

University of Leeds, Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Committee

Minutes 15 February 2021

8 members of the Committee joined the meeting with one person in attendance.

Minutes

20/59 The minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2020 were received and approved.

Matters arising

20/60 Recognition of the retirement of an academic member had been overlooked at the previous meeting. The Chair agreed to write to the former member to thank him.

ACTION: Administrator and Chair.

Establishment Licence (PEL) holder and Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) update

(Received paper AWERC/20/12)

20/61 Two environment management issues reported by the Named Animal Care and Welfare Officers (NACWOs) had been identified and reported quickly by unit staff. These had been resolved rapidly and promptly by Estates Services and animal welfare had not been affected.

20/62 A letter had been received from the Home Office (HO) compliance team in relation to the non-compliance issue reported to the Committee in December (M 20/38). The letter set out the facts reported to the HO and it was anticipated that the University would receive a further letter with the outcome of the compliance team's investigation in due course.

20/63 Two Condition 18 reports on two separate project licences had been submitted to the HO. Thorough investigations had been conducted in each case and sent to the HO promptly. In both cases the reports had been accepted and filed with no further action being necessary. The responses from the HO to Condition 18 reports had been provided for information.

20/64 Consideration had been given to the best way to manage cover during the long term sickness absence of a key member of unit staff. Arrangements had been discussed and agreed with Faculty management for temporary cover and, in relation to this, temporary NACWO cover by a fully trained senior staff member had also been agreed.

20/65 A number of project licence (PPL) applications submitted to the HO during 2020 were still in progress. Two additional inspectors had been asked to assist with assessment of those applications. Discussions had taken place regarding one application to identify separate service and research aspects of the application, which would enable the HO to conduct its assessment. Further delay had been due to the applicant's training having lapsed during the lengthy period that the application had been in progress. The HO inspector had asked for training to be repeated.

20/66 The Sub-group tasked with undertaking PPL mid-term reviews (M 19/89) had almost caught up with reviews due during 2020. The Committee agreed that the Sub-group should continue to conduct mid-term reviews and that licences requiring formal retrospective assessment by the HO would continue to be brought to the full Committee for consideration.

Project licence application A369

20/67 The NVS reported that a number of Condition 18 reports had been submitted to the HO in relation to a severe protocol under the current PPL. The applicant explained that the new application would be a partial continuation of work under this PPL.

20/68 Following a presentation discussion was mainly concerned with the number of animals experiencing severe severity, what their experience would be and the likelihood of sudden, unexpected death. It was anticipated that a very small number, around 1% of animals on the severe protocol, were likely to be affected. Consultation with the HO inspector and colleagues had concluded that monitoring was appropriate for the work. With no signs of adverse effects being evident prior to sudden death the consensus had been that animal suffering was unlikely.

20/69 There was also some discussion of a potential future alternative for parts of the research. Since this work was being done at the University the licensee would remain informed of any developments relevant to the project.

20/70 The Committee considered the application to be very well written and well explained. The length of the application was noted and the NVS advised that issues with the current format of PPL applications had been well reported and that the HO was aware of the problems.

20/71 The Chair asked the applicant to review and revise the short lay paragraph.

PPL reviews

(Received paper AWERC/20/13)

20/72 The Committee received the updated list of reviews for information.

Membership

(Received AWERC/20/14)

20/73 Membership details were received for information. Since the Committee's remit was to provide assurance on animal care and welfare and on scientific procedures, the PEL holder reminded the Committee that it had to ensure that different perspectives were represented. The Committee relied on members to provide scientific and statistical advice; to give assurance that procedures were appropriately designed and that an appropriate number of animals would be used; to ensure that the cost benefit balance had been properly assessed; and to receive a lay perspective.

20/74 It was agreed that members would be contacted regarding their attendance and the balance of representation at each meeting. The NACWOs would be asked to agree an annual rota of attendance. Consideration would be given to the appointment of

another lay member and the unit manager would be asked to attend meetings upon his return to work. Action: Administrator and PEL holder.

20/75 The NVS offered to identify a student member to join the Committee. Action: NVS.

Schedule of Business

(Received AWERC/20/15)

20/76 The Schedule of business was received for information.

Being an effective member of an Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)

(Received AWERC/20/16)

20/77 The infographic produced by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) was received for information. At a recent RSPCA Lay Members' Forum meeting AWERBs were being encouraged to develop a culture of care statement. It was proposed that a statement should be developed to incorporate elements which the Committee touched on in reports which would provide a focus and something for the Committee to measure against. It was agreed that this should be added to the Agenda for the next meeting. Action: Administrator.

Other business - training

20/78 The NVS reported that the last in-house licensee training course had been run in October 2020 and that a further session had been provided for PhD students who would not be doing any regulated work. Prospective personal licensees were being asked to attend external, virtual, theory courses which would be followed by local induction, practical training and assessment when access to the facilities was possible. Training was being monitored and recorded to ensure that all mandatory training modules had been completed.

20/79 The NVS reported on staffing changes at [Redacted](#). A new veterinarian had been appointed and the manager would be leaving shortly. The NVS would ensure that good contact would be maintained.

Date of next meeting

20/80 The next meeting would be held on 8 April at 1400 on Microsoft Teams.