

The University of Leeds, Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Committee Minutes 20 September 2019

9 members were present at the meeting with one person in attendance.
A new lay member was welcomed and introductions were made.

Minutes

19/1 The minutes of the meeting on 24 July 2019 were received and approved.

Matters arising

Received paper AWERC/19/01

19/2 The update on actions was received for information.

19/3 The project licence (PPL) application to be re-submitted to the Committee (Min 18/116) was still being re-drafted in the new Home Office (HO) e-Licensing (ASPeL) system and would be brought to a future meeting for scrutiny.

Establishment Licence (PEL) holder's update

19/4 The PEL holder reported that a half-day ethics workshop was being prepared, to look at the kind of issues the Committee might consider relating to potential harms and benefits in PPL applications. The workshop would look at real case studies and provide an opportunity for the Committee to consider ways of improving its modus operandi. The PEL holder indicated that a significant turnout would be desirable with all members to be encouraged to attend. Members would be consulted regarding availability for the proposed date in January. The Chair welcomed this as an opportunity for the Committee to consider some key issues which warranted further reflection. ACTION: Administrator to check availability, relevant members to prepare content for the workshop.

19/5 There had been no Condition 18 reports since the last meeting.

19/6 A Continuing Professional Development (CPD) day for licensees was being planned to take place on 9 January to include relevant interactive workshop content.

Chair's Report

19/7 The Chair reported that two of the lay members, accompanied by the Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS), had made a visit to the REDACT in August. During the visit they had been given the opportunity to see animals on a dietary project carried out under farming standards and Places other than the Establishment Licence (POLES) authority and the new facilities which were under development.

19/8 The Committee briefly discussed the question whether the new facilities might include a location for regulated work, and also stressed the importance of the University's ensuring that there was a clear delineation of staff management lines between academic and commercial work.

NVS's update

- 19/9 The NVS presented a short video regarding the PREPARE Guidelines which encouraged a checklist approach and explained how both the PREPARE and ARRIVE Guidelines were flagged to licensees. There was some discussion around the broad issues.
- 19/10 Two rats under a severe protocol were currently under close observation. The Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer (NACWO) confirmed that over three days of monitoring the animals had continued to improve.
- 19/11 An incident of deviation from standard operating procedure relating to a personal licensee working in REDACTED had been observed and immediately rectified by the technical staff. The incident had not affected animal welfare. Immediate action had been taken to ban the personal licensee concerned from the unit and any necessary re-training would be provided. A full follow-up would be undertaken and other users would be informed. During discussion other considerations included whether a tariff of punitive measures might be developed; whether the Committee should communicate directly with licensees on matters such as this; and it was acknowledged that re-training was of key importance. The Committee was invited to reflect on how near-misses could be shared with users. ACTION: All
- 19/12 The NVS presented a summary of the recently published statistics of animal use in the UK for 2018 and observed that animal use at the University was in line with the broad national picture. The Chair asked whether it would be useful for the Committee to see a comparison of the severity data for the last three years. However, members were advised that according to UK/EU requirements the statistics of animal use under the Animals Scientific Procedures Act (ASPA) in relation to severity classification had been compiled for the first time in 2018. Similar figures for previous years were not available.
- 19/13 Whilst some new PPL applications were in preparation in the new Animals in Science e-Licensing (ASPeL) system none had been received in time for consideration at this meeting. There was no indication that there would be a backlog of applications and only one or two applications were expected to be submitted for the next meeting. It was too early to assess the impact of the new system on the application and Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Committee (AWERC) review process.

AWERC report to Council

Received paper AWERC/19/02

- 19/14 The PEL holder advised the Committee that suggestions for additions to the Annual Report made by the Committee at the last meeting had been incorporated into the amended report. There was no further comment from the Committee on the revised draft.

University of Leeds Biomedical Services Committee (ULBSC) report

- 19/15 The NVS advised that the ULBSC had not met since the last meeting.

Review of Terms of Reference oversight

Received paper AWERC/19/03

- 19/16 It was agreed that this should be considered following the workshop in January.
ACTION: Administrator to update the Schedule of Business.
- 19/17 A member observed that the acquisition of animals, an item included in the terms of reference, did not appear on the PREPARE guidelines checklist.

Review of AWERC openness

- 19/18 The Committee reviewed the methods by which it secured as much openness as possible in its work, noting that a significant amount of AWERC information appeared on the University's website. Members acknowledged the importance of visits to the animal facilities, particularly by lay members, to observe procedures; attending relevant parts of the licensee training course were also considered to be important. The possibility of having a student member on the Committee was raised, perhaps from the post graduate community.
- 19/19 A researcher extended an invitation to lay members to observe procedures under his project. ACTION: Administrator to liaise with Chair regarding potential dates.

Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB) Hub meeting

Received paper AWERC/19/04 for information

- 19/20 The Chair explained that the AWERB Hub meeting Agenda had been circulated for information. Members were told that attendance at both AWERB Hub and Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) Lay Members' Forum meetings had been beneficial due to the opportunities for sharing ideas and experiences.

Schedule of business

Received paper AWERC/19/05

- 19/21 The updated Schedule of Business was received for information.

Other business

- 19/22 There was no other business to report.

Date of next meeting

- 19/23 Wednesday 4 December at 1000.