

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes
30 May 2018

Present: 11 members were present at the meeting with one person in attendance.

An observer was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made. The PEL holder advised that the invitation had been extended following agreement to strengthen ethics expertise on the Committee.

Minutes The minutes of the meeting on 28 March 2018 were received and approved.

Matters arising

Received paper AWERC17/22

17/108 It was noted that new meeting dates had been circulated and that a number of matters, deferred from the last meeting, would be discussed under Agenda items 7, 10, 11 and 12.

17/109 There was a discussion regarding the review of projects involving non-regulated work. It was noted that such work fell into three categories. These were non-regulated work:
a) in the UK which was below the ASPA threshold;
b) with overseas jurisdiction which would be below the ASPA threshold for regulation; and
c) overseas that would count as regulated if done in the UK.

It was considered that appropriate mechanisms for a) and b) were already in place, but that these should be tested to ensure that relevant staff, including those in faculties not normally involved in animal research, were aware of reporting requirements. Any concerns or changes to existing mechanisms would be reported to the Committee by the NVS. The principle that proposals under c) should be considered by the Committee would be discussed further was agreed. **ACTION: PEL holder, NVS and administrator.**

Establishment Licence (PEL) holder's report

17/110 The PEL Holder reported that a group had been set up to look at animal facility provision across the University. Some Committee members were involved as were some members of the ULBS. Discussions were reported to be at an early stage and no specific proposals were on the table. Recommendations were expected within months but no specific timeline had been set.

17/111 Following the resignation of a member of unit staff, thought was being given to the future of the Service Licence.

17/112 The Home Office (HO) had produced and issued new guidance for reporting breaches in adherence to the severity limits of the project licences that were submitted under project licence standard condition 18. The NVS understood that this required reports to be submitted only when checks and balances of animal welfare monitoring and humane endpoints defined and approved within a project licence had not been met. The NVS would be speaking to the HO inspector to confirm his understanding of the new guidelines.

Named Veterinary Surgeon's (NVS) report

17/113 Following communication with the HO inspector four project licences had recently been granted with a further two still awaited. Whilst there had been no recent visit by the HO inspector, an intention to visit had been expressed and there had been no concerns during the period since the last visit.

- 17/114 With regard to the future of the Service Licence (*reported at min 17/111*) a number of options were being considered in order to find an acceptable solution. This was being discussed with the HO inspector and animal welfare would be taken into account when making any decision. Discussion followed concerning issues relating to transport of animals, whether the vacant post would be filled (which was a matter for the Faculty to determine), and the fundamental question being considered (*reported at min 17/110*) which would inform any decision. The Committee would welcome a report from the unit manager at the next meeting. **ACTION: Unit manager.**

ULBS report

- 17/115 The ULBS had also been involved in discussions regarding refurbishment of the building at in which the animal facility was located. The Group was now focused on what services would be required including arrangements for breeding on or off-site. It was reported that on-site breeding was favoured by the unit manager for animal welfare reasons and that a joint animal unit project group had been set up which would be reporting to the on this matter.
- 17/116 Talks were ongoing with Estates Services regarding the possibility of ensuring that there was an alert for malfunctions or other disturbances in lighting cycles, an issue previously reported to the Committee (*min 17/86*).

Annual training report

Received AWERC 17/23

- 17/117 The Committee received the annual training report for information and noted that feedback had been positive and that numbers requiring the mandatory licensee training modules had remained high. It was confirmed that licence applicants were unable to apply for a licence without first successfully completing the training modules required by the HO for the category of licence being requested.
- 17/118 The provision and availability of non-mandatory training in relation to animal research was discussed including CPD provision and opportunities to inform staff and students not involved in animal research. The Chair asked for details of such training to be provided for the benefit of lay members. **ACTION: Member concerned.**

University's Animals in Research Policy Statement

Received AWERC 17/24

- 17/119 The Committee was asked to consider any changes to the statement to be proposed for further consideration. Suggestions included a clarification that "Projects" in this context referred to "Projects regulated under ASPA". It was agreed that a proposal to amend the statement to address non-UK-regulated overseas work should be considered following further discussion (*min 17/109*). **ACTION: Administrator to bring forward as appropriate.**

Project licence reviews

MR29

- 17/120 The Committee noted the low volume of work on the project and discussed whether this had been related to funding. The NACWO and NVS confirmed that there had been no animal welfare concerns in relation to the project.

MR32

- 17/121 The Committee noted that the work, involving very low numbers of animals, had been made available worldwide. All the work, involving blood withdrawal, had been done by licensed animal technicians and there had been no welfare issues

Induction pack for new members

Received AWERC/17/19 (previously circulated)

- 17/122 The Committee was asked to suggest changes or additions to the content of the induction pack. It was agreed that an explanation of the terms “regulated” and “non-regulated” along with clarification of internally used acronyms would be helpful. **ACTION: Administrator.**
- 17/123 The Chair recommended attendance at the RSPCA Lay Members’ Forum.

Review of Terms of Reference oversight

Received AWERC/17/25

- 17/124 With regard to 1b), promoting awareness of the 3Rs, the Committee was told that this was being done by pointing individuals in the right direction, offering appropriate in-house training and CPD, circulating NC3Rs and HO publications to be read and for the licensees then to maintain details of relevant activities in their personal training, supervision and competence records as required by the HO. Such records are available for inspection by the NTCO and the HO inspector.
- 17/125 With regard to 1c), concerned with management and operational processes for monitoring and reporting on the welfare of animals, the NACWO outlined the decision-tree process for reporting animal welfare concerns which had been working well since its implementation on all sites. The NVS confirmed that the process was a very clear, structured, pathway which was very visible to researchers working in the units. The administrator confirmed that the performance of the process would be formally reviewed and discussed by the Animal Care and Welfare Group which reported annually to the Committee. However, it was confirmed that the Group had not met during the long-term sickness absence of (as noted in the Schedule of Business, paper AWERC/17/26).
- 17/126 In addition the NACWO advised that informal staff meetings took place daily with regular staff meetings being held on a monthly basis to monitor animal welfare and user satisfaction. It was reported that these work well to maintain good communication between staff and users.
- 17/127 During general discussion the Chair questioned whether awareness of animal research and the 3Rs should extend beyond those involved in animal research. The Committee was told that ethics and 3Rs teaching for undergraduates was targeted to students in FBS and the question of whether this could be extended was raised.
- 17/128 A member agreed to provide the results of a recent survey to the Committee for information and to provide a grid showing what teaching exists and to whom it is targeted. **ACTION: Member concerned.**

Schedule of business

Received AWERC/17/21

- 17/129 The Committee received the updated schedule of business for information.

Other business

Invitation to comment on Animal Welfare Policy

- 17/130 The NVS reported that information had been received from University colleagues that a major political party was inviting comments on its Animal Welfare Policy. Whilst the Committee itself would not offer any comments, the University was considering whether it should submit an institutional response.

Date of next meeting

- 17/131 The next meeting would be held at 10.00 on Wednesday 25 July.