
Summary Minutes: AWERB (Standing Agenda items meeting)

Status: FINAL

Meeting held: 1 November 2022 at 2pm via MS Teams

Present: 11 plus 1 in attendance and 11 apologies

1 MINUTES OF AWERB MEETING

The minutes of the AWERB meeting held on 05 October 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record.

2 MATTERS ARISING.

2.1 Item 4.1: AWERB Terms of Reference (05 October 2022 meeting)

A meeting with the interim Establishment Licence Holder had been arranged to discuss adding “strategy elements” to the terms of reference.

2.2 Item 4.2: Camden stables (05 October 2022 meeting)

A meeting with the interim Establishment Licence Holder had been arranged to get his input on whether the area by the stables was the most appropriate emergency access point for the fire brigade and also concerns that cars were being parked in this area too.

2.3 Item 4.3: AWERB budget (05 October 2022 meeting)

The Chair unfortunately had not been able to make the October workshop on induction and training for AWERB members. However, she would arrange to meet with someone who had attended.

2.4 Item 4.4: BSU Virtual Tour storyboard (05 October 2022 meeting)

A meeting had been arranged with the interim Establishment Licence Holder to discuss the BSU Virtual Tour further.

2.5 Item 4.5: Ethics oversight of RVC Wildlife and Pest Control used (05 October 2022 meeting):

The Environmental Sustainability Manager was now scheduled to attend the December meeting to discuss biodiversity. The new Head of Campus Operations would be invited to AWERB to discuss pest control once she was in post.

2.6 Item 5: Reviewing of research policies (05 October 2022 meeting)

The interim Establishment Licence Holder had provided comments on the research policies.

2.7 Item 5: Maintaining GA lines agenda item (05 October 2022 meeting)

As the date of the original November AWERB meeting had to be changed, this agenda item had been deferred to the December meeting.

2.8 Item 14.1: Mid-term and end of PPL review templates (05 October 2022)

Templates had been updated and uploaded to the intranet.

2.9 Item 14.2: Mid-term report (05 October 2022)

A meeting was being arranged with the project licence holder to discuss his mid-term report.

2.10 Item 1.6: Breeding and Colony Management Discussion Group update –Researchers to be provided with guidance to consider what they would do if the funding they had for their work ran out and how to prioritise their work. (03 May 2022 meeting):

The interim Establishment Licence Holder suggested that when researchers were given costings for work with a genetically altered (GA) line this should include the costs of freezing down that line at the end of the project so they could include this in grant applications. Also when a funded study finished, researchers should be asked whether this was the end of their current grant funded research. If it was and unless a new funding proposal was submitted within 3 months then the researcher would be required to freeze down the line as it usually took at least another 6+ months to obtain funding and start a new project.

3 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

AWERB noted that a new FOI request relating to dogs that had been responded to.

4 NVS REPORT

4.1 Camden

- **Ferret:** An older ferret had undergone surgery. She had initially recovered as expected but the following day concerns were raised in relation to her neurological behaviour. As she continued to deteriorate after initial improvement following treatment, she was euthanised. A post-mortem had shown some bleeding and swelling so the situation was being reviewed before any further surgeries were done.

4.2 Hawkshead

- **Pig recovery surgery:** Several pig recovery surgeries had been carried out. One of the pigs had sustained an eye injury in the recovery process. She had been treated and was now doing fine.
- **Horses:** one of the ponies that had recently developed laminitis, was still receiving treatment. Laminitis was listed as a potential adverse effect on the licence so was not a condition 18. The study had now concluded, so once the pony had recovered it would be rehomed as a companion pony.
- **Dog Unit:** Four bitches had whelped in the past two weeks. For the first whelping, two male puppies had to be euthanised. One had breathing difficulties and had not responded to oxygen; the second had struggled to feed. The puppy had been provided with an oral glucose supplementation during the first night but despite trying to stimulate a suckle by giving the puppy different bottles and trying different feeding methods, he failed to feed. He was admitted to hospital but as he did not improve the decision was taken to euthanise him. Genotyping was being carried out and discussions held on how to handle this moving forward.

5 NACWO REPORT

5.1 Camden

5.1.1 Ferrets

Discussions were being held with the PPL Holder about implementing changes in terms of monitoring of post-surgical animals and sourcing of equipment being used. Scheduled surgery dates had been pushed back for now until these changes had been made.

5.1.2 Mice

Several mice had experienced dermatitis and malocclusion. This had been picked up by NACWOs and the junior staff who were very good at identifying these types of issues.

5.1.3 BMS/thermoregulation system

Concern was expressed that updates had not been received about the assessment outcomes of the BMS/thermoregulation systems and monitoring functionality and/or planned remedial/replacement works. This would be raised with Estates and an update requested on what was being done to resolve issues.

5.2 Hawkshead

5.2.1 Animal Welfare Barn

It was reported that different temperatures had been reported in two of the rooms. There were active experiments taking place which could be subtly affected by the temperature changes. The studies had initially been run in August and were being run again in November, but they were experiencing slightly different results. The design of the study had been adjusted to take this difference into account so that the study should still produce valid data. The ducts were not working which was to do with the fans and the bristles. Replacement parts were being ordered.

5.2.2 Fields

Several of the fields that had traditionally been used for the horses to graze in, were no longer usable due to there being oak and sycamore trees around those fields (acorns and sycamore seedlings were highly toxic to horses). Discussions would be held with Estates about avenues of action that could be taken to make these paddocks usable again, which would cause the least amount of disruption to the environment.

6 HOME OFFICE UPDATE

6.1 Breeding of animals

The Chair pointed out that the Home Office were releasing more standardised approaches to the breeding of animals in relation to zebrafish and mice. A query had been raised whether project licence holders should be responsible for including this in their project licences, or whether it should be added to the Establishment Licence as a standard protocol. Initial thoughts were that as there were not a large number of genetically modified animals bred at the College, these should be added to the relevant project licences.

6.2 Unannounced facilities audit visit

There had been a recent unannounced Home Office Inspection. The inspection had included a walk around the fields that held the horses and ponies, looking at the shelters and fences provided; and also the dog area where they saw the animal holding areas, procedure room, feed prep area, outdoor areas/paddocks. They had reviewed records such as training folders, individual dog records, socialisation/paddock routine access chart and environmental monitoring records. They had also spoken to individual members of staff. This was followed by questions about our processes in relation to A(SP)A legislation, our facilities and also how our AWERB worked. Initial feedback by the Inspectors had been positive and an official report was expected.

7 AMENDMENT TO ESTABLISHMENT LICENCE

AWERB noted that the Establishment Licence had been amended to replace the Establishment Licence Holder, Named Person Responsible for Compliance and Named Information Officer.

- 8 FEEDBACK FROM PPL HOLDERS THAT HAVE ATTENDED AWERB**
The positive feedback report from a PPL Holder that had recently attended AWERB was noted.
- 9 STUDY REQUESTS APPROVED SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
AWERB noted that one study request had been approved since the previous meeting.
- 10 MID-TERM PPL REVIEW**
One Mid-term report had been reviewed. There were a couple of administrative comments in relation to the review but other than that it was a good report.
- 11 RETROSPECTIVE ASSESSMENTS FOR THE HOME OFFICE THAT NEED FORMAL APPROVAL BY AWERB**
One retrospective assessment was approved for submission to the Home Office.
- 12 AWERB TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW**
- 12.1 Group composition:**
AWERB reviewed the composition of the Committee. It was felt that for the group “Animal Welfare Science and Ethics representatives” the area was too narrow, so the work ended up falling on just a couple of academics, which because of their other commitments, meant they were not able to attend AWERB very often. It was agreed that this area should be broadened out to include people interested in animal welfare from an academic perspective, as that might encourage more academics to get involved.
- 12.2 Meeting frequency**
AWERB were reminded that the frequency of the meetings had been increased in 2021 to two meetings a month: one meeting that focused on reviewing project licences; the other on standing agenda items. Although this had worked well, this had increased the workload on AWERB, particularly in the number of meetings attended. It was therefore suggested that although the monthly PPL review meetings would continue; the standing agenda items meetings should be held every alternate month (so reduced from 12 a year to 6). Although there was a concern that this might result in these becoming very long meetings, it was agreed that this format should be trialled in 2023 to see if it worked. If any welfare issues occurred between the standing agenda items meetings, then these could be raised at the PPL meetings or through e-mail or through an emergency meeting.
- 13 CONDITION 18 REPORTS**
AWERB noted the two condition 18 reports that had been submitted to the Home Office.
- 14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
This was scheduled for 23 November at 10am. It was a PPL review meeting.

Secretary
09 November 2022