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

The 70<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AWERB was held virtually via MS Teams on  
Wednesday 14 September 2022 from 1pm – 3pm

**DRAFT – MINUTES**

**PART I – PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

Present: [REDACTED]

Apologies: [REDACTED]

In Attendance: [REDACTED], [REDACTED] (Secretary)

**2. AWERB Terms of Reference and Membership (AWERB/70/01)**

2.1 The AWERB **DISCUSSED** proposed changes to the AWERB ToR, and that of its' sub-committee, the Application Review Group. Some of the changes included updates to colleagues' job titles as well as changes to better reflect the business covered by the AWERB and its' sub-committee. The updates and changes were welcomed by AWERB members. [REDACTED] noted that further changes may be required pending the outcomes of the Home Office Change Programme.

2.2 There was a general discussion regarding membership and composition of the AWERB and ARG and the Secretary noted that we have a vacancy for a BSMS representative on the ARG. **[Action: The Chair to approach potential colleagues in BSMS to fill this vacancy.]**

2.3 The AWERB **APPROVED** the changes, and the ToR will be presented to the Research Governance and Quality Assurance Committee for their comment and approval.

**3. Minutes - (AWERB/69/M)**

3.1 The AWERB **APPROVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 15 July 2022.

**4. Matters arising from the Minutes - (AWERB/70/02)**

- 4.1 The Body **NOTED** current actions outstanding from the previous meeting. Regarding the Culture of Care Statement, the NCTO, NVS and Secretary will be attending a training day on the topic of training and support for AWERB members, in Birmingham on 6 October 2022, which may help inform this work.
- 4.2 There was a discussion regarding how best to advertise and promote The 3Rs Award, as to date there have been no nominations made since the introduction of the award in December 2022. **[Action: ██████ to meet with the Secretary to agree on a approach to the promotion and advertisement of the award. ██████ to set out a proposal for a formal application process and criteria.]**
- 4.3 There was a general discussion which was lead by the NCTO regarding some Neuroscience students who were working at the BRF as part of their rotation who seemed unprepared for the realities of what a Schedule 1 procedure entailed. ██████ noted that she gives all her students a full and detailed induction outlining what to expect, ██████ agreed with the NCTO's suggestion and said that perhaps this could be incorporated into a rotation induction. The NCTO stressed that this should be a discussion rather than part of induction literature alone. **[Action: ██████ and ██████ to meet with ██████ to discuss and agree the information regarding Schedule 1 procedures, to ensure a cohesive approach.]**
- 4.4 The NACWO added that confirmation of death, is also a sensitive topic in which to navigate with students who are new to the work of the BRF. The NVS suggested that new starters perhaps could be shown footage in the first instance to help them prepare, rather than being faced with it for the first time in a real life setting. ██████ also noted that young people may not be aware that interviews are two way exchange, and may not be assertive enough to stipulate their needs during interviews.

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

**5. ██████ - Retrospective Review - 'Neuronal Communication in Fish' - (AWERB/70/03)**

- 5.1 Prior to the start of the presentation, the Secretary confirmed with ██████ that he was happy for the presentation to be recorded, and ██████. ██████ licence came to an end in June 2022, and there is now a new Project Licence in place to continue this work. Retrospective reviews are one of the conditions of being granted a Home Office licence, and therefore a key area of oversight for the AWERB. The focus of this study has been how the brain receives sensory information, in particular in relation to vision, and how other senses interact with vision.
- 5.2 In regards to statistical significance, ██████ noted that unfortunately, power calculations are not always a sound solution to the issue of 'Reduction'. In regards to Refinement, ██████ noted that it is becoming standard practice to use larval stage fish, which are generally thought to be less sentient than juvenile specimens, and they are not covered by the act before day 5.



- 5.3 In regards to mitigating harm, pain relief is administered to the fish where necessary in the form of Tricaine. The NACWO said that they are investigating the administration of aquased for euthanasia, as it is thought to hold less room for error in regards to its' application.
- 5.4 In regards to enrichment, artificial foliage has been placed in tanks to allow the fish more stimulation and a place to hide and perform natural behaviour, as well as false 'gravel' flooring on the base of the fish tanks.
- 5.5 ■ noted that Zebra fish are used as they can be genetically engineered to be translucent, which is useful for monitoring the animal's heart rate, as their heart can be directly observed. The researcher can then directly determine whether or not a fish is particularly stressed and take action as required.
- 5.6 ■ had a query regarding the age of the fish used in the study. ■ said that this is somewhat dependent upon the development of the fish's central nervous system, as well as evidence of an ability to complete complex reflect behaviours, such as the ability to hone in on prey.
- 5.7 The NVS commented that one of the key points to consider at the end of a project licence is what has the study achieved? The number of publications, as well as the number of colleagues employed and the outcomes of the study are submitted to the Home Office via their forms on their online system ASPeL. In regards to funding, this project was funded by ■ who have also extended their funding to another project licence, and indeed part of the funding application was to justify how the previous grant was spent.
6. ■ – **Mid-term Review – 'DNA Damage Responses and Disease' (AWERB/70/04)**
- 6.1 The AWERB **RECEIVED** and **DISCUSSED** ■ mid-term review for his PPL entitled; 'DNA Damage Responses and Disease'. ■ review was also recorded for future reference.
- 6.2 The AWERB were satisfied that ■ had appropriate oversight of his licence and that the 3Rs were fully incorporated and considered in regards to the daily running of the study.
7. **Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer and Named Training and Competency Officer Report (AWERB/70/05)**
- 7.1 The AWERB **RECEIVED** and **DISCUSSED** the updates from the NACWO and NTCO reports.

**PART III – MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

**8. Concordat on Openness in Animal Research Action Plan (AWERB/70/06)**

8.1 The AWERB **NOTED** the COAR Action Plan.

**PART IV – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**9. Dates of future meetings**

- Wednesday 18 January 2023: 1-3pm, **Sussex House Committee Room**
- Wednesday 22 March 2023: 1-3pm, MS Teams
- Wednesday 14 June 2023: 10am – 12pm, MS Teams

**AWERB Membership**

**Ex-officio**

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

**Representative members**

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

**In attendance**

- Named Training and Competency Officer (NCTO) and BRF Deputy Manager: [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] Forum (at the invitation of the Chair as appropriate but to attend at least one meeting per academic year.)
- Senior Research Integrity and Governance Manager: [REDACTED]
- Secretary to the AWERB: [REDACTED]