
Minutes: AWERB

Status: Chair approved

Meeting held: 17 May 2018 at 2pm in F82 Hawkshead videolinked to U5 Camden

Attendees: 8 members present; 2 in attendance; 5 by invitation; 8 apologies

1 PRESENTATION FROM PROJECT LICENCE HOLDER

The project licence holder and her team were welcomed to the meeting. It was explained that two scientists had also been invited to attend as they had been involved in reviewing the proposed amendment to the project licence in order to provide comments from a scientist's perspective.

It was explained this licence supported work developing drugs for central nervous systems and inflammatory disorders. There was a major unmet need in patient populations suffering from disorders with a significant component of memory difficulty; disorders with a chronic pain component and disorders with an inflammatory component. Current treatments in these areas have substantial limitations in terms of the level of efficacy provided and/or the side effects caused.

Through their work, the aim was to provide data that aided their decision making about the progression of potential drug candidates.

Their research consisted of compound screening (about 90% was of that nature) and 10% was research to validate models. A query was raised whether the validated models were published so that other researchers could be informed of the refinements that they had made or those areas of research that had not worked. It was explained that as it was difficult to get "negative results" published, the company instead focused on ensuring that these results were discussed at major pharmacology meetings.

AWERB asked about their internal ethical review process. How did they determine which compounds were of real value to society and were worth testing?

When were the power calculations done? This was done by making sure the sample sizes were optimal for testing for effects. Pilots would be carried out for new model development. There were also constant discussions about appropriate end and time points which would be reviewed as the study progressed.

AWERB asked where refinements were made to models, how were these reported. Discussions were currently underway about how to best publish these results as it should result in reduced animal figures for other people running that model.

The licence holder was involved in an enrichment study in order to reduce the incidents of mice fighting; they were also trialling group housing for rats. They would bring back to a future AWERB meeting the results of these enrichment projects.

Several changes were being requested to the project licence, including the ability to be able to reuse animals from one protocol onto several of the other protocols. This would enable the reuse of surgically prepared animals that were set up under the EEG protocol in some of the pain protocols. It

would also enable pain models to be performed on them, which would be beneficial from a refinement point of view, as it would enable more information to be gained from the one animal.

After the project licence holder had left, the project licence was discussed in detail and several key points were identified to be fed back to the project licence holder for them to respond to.

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the AWERB meeting held on 17 April 2018 were confirmed as an accurate record.

3 UPDATE ON ACTIONS

3.1 Item 7.2: Pallets (April 2018)

It was still not known who had been leaving pallets to the side of BSU. The pallets that had been left had now been broken down and put into skips.

3.2 Item 1.1: Environmental Enrichment Audit report (March 2018)

“Well done” letters had been sent to those areas that had been classed as “highly commendable”.

3.3 Item 1.1: Environmental Enrichment Audit report (March 2018)

A project abstract involving investigating enrichment options had been put forward for advertising to 3rd year BSc students. If a student selected the project, they would start in October.

3.4 Item 5.2: ARRIVE guidelines (March 2018)

A draft template had been put together which had been circulated to AWERB for review and it was scheduled to be discussed in more details at the June meeting.

3.5 Item 7.3: Rabbits (March 2018)

Several options of how best to manage the increased rabbit population in the fields were being discussed.

3.6 Item 8: Sharing resources (March 2018)

The animal sharing figures for Hawkshead had been obtained and were in the process of being reviewed prior to circulation.

3.7 Item 3.3: Fish (February 2018)

Technical staff have been sent on training courses so that they could aid more with the fish facility. New equipment for the facility was being costed and would be prioritised for the next financial year. The siting of the fish facility was currently under discussion with the users.

3.8 Item 15: Harm Benefit Analysis (January 2018)

An academic paper had recently been published on this topic (though the focus was more on Europe than the UK). This would be discussed at a future meeting.

4 SCHEDULE 1 REGISTER REVIEW

AWERB noted the latest version of the schedule 1 list. A skill gap analysis had been undertaken which had highlighted areas where people needed to be trained.

5 TRAINING RECORDS DATABASE

A training intranet database was being put together that would draw together all the different sources of training records into one place that could be accessed from both sites, making it a lot easier to identify the skills that animal technicians have as well as training gaps.

The database would be divided into categories:

- Animal procedures
- Internal procedures
- Schedule 1 register
- Module training
- CPD

The database would help aid the appraisal process, provide clear goals and give staff identifiable targets.

AWERB thought that the setting up of the database was an excellent idea. On hearing that the database had initially been set up using excel in order to establish the concept it was suggest that IT or e-media advice should be sought about which database would best meet the requirements as there were several out there.

Whose responsibility would it be to keep the records up to date? It was confirmed that would be an NTCO role but that the building and writing of modules would be shared between senior staff and animal technicians. There were now very strict legislative rules on how to record training and this would help with that. There was also a strong culture of care for technicians and helping them control their own career paths, which this would also help with.

6 REVIEWS

AWERB noted the two mid term reviews that had been submitted.

7 PROJECT LICENCES: END OF PROJECT LICENCE REPORT

AWERB noted the end of project licence report that had been submitted.

8 NEW PROJECT LICENCES GRANTED BY THE HOME OFFICE

AWERB noted that one project licence had been granted since the last AWERB meeting. They were looking forward to hearing about how the work was progressing. An end of project licence report had been scheduled for July 2019.

9 PROJECT LICENCE AMENDMENTS

AWERB noted that there had been three project licence amendments since the last AWERB meeting.

10 CONDITION 18 REPORTS

AWERB noted that two condition 18 reports had been submitted to the Home Office Inspector. No subsequent comments had been received.

11 WORKING GROUP REPORTS

11.1 Rodent Handling Group

A webinar on Rodent Tunnel handling has been made available to animal technicians and personal and project licence holders.

Technicians were placing tunnels into all cages and were using tunnel handling or cupping methods. All new users/vet students/Home Office Licence candidates were being shown the tunnel and cupping method.

12 NVS REPORT

12.1 Camden

There was no report for Camden.

12.2 Hawkshead

One of the new stud dogs was not showing positive signs of interaction with the other male dogs so it was highly unlikely that he could be housed with them. In order to prevent him from being housed singly, discussions were underway about maintaining a spayed carrier female with him for companionship. It was suggested that this option should be discussed with one of the Animal Behaviour Consultants.

13 ESTATES ISSUES

13.1 Hawkshead autoclave

This needed to be validated.

13.2 H60

Work was being done on the new area that was refurbished, as there were challenges with the air handling unit.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 Date of next meeting

This was scheduled 19th June 2018.

14.2 TEACHING ANIMALS AT CAMDEN

The teaching animals that normally lived in Camden during the term time had been bought back to Hawkshead as they were getting stressed from the building noise that was occurring.

Secretary
22 May 2018