

University of Nottingham
Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body
Tuesday 29 September 2020

MINUTES

20 Members Present, 3 Apologies, 1 in Attendance

20/36 Minutes

RECEIVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2020.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved.

20/37 Matters arising from the Minutes

(a) Action log

The action log from the previous meeting had been presented to AWERB and progress updates provided to members. This included:

- (1) That the visit to Sutton Bonington had been postponed due to COVID-19.
- (2) That membership of the 3Rs committee and how PPL's for review would be selected was progressing.
- (3) That the refined mouse handling discussion with the HO Inspector was on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions and the NC3Rs programme manager vacancy.
- (4) That some areas outside BSU were being considered for removal from the Establishment Licence by the designated manager and NACWO.
- (5) That the updating of knowledge and expertise in the area of hearing research by AWERB would commence after the facility reopens.

(b) Applications considered at last meeting [Minute 20/29]

REPORTED: That this application had not been submitted as comments made by AWERB had not yet been addressed.

20/38 Chair's Business

(a) Membership

REPORTED:

- (1) That a replacement academic member to join AWERB has been found.
- (2) That the NC3Rs Programme Manager vacancy would be appointed to once there is some clarity around any lifting of COVID-19 restrictions which would allow the type of in person interactions that are necessary in this role.

20/39 Project Licence Applications

(a) BSU Service Licence

REPORTED: That this generic service licence is to provide specific antibodies, blood and other animal tissues for subsequent ex-vivo and in-vitro studies to the research community which would require individual approval by AWERB.

A series of comments were made on the application by the NACWO, NVS and Scientific Reader. These primarily focused around the high standard of animal

welfare, use of grimace scale for the appropriate species and re-use of animals, which were addressed in the application. It was recommended that the opportunity be taken to revisit the pro forma application form that would be submitted for subsequent studies.

RESOLVED: It was recommended that the application be approved.

(b) Dr BB

REPORTED: That the proposed work involves understanding the robustness of molecular programmes driving cellular differentiation during zebrafish blood development.

A series of comments were made on the application by the NACWO, NVS and Scientific Reader. Questioning primarily focussed around the translational relevance, why fin clipping rather than skin swabbing method is necessary and ensuring this would reduce suffering, and a commitment to reviewing the most appropriate method during the course of the licence.

RESOLVED: It was recommended that the application be approved subject to addressing comments from AWERB and taking advice on options available for analgesia.

(c) Dr CC

REPORTED: That the proposed work involves the study of brain mechanisms of cognitive functions (such as memory, attention and behavioural flexibility) and other behavioural functions and how brain dysfunction causes clinically relevant impairments.

A series of comments were made on the application by the NACWO, NVS and Scientific Reader. Questioning primarily focussed around a pilot study for the novel use of chemogenic DREADD technology and infection control mitigations.

RESOLVED: It was recommended that the application be approved by Nottingham AWERB subject to addressing comments from AWERB including those not yet received from the lay reader.

20/40 Home Office Update on Resuming On-site Inspections

REPORTED: That on-site inspections by the Home Office have resumed. An inspection of UoN is expected to take place in October 2020.

20/41 LASA COVID-19 Lessons Learned Report

REPORTED: That the COVID-19 crisis resulted in many establishments having to rapidly curtail, stop work or drastically alter working practices. AWERB would review the processes that were put in place for learning for similar future episodes and to inform general disaster management plans. Three phases were to be considered including impact on staff, difficulties they experienced and whether any changes have led to improvements in process. In the case of future emergencies AWERB and BSU were to be consulted ahead of decisions to stop in vivo research to ensure minimal culling of animals.

20/42 Return to Operations

REPORTED: That there are currently concerns about the supply of PPE which potentially posed a serious risk for operations for animal research facilities.

20/43 HSE Inspection

REPORTED: That there would be a HSE inspection during October.

20/44 Home Office Licensee Training

REPORTED: That training for new Licensees will run during October.

20/45 Summary of PPL applications and amendments

REPORTED: That a summary spreadsheet tracking progress of PPL applications and amendments was available.

20/46 Approvals by Fast-Track Procedure for Report

REPORTED: That four project licence amendments had been approved by fast-track procedure.

20/47 Project licences granted by the Home Office

REPORTED: That two project licences had been granted by the Home Office.

20/48 Any Other Business

- (1) Refined mouse handling. Progress report received
- (2) Use of animals in teaching oversight by AWERB.