

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

**ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Minutes  
29 September 2017

**Present:** 10 members were present at the meeting with one person in attendance.

**Apologies:** Apologies were received from 6 members.

**Minutes**

17/1 The minutes of the meeting on 6 July 2017 were received and approved.

**Matters arising**

*Received paper AWERC17/01*

17/2 The update on actions was received for information. The Chair noted that other matters would be picked up on the Agenda.

**Establishment Licence (PEL) holder's update**

17/3 The PEL holder extended the Committee's best wishes to the unit manager for a full and speedy recovery from his current illness. He also thanked the staff, particularly the NACWOs, who had stepped up to cover during this long-term absence.

17/4 The Committee's Annual Report had been presented to the Council the previous day, augmented by an addition to cover pigs at .

17/5 One condition 18 report had been reported to the Home Office (HO) since the last meeting which the Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) would report on.

17/6 A new HO, Animals in Science Research Unit (ASRU), Chief Inspector had been appointed from within the Inspectorate.

**Named Veterinary Surgeon's update**

17/7 The NVS advised that the recent appointment of an experienced former Superintending Inspector as the new ASRU Chief Inspector had been welcomed.

17/8 The condition 18 report mentioned in the PEL holder's report concerned the unexpected deaths of 5 out of 36 animals on a severe protocol. During the past 6 years in Leeds no other animal deaths had been experienced on the project. Following investigation it had been concluded that, despite accurate formulation, a substance that had previously been used in a collaborating establishment without adverse effect had caused drug toxicity in animals. As soon as the drug toxicity was noticed action had been taken to abandon the experiment and the remaining animals had been humanely sacrificed. The HO inspector was satisfied with the work done, the actions taken and the investigation and no further action would be taken. The HO inspector and principal investigator are still working to establish why toxicity had been a problem on this occasion when it hadn't been observed before.

17/9 A small problem was reported when a light-clock had been overridden due to an electrical fault, affecting behaviour of rats in an ongoing study. The situation had been rectified when it was discovered. The NVS confirmed that everything was being done to draw attention to the importance of maintaining set light-cycles.

17/10 Discussions were continuing, with Estates Services and researchers, regarding planned refurbishment and the possibility of disturbance to animals due to noise and vibrations. Depending on tests results it may become necessary to de-register up to 3 existing rooms on the Schedule of Premises and register alternative rooms elsewhere for animal use for the duration of the work.

17/11 The had been officially opened, as planned, on 13 July.

### **ULBSC Report**

17/12 The ULBSC had expressed their good wishes for the speedy recovery of the Unit Manager and thanked the NACWOs for maintaining service provision on both sites. Issues discussed at the recent ULBSC meeting included the charging structure, cost recovery and efforts to collect evidence of the cost of animal research in different establishments to start a discussion with the management team. This was being done in consideration of the limitations of funding, particularly where charitable organisations would not fund overhead costs. ULBS had also received an update regarding plans for the construction of new pig facilities at .

17/13 It was reported that work on the new integrated unit management IT system was continuing. Plans had been revised to facilitate a phased roll-out of the essential aspects of the system to individual research groups with a view to having everyone trained and using the system by the year-end. The less essential aspects, "billing" and "study-plans", would be introduced during 2018. It was considered that this approach would help to manage the additional workload for staff.

### **Review of Openness**

17/14 The new animal research web pages were demonstrated and explained. As agreed, AWERC minutes, reports and current PPL summary paragraphs had been uploaded and were now openly available along with links to the PPL non-technical summaries. The few outstanding summaries would be uploaded in due course and information would be maintained in respect of current projects. It was agreed that an archive should be established for the details of terminated projects and the communications team would be asked to provide data regarding visits to the pages. The possibility of providing a 'quick link' from the home page would also be explored. **ACTION: Administrator.**

17/15 The NVS proposed that further development of the pages could include the addition of relevant pictures/ videos and a professionally produced video-tour of the facilities, also agreed previously. This would be discussed with individual researchers and if supported, done under the expert advice of the communications team with the agreement of the PEL holder.

### **PPL Application**

A336

17/16 The Committee considered a PPL application (reference A336). The NVS advised that the PPL applicant had transferred the work to the University under an existing project and was now seeking to obtain a new project licence to continue the work. Discussions included the need for further explanation of what had been accomplished previously; greater clarity of the plan of work and clearer justification of the science; how power calculations related to the overall number of animals requested; how previous non-animal work would inform the work to be done in-vivo and how this in-vivo work would be justified.

17/17 It was agreed that both the application and the short lay paragraph would require further work. Specific comments from members would be conveyed to the applicant who should be required to re-submit the application to the next meeting and to attend. **ACTION: Administrator.**

17/18 The Committee agreed that in future applicants for new PPLs would be required to attend meetings when their applications were to be discussed. The Chair agreed to draft an invitation to include advice on what the Committee would be looking for. **ACTION: Chair and administrator.**

### **Mid-term Review**

MR24

17/19 The Committee undertook a mid-term review (MR24), and discussed in particular a problem raised in the review regarding space. It was agreed that the applicant should be asked to

clarify whether there had been any impact on the research or any negative welfare effect as a result and that this would be reported at the next meeting. The form would be revised to encourage PPL holders to provide more complete information to include problems encountered; impact on the study; and actions taken. **ACTION: Administrator.**

#### **PPL Amendments Summary**

*Received paper AWERC/17/02*

17/20 A summary of PPL amendments since the last meeting was received for information.

#### **PPL Review Schedule**

*Received paper AWERC/16/26*

17/21 The updated schedule for PPL mid-term, final and Section 5B reviews was received for information. The Committee was satisfied with the arrangements for all three types of review and agreed that the existing requirements for licence holders to attend should continue. It was agreed that the administrator should continue to manage the number of reviews and applications for consideration at each meeting and update the schedule accordingly.

#### **Review of Membership**

17/22 A new member was welcomed to the Committee and it was reported that, whilst there were no issues with membership, the Chair had agreed to discuss membership and succession planning with the PEL holder following the meeting.

#### **Putting Ethics into the AWERB**

17/23 The Chair reported on the meeting "Putting Ethics into the AWERB" which had not been exclusively for lay members. Materials from the meeting had been promised and would be circulated in due course.

#### **Schedule of Business**

*Received AWERC/16/29*

17/24 The Committee received the updated schedule of business for information. It was agreed that relevant points in the terms of reference would be added for review during 2018.  
**ACTION: Administrator.**

#### **Other Business**

17/25 The possibility of a seminar from an ethics professional about producing a conceptual checklist to assist with weighing and assessing proposals was suggested. **ACTION: PEL holder to discuss options with colleagues.**

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

17/26 The next meeting would be held at 14.30 on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December.