

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes
16 March 2015

Present: 11 members were present at the meeting with 1 person in attendance.

Apologies: Apologies were received from 3 members.

Minutes

14/35 The minutes of the meeting on 5th February 2015 were received and approved with an amendment to Min.14.11 that proposals for additional representation should be brought to the July meeting. **ACTION: All.**

Concordat on Openness

14/36 The University, along with about one third of Russell Group members, was still considering whether to sign the Concordat. Key factors still being addressed included resource implications for communication with the media and the potential impact of facilitating external visits to the animal units. Regardless of this decision positive steps were being made to ensure compliance with the broad principles of openness through plans for publication of non-technical summaries (NTS), something which had not been done by other establishments. A paper would be brought to the next meeting. **ACTION: PEL holder.**

14/37 Proposals for the publication of NTS were presented by the NVS. Following discussion it was agreed that information from the NTS should be published and that the AWERC should seek to ensure that these would be of suitable quality for publication. PPL holders and prospective PPL holders would be notified of plans for publication of NTS (project licence applications received from January 2015 onwards) and invited to comment. Any objections would be brought to the next meeting. **ACTION: PEL holder, NVS and administrator.**

14/38 NTS for existing PPLs (granted before January 2015) would have to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Consideration should be given to what is practical and proposals brought to the next meeting. **ACTION: NVS and administrator.**

Terms of Reference 1a) and 1b)

Received paper AWERC/14/07

14/39 The Committee acknowledged the work already being done in respect of these two points. During discussions the PEL holder stressed the importance of the Committee having a clear understanding of how each point was being met in order to provide credible information in the annual report. It was suggested that following an internal audit of record keeping it might be useful for the auditors to be asked to focus on delivery to ensure that evidence could be provided in support of any statements made. Members were asked to consider ways of testing effectiveness. **ACTION: All.**

Schedule of Business

Received paper AWERC/14/08 for information

14/40 The updated schedule of business was received for information. This schedule would be updated on an ongoing basis with points 1c) and d) to be considered at the meeting in May.

NACWO's Reports

Received paper AWERC/14/09 and AWERC/14/10 for information

14/41 The Committee was told that a number of unexpected deaths had occurred in transit when diabetic mice had been shipped to the University by an international supplier. The NACWO advised that this could have been due to fluctuations in temperature or delays in transit to which these animals would have been particularly susceptible. Because of animal welfare concerns, the PPL holder, NVS and NACWO had been working with the company to establish the likely cause and identify possible solutions. In-house breeding was being looked at as another option but other ethical considerations such as fluctuating demand would have to be carefully weighed before a final decision could be made. The Committee was satisfied with the steps already taken and requested an update for the next meeting. **ACTION: NACWO and NVS.**

14/42 The Committee supported the opportunity for greater flexibility through staff being able to move between units. Other personnel matters raised in the reports would be referred to those responsible. **ACTION: NACWOs**

Animal Use Summary 2014

Received paper AWERC/14/11 for information

14/43 The Committee noted that the increase in the use of mice during 2014 had been in line with expectations and reflective of national statistics. It was acknowledged that this trend would be likely to continue in view of current research strategy.

14/44 Flexibility of space and strategy for the animal units was briefly discussed and the Chair asked the Named Persons to inform the Committee should animal welfare be put at risk due to increasing demands on space. The NACWOs assured the Committee that use of the facilities was tightly managed and controlled through detailed planning with researchers before any work could commence so animal welfare would not be at risk as a result.

NVS Brief

14/45 The NVS reported on a recent change of Home Office Inspector and a number of changes to the Schedule of Premises which would be submitted to the Home Office for amendment effective from April 2015.

PPL Amendments and Reviews

Received paper AWERC/14/12 for information

14/46 Two minor amendments to PPLs had been received and fast-tracked since the last meeting.

14/47 Options for PPL review were discussed and the Committee agreed that half way through a project the PPL holder should be invited to present their work to the Committee either in a short presentation or talk. A list of PPLs would be brought to the next meeting so that a programme for reviews could be agreed. Brief instructions indicating two or three things for the PPL holders to focus on would also be drafted. **ACTION: Administrator.**

Application A311.1

14/48 The Committee agreed that the application had been greatly improved; the research was important; the work should be supported and that there were no welfare concerns. However, a number of points still needed to be addressed and overall the application would benefit from greater clarity and consistency.

14/49 Comments on the application would be conveyed to the applicant along with a request to re-write the Non-Technical Summary in lay terms. **ACTION: Administrator.**

ASPeL Update

14/50 ASPeL would be taken down for a period of five to six weeks during July and August for the Home Office to set up the PPL process. Recent indications were that the system had been improved considerably and that the AWERB process would now be done offline.

Other Business

14/51 The Home Office Inspector should be advised of advance meeting dates. **ACTION: Administrator.**

14/52 A sheet providing updates on matters arising should be brought to the next meeting. **ACTION: Administrator.**

14/53 Following recent supplier demonstrations the options for purchase of an integrated unit management software system had been narrowed down to three possibilities.

Date of next meeting

14/54 10.00am on Tuesday 19th May 2015.