

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes
27 July 2016

Present: 9 members were present at the meeting (1 via conferencing) with 1 person in attendance.
Apologies: Apologies were received from 7 members.

Minutes

15/95 The minutes of the meeting on 27 May 2016 were received and approved.

Matters arising

Received AWERC/15/24

15/96 The update on actions was received for information. A letter regarding agreement in principle had been provided in respect of the potential transfer of US National Institute of Health research funds to the University which would require US Foreign Institutions' Public Health Service Approved Animal Welfare Assurance to allow the funds to be transferred. However, it was reported that no further communication had been received regarding this matter.

PPL applications

A326

15/97 Since the applicant was unable to attend the meeting the Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) explained the nature of the project. The Committee was told that the application was to test the function of tissue engineering scaffold structures to establish proof of concept prior to clinical trials. Matters discussed included the use of histological assessment after three months to judge the success of the structures and whether the small number of animals requested would be sufficient to determine whether work should proceed. It was agreed that further information about the benefits of the work should be included in the lay paragraph. A number of changes were discussed which would be conveyed to the applicant and incorporated before submission of the application to the Home Office.

A325

15/98 The applicant was welcomed to the meeting and introduced to the Committee. The Committee was told that the project would examine sensory neural circuits, focusing on the function of the olfactory bulb. The project would aim to identify defects in the sense of smell which can show up long before any memory related impairments and lead to a better understanding of neurodegenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease. Discussions included the use of optical methods to examine multiple effects simultaneously therefore reducing the number of animals required for the study. The minor severity limit was noted. Arising from discussions a number of suggested changes were proposed including further technical explanation in the project plan regarding each of the sub-headings in the protocol and power analysis details which the applicant agreed to incorporate.

15/99 The Chair observed that the short lay paragraph for both applications would benefit from further explanation of potential benefits and it was agreed that the communications team should be asked to assist both applicants with revising the information. **Action:**
Administrator.

Establishment Licence (PEL) holder's update

15/100 The PEL holder gave a brief report following a meeting, involving the Chair and the Head of Engagement from Understanding Animal Research (UAR), regarding the University's plans for addressing the Concordat on Openness commitments. Discussions were reported to have included proposals for the web pages and visits to the animal facilities for staff and external visitors, as previously agreed and actioned by the Committee. Some suggestions for improving internal openness were suggested by UAR including the possibility of open-days and an acknowledgement of animal research at the University in recruitment information. It was agreed that the latter would be raised with Human Resources. **Action: PEL holder**

NVS's update and AWERB Hub meeting

15/101 The NVS reported that one Condition 18 report had been submitted to the Home Office since the last meeting which had been accepted by the Home Office with no further action being required.

15/102 The NVS had attended the first AWERB Northern Regional Hub meeting, which had been attended by 19 representatives (in various Named roles) from 10 establishments. Notes from the Hub had been circulated for information prior to the meeting along with information regarding the operation of the host establishment's AWERB and the Committee was told that due to this being the largest hub it was likely that it might be divided in future should another northern licenced establishment offer to host another hub. The main outcomes of the meeting included an agreement to share information on how local AWERBs are run and a decision from the Animals in Science Committee Chair to consider how hubs could share good practice and influence other AWERBs. It was expected that the hubs would continue to meet annually.

Draft Annual Report to Council

AWERC/15/25 to be circulated

15/103 The Committee was told that the draft report was in preparation and would be circulated in due course. It was noted that the final report would be made available on the University's web pages along with other Council papers. **Action: Administrator.**

Review of Schedule of Business

Received AWERC/15/26

15/104 The updated Schedule of Business was received for information.

NACWOs' Report

Received AWERC/15/27

15/105 The unit manager advised that the period since the last meeting had been relatively quiet with no issues to report. The Committee was told about changes in NACWO cover, approved by the Home Office in June, which would align operations on both sites. The increase in NACWO support was welcomed by the Committee. Staff annual leave over summer and other staff absences were being managed so that there would be no impact on animal welfare.

15/106 The Committee was told that the purchase order for an integrated unit management software system had been placed, following completion of the procurement process, and that IT personnel would be dealing with installation to provide access to the system to staff both sites.

PPL amendments, applications and reviews

Received AWERC/15/28

15/107 A summary of project licence amendments submitted to the Home Office since the last meeting was received for information.

Mid-term Reviews

MR010

15/108 Because only a limited amount of work had been done under the project it was agreed that the Committee should establish whether there was a need for the licence to continue.

ACTION: NVS and unit manager.

MR011

15/109 No concerns were raised regarding the work and animal numbers were well within the limit permitted. It was noted that no information regarding animal welfare improvements had been included and the Committee also observed that licensees were not consulting with the unit staff when completing the review form. However, it was acknowledged that, with animals already being maintained at a high standard, it was not always possible to keep introducing welfare improvements.

15/110 It was agreed that the schedule of project licence reviews would be considered at the meeting in September, as indicated in the Schedule of Business, by which time the backlog of reviews should have been cleared. It should then be possible to consider inviting licence holders to attend meetings during which their work would be reviewed.

15/111 It was agreed that it would be helpful if project licence protocols could be submitted along with the review form for mid-term and retrospective reviews. **ACTION: Administrator.**

15/112 The NVS advised that one project which had been identified for formal retrospective assessment by the Home Office would be submitted for review at the next meeting. Following this review the Committee would be required to submit a report to the Home Office (normally within three months of the due date which in this case is 17th October 2016).

Date of next meeting

15/113 0900 – 1100 on Tuesday 27th September. The Date for the re-scheduled November meeting would be circulated in due course. **ACTION: Administrator**