
Minutes: AWERB

Status: Chair Approved

Meeting held: 23 March @ 1pm in Camden Council Room videolinked to F82 Hawkshead

1 **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2017 were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.

2 **MATTERS ARISING**

2.1 **PPL Holders and BSU Hawkshead**

A project licence holder would be presenting to the Ethics and Welfare Committee over lunchtime on Thursday 27th April. AWERB and Hawkshead animal technicians were welcome to attend.

2.2 **In vivo study adjustment**

The project licence holder and statistician have discussed the study design and sample size for this project. The original sample size was fine although they had been unlucky to have lost several rats for reasons unrelated to the experiment protocols. With the remaining sample size (9 and 10 in each group), they would still have reasonable power to detect treatment effect based on CT data, so no more rats had been added into the current study group.

2.3 **Devising a research project to compare the different methods for handling rodents (tunnelling and cupping)**

The intention was to run a study over the summer. They would look at different types of tunnels, including transparent tunnels to see if they could be used for inspecting mice. A student would be involved in collecting the data and analysing it. A meeting was also being set up to discuss further and work out the best way of determining which method(s) had the best welfare benefits.

2.4 **Schedule of talks for BSU Camden**

A schedule of talks involving scientists and animal technicians was being put together. This should help foster better communications between the scientists and the technicians.

3 **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR NTCO'S, NIOS AND HOLCS WORKING UNDER A(SP)A**

The current training and record keeping processes were being reviewed. It was recommended that the training records be amended to include a date for a yearly reassessment. Some of the forms would need to be updated/created to aid with this. A record of initials and signatures was also required in order to verify the competency forms.

A query had been raised whether only those people who had been on the assessors' course, could actually assess others. It was clarified that scientists who had expertise in their areas did not need to

go on the assessors course, but it was important that BSU staff attended before they could be signed off as competent to assess.

4 LIST OF MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS FOR MEETING WITH THE HOME OFFICE INSPECTOR

An updated version of the risk profile discussion document had been circulated to AWERB for comment. The aim of the meeting with the Home Office Inspector was to set goals for the next 12 months as well as identify achievements from the past 12 months.

The following additional suggestions were made:

- **PELh effectiveness/visibility**
 - Animal technicians are encouraged to pass on their concerns to the NACWOs so that they can be fed into these meetings.
 - Regularly reviews grant applications from scientists within the College (so visible to them).
 - Goes to external events such as the NC3Rs prize giving event and PELH Forum which provides opportunities to network and feedback on good practice.

- **AWERB effectiveness**
 - Encouragement of Scientists to share resources – if an animal is not needed in one area, then utilise it in a more effective role.
 - Rehoming policy developed
 - Ongoing discussions about mice handling and the best practices that should be followed

- **NVS effectiveness/involvement**
 - Regularly contribute to the Home Office module courses.
 - Good representation on the Working Groups that have been set up

5 INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

5.1 Animals used at Camden

It was mentioned that there was a path that went by the pens at Camden which members of the public used. It was suggested that it would be useful to provide information (such as posters on the public side of the fence) on these animals and how they helped with training the vet students. It was agreed that an initial draft should be put together as it would be a good way to engage with the community.

6 DRAFT DOG REHOMING POLICY – FOR REVIEW

AWERB reviewed the draft application form to adopt a dog or puppy from the RVC. AWERB discussed whether the College should carry out home checks on the people who wanted to adopt a dog. Although it was recognised that it was good practice, it really depended on where they lived. If it was not possible to visit then photo evidence could be requested to make sure for example that the garden was secure. It was agreed that a follow up survey of owners that have already rehomed dogs be carried out asking how they were getting on with the dogs and whether there had been any problems. A decision would then be made about home visits.

7 PRESENTATION FROM PPL HOLDER

The project licence holder was welcomed to the meeting. It was explained that this was a project licence application to assess the efficacy of RPE and/or photoreceptor transplantation in the retina of the eye. After discussing the project licence there were several queries that needed to be clarified/looked into further, before a decision could be made about the project licence application. They were of the consensus though that the project was scientifically valid and that the potential benefits outweighed the harms.

8 WORKING GROUP UPDATES

8.1 Environmental Enrichment Working Group

There would be a new call for expressions of interest to join this group. The first aims of the group would be to carry out an audit of current practices to see what was done and what could be improved.

A page would be set up on the intranet providing updates on progress made by the Working Group.

9 UPDATE ON THE CAMDEN TEACHING ANIMALS

The large animals enclosure at Camden was now much improved with the animals having proper designation areas. A project comparing the welfare of the ponies between Camden and Hawkshead and which places they seemed to prefer to be at was being carried out

There were now no teaching dogs kept at Camden. Instead “flexi dogs” were used.

10 NVS UPDATES

10.1 Hawkshead

- a working group to look at the immunosuppression regime would be set up
- there had been a visit to a crocodile farm to view how the crocodiles were kept.

11 ESTATES ISSUES

11.1 BSU Camden

Staff were ensuring that they were logging any building/estates work that needed to be carried out on EOSS.

12 PROJECT LICENCES – MID TERM REVIEW

AWERB noted the mid term review that had been submitted and the comments that had been raised.