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Chloe Newbold
Clerk to the Disciplinary Committee

Executive Office
Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
Belgravia House
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London
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By email only: c.newbold@rcvs.org.uk

Dear Chloe,

Re: Lonsdale v RCVS – Challenge to the validity of the 2017 Council Election (“the Election”)

Thank you for your 5 October 2017 email message and 4 October 2017 letter of advice from Mr Price, the Legal Assessor. I shall endeavour to provide a full response by 12 October 2017.

Meanwhile I note that the RCVS is invited to provide comment on Mr Price’s 4 October advice regarding its three nominated members of the Challenge Committee — members nominated by the RCVS from its own ranks.

Does this amount to the RCVS being invited to exercise further 'undue influence' as a means to impede proper evaluation of the allegations against it?

Should the RCVS make a submission please advise if you will be providing me with a copy.

Appeal process

On previous occasions I have requested details of any appeal process should I take the view that one or more members of the Challenge Committee are lacking in the necessary independence and impartiality. Please advise why this information has not been made available. Please, as a matter of urgency, provide detailed advice regarding any and all avenues for appeal.

Recusal of the Legal Assessor

Advice on appeal process

Is the Legal Assessor aware of my previous requests for details on an appeals process? If so, please advise his reasons for ignoring the requests.

Conflicting or absent advice

Mr Price has indicated that he well understands that I consider the majority of veterinarians and those working in veterinary environments to be inherently biased in favour of the *status quo* — the *status quo* that I say injures animal health, defrauds pet owners and defrauds vet students.

On 21 August [Mr Price wrote](#):

The Scheme Rules require that the Committee shall consist of three members of Council who are not elected. It would appear that Mr Lonsdale is objecting to anyone who is a member of the RCVS, and

particularly anyone who is a member of the Council of the RCVS, or of any of the other bodies mentioned above. If the objection were to be accepted, it would be impossible to constitute the Committee from three members of the Council who are not elected, as required by the Scheme. **My advice is that such an objection should be rejected.** [Emphasis added]

and

If there is no evident conflict of interest, I advise that Mr Lonsdale be told that the Committee has considered his objection contained in his letter of 25 July, and does not consider that any conflict of interest exists. If he has any specific basis for suggesting that there is a conflict of interest with any individual member of the Committee, he should provide relevant details and reasons to the Clerk.

12 September 2017 [Mr Price repeated the statements](#) of Professor Hammond (Bristol Veterinary School) and Professor James Wood (Cambridge Veterinary School) where they disclosed matters, by virtue of their employment, that in their opinions may be *evident* conflicts of interest. To which I would add that both professors should be assumed to be ‘fair-minded and informed’ and can recognise apprehension of bias when they see it.

Mr Price stated in respect to Ms Acaster: ‘Ms Acaster is clear that she has no conflict.’ Which statement Mr Price appears to take at face value despite the fact that any ‘fair-minded and informed observer’ can plainly see, without any additional evidence being adduced, that Ms Acaster suffers an apprehension of bias in respect to her previous employment at the Royal Veterinary College, University of London and her current membership of the Council of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

[4 October 2017 Mr Price appears to distance himself](#) from his previous blunt advice:

My advice to the members of the Challenge Committee is that they should apply the principles laid down by Lord Hope, when considering all the relevant information disclosed by members of the Committee, and deciding whether or not it is necessary for any of them to recuse themselves from sitting to hear the challenge brought by Mr Lonsdale.

To which statement I comment that even on the strength of their very partial disclosure about hush money accepted by their veterinary schools, the two professors have correctly raised the prospect that they may suffer an apprehension of bias. Ms Acaster, as previously noted, has not disclosed evidence or relevant information. Mr Price seems to accept nil or partial disclosure of relevant information such as the three Committee members see fit to provide.

Mr Price then goes on to say:

The Committee will bear in mind that the pool of unelected members of Council, who would be eligible to be members of the Challenge Committee, is very limited, and Mr Lonsdale is likely to object to any potential member who has any involvement with the veterinary profession, and all organisations or institutions connected with it.

Nowhere does Mr Price provide guidance on what courses of action are open to the Committee in the event that they deem themselves to be suffering an apprehension of bias in determining the case against the RCVS of exercising undue influence in the 2017 RCVS election. In fact Mr Price appears to convey the impression that there are no alternative courses of action.

What are the alternatives or is there *no* alternative? The Committee should be properly, transparently informed before being required to take decisions.

Junk pet-food ‘sponsorship’ deals

Mr Price seems to view vets consorting with corrupt multi-national corporations and the receipt of tainted money as being somehow innocuous. Mr Price provides no indication as to why he first floats his interest in the level of sponsorship at Bristol and Cambridge vet schools, but not London, or whether there is some critical value at which he may deem the payments to be illicit.

All ‘fair-minded and informed’ members of any profession, other than the veterinary profession and its support personnel, who I encounter, agree that veterinary schools prostituting themselves and pimping their students for *any* junk pet-food funds goes against all moral, ethical and legal codes.

Lest this descriptor of the veterinary pushers of packaged and canned junk be too obscure, I invite you to consider the prospect of McDonald’s making strategic, low cost ‘sponsorship’ deals with every medical school in the UK and most other medical schools in the world — with every patient, whether in-hospital or out-patient, being advised to consume, nay being forced to consume, McDonald’s junk at every meal for the entirety of their bloated, miserable lives. Please also consider the massive return on investment for McDonald’s — for the price of a smear of junk-food grease the global medical profession would be safely in McDonald’s pocket. And conditional on medical regulators and their lawyers refusing to take action, McDonald’s would be guaranteed a multi, multi billion pound income stream. With billions of sick people, medical school places would be in demand and medical incomes guaranteed.

Mr Price makes no judgement on the validity of my claims that the entire small animal veterinary enterprise, as taught and practised at the Bristol, Cambridge and London veterinary schools, is cruel and fraudulent.

Whilst I agree it is beyond his remit to determine such a large, multifaceted question, I believe Mr Price needs to give credence to the possibility I am right and whether veterinarians, part of a wider conspiracy, should have authority over any investigation that touches on that conspiracy.

Mr Price accepts without comment that the three Committee members quite clearly depend on and support their respective institutions — and of course depend on and support the corrupt RCVS. Clearly any ‘fair-minded and informed’ member of any profession, other than the veterinary profession, would have severe misgivings about entrusting decisions to self-interested vets and veterinary support staff.

Prior knowledge and potential conflict of interest

Whilst I do not accept that reviewing the limited financial disclosures of two of the three Committee members has much if any bearing on the level of taint, that line of enquiry may have some utility in respect to Mr Price’s own income. Without, of course, suggesting his emoluments are corrupt, but at the same time saying they are of significance, then I believe we need to consider Mr Price’s past, present and future earnings from the RCVS.

[An internet search reveals](#) that Mr Price has been Legal Assessor to the Disciplinary Committee of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons since 2007.

His client, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (and the UK veterinary schools and wider profession from whence the RCVS Council is derived), is now accused of gross malfeasance by virtue of facilitating the mass poisoning of pets, the defrauding of pet owners and the defrauding of veterinary students. The RCVS is then further accused of exercising undue influence as a means to covering up or obscuring its malfeasance.

In the course of the [last 21 Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons elections](#) many hundreds of fair-minded and informed veterinary surgeons have agreed with this characterisation of RCVS conduct.

The question needs to be put regarding Mr Price’s prior knowledge of the accusations against his client and supported by the votes of many hundreds of informed veterinarians in the ten years since 2007.

Did he know, when did he know and to what extent did he know? What was his ongoing advice to his client?

If in the event Mr Price did not know about the allegations — of which the [RCVS was aware since 1992](#) — then we should be informed as to why the RCVS chose not to tell its legal advisor about grave allegations of continuing misconduct.

In the event that aggrieved pet owners and [aggrieved former vet students bring actions](#) against Mr Price's client, the RCVS, then we can assume that his client will suffer loss of credibility and likely be exposed to damages claims in the many millions of pounds.

Mr Price clearly has a duty to protect his client's interests. However both the selection of unbiased members of the Challenge Committee and the work of the duly formed Challenge Committee threaten to adversely affect the position of the RCVS.

In light of his conflicting advice provided to date and his current and ongoing responsibilities to the RCVS, I suggest that Mr Price is himself conflicted.

A familiar truism states that no man can serve two masters. Accordingly I believe that Mr Price should recuse himself from any further involvement in the Challenge procedure.

Your early advice on all matters would be appreciated.

Your sincerely,



Tom Lonsdale

