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Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)

The 66th Meeting of the AWERB was held virtually via MS Teams on
Wednesday 22 September 2021 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/65/M)

The committee **APPROVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2021.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes - (AWERB/66/01)

3.1 The Board **NOTED** the matters arising from the previous meeting held on 8 July 2021. One notable outstanding action was regarding 'The 3Rs Animal Welfare Award'. [REDACTED] updated the committee that it has been agreed in principle, however, he has encountered some road blocks in relation to assigning a monetary prize to accompany the award due to various complicated bureaucratic policies. [REDACTED] added that the main aim of the award is to acknowledge the excellent work being done by colleagues, and to this end a certificate and formal acknowledgement and advertisement of the winner would suffice. The Chair also added that winning such a prize would be a notable accolade to add to one's C.V. [REDACTED] said that it was important to raise the profile of research involving animals, and to ensure that information regarding the award and the winner is appropriately advertised and disseminated.

[Action: [REDACTED] to update on the progress of The 3Rs Animal Ethics Award at the next AWERB meeting.]

4. Terms of Reference - (AWERB/66/02)

- 4.1 The Board **RECEIVED** a verbal update regarding the ongoing work in relation to updating the current Terms of Reference. ■ noted that he has a number of suggestions for improvement around promoting the 3Rs, which have arisen as a result of the KPMG audit.
[Action: ■ to meet with the Chair ahead of the next academic year and bring a revised version of the Terms of Reference and discuss possible amendments that can be made in regards to the scope of the AWERB. This updated version will then be brought to AWERB for their approval in September 2022.]

PART II – MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION

5. **NACWO, NTCO, NIO and NVS Updates (AWERB/66/03)**
- 5.1 ■ spoke to the NTCO report, she informed the committee that she has introduced some recent refinements in regards to the care of rats in implementing a non-restraint tail bleed. ■ queried whether a numbing cream was also applied, ■ responded that this is not currently in use, as the favoured method is to use warm water. ■ also added that in terms of reducing the sting factor of injections into rats' tails, that the concentration of the drug may be diluted and the temperature increased slightly, he noted that covering the head of many animals has a calming effect and that this technique could also be trialed.
[Action: The Chair requested that a summary of what training has been undertaken within the BRF be added to the NTCO report as an additional bullet point at subsequent meetings as he believed that it was of value for AWERB to have oversight of this.]
- 5.2 In ■'s absence ■ presented an overview of the NACWO report. Some of the items discussed included updates regarding the Home Office Change Programme and ■ noted that to date PPL and PIL holders have not experienced any issues with the changeover. In regards to the report following the KPMG audit, the action regarding standardisation of documentation has been completed, however other actions as well as cultural change will take longer to imbed.

In regards to the Biomedical Research Facility, the refurbishment is due to commence on 11 October 2021 and the data connectivity update has now been approved. Tenders have been put out for a new database for training and competency tracking, which was identified as a weakness in the KPMG audit.

■ sent an e-mail to PPL holders asking them to send an e-mail of thanks and acknowledgement to Animal Technicians and related staff who were working throughout the pandemic allowing research to continue at the BRF. ■ conveyed ■'s disappointment that this had not been done. ■ apologised for not following up on this but added that he is frequently present in the BRF and thanks staff verbally in person.

- 5.3 ■ presented the Named Veterinary Surgeon report to the Body. ■ noted that he would still like to recruit a Veterinary Assistant to join the BRF team, in particular to assist with surgery and aseptic preparation. ■ added that this is an invaluable role which is present in other institutions and would free up time for researchers. ■ and ■ echoed these sentiments. ■ said that he envisioned delays with this post being advertised however due

to the number of new starters joining the team at present. ■ attended a Home Office meeting regarding changes to Condition 18 reporting, along with other 'named persons' colleagues. The meeting was in regards to what circumstances trigger reporting. ■ said the presentation was useful and that the slides will be available in October 2021 for everyone to view.

■ gave an update regarding a recent Non-ASPA application regarding Elephant field work in Africa. The application raised concerns external to the study itself in relation to researcher welfare whilst carrying out research overseas as well as wider study feasibility concerns which are not picked up in the current Non-ASPA pre-application or full application forms. ■ commented that perhaps we could add questions regarding whether their research question has been peer reviewed, as well as details of any funding that is in place. A check-list was also suggested to accompany the application forms. The Nagoya protocol was also identified by ■ as an area in which we have an institutional responsibility to ensure researchers are adhering to it. **[Action: ■, ■, ■ and ■ to meet to discuss this case and the issues it has identified in order to identify what is required in the application form for future applications.]**

6. Revised PPL presentations template - (AWERB/66/04)

- 6.1 The committee **RECEIVED** a short presentation and overview of the updated PPL presentations template from ■. The amendments were made as a direct result of discussion and comments from the AWERB during the previous meeting regarding the presentation template used for PPL reviews; encompassing new PPLs, mid-term reviews and retrospective reviews. The main improvements were around being more 3Rs and animal experience focused as opposed to science focused, as this detail is included within the Home Office PPL application itself. The committee **APPROVED** the revised PPL presentations template for use in future presentations and reviews.

PART III – MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

7. AWERB Websites Development Update (AWERB/66/05)

- 7.1 The committee **RECEIVED** a brief update presentation from ■ on plans for the development of the internal and external webpages.

8. Applications Review Group (ARG) Report (AWERB/66/06)

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

9. Singly Housed Mice Report (AWERB/66/07)

- 9.1 The committee **NOTED** the Singly Housed Mice report. There has been an increase in the number of Singly Housed Mice, in his report ■ noted that he has contacted the researchers in question and asked them to provide reasons for this. ■ said that her ageing study is one of the groups in which numbers have increased. ■ noted that the separation was to prevent breeding, and in other cases to facilitate recovery post-surgery.

■ was another of the researchers whose group had seen an increase in singly housed mice, ■ noted that ■ has been in touch with him about this and the numbers have been reduced accordingly. ■ was commended for his communication with researchers on this topic.

■ said that we need more visible justification to become the norm, and that perhaps requests to singly house be authorised by the NVS, which would formalise the practice and

hopefully increase accountability. [REDACTED] noted that this was the process at her previous establishment, she added that this was about finding a balance between accountability whilst avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy.

[Action: It was agreed that in future this be incorporated into the Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer report rather than as a stand-alone report for future meetings.]

10. **Training opportunities, links to useful resources and news from within the sector**
For AWERB members to disseminate amongst relevant colleagues such as; PPL holders and animal technicians etc. as appropriate.

10.1 Sentience Bill public enquiry: The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Select Committee has launched an inquiry into the [Animal Welfare \(Sentience\) Bill](#)

PART IV – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11. Dates of future meetings

- 27 January 2022
- 5 April 2022
- 6 July 2022

(All meetings will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams from 10am to 12pm unless otherwise stated.)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]