

Meeting:	Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)		
Date:	24th June 2025	Time:	09:30-12:00
Location:	In-person		
Members present:	Outgoing AWERB Chair / Named Information Officer (NIO) Incoming AWERB Chair Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) NACWO/HOLC/NTCO Deputy NVS Head of Assurance representative Chair of BRF User Forum NASPA Chair PIL representative (x2) Independent, external lay member (x1) Academic/staff with relevant experience (x3)		
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 UAR – Understanding Animal Research		

Agenda Items:

Item		Action #
1.	Welcome and Apologies Chair welcomed all members. Apologies received from: NEER Officer, AWERB deputy Chair, Communications and Public Affairs representative	Apologies for absence to be sent to Chair in advance of meetings. (ALL)

2.	PP2250582 4-Year Review PPL holder gave verbal summary of the work. The purpose of this PPL is to support the development of new and improved vaccines, with a focus on developing platforms amenable to several diseases. This licence has taken place on two different sites. The PIL holder explained that there was no duplication of work. It was mentioned that using aged mice was a challenge due to cost and low availability. The PIL holder was informed about the tissue sharing program at Surrey and has already provided bone marrow from aged mice to another researcher at the institution. They intend to remain in contact with other researchers for potential future sharing. After encountering technical difficulties with the tail bleed procedure using the blade method, it was switched to the syringe technique. However, this method remains challenging. NVS provided guidance on improving the procedure, and the adjustment was considered a refinement. The Chair thanked the PPL for providing their report and the committee indicated they were satisfied with the progress being made on the PPL including activities related to the 3Rs.	
3.	New Chair introductions The current Chair is stepping down to take on a new role and so the committee welcomed the new Chair of AWERB. Short introductions between the new Chair and each committee member took place.	
4.	Approval of minutes and update on action log Previous meeting minutes were reviewed for accuracy and members given to 11/07/25 to provide any feedback before the minutes are finalized for posting. 8/24: Tissue sharing database – A new Teams-based platform is being developed to facilitate the sharing of tissues among researchers. A template SOP will be written to streamline ethical review processes for tissue use and it is expected to be completed within the next few weeks, after which the platform will be launched. The platform will	On-going

	be shared with facility users first but there is scope to extend. 10/24: Webpage working group. No progress on this item as it will be handed over to the new AWERB Chair. 19/24: Communication planning on Animal ethics (University-wide campaign to raise awareness). This remained on hold until the appointment of new Chairs for AWERB and NASPA committees. 1/25: The NIO established that the news items posted on the BARN digest are picked up from the University news feed. An alternative route is available and that would involve sending a link directly to UAR BARN digest representative. This route may provide a more direct route to improving the visibility of work and 3Rs successes. 8/25: NEER review processes – the AWERB/NASPA Chairs and NEER officer discussed and agreed behind-the-scenes processes to support the review of studies that are performed elsewhere but fall under ASPA legislation. Minor updates to wording on SAGE-AR and on ethics pages will be made. Communication of the process will be part of 19/24. 10/25: An individual is needed to support processing of NEER activity. 11/25: The licence P00000000 has been approved by Home Office.	Carried forward Carried forward Closed On-going On-going Closed
Break		
5.	Named persons reports – key points only from: NVS: nothing to report. NACWO: reported correspondence issues between users and staff occurred. This has been discussed and resolved. The team will be taking clinical scoring of the animals as well as the users. NTCO: No updates. HOLC: No ethical concerns to report. See report for general issues. NIO: No ethical concerns to report. See report for general issues. NASPA Chair: See report for details.	

	Ten SAGE-AR applications, two NASPA applications and one amendment were received since 25th of April. NEER Officer: no ethical concerns to report. See the report for details of the ongoing NEER reviews. User Forum Chair: Stress measurements study received funds and will start in August. User forum Chair volunteered to become a member of the steering group for the NC3Rs Research Group Tool User group that is tasked with developing a '3Rs self-assessments tool' specifically for research groups. Feedback on this item will be given in the next meeting.	12/25 User Forum Chair
6.	3Rs and Culture of Care item The RSPCA are developing guidelines for non-ASPA project ethical review and approached the NASPA Chair for input as it was recognised that we have a good system in place. A discussion about our processes including how ethical and governance review was performed, and the scope of projects under review, took place. The AWERB Chair confirmed the Concordat on Openness on Animal Research Annual Report was submitted on time. A copy is available on the AWERB share point for members to view. The NIO was invited to become a member of the steering group of the NC3Rs Animal Facility working group who are tasked with developing a 3Rs self-assessment tool specific for facility managers. The NIO officer invited the BRF manager to feed-in too. Feedback on this will be given under 12/25 as these items relate to a set of shared tools.	12/25 NIO / BRF manager
7.	Any other business Two freedom of information requests were received and responses given: FOI 733 – animal sepsis experiments FOI 710 – PPL query / forced swim test	

Next AWERB committee meeting: 9th of September (in person meeting)	
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