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Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)

The 73rd Meeting of the AWERB was held on
Thursday 7 December 2023
3pm - 5pm, MS Teams

DRAFT – MINUTES

PART I – PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Present: [REDACTED]

Apologies: [REDACTED]

In Attendance: [REDACTED] (NACWO for Fish), [REDACTED] (Research Ethics, Integrity and Governance Senior Manager) and [REDACTED] (Secretary)

2. Minutes - (AWERB/72/M)

2.1 The AWERB **APPROVED** the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 April 2023.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes - (AWERB/73/01)

3.1 The AWERB **DISCUSSED** the Matters arising, most items are now closed, with several longer term projects which are in progress.

4. AWERB and AWERB ARG Composition and Terms of Reference - (AWERB/73/02)

4.1 The AWERB **DISCUSSED** the updated Terms of Reference and composition.

4.2 The Head of Research Ethics, Integrity and Governance raised that AWERB does not currently have a Deputy Chair, and that this would be useful to bring it in line with other University Committees, and provide more robustness and assurance.

4.3 **[Action: The Chair to consider a colleague to nominate as Deputy Chair.]**

4.4 One of the changes to the Terms of Reference was regarding the tenure of the Chair, it was suggested that this be changed to 3 years, plus an additional two years upon mutual

- agreement. This would bring AWERB in line with other committees and members were supportive of this change.
- 4.5 In regards to the composition of the AWERB, █████ suggested that the NACWO for Fish, █████ be added to the AWERB membership. █████ also suggested that the newly appointed Research Ethics, Integrity and Governance Senior Manager █████ be added as an 'In Attendance' member of AWERB to act as a deputy for █████
- 4.6 The AWERB **APPROVED** the changes to the Terms of Reference with one small correction from █████ regarding reference to Project Licences (PPLs). **[Action: Secretary to make the amendment and include updated Terms of Reference on the agenda at the next Research Governance and Quality Assurance Committee (RGQAC) for approval at the next meeting held on 17 January 2024.]**
- 4.7 There was a general discussion regarding refreshing the membership of the AWERB and including more junior colleagues perhaps to enhance the range of expertise on the committee and to gain some fresh perspectives. **[Action: The Chair to identify and contact a colleague from the School of Psychology to approach to become a potential new member of AWERB.]**
- 4.8 █████ raised the topic of 'culture of care' and asked whether this should be incorporated into the AWERB Terms of Reference. █████ said he believed there was more that we could be doing in this area, but was unsure of whether this was too big a scope for AWERB.
- 4.9 █████ suggested that a statement on the website regarding 'culture of care' could be a good starting point. **[Action: It was suggested that █████ and █████ meet to discuss a way forward regarding how best to address the 'culture of care issue'.]**
- 4.10 █████ noted that ethical review is not mentioned in the AWERB Terms of Reference, and there was a discussion around whether it should be or not. There was a question of whether the committee is actually more governance and compliance focused, rather than ethics focused. Some members added that ethical review is more the remit of the AWERB Applications Review Group.

PART II – MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION

5. **Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer and Named Training and Competency Officer Report - (AWERB/73/03)**
- 5.1 The AWERB **RECEIVED** and **DISCUSSED** the report. █████ said that █████ will now provide a report for fish health to the AWERB going forward. █████ has met with █████ to gain her advice on this.
- 5.2 █████ gave an overview of the Condition 18 reports which have recently been submitted to the Home Office, these were due to post-surgical complications. The NVS and NACWO met with the relevant surgeons and the Home Office had no concerns or further comments upon receipt of the reports. The NACWO was assured that there weren't any wider factors at play or cause for concern.
- 5.3 █████ added that the Animal Management Database is now live and in active use, and noted that this should significantly streamline the annual Return of Procedures for next year.

- 5.4 The BRF Refurbishment Project is ongoing and [REDACTED] is currently working with colleagues on developing an accurate costed plan.
- 5.5 In regards to staffing, there is still a vacancy for a deputy BRF manager and NCTO, interviews are upcoming and we are hoping to appoint.
- 5.6 There was a general discussion regarding the Named Roles within the AWERB and how these should be handled going forward. **[Action: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to meet to discuss this in further detail.]**
- 6. IAT / LASA / LAVA Survey Results regarding the Home Office Change Programme (AWERB/73/04)**
- 6.1 The AWERB **RECEIVED** and **DISCUSSED** the survey results. [REDACTED] drew members' attention in particular to page 4 of the survey results which summarises the key findings and contains some useful graphs.
- 7. Non-ASPAs Training Provision**
- 7.1 The AWERB **DISCUSSED** a proposal presented by [REDACTED] that Non-ASPAs Training Provision be developed and provided to Schools. The background to this was to fill a gap in knowledge within Schools and raise awareness of the need for ethical review of non-regulated animal work. This would help ensure that the committee has appropriate oversight of all animal work being conducted at the University.
- 7.2 [REDACTED] discussed who should be approached and targeted to raise awareness of this training, and there were a number of suggestions in this area. It was deemed not appropriate to approach BSMS colleagues using non-animal models (as this would fall under 'Replacement') however.
- 7.3 The provision of Non-ASPAs training was endorsed in principle by the AWERB. It was also noted that would be a good exercise to bring awareness of **[Action: [REDACTED] to work up a proposal of how the training would be rolled out and present a draft of the training provision for AWERB's approval at a future AWERB meeting.]**
- 7.4 There was a general discussion regarding the oversight of non-regulated research involving animals more generally. [REDACTED] added that he is a member of a collaborative Animal Derived Products Working Group which spans various institutions and industries, [REDACTED] noted that [REDACTED] will be producing a report on this, but this is yet to be published.
- 7.5 The potential to incorporate Non-ASPAs applications into the Research Management System was also discussed as a potential way forward in the future once it has been procured and is fully operational.
- 8. Establishment of a 3Rs Working Group (AWERB/73/05)**
- 8.1 The AWERB **DISCUSSED** a proposal to establish a 3Rs Working Group, of which the AWERB were in agreement in principle.
- 8.2 **[Action: It was agreed that this proposal required further detail, therefore [REDACTED] was tasked with developing a more detailed proposal, outlining the Terms of Reference, frequency of meetings, and potential membership of the group, and bring this to a future AWERB meeting for their approval. It was also suggested that [REDACTED] contact his equivalent at [REDACTED] and potentially invite them to join the Working Group.]**

9. Formalising The 3Rs Animal Welfare Award Criteria and Raising Awareness - (AWERB/73/06)

- 9.1 The AWERB **RECEIVED** and **DISCUSSED** proposed applicant criteria for The 3Rs Animal Welfare Award and a plan to raise awareness of it to encourage nominations.
- 9.2 The AWERB were in agreement that stronger criteria were needed as well as a robust communications plan to raise awareness of the award, as unfortunately the one off communication regarding the Award when it was introduced in 2021 has not been enough to raise awareness or garner nominations. The AWERB were supportive of [REDACTED] outline criteria for the award.
- 9.3 **[Action: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to work together to create a plan for advertisement of the award and bring this to a future AWERB meeting.]**

PART III – MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

10. Establishment Licence Holders’ Autumn Forum (LASA)

- 10.1 The AWERB **RECEIVED** a verbal update on the Forum held on 17 October 2023 in London from the Establishment Licence Holder.
- 10.2 [REDACTED] noted that the meeting was well attended and that the unanimous view of those present echoes the feedback outlined in the survey results outlined in item 6.
- 10.3 **[Action: [REDACTED] agreed to share the slides sent to him following the forum with [REDACTED] for her to share with AWERB members following the meeting.]**

11. Concordat on Openness in Animal Research Action Plan (AWERB/73/07)

- 11.1 The AWERB **NOTED** the COAR Action Plan.

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]
- Named Training and Competency Officer (NCTO): [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: **VACANT**

In attendance

- Chair of the BRF Management Forum (at the invitation of the Chair as appropriate but to attend at least one meeting per academic year.)
- Head of Research Ethics, Integrity and Governance : [REDACTED]
- Secretary to the AWERB: [REDACTED]

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