1. Executive Summary

1.1 This review and report on the complaints process of the College of Veterinarians of British Columbia was commissioned by the College in October 2021 and was completed in April 2022. The review was conducted by Harry Cayton, Professional Regulation and Governance, and Greg Cavouras of Sugden, McFee & Roos LLP.

1.2 The review was required to evaluate and report on the complaints process used by the College in terms of its efficiency and effectiveness, its compliance with the College's legislation and bylaws and against the Standards of Good Regulation for Complaints, and to make recommendations.

1.3 In 2015, there was a finding against the College's predecessor by the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal. That finding has adversely affected the reputation and performance of the College but related to events from many years ago. It was not the subject of this review.

1.4 This review focuses on the performance by the College of one of the four key roles of a professional regulator; that of effective, efficient and fair complaints management.

1.5 The review considers College's performance within the legal framework in which it operates. It concludes that the College can and should significantly improve its performance within the current framework, although in the longer term some amendments to legislation and bylaws would be helpful.

1.6 The review assesses the performance of the College against the Standards of Good Regulation for Complaints, and finds that the College partially meets two Standards out of ten. The College does not meet eight of the ten Standards.

1.7 Twenty-four recommendations for improvements in the College's communications, complaints processes, decision-making, transparency and data collection, and resource allocation are set out.

1.8 Briefly stated, the review concludes that a rethink of the College's complaints process is required. The review recommends a serious and energetic programme of improvement, along with a commitment to providing the College's CEO with the necessary resources, so that the College can deliver on its mandate of public protection and become an efficient and effective handler of complaints.