality of the approval and can only subsequently be changed through a variation application. The information it contains can be used by the MA holder on the product packaging and literature along with wording approved in the Quality Review of Documents (QRD) template. The approved wording can be used by companies in their product advertising and also provides a useful source of information about the product for a prescriber, supplier or user. SPCs are available on the VMD's Product Information Database (PID) along with public assessment reports which contain more detailed product information.

5.2. The basis for SPCs lies in EU and UK legislation and continued use of the format ensures useful harmonisation. In accordance with current requirements, most environmental risk assessments related to companion animals end at an early stage. The VICH guideline 6 on the environment is proposed for review by the relevant international committee.

5.3. Members asked about the use of products under the cascade, with some members feeling that the legislation is overly restrictive. VMD clarified that the cascade exists to help with availability of suitable medicines, and that use of the cascade is down to the judgement of veterinary surgeons, noting that any use outside what is described on SPCs must be clinically justified and properly recorded. It was suggested that VMD provide more guidance on the use of products under the cascade for food producing animals and the withdrawal periods which apply. It was commented that recent changes to the VMR about this could have been communicated better.

5.4. Members asked about the lack of clarity in disposal advice on SPCs and were informed that a project is ongoing to improve this.

6. **Consideration of an application: ref no. 02484/2025**

6.1. The Committee examined evidence relating to an application for a change to distribution category for a pharmaceutical product.

6.2. The Committee provided advice to the VMD.

7. **The UK Pharmacovigilance Report**

7.1. **Introduction**

7.1.1 The Committee had received as part of the distribution pre-meeting the Pharmacovigilance Report for August to November 2025. No comments or questions were received before the meeting or presented on the day of the meeting.

7.1.2 The presentation focused on work the team is doing to improve collaboration and communication strategies and current activities in those areas.

7.1.3 An update of progress for ongoing R&D Pharmacovigilance collaboration was presented, including the projects directed by VPC members Professor Killick and Dr Tulloch. VPC members were offered the opportunity to express their interest in testing adverse event reporting as part of a VMD R&D project.

7.1.4 VMD's Alert Group is under review and in future will focus on analysing the risk:benefit of products rather than only reviewing pharmacovigilance reports. The role of VPC Members in the group is yet to be decided but an update will be provided at the next meeting.

7.2. **Suspected adverse event reports in humans**

7.2.1 Human adverse event reports were included in the presentation that was circulated to Members (up to date to 21 January 2026).

7.3. **Suspected adverse event reports in animals**

7.3.1 Animal adverse event reports were included in the presentation that was circulated to Members (up to date to 21 January 2026).

7.4. **Environmental incidents**

7.4.1 There were no environmental incidents presented.

8. **Evaluation of VMD assessment reports: Results**

8.1. Members had provided ratings and comments on the four products selected at the last meeting for the VPC's annual exercise to evaluate VMD's assessments. The results were reviewed and the Committee agreed on the overall rating for each assessment.

8.2. VMD officials thanked them for the time and effort spent on completing this task and will respond in writing to the comments and questions raised by Members. It was agreed to review the way products are evaluated and rated at the next meeting before the exercise is run again in the autumn.

9. **Special Imports**

9.1. There were no comments on the reports of imported products.

10. **VMD briefing: Residues surveillance**

10.1. VMD's Head of Residues, Callum Harris, explained that his team works to protect public health and to ensure the secure trade of animal-sourced food products by coordinating the testing of residues samples and investigating instances of MRL breaches and contamination. To achieve this, his team works with seven other agencies representing all the animal food sectors which send samples to Fera for testing. They test around 30,000 samples and results show that UK achieves 99.7% compliance. Where non-compliance is found, the APHA will investigate and report back to VMD which has powers to stop animal slaughters and to prosecute. Most non-compliances are for naturally occurring substances such as heavy metals. The process is paid for by fees charged to abattoirs. The VMD reports annually on the results in March and also sends surveillance results to the EC.

10.2. Members asked about imported food products and Mr Harris said that these are dealt with by the FSA under control plans. VMD also audits the surveillance schemes in EU countries. The UK and EU base their testing on risk analysis while in other countries the randomised Codex approach to testing is commonly used.

11. **Legislation update**

11.1. VMD has fed in to the consultation on the Veterinary Surgeons Act and monitoring results.

12. **Horizon scanning**

12.1. Members raised the issue of maintaining vaccine availability for exotic diseases. VMD reported that it is linked in with Defra risk groups and is working up an action plan involving relevant stakeholders, while encouraging the pharmaceutical industry to increase production to meet intermittent needs.

12.2. Members asked about class referrals run by the EMA such as the referral on use of veterinary medicinal products containing amoxicillin and VMD confirmed that it is not involved in the referral process.

13. **Items for information**

13.1. The following items for information are publicly available:

13.1.1 The Veterinary Medicines Directorate Product Information Database (http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/ProductInformationDatabase/).

13.2. The following items for information are not publicly available:

13.2.1 Report to the VPC on new MA applications granted.

13.2.2 Report from the Scientific Secretariat and the Biological Committee.

13.2.3 Report to the VPC on new ATC applications.

14. **Any other business**

14.1. There was no other business.

15. **Date of next meeting**

15.1. The next meeting of the VPC will be on 4 June 2026 at the VMD, Woodham Lane, New Haw, Addlestone, Surrey.