
Minutes: AWERB

Status: Chair approved

Meeting held: 28 October 2016 at 10am in Room U5 Camden videolinked to F28 Hawkshead

1 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The minutes of the meetings held on 27 September 2016 and 20 June 2016 were confirmed as an accurate record.

2 **MATTERS ARISING**

2.1 **Guidance from the RSPCA in avoiding severe suffering**

AWERB were content with the guidance that had been issued by the RSPCA.

2.2 **Training for schedule 1 killing**

Anyone applying for a new or amended licence needs to be signed off to schedule 1 the species they are applying for before they can apply for their licence. For qualified veterinary clinicians and nurses, if they can demonstrate competence to schedule 1 an animal then they will need a statement of competency reflecting this and be added to the schedule 1 list.

2.3 **Tours of BSUs for existing staff and new starters**

Discussions were being held with HR about getting tours of the BSU unit included in the quarterly induction programme for new staff.

2.4 **Discussion forum for undergraduate students**

Discussions have been held about time being provided on the undergraduate timetable for students to have discussion sessions in relation to research and animals.

2.5 **Camden BSU and scientists' discussions about animal welfare**

Sessions were being arranged with project licence holders (or their teams) to discuss their studies with the animal technicians. The aim was for the scientists to talk about their science in an understandable way and how their animals should be kept, so that the technicians have more of a background about the work they are doing.

2.6 **New project licence (June 2016 meeting)**

Confirmation had been received that the work on chemosensitivity would be published in order to further the understanding of genotyped of tumours. It was important to make the information publically available to broaden the reach and significance and significance of this research involving animals.

3 **STANDARD POLICY FOR HANDLING RATS AND MICE**

AWERB had reviewed the [NC3Rs tutorial](#) before the meeting on mouse handling. In light of this, it had been suggested that the College's standard policy for handling rats and mice be reviewed. The

tutorial promotes the use of tunnel handling of mice rather than handling mice by their tail. It was explained though that the policy had been put together following a trial within BSU with tunnel lifting and cupping mice and focused on the best handling of mice within the unit rather than generally. During the trial the technicians had found that the mice did not like the tunnels with the mice trying to jump or bite the handler. In addition, if the mice were on the large size or pregnant they could not fit in the tunnels.

With the cupping although some of the mouse strains were easily trained, other strains were quite stressed by cupping as a practice. It was also found that it was difficult for body inspection.

After discussion it was agreed that the current draft policy should be introduced, but that cupping and tunnel handling be added as alternative options. The policy would also be reviewed against the NC3Rs recommended methods, with a report back to the February AWERB meeting with how things were progressing.

4 CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE HOUSING AND CARE OF ANIMALS BRED, SUPPLIED FOR USE FOR SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES

This code of practice would be reviewed.

5 GUIDING PRINCIPLE FOR NTCOS, NIOS AND HOLCS WORKING UNDER THE ANIMALS (SCIENTIFIC PROCEDURES) ACT 1986

These guiding principles would be reviewed.

6 MODEL DEVELOPMENT AS PART OF PROJECT LICENCES

6.1 Study One

This study has model development as a major part of the project, which involves looking at a novel approach for treating chronic back pain.

The Establishment Licence Holder had been kept informed of progress with the study and he was happy that the group were now progressing the study in a logical step by step fashion and using as few as animals as possible.

6.2 Study two

This was a project licence that was being driven by external researchers, but with the technical expertise to do the experiments being provided by animal technicians at the College. The project would be closely monitored to make sure that work was progressing and that the results were supporting the aims of the project.

7 WEBSITE INFORMATION

Discussions were being held about putting information on the website in relation to animals used at the RVC as part of our commitment to the Concordat on Openness.

8 PROJECT LICENCES GRANTED/AMENDED

AWERB noted that one new project licence had been granted and three had been amended since the previous meeting.

9 CONDITION 18 REPORTS

AWERB noted that three condition 18 reports had been submitted to the Home Office. The Home Office had replaced the reports on file.

10 PROJECT LICENCES – MID TERM REVIEW

AWERB noted the mid-term review that had been submitted.

11 PROJECT LICENCES – END OF PROJECT LICENCE REVIEW

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

12 STUDY REQUESTS

AWERB noted the 3 study requests that had been received.

13 NVS REPORTS

The NVS reported the findings of their most recent inspections, which were noted by the committee.

14 PRESENTATION FROM PROJECT LICENCE HOLDER

The Project Licence Holder was welcomed to the meeting. He was applying for a project licence to have secondary availability at the RVC. The project licence holder worked for a company that provided high quality contract research services to progress compounds from hit identification through to lead optimization in disease models. They offered a variety of research models in the field of inflammation, such as respiratory, gastrointestinal and ocular diseases, as well as models of infection, and pharmacokinetic screening.

AWERB were of the consensus that the work that was being proposed was justified in terms of respiratory disease being such a worldwide problem and a distressing disease. They did request though that AWERB be provided with copies of study plans prior to commencement of work or commissioning studies with clients for animal welfare review to ensure that AWERB were happy with the proposals.

15 PRESENTATION FROM PROJECT LICENCE HOLDER

The Project Licence Holder explained that she was looking to transfer her current project licence from her current establishment to the RVC. The principal aim of her interdisciplinary research project was to further understanding of the population structure, evolution and behaviour of infectious agents, primarily helminths (the parasitic worms) and protozoans, and their subsequent impact upon, and the mechanism of action underpinning, their natural host health and behaviour. Such information would help to interpret and predict prevailing patterns and characteristics of infection and disease in both humans and animals and to guide future disease control activities.

AWERB were impressed with the number of successes in relation to the 3Rs in particular that the majority of previous animal usage had been replaced due to recent research success in the laboratory specifically aimed to replace animal usage.

16 PRESENTATION FROM PROJECT LICENCE HOLDER HOLDER

The Project Licence Holder explained that the aim of this project licence was to understand the potential health benefits of a balanced microbiota in fish, in terms of fish health, production, gut development, gut integrity and function and immunity. This would be done by measuring the benefits of the microbiota and any additional benefits afforded by pre and probiotic feeds in a zebrafish model. Another aspect of the project would investigate the effect of sustainable fish feeds (using plant-based proteins rather than a fishmeal protein diet) on fish health, including microbial composition.

AWERB were supportive of the aims of the science. They noted that protocol 1 would consist of pilot studies to monitor and assess the severity and timing of any adverse consequences following procedures. This had been suggested by the Home Office Inspector as the timing of the adverse effects (if there were any) were not known and the pilot study would help determine that. As it was

not known what the effects might be the severity had been classed as severe. Once the results from the pilot studies were known it would inform the next part of the licence. AWERB suggested that once the pilot studies had been undertaken a review of the project should be done for AWERB.

17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 Crick Institute

It was reported that on 9th November the Queen would be opening the new Crick building. This would be 79 years to the day since new buildings at the RVC were opened by King George VI in November 1937.

Secretary
04 November 2016