

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

**ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Minutes  
15 September 2015

**Present:** 9 members were present at the meeting with 2 people in attendance.

**Apologies:** Apologies were received from 5 members.

**Minutes**

14/97 The minutes of the meeting on 2 July 2015 were received and approved.

**Matters Arising**

*Received paper AWERC/14/26*

14/98 A reminder to PPL holders to provide details of benefits had been sent and further responses received. These had been summarised and examples were being chosen for inclusion in the University's Annual Report.

14/99 The Chair reported that, having produced a paper on benefits of research, the had offered to provide information to assist with this if required.

**AWERC report to Council**

14/100 The report to Council had been well received, very few questions had been raised and there were no negative comments. It was noted that there had been no increase in interest following the meeting apart from one question, in relation to the number of animals used, which had been answered.

**NVS Report**

*Received paper AWERC/14/35*

14/101 Two visits from the Home Office (HO) had taken place since the last AWERC meeting. During the first unannounced visit the inspector observed procedures carried out on large animals and seemed impressed with the atmosphere in the operating theatre and with the way in which the work was carried out. The second was a joint visit with the Chief Inspector which involved a visit to one of the animal units, meetings with a number of researchers and an opportunity to look, in general, at the way we work. The Chief inspector had also appeared to be pleased.

14/102 The Animals Scientific Procedures e-Licensing system (ASPeL) is still out of service but should be available from 17<sup>th</sup> September for early adopters, including the University, to submit both personal and project licence applications. One none-urgent project application had been deferred in order to be submitted through ASPeL, this would be presented to the next meeting.

14/103 Two condition 18 reporting forms had been completed. One was in relation to a mouse found dead on a moderate severity protocol; the post-mortem had shown tumour mass to be the cause of death. The second was a sudden death of a mouse on a heart failure protocol for which sudden deaths had been anticipated as a possibility. In both instances the HO had filed the reports with no concerns being raised.

14/104 Plans for development of imaging facilities were reported to be ongoing. Similarly, plans for location of the wind tunnel were still being considered and once a site had been agreed the HO would be invited to look at the proposals and advise. A member stressed the urgent need for the wind tunnel to be permanently situated to enable work to be done. The Chair agreed to raise these issues in order to elevate them through appropriate channels. **ACTION: Chair**

14/105 Following her attendance at the last AWERC meeting the HO Inspector had been positive about the way the Committee works and had asked for our agreement to take back and communicate aspects of good practice to be shared with colleagues at the HO and other establishments.

14/106 The Chair asked whether the HO provide written reports following Inspectors' visits and was told that reports were only received in cases where specific problems had been identified in association with a particular project, site or issue. The Committee was told that arrangements for routine reporting to establishments were currently being reviewed by ASRU.

**ULBS Report and Animal Welfare Group**

14/107 Nothing to report.

### **Terms of Reference, oversight of functions 1c) to 1f)**

*Received paper AWERC/14/27*

- 14/108 Some minor changes to the document were agreed and the paper would be updated. **ACTION: Administrator**
- 14/109 Suggestions to strengthen reporting included a proposal that staff surveys could be introduced to establish whether researchers and animal care staff felt supported (function 1a). It was agreed that this could be undertaken through the user groups and staff meetings by asking for feedback from participants. Any feedback could then be returned to the user groups, acted upon as necessary, and reported to the Committee. **ACTION: ULBS representatives and NACWOs.**
- 14/110 With regard to promoting awareness of animal welfare and the 3Rs (function 1b), the Chair acknowledged the Committee's reliance on named persons. The possibility of recording details of "spot-checks" was discussed but the Committee agreed that, taking account of the balance between keeping records and prioritising animal care and welfare, this should remain a fluid process.
- 14/111 The Chair was assured that where mandatory training was required the University had robust measures in place to ensure that people could not apply for licences to work under ASPA without successfully completing the requisite training.

### **Schedule of Business**

*Received paper AWERC/14/28*

- 14/112 To be updated following the meeting. **ACTION: Administrator.**

### **Concordat on Openness – information for web pages, non-technical summaries**

*Received AWERC/14/29 to 33 for information*

- 14/113 It was agreed that the information was to be published to inform the public about animal research being done at the University and what benefits it would bring.
- 14/114 The distinction between non-technical summaries (NTS) and lay summaries was acknowledged. After considerable discussion it was agreed that the NTS for granted projects should be uploaded without change from the version submitted to the HO. In future the Committee would request a short paragraph (~400 words) in plain English, at the time of application, to publish on the web site and link to each NTS once the licence was granted. With regard to existing project licences it was agreed that a checklist of what should be included in the lay summary paragraph would be produced (e.g. as an "exam question") and after working with the project licence holders and press office staff as required, an example would be uploaded by the end of the year. **ACTION: to provide information for checklist, to produce a draft checklist.**

### **PPL Reviews**

*Received paper AWERC/14/34*

- 14/115 As no PPL applications or amendments to PPLs had been received since the last meeting the Committee went on to discuss the proposals for PPL reviews.
- 14/116 The practice of conducting a mid-term review for each project would continue. Each project licence holder would be required to complete the review pro-forma and those with projects containing severe protocols would also be asked to deliver a short presentation (maximum 5-10 minutes) to the Committee. With regard to the proposed schedule it was agreed to arrange two presentations for the meeting in November and another in January with all the review forms to be requested as per the details in the schedule. When being asked to submit their reviews project licensees should be sent relevant information from the RSPCA Lay Members' Handbook to inform them about specific points to consider (pp 36 to 38). **ACTION: Administrator.**

### **Other Business**

#### **PEL holders' letters and e-newsletters**

- 14/117 It was agreed that HO circular letters would be distributed to the Committee in future and that the last two issues would be sent following the meeting. **ACTION: Administrator.**

#### **Date of next meeting**

- 14/118 Friday 20 November at 10.00am.