



**STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL  
NOT FOR FURTHER DISCLOSURE**

**Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)**

**The 64<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AWERB will be held virtually via MS Teams on  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021 from 10am - 12pm**

**DRAFT - MINUTES**

**PART I – PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

**Present:** [REDACTED] (Chair), [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED].

**In Attendance:** [REDACTED] (Local Home Office Inspector), [REDACTED] (AWERB Secretary)

**Apologies:** [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

This was the first meeting chaired by the incoming Chair [REDACTED]. The Chair introduced himself to the Body for the benefit of the two lay members. It was felt by the previous Chair [REDACTED], that there wasn't sufficient impartiality and distance for him to continue as Chair to the AWERB especially taking into consideration his other area of responsibility as Establishment Licence Holder. [REDACTED] will however continue as a full member on the AWERB. Our Local Home Office Inspector, [REDACTED] was in attendance at this meeting and the Chair extended a warm welcome to him.

**2. Minutes (AWERB/63/M)**

The Body **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2021.

**3. Matters arising from the Minutes**

The Body **NOTED** current actions outstanding from the previous meetings. There was one action still outstanding, namely for [REDACTED] to send out the e-mail to his researchers in regards to acknowledging and thanking animal technicians for their hard work throughout the pandemic.

## PART II – MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION

## 4. Discussion on the future scope of AWERB and ARG (including agenda structure, membership, good practice, 3Rs, research outputs etc.) (AWERB/64/02a-b)

■ shared a presentation with the group which outlined some suggested areas of discussion regarding the future scope of the AWERB. The incoming Chair, ■ wished to use the opportunity as new Chair to steer the AWERB more towards a focus on Animal Welfare. ■ was in agreement and added that the focus of the meetings should firmly be on the 3Rs.

In regards to the Application Review Group meetings ■ added that the PPL reviews are very science focused whereas the focus on Animal Welfare should be given more emphasis. ■ suggested that perhaps the PowerPoint template for PPL reviews be updated and aligned more with the Home Office application form. ■ added that we need to better communicate why certain procedures are necessary. **Action: ■ to review the PowerPoint template so that the focus is more on the animal experience and align it with the new Home Office PPL application form.**

There was a general discussion regarding whether or not PPL reviews should be conducted at AWERB meetings or continue being reviewed at ARG meetings. The Chair's thoughts were that the reviews were too important to be seconded to ARG meetings and that it would be more appropriate for them to come to the AWERB. The Chair added that this would make AWERB meetings more engaging, especially for our lay members and would also provide the AWERB with better oversight. It was agreed that from this meeting onwards that Retrospective and New PPL reviews would be presented as part of the business of AWERB. **Action: The AWERB Secretary to implement these agreed changes to the business of the AWERB and ARG meetings.**

■ added that a lot of pertinent information regarding animal welfare is carried out during the 'Animal Request Form' application process, when the researcher proposes the work to be carried out in the BRF. How can we feed this oversight into AWERB? ■ suggested that perhaps templates for different types of study are needed. ■ added that there are pre-study meetings and perhaps an overview report of these be presented to the AWERB.

■ suggested that in future meetings we could use a proportion of the meeting to hold a mini-symposium, which would consist of a focused session looking at specific areas of work and research being carried out at the BRF. These areas could be categorized via animal group, and / or areas of research. For example, at one meeting we could invite researchers who are researching vision, at another meeting we could focus on researchers whose research focuses on carrying out surgical procedures on rats. These presentations would have the added benefit of fostering collaboration amongst researchers and providing a forum in which they can come to together. **Action: ■ and ■ to work together to implement this feature in future AWERB meetings with oversight and input from the Chair.**

There was a discussion regarding extending the current membership of the AWERB. It was suggested that early career researchers could sit on the AWERB. ■ voiced her concerns in regards to workload and capacity in regards to inviting ECRs onto the AWERB. ■ suggested

that perhaps a Senior Post-Doctorate colleague would be more appropriate as they are still involved in research and should have greater oversight. ■ noted that this position is not present in every School but that in his opinion it should be. ■ suggested that we invite some non-scientists to join the AWERB, a colleague from the School of Philosophy for example, to gain a fresh perspective. ■ added that there is an open invitation to all researchers to both attend the AWERB as well as approach us regarding presenting something to the AWERB. ■ added that we need to spread this message and communicate this more clearly.

**Action:** ■ suggested that a **Culture of Care Working Group** be set up to look at how we can foster this agenda in our AWERB, and also formulate some annual objectives.

**Membership** to of the Working Group will include, ■, our two lay members, ■ and ■. ■ to arrange the meeting.

**5. Presentations from the NACWO, NTCO and NVS and Key Updates**

**5.1 Named Animal Care & Welfare Officer (NACWO) report (AWERB/64/03)**

■ gave an overview of his report, the refurbishment of the BRF is now complete and was within budget. ■ secured some SEF funding to allow the surgery rooms to be repainted. Regarding the Singly Housed Mice report, we have reduced numbers by around 10%, but ■ would like to see this reduce further.

**5.2 Named Training and Competency Officer (NTCO) report (AWERB/64/04)**

In regards to the delivery of training, ■ admitted that it was extremely challenging to gain true oversight of training records and competencies as there is no central database and information is so sporadic and stored and recorded in different ways amongst different research team.

■ noted that there are no robust procedures around training, for example surgery and aseptic training, ■ recently had a meeting with staff delivering this training to ensure consistency. ■ added that training and assessment documents are currently under development. Following the report from the audit, the need for consistency in documentation was highlighted so we need to drive forward the standardisation agenda.

The Chair noted that he was surprised that there was no central database which captured staff who are providing training. In regards to surgery techniques, ■ added that he could give some general advice, however he is not experienced or qualified in cranial window surgery for example.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor ■ has asked ■ to produce a business case outlining the justification for a central database for BRF to present to the University Executive Group. The report from KPMG also helps support the need for this.

**5.3 Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) (Verbal Update)**

The NVS gave a brief overview to the group. The screening reports have all come back negative for pin worm and other disease. ■ has been working with some suppliers regarding obtaining materials for the BRF.

**5.4 Update from the AWERB SE Hub event held on 9 April 2021 (Verbal Update)**

■ added that this was a valuable meeting, the focus of which was on the Culture of Care which



will help inform discussion in the working group meeting.

**6. Research and Procedures Involving Animals Audit (KPMG) (AWERB/64/05a-c)**

█ gave a short presentation to the group regarding a recent audit which was carried out by KPMG, one of their aims was 'to review culture, roles and responsibilities'. As part of the audit and to fulfil these aims KPMG carried out a staff survey. One of the key findings of the survey was that staff did not feel sufficiently rewarded for compliance.

Therefore, one of the actions of the audit was to positively reinforce compliance by developing and implementing a formal recognition process for researchers. █ asked for suggestions from the group on how we could do this? █ suggested a 3Rs / Animal Welfare award to recognise colleagues who are demonstrating excellence in this area by developing novel initiatives and techniques.

**Action: It was agreed by all that a 3Rs award should be introduced to acknowledge excellence in the area of animal welfare and the 3Rs. █ to draft a proposal for how this could be implemented, such as nomination criteria, whether or not colleagues can self-nominate etc. █ will also work with the Communications Team to ensure that once a procedure is agreed, colleagues throughout the University are aware of the 3Rs award and that winners of the award are given appropriate attention in the University communications.**

█ asked whether this could be opened up to include non-ASPA studies? █ said that a commendation should be given to some of the excellent applications recently received.

**Action: As well as a formal 3Rs Award it was agreed that there would also be a less formal award which █ would oversee and this would be given to colleagues in recognition of good practice.** █ was unable to attend the entirety of the meeting but wished to note and commend the excellent quality of the discussion during the meeting, which he said was very encouraging.

**PART III – MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

**7. Home Office Return of Procedures figures (AWERB/64/06)**

The committee **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the ROP figures.

**8. Applications Review Group (ARG) Report (AWERB/64/07)**

The committee **NOTED** a summary of activity from the Applications Review Group.

**9. Animal Derived Materials Working Group (Verbal Update)**

The committee **NOTED** recent progress and findings.

**10. Forthcoming training opportunities and links to useful resources**

10.1 3 Minute 3Rs Podcast: [3 Minute 3Rs on acast](#)

10.2 '10 years of CRACK IT webinar: Virtual laboratories for non-animal disease research and toxicity testing', NC3Rs event, Tues 20 April 2021, 14:00 to 15:00, register [here](#).

10.3 '10 years of CRACK IT webinar: Rodent behavioural monitoring...what have you been missing?', NC3Rs event, Weds 12 May 2021, 14:00 to 15:00, register [here](#).

- 10.4 Apply for the the Global 3Rs Awards program, deadline 1 June 2021, 16:00 EDT, details on how to apply can be found [here](#).

#### **PART IV – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

11. Regarding item 10 on the agenda, the Chair asked how we can better communicate these opportunities to the researcher community? [REDACTED] added that perhaps this could be included in the suggestions for the improvement of the AWERB/BRF website.

#### **12. Dates of future meetings**

- 08 July 2021
- 22 September 2021
- 11 January 2022

*(Unless advised otherwise, all meetings will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams from 10am to 12pm.)*

#### **AWERB Membership**

##### **Ex-officio**

- Representative of the Biomedical Research Facility User Group and Incoming Chair: [REDACTED]
- The Establishment Licence Holder (Outgoing Chair): [REDACTED]
- The Named Veterinary Surgeon: [REDACTED]
- The Named Animal Care & Welfare Officer: [REDACTED]

##### **Representative members**

- Two lay members, at least one of whom should have no responsibility under the Act:
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
- One representative of the Project Licence Holders: [REDACTED]
- One representative of the Personal Licence Holders: [REDACTED]
- One representative of the School of Psychology: [REDACTED]
- One representative of the Brighton and Sussex Medical School: [REDACTED]

##### **In attendance**

- The local Home Office Inspector: [REDACTED]
- Chair of the BRF Management Forum (at the invitation of the Chair as appropriate but to attend at least one meeting per academic year)
- Deputy BRF Manager: [REDACTED]
- Research Governance Officer: [REDACTED]
- Secretary to the AWERB: [REDACTED]