

Agenda Items:

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| Meeting: | Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB) | | |
| Date: | 05 August 2024 | Time: | 10:00 – 12:30 |
| Location: | Teams meeting | | |
| Members present: | AWERB Chair / Named Information Officer (NIO) Deputy Chair Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) NACWO NASPA Chair PIL representative Head of Assurance representative Independent, external lay member Academic staff with research experience Co-opted academic staff with research experience | | |
| In attendance: | AWERB Secretary, | | |
| Minutes: | AWERB Secretary | | |
| Acronyms | AWERB – Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body BRF – Biomedical Research Facility ECR – Early Career Researcher FEO – Favourable Ethical Opinion HOLC – Home Office Liaison Contact NASPA - Non-Animal in Scientific Procedures Act NACWO – Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer NEER – Non-Establishment Ethics Review NIO – Named Information Officer NVS – Named Veterinary Surgeon PILh – Personal Licence (holder) PPLh – Project Licence (holder) PELh – Establishment Licence (holder) RIGC – Research Integrity and Governance Committee SAGE-AR – Self-Assessment for Governance and Ethics – Animal Research URIC – University Research and Innovation Committee | | |

| Item | Action # |
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| 1. | <p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Apologies received from: NEER Officer, Communications representative, PELh, Academic staff member with relevant research experience.</p> <p>Chair welcomed all members.</p> | <p>Apologies for absence to be sent to Chair in advance of meetings. (ALL)</p> |
| 2. | <p>Approval of minutes and update on action log</p> <p>Minutes of two previous AWERB meetings (held in March 2024 and May 2024) were circulated prior to the meeting and the final copy approved in meeting. It was noted that abbreviations should be defined if not listed as an acronym.</p> <p>3/23 New SAGE-AR went live 1/8/24. Communication updates were placed as a SurreyNet News item, on the internal FRIO site and in MySurrey. Committee recommended sending out an email update to relevant Schools in the Faculty. Drop-in sessions should be offered in coming months.</p> <p>Updates to BRF webpage should now be prioritised. Task and finish group will be set up to resource case studies, add examples of 3Rs, re-design page content and create pages specific for NASPA-approved projects.</p> <p>5/23 No time to progress. Will get a draft document back to the 3Rs champion Group. Chair reported progress on scoping review.</p> <p>8/23 Re-homing policy document. NVS needs to review what documents will be shared with potential applicants and assess whether information is sufficient.</p> <p>15/23 Legislation Training Module. NACWO this has been done.</p> <p>4/24 Chair wrote to Licence Holder but no response.</p> <p>7/24 Deputy NVS role. Appointment has been made.</p> <p>8/24 Chair of BRF User Forum not at meeting so carry forward to next meeting.</p> | <p>AWERB minutes (uploaded to BRF website)</p> <p>9/24 AWERB Chair</p> <p>10/24 AWERB Chair to organise T&F group</p> <p>Carried forward</p> <p>Carried forward</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Carried forward</p> |
| 3. | <p>New PPL application review Mitochondrial and cellular function in the stressed heart</p> <p>The PPL holder (PPLh) was welcomed to the meeting and asked to deliver their presentation. The committee found the slides informative and the presentation easy to follow. The proposed research was seen as important, and appropriate context was given in terms of the extent of the disease and possible benefits to health. Committee members queried the justification for using agonists, the number of animals requested, the experimental design, and issues related to animal welfare (i.e. typical animal experience, adverse effects). Several revisions to the written document were requested – see list below. Links to PPLh publications can remain but names should be removed.</p> | |

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| | <p>The Committee approved the Licence application subject to satisfactory completion of revisions (to be reviewed by NVS, NACWO, Lay member and Chair).</p> <p>Revisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify non-technical summary • Acknowledge suffering due to the <u>serial</u> administration of substances (i.e. cumulative suffering). • Be more specific about “computational models” in search of alternatives • Consider reviewing ‘heart on a chip’ type models • Submit a brief report containing your search (for alternatives) strategy • State total number of animals and how this relates to group size number • Remove any text with “HFpEF” • Check options selected for ‘tissue biopsy’ sampling in protocol 1 • Check humane endpoints list the physiological and/or behavioural signs or combination of signs that would trigger action • Revise values in clinical score sheet • In the ‘Protocol animal experience’ sections for each protocol – try to rewrite acknowledging the <i>experience</i> of the animal. | <p>11/24 AWERB Chair</p> |
| 4. | <p>Break</p> | |
| 5. | <p>Named persons reports – key points only</p> <p>NVS: No major welfare issues to report NACWO: No major welfare issues to report NTCO: A senior technician is now trained on intra-tibia model; pilot study to commence. HOLC: HOLC raised issue that Home Office (HO) comments are lost in ASPEL when Licences are approved. It would be useful to keep these for AWERB learning. HOLC to feedback to HOLC forum. NIO: Temporary cover is in place for statistical support. Options for a replacement statistician are under discussion with PELh. Requested that Users are made aware of Standard Condition 16 on their project licence, and the new UKRI Animal policy document that has been released: scope now includes all invertebrates and vertebrates in the animal kingdom. NASPA Chair: (including Animal Tissue Audit): No applications or amends since last meeting. New Medical School will use animal tissue, the NASPA Chair has contacted the Anatomy Lead to bring to their attention the need for NASPA approval before any activity can commence.</p> <p>(NEER Officer and User Chair absent)</p> | <p>12/24 HOLC</p> <p>13/24 User Chair</p> |
| 6. | <p>PPL PP0204823 Amendment outcome</p> | |

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| | <p>The PPLh provided satisfactory responses to queries raised by committee in regard to adding the chronic restraint protocol and the sleep fragmentation protocol. Further clarification on two points were requested: i) what is the outcome measure in the group size section, and ii) consider revising section outlining ‘animal experience’.</p> <p>PPLh also requested another minor amendment which would add a 48-hour dark period prior to killing of some animals bred for ‘microbiota studies’. The committee reflected this would result in adding an ‘experimental step’ to a breeding protocol and that ~300 animals had been bred so far and killed via Schedule 1. The committee asked how these animals had been used and why progress had not been made on writing a new PPL to cover this activity. The Chair suggested inviting the Licence holder and researcher to the next meeting to discuss. The minor amendment request was not approved.</p> | <p>14/24 AWERB Chair</p> <p>15/24 AWERB Chair</p> |
| 7. | <p>Chair’s report:</p> <p>FOI request #FOI-433 - DPCY6JWQJP – complete</p> <p>One Freedom of Information request about animal numbers, what happens to them, and the types of research we perform.</p> <p>SouthEast AWERB Chairs Hub (26/6/24) – meeting held at University and attended by representatives from 8 local institutes. Focus on Standard Condition 16s and impact of reduced frequency/access to Home Office Inspectors.</p> <p>Understanding Animal Research AGM (27/6/24): Chair attended virtual meeting. Key points: i) there has been increasing activity targeting secondary and tertiary companies that supply institutes performing animal research, ii) UAR has launched a series of Thursday lunchtime webinars that may be of interest, as well as the Barn (Biomedical and Animal Research News) Digest to show the benefits of animal research.</p> | <p>13/24 User Chair</p> |
| 8. | <p>Any other business</p> <p>Date of next meeting – 10th September (in person)</p> <p>Chair thanked everybody for their contributions and closed the meeting.</p> | |