Bovine TB and puppy farming top BVA agenda at Welsh dinner

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BVA president Harvey Locke was speaking at the annual BVA Welsh dinner, held at City Hall, Cardiff on June 28.

On the review of scientific evidence on eradicating bovine TB and badger culling, Mr Locke, addressing minister for environment and sustainable development John Griffiths and guests, said: “As veterinary scientists we are fully committed to science-based policy, but we believe that work has already been done. We are concerned that any further delay to the implementation of a targeted cull will simply result in further devastation to Welsh herds.

“However, we do acknowledge your stated desire that the review be completed within a short timeframe and we appreciate your commitment to that. We are also very keen to see a strong veterinary representation on the review panel.”

On puppy farming regulations, Mr Locke said: "The Welsh Government took a bold step forward and then two steps back. In March the then-minister announced that new regulations to
tackle puppy farming would not be introduced. I implore you to put this issue back at the top of the Government’s agenda. Too often veterinary surgeons see the devastating consequences of poor breeding practices.

“A huge amount of work has already been completed by experts in the field and bold policies proposed. I can assure you that you will have the full support of the veterinary profession.”

Turning to the subject of tuition fees, Mr Locke said: “The Welsh Government has announced its intention to subsidise the undergraduate education of Welsh students attending UK universities. This is a commendable policy that the BVA warmly welcomes.

“We are keen to work with governments in both Cardiff and Westminster to encourage and inspire the next generation of veterinary surgeons in Wales.”