
Minutes: AWERB summary minutes

Status: Chair approved

Meeting held: Wednesday 12 January 2022 at 2pm via MS Teams

Attendees: 12 plus 1 in attendance and 7 apologies

1 WELCOME

A NACWO was welcomed to her first AWERB meeting. The new student representatives were also welcomed to their first official meeting.

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2021 were confirmed as an accurate record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Item 3: PPL Amendment (14 December 2021 meeting)

The Chair had briefly discussed with the project licence holder about setting up a process so AWERB were able to review outlines of proposed dosing regimes that were requested by clients, in order to assess whether there was a clear benefit that outweighed the harm being done to an animal.

3.2 Item 5.1: Establishment Licence (14 December 2021 meeting)

A copy had been placed on a shared drive.

3.3 Item 5.2: Having more small animals oriented clinicians on AWERB (14 December 2021 meeting)

The meeting that had been arranged with the Establishment Licence Holder for just before Christmas to discuss this had been postponed. This needed to be rescheduled.

3.4 Item 5.4: Working group to revamp mid/end of project licence reviews. (14 December 2021 meeting)

A request for volunteers had been circulated and a couple of people had come forward. They would meet within the next month.

3.5 Item 5.6: Study requests received (14 December 2021)

The proposed presentation on the tissue sharing programme would be arranged once the new lay panel members had been appointed.

3.6 Item 5.7: Condition 18 training (14 December 2021 meeting)

The slides from the workshop had now been received. These would be customised and condensed to make them easier to follow and more relevant to the RVC.

3.7 Item 5.8: ARRIVE compliance report (14 December 2021 meeting)

The ARRIVE guidelines workshop was being finalised. The plan was to advertise it at a BSU Internal Users group meeting. Once several sessions had been held then it would be reviewed to see if it should be rolled out wider.

3.8 Item 5.9: AWERB membership (14 December 2021 meeting)

The call for new internal lay panel members had closed just before Christmas. Approximately 10 applications had been received and were being reviewed to narrow them down to a short list. They would then be invited to an introductory session on ASPeL and also to attend a AWERB meeting as an observer.

3.9 Item 5.11: Establishment Licence: updating the room names (14 December 2021 meeting)

The site plan was still being worked on.

3.10 Item 5.12: Air Handling Units at Camden (14 December 2021 meeting)

A meeting had been held with the BMS specialist just before Christmas to go through his report. Further investigation into the system was needed though as there were no records available about the additions that had been made to the system in 2016. This information was needed in order to do a full report on what needed to be done to make the system work properly.

3.11 Item 5: Update on Student REPs (30 November 2021 meeting)

The recent induction programme that had been developed for the new students had gone really well and would be used as a formal process for future inductions. Several sessions had been held including an introduction to A(SP)A and legislation; background to animal research carried out at the College; functions of AWERB; attending AWERB as an observer to get a flavour of the meeting and then a session on how to review project licences including key things to consider and how the project licence application process worked.

4 RSPCA WEEK 4: HOW WELL SUPPORTED IS YOUR AWERB?

The final week of this series had now been published by the RSPCA.

An initial review of the suggested topics for reflection had been done and the consensus was that the AWERB did do most of them. There were a couple though that were not done such as including annual objectives for AWERB to try and achieve and making sure there were action plans in place such as identifying priorities that AWERB wanted to achieve and then reviewing them throughout the year to see what progress was being made.

Another key area was having senior management involvement in AWERB. This used to be provided by the previous Vice Principal for Research and Innovation (VPRI) who regularly attended these meetings as part of his Establishment Licence Holder role and as VPRI also sat on senior management committees. Although the replacement Establishment Licence Holder also sat on these committees, there was a slight concern that interaction could be lost.

A query was raised by one of the students about whether there was adequate communication about AWERB within the College. She suggested that it might be useful to run introduction sessions to AWERB, for example for the PhD students, as she would have found that really useful when she had started as a PhD student. People that were not specifically involved in animal research probably did not have an understanding of the process behind it and how animal research was approved. It was noted that an introduction to the BSUs was provided for residents and interns but not the PhD students. This could be included as part of the mandatory sessions that were run during the PhD induction week in October. It was also suggested that there could be sessions on the basics of 3Rs.

A query was raised whether there was a formal budget for AWERB, that could be used for things like training for members. The Committee were advised that requests to attend training were currently

submitted on an adhoc basis for approval. Enquiries would be made about whether it was possible to have a formal budget.

It was noted that the RSPCA guidance on the website also included several background documents that AWERB were encouraged to look at including Guiding Principles on Good Practice for AWERB.

5 AWERB TERMS OF REFERENCE

AWERB reviewed the terms of reference that related to Delivery and confirmed that they were happy with them.

6 NVS UPDATE

6.1 Anaesthetic issues:

There had been several post anaesthetic losses under a study. The protocol had subsequently been reviewed and a condition 18 report would be sent to the Home Office.

6.2 Teaching pony

One of the teaching ponies had continued to have ill health issues that related to old age so the decision had been taken to euthanise her. This meant that there were now only 2 teaching ponies: another old pony and a younger newer one, both who were going back to Camden that day for a second time in a row for Spring term.

A new pony was scheduled to arrive the following day but needed to be assessed to see if she would be suitable. Sourcing appropriate ponies continued to be a concern and there were no other potential ponies lined up.

It was suggested that senior management needed to be made aware of the issues in relation to the teaching ponies and to discuss with them whether alternative teaching animals could be used instead. The teaching calves were fine with being in Camden. It was just the ponies that it was not suitable for.

One of the undergraduate students advised that as part of the ISFs, the students were not given any information about conditions the animals might have. For example, they had noticed that one of the ponies had a poorly leg and were told afterwards that it had osteoarthritis. Was this something that the students should have been told about earlier so they would know to be very cautious when approaching the pony? The student was thanked for this feedback. Great care was taken when examining the ponies to make sure they were able to cope with normal physical examinations as well as ensuring they were fit enough to stand around for a long period of time but it was useful to know these concerns so they could feed into the relevant conversations.

6.3 DMD dogs:

A project licence amendment had been submitted to add the possible adverse effect of gastrointestinal signs occurring following IV gene therapeutic administration.

There had been a small traumatic injury to one of the smaller male dogs that had required some minor veterinary treatment to the wound. The dog was now fine.

One of the carrier females (5 years old) had developed a lesion on top of her nose and the skin looked very pink. Pictures had been sent to QMH Dermatology who had confirmed that it was most likely some type of round cell tumour. A fine needle aspirate under sedation had been done but there was not enough diagnostics to decide what it was. It was a hard area to get a fine needle aspirate into and she would need a full general anaesthetic for a proper biopsy or removal. Apart from the lesion the dog was fine.

6.4 **Sheep**

One of the sheep that was 3 months into a 6 months study had developed a respiratory disease. This did not seem to be linked to the procedure. She was however a small, light sheep which therefore made intramuscular injections very tricky. One course of intramuscular antibiotics had so far been provided but the respiratory issues had returned. Discussions were being held about whether to use an intravenous course of antibodies as an alternative method.

7 **3RS**

7.1 **NC3Rs Webinar: Environmental monitoring for rodent health surveillance**

(<https://nc3rs.org.uk/events/nc3rs-webinar-environmental-monitoring-rodent-health-surveillance>)

NC3Rs had hosted this webinar. The webinar was aimed at those people who wanted to learn more about using environmental monitoring strategies for rodent health surveillance. It had discussed the practicalities of implementing environmental monitoring for both rack-level filtration systems and cage-level options.

7.2 **Malocclusion training resources**

NC3Rs had also put together some training materials in relation to spotting the signs of malocclusion in mice and steps that could be taken to prevent it. They had also put together a very nice poster which summarised the signs to look for.

<https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/malocclusion-mice>

7.3 **Breeding and Colony Management discussion group (from 27 April 2021 meeting)**

Following the discussion group meeting held the previous March/April, the annual review to see how things were progressing was scheduled for the March 2022 AWERB meeting. NC3Rs have produced a high level document on “Archiving best practice” which would be circulated in advance of the March meeting. It provided useful reading about what best practice was and a checklist for what to consider when cryopreserving a strain.

8 **NACWO REPORT**

8.1 **Camden**

- BMS System: there were ongoing issues with the BMS system. One of the rooms was reporting 33% humidity which was outside the required range. There were discussions about shutting down the affected areas.
- Penile issues: blood spots were being found in some of the cages. The mice were therefore being continuously monitored to make sure they were ok and to try and identify which of the mice were experiencing the problems. Discussions were being held about what could be causing it.

8.2 **Hawkshead**

There were no issues to raise from a NACWO perspective. There were no issues in relation to animal welfare.

9 **CONDITION 18 REPORT**

AWERB noted that there had been one condition 18 report submitted to the Home Office. No further action had been required.

10 **PROJECT LICENCE AMENDMENTS**

AWERB noted that 5 project licences amendments had been approved by the Home Office since the previous meeting.

11 STUDY REQUESTS

AWERB noted that two study requests had been approved since the previous meeting.

12 END OF PPL REVIEWS

Two end of PPL reviews were noted. It was flagged that one of the reports had included papers that there was uncertainty whether they actually related to the project licence work that was done. This had occurred in other reports so would be added to the review that was being done on the end of project licence report templates.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

This was scheduled for Tuesday 25 January 2022 and would be a PPL review meeting.

Liz Wilkinson
17 January 2022