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

The 67<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AWERB was held virtually via MS Teams on  
Thursday 27 January 2022 from 10am - 12pm

**DRAFT – MINUTES**

**PART I – PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

**Present:** [REDACTED]

**In Attendance:** [REDACTED]

**Apologies:** [REDACTED].

**2. Minutes - (AWERB/66/M)**

2.1 To **APPROVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2021. [Action: The Secretary to revise the wording of item 3.1 to clarify that [REDACTED] submitted a report to the meeting but was not present to give it.]

**3. Matters arising from the Minutes - (AWERB/67/01)**

3.1 The Committee **NOTED** the current actions outstanding from the previous meeting held on 22 September 2021.

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

**4. Invited Speaker: [REDACTED] 'Elephant Culture' (AWERB/67/02)**

4.1 The Board **RECEIVED** a presentation from invited speaker [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] non-ASPA research regarding culture in African Elephants. This was the first presentation of its kind at an AWERB meeting, guest speakers and short presentations were introduced to AWERB

meetings to make the meetings more engaging and dynamic. This change was implemented as a direct result of feedback received from AWERB members in the meeting held on 22 September 2021.

The presentation was followed by an opportunity for AWERB members to ask questions about ██████ research. ██████ posed a question regarding “culture” versus “genetically transmitted traits” in elephant populations. ██████ replied that much like in humans it is sometimes difficult to determine which traits are genetically transferred, and which are learned behaviours, as with humans the likely answer is that it a combination of the two, and this is also why her research focuses primarily on social behaviours as a marker of culture.

A question regarding how much human contact the elephants have had and how this might impact their behaviour was posed by ██████ ██████ replied that the variety of elephants studied are Amboseli elephants in Africa. This particular group of elephants are heavily monitored and are therefore used to human presence and observation.

GR asked whether this study would be a longitudinal one, given the long lifespan of elephants in order to observe the possibility of inter-generational transmission of behaviours. ██████ said that this was the intention. The Chair thanked ██████ for attending the meeting and giving a thought-provoking and engaging talk to the AWERB.

## 5. NACWO, NTCO, NIO and NVS Updates (AWERB/67/03 – AWERB/67/04)

- 5.1 The Body **RECEIVED** and **DISCUSSED** a summary report from the Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer. In regards to ongoing works and improvements to the Biomedical Research Facility, ██████ said that he has been following up with SEF to complete the scheduled painting of the corridors.

The NVS gave a brief verbal update to the group. ██████ encouraged the increased use of welfare grids, especially in the case of mice and in particular the “grimace scale” to determine pain and discomfort in animals. ██████ added that only food restricted mice and pregnant mice are currently monitored in this way, and suggested that we also implement this in post-surgery mice.

On the subject of training; we currently have two members of staff competent to train and two competent to assess. ██████ added that further in-house training is required.

██████ said that he has now completed the institutional NC3Rs self-assessment tool, but urged research groups to also complete this to ensure that we garner a good cross section of responses. ██████ requested that both PIL and PPL holders also complete the questionnaire as well.

**[Action : ALL members to engage with other users in their teams to ensure that the questionnaire is completed.]**

**PART III – MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

**6. Applications Review Group (ARG) Report (AWERB/67/05)**

6.1 The Board **NOTED** a summary of activity from the Applications Review Group, including non-ASPA studies.

**PART IV – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**7. NC3Rs Self-Assessment Tool**

7.1 ■ reiterated the request for researchers to complete the NC3Rs Self-Assessment Tool which can be found via the NC3Rs website here: <https://3rsselfassessment.nc3rs.org.uk/>

7.2 ■ wished to formally acknowledge the two newly appointed Animal Technicians who hit the ground running, and picked up the role quickly which ensured continuity of business.

7.3 ■ noted that due to staff illness the BRF has been vulnerable as some colleagues hold key knowledge in certain specific areas. ■ said that this has highlighted to him the need to increase training so that all colleagues are able to cover all areas, to ensure increased resilience within the service.

7.4 ■ said that there has been an increase in Animal Rights activity recently, notably, there was a protest due to take place on campus on 22 Jan 2022 outside of the Medical School on campus, but this was later cancelled. Some protestors have shared ■ name and email address on social media, urging people to contact him to convey their disapproval of research involving animals being carried out at the University. This is not an issue particular to Sussex, but rather reflects a national trend.

**8. Dates of future meetings**

- 22 April 2022
- 6 July 2022

**AWERB Membership**

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[REDACTED]

In attendance

[REDACTED]

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