

# University of Leeds, Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Committee

## Minutes 28 September 2021

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

### Minutes

21/1 The minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2021 were received and approved.

### Matters Arising

21/2 The Chair asked for membership to be included on the Agenda for the January meeting (M20/120).

21/3 The awaited ASRU response would be covered in the report under Agenda item 4 (M20/122).

21/4 The draft Annual Report to Council was being finalised to include an update on the compliance matter (M20/132).

21/5 The administrator was asked to re-circulate meeting dates. ACTION: Administrator.

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

(Received paper AWERC/21/01)

21/6 After a lengthy wait a response from the Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU) compliance team, seeking clarification of one of the points, had been received. A reply would be sent to the Home Office (HO) after relevant details had been checked with the researcher concerned.

21/7 One standard condition 18 (SC18) report had been sent to ASRU the previous day requiring a last-minute addition to the report. One mouse, out of 9 that had been injected with cancer cells in the brain, had been found dead on the last day of the study, 12 days after injection. The post-mortem report indicated the cause of death was brain haemorrhage resulting in instant death without suffering. A response from the ASRU compliance team was awaited.

21/8 The unit manager remained on sick leave and steps were being taken to appoint an interim facility manager. Discussions were underway about the future of the facility at REDACTED.

21/9 ASRU had convened meetings with stakeholders regarding how SC18 reports should be submitted. Three places for these sessions had been offered to each establishment and the NTCO, NIO and a NACWO would attend. The slides and outputs from the meetings would be shared after the last meeting had taken place and there was an expectation that information would then be cascaded to licensees by the attendees.

### ASRU new operating model

(Received paper AWERC/21/02)

- 21/10 Periodic updates from ASRU were being received and groups, including the PEL Holders' Forum and Home Office Liaison, Training and Information Forum, were continuing to monitor developments closely. Discussion of the paper was deferred until the next meeting when the updated SC18 information should have been received.

### **Named Animal Care and Welfare Officers' (NACWO) Report**

(Received paper AWERC/21/03)

- 21/11 Due to the ongoing absence of the facilities manager senior staff had been invited to express an interest in the temporary position until the long-term situation could be resolved. The Committee acknowledged the importance of resolving this along with other ongoing staff and staff training matters.
- 21/12 Concerns over plans for checking oil levels and servicing of the backup generator over winter were reported. The Committee would be kept informed.

### **Draft updated Terms of Reference**

(Received paper AWERC/21/04)

- 21/13 The Committee agreed to the proposed change to the terms of reference.

### **Culture of Care**

(Received paper AWERC/21/05)

- 21/14 The importance of culture of care with respect to people and animals at the University was acknowledged. It was agreed that the Committee should take the opportunity to test the University's culture of care against the questions contained in the paper. A small group would be established which, in conjunction with academic colleagues and triangulation within the wider University community, would put forward proposals for the Committee. ACTION: PEL holder.

### **Project licence applications**

- 21/15 The applications to be considered were for continuation of work under existing licences. Comments received from two members prior to the meeting had been sent to the applicants and members were invited to send further scientific queries and editorial comments on the applications to the administrator after the meeting. The NVS advised that there would be a short period for ongoing revision of applications following the meeting. ACTION: All.

### **A375**

- 21/16 The applicant's presentation covered animal welfare and 3Rs considerations, including the timing of procedures during the sleep period; a video demonstration of how animals were able to move freely following procedures without showing stress; the pro-active sharing of tissues and the use of imaging to collect as much data as possible whilst using fewer animals. With regard to previous work the applicant confirmed that procedures had been refined to ensure the highest recovery and best welfare for the animals and the assistance from technical staff was acknowledged.
- 21/17 Subject to the incorporation of proposed changes it was agreed that the application

could be submitted to the HO.

**A376**

21/18 The applicant was asked to edit the short lay paragraph to remove complex language and to incorporate further information about the 3Rs. The applicant explained how in-vitro pilot studies had reduced the need for in-vivo experiments and as a consequence this had led to a reduction in the number of animals used. Animals were used in cases where cell lines do not have the circuitry needed for the study. Measures to address animal welfare and the 3Rs had included increased use of tissue bank storage; sharing of breeding lines and surplus animals; sharing of animal tissues; the use of terminal procedures; and providing animals with heat, warm saline and wet mash following procedures. The applicant explained how power calculations, randomization and blinding had been applied and provided information regarding CPD.

21/19 The Committee agreed that the application could be submitted to the HO once changes proposed by members had been incorporated. The short lay paragraph should be amended and sent to the administrator.

**A377**

21/20 The applicant was asked to add details of the 3Rs to the short lay paragraph and to refine some of the complex language used. The applicant explained that the project would involve fundamental research, initially, then look for ways to manipulate cells or pathways to target and improve anti-cancer function. Power calculations from the NC3Rs Experimental Design Assistant had been used and randomization and blinding were applied where practicable. With regard to the 3Rs, the use of homozygous colonies and breeding plans allowed for efficient breeding; multiple parameters were studied in single animals and imaging was used for longitudinal studies. Close consultation with the NVS and unit staff would be ongoing throughout the project.

21/21 The NVS advised that an outline of breeding strategy might be required by the HO. The Committee agreed that the application could be submitted to the HO following incorporation of changes received from members and the short lay paragraph should be amended as requested.

**A377**

21/22 The applicant was asked to include the 3Rs in the lay paragraph which was considered to be rather long. The application was to aid development of diagnostic tools then work towards therapeutic interventions. Some research had been done using in-vitro models through which cell lines had provided some indication of cell growth to inform the work. The licensee had also collaborated with a researcher working with brain organoids. However, the use of alternative methods would not replicate the effects in a whole animal. The applicant explained how tests had been selected in order to avoid causing lasting pain. The use of more harmful tests would be limited and for moderate severity protocols the researcher would seek to cause the least pain possible by applying appropriate endpoints to studies. The applicant had received a grant from NC3Rs to develop a new lower species study.

21/23 The NVS advised that an outline of breeding strategy might be required by the HO. The Committee agreed that the application could be submitted to the HO once changes had been made to the application and short lay paragraph.

### **Project licence review for Retrospective Assessment S5B52**

21/24 The Committee noted that a review of the project had been completed earlier in the year when a new application had been submitted for consideration. The new licence had since been granted by the HO. Considerations for the review and Retrospective Assessment form included fulfillment of aims; actual against predicted harms; the number of animals used on each protocol and the overall numbers on the project which had been in line with expectations; SC18 reports submitted to the HO following sudden animal deaths; and the monitoring regime which had been agreed with the HO. Subsequent HO inspector comments had given no indication that monitoring could have been improved further. Publications arising from the work had been provided.

21/25 No concerns were raised, and the licensee was asked to refine one section of the review before submitting the final version to the HO.

### **Schedule of Business**

(Received AWERC/21/06)

21/26 The Schedule of business was received for information.

### **Other Business**

21/27 Dates of relevant meetings would be circulated to members. Action: Administrator.

### **Date of next meeting**

21/28 The next meeting would be held on Monday 22 November at 1400 on Microsoft Teams.