

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes
5 February 2015

Present: 10 members were present at the meeting with 1 person in attendance.

Apologies: Apologies were received from 4 members.

Minutes

14/1 The minutes of the meeting on 15th June 2014 were received and approved by those members who had attended the meeting.

Introduction, welcome and background

14/2 The Chair introduced herself, invited introductions from the Committee and welcomed new members.

14/3 Following introductions, the Chair explained that the Committee had been reconstituted to address recent legislative changes and to draw in a broad cross-section of members. The Committee would focus on animal welfare and act to ensure that all legal requirements and ethical aspects of animal research would be considered on behalf of the University.

Establishment Licence (PEL) holder's report

14/4 The Committee was told that the findings of the Brown Report, following an expose at another establishment, had resulted in an impetus for change and that consideration had been given to how transparency could be improved. In terms of AWERB reform the decision had been taken to appoint a lay member of the University's governing body as Chair of the reconstituted AWERC. The Committee would report on an annual basis to the governing body so that its responsibilities could be discharged effectively.

14/5 To address the tendency to concentrate on PPL applications and to focus more on the proactive work of the Committee a new pattern of six meetings a year had been established.

14/6 Allied to this was the proposal that PPL non-technical summaries and AWERC minutes should be published. During discussion the need to protect individual identities was stressed and acknowledged and it was agreed that only approved minutes should be published. **RESOLVED:** To draft a plan, for the next meeting, concerning how PPL holders and new applicants would be notified of this decision and to draft a proposed timetable for publication of approved minutes. **ACTION: PEL holder, NVS and NIO**

14/7 With regard to operation of facilities the Brown Report made some recommendations to overcome difficulties in relation to dispersed facilities. A group working under the University Executive Group (UEG) had concluded that the animal facilities should be brought under one management structure to establish a common approach and establishment-wide culture of care. A manager had recently been appointed who would work with a small strategic committee towards matching facility provision with the Strategic Plan.

14/8 The PEL holder shared early thinking about the long term provision of animal facilities at the University (looking 10 to 20 years ahead). The UEG group has continued to consider whether the facilities should be brought together on one site in consideration of essential building work and linked to the review of academic strategy. Discussions were reported to still be in a state of flux.

14/9 It was agreed that the Concordat of Openness would be included in the Agenda for the next meeting.

Membership

Received paper AWERC/14/01 for information

14/10 In reviewing membership, existing expertise had been maintained through the Named Persons and PPL/PIL holders but the University had also been keen to introduce new scientific lay members.

14/11 The Committee was asked to consider what expertise might be missing, e.g. student members, and bring proposals for additional representation to the next meeting. **ACTION: All**

Terms of reference and schedule of business

Received papers AWERC/14/02 and AWERC /14/03

14/12 The Terms of Reference had been approved by Council and the Committee was asked to consider how a number of points might be met. The schedule of business was presented as a fluid document to be revised and updated as required. **RESOLVED:** To take these points in order and revise the schedule of business accordingly. For the next meeting a small group were asked consider points a) and b) and update the schedule as necessary: **ACTION: NVS, NACWOs and NIO**

14/13 It was **AGREED** that other amendments to the schedule of business could be done by electronic means with any changes to be notified to the administrator, incorporated and brought to the next meeting. **ACTION: All.**

14/14 The Committee was advised that an annual meeting would take place, in July, to take a strategic look at the work of the Committee and agree a draft report to Council.

Named Veterinary Surgeon/Training and Competence Officer's Report

Received paper AWERC/14/04

14/15 The NVS/NTCO reported on recent Home Office inspections; Home Office risk assessment; project and personal licence numbers and issues relating to the availability of space for conventional work.

14/16 It was reported that two thirds of PIL conversions had been completed and that the majority of annual return of procedures to the Home Office had been submitted. With regard to retrospective severity reporting it was **AGREED** that deviations from the prospective severity assessment should be reported to the Committee. **ACTION: Administrator**

14/17 No animal welfare issues were reported.

14/18 The Committee was told that a number of integrated unit management IT systems (bringing together unit management, training and competence and experimental records) had been reviewed to determine their suitability for use at the University. It was reported that this had a bearing on animal welfare and was necessary to replace existing systems which staff were unable to maintain and develop. The urgent need for the University to procure an IT system for recording supervision, training and competence to enable the NTCO responsibilities to be discharged effectively was stressed.

University of Leeds Biomedical Services Executive Committee Report

Paper AWERC/14/06 circulated following the meeting

14/19 It was reported that the ULBS Executive Committee had met and that terms of reference and membership, comprising representatives of both Faculties to represent all interests, had been approved.

14/20 There had been strong support for the purchase of an integrated unit management IT system, as raised in the NVS/NTCO report, and ULBS could confirm that funds would be available to support the purchase of a suitable system.

- 14/21 The Committee was told that plans for the establishment of a pre-clinical imaging facility, providing various options for imaging live animals, were underway.
- 14/22 Concerns reported included the limited availability of space in for conventional use and the financial deficit which had exceeded expectations.
- 14/23 It was **AGREED** that the ULBS report would be circulated following the meeting and that future reports would be circulated with the Agenda for information. **ACTION: Administrator and ULBS representatives.**

PPL applications/amendments/reviews

Received paper AWERC/14/05 for information

- 14/24 The NVS explained the fast-track process for minor PPL amendments and it was **AGREED** that this fast-track process could continue with details of the changes reported to the Committee. **ACTION: NVS**
- 14/25 The Committee was told that the University would be participating in the ASPeL pilot for project licence applications and that this might impact on the operation of the application process with regard to the AWERB.
- 14/26 It was **AGREED** that the process for retrospective review of projects should be considered and proposals discussed at the next meeting. Members to submit suggestions for different approaches for retrospective review to the administrator. **ACTION: All**

Application A311

- 14/27 There was some concern over the extent of the plan of work and it was agreed that the applicant should be asked to limit its scope, provide specific details in relation to this and provide more clarity as to what will be done.
- 14/28 Also the applicant should be asked to provide justification for the use of the species requested as this appeared to be absent from the application.
- 14/29 The Committee agreed that the 3Rs section of the application had not been completed appropriately and that the applicant should be asked to rectify this by providing information about how each of the 3Rs had been considered and addressed.
- 14/30 The size and number of implants to be undertaken in a single animal was unclear so the applicant should be asked to explain, clarify and justify this.
- 14/31 The Committee considered the availability of facilities for the species in the application and it was agreed that specific requirements such as the need for isolation and duration of work should be discussed with the NACWO concerned.
- 14/32 It was **AGREED** that the applicant should be asked to revise the application according to the comments and concerns of the Committee and re-submit to the next meeting. **ACTION: administrator**

Acknowledgements

- 14/33 The PEL holder expressed his thanks to a number of Named Persons for their work during a very difficult period since the death of the former manager.

Date of next meeting

- 14/34 2.00pm on Monday 16 March 2015.
All advance meeting dates to be circulated to members.