

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

A meeting of the AWERB was held at 11:00 on Tuesday 19th March 2024

Location:

Video conferencing

Summary of actions

Item	Action	Due
7	To add severity column to End of PPL review form.	March 2024

Minutes

Item	
1. Welcome and apologies	
Chair welcomed new members including new scientific member specialising in wildlife and also a new NACWO.	
We also have review input from an external biostatistician although they won't be attending the AWERB meetings they will input into reviews and will be looking at the statistical/experimental design of a PPL application and providing the applicant with review feedback.	
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 20th February 2024	AWERB/2324/28
Minutes were agreed as accurate.	
Discussion took place over training in Co2 (rising concentration) which is used as a schedule 1 method for some studies, where no alternative method is suitable.	
3. Matters Arising/Actions	AWERB/2324/29
Three actions in progress, no updates.	
4. Amendment Review	AWERB/2324/30 a, b
<ul style="list-style-type: none">PPL amendment AWERB/2324/30 (<i>Major amendment</i>) was reviewed by AWERB.	
PPL Holder attended to give a summary and rationale for the requested amendment of an additional protocol with decapitation of neonates (Mice) rather than cervical dislocation which is not a suitable method for extracting brain tissue.	
Discussion:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">age of neonates that will experience a non-schedule 1 method of termination.separating the neonates waiting for the procedure vs the one undergoing it – visual and pheromone exposure.training ensuring successful completion of technique.Protocol ensuring equipment is regularly maintained.Culture of care for staff wellbeing when undertaking this termination methodAWERB considered it was well written.	

	<p>AWERB were happy that the PPL holder addressed their comments in the meeting.</p> <p>Decision: ENDORSED</p>	
5.	<p>General updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Establishment Licence updates</u> Request for authorisation on PEL: Decapitation of neonates as a schedule 1 method for mice - this is better method for both animal welfare and staff undertaking the method, other methods inefficient. • <u>Standard Condition 18 reports</u> 1 x mouse found deceased. 1x PPL amendment has been submitted to address a Keep Alive Request (Mouse) 1x Request to Keep Alive for unintended use of two sites on mouse. • <u>Rehoming</u> Nothing to report • <u>Compliance issues</u> Nothing to report. • <u>Updates from Named Persons Meeting</u> <p><i>3Rs achievements</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Second half of lighting phase for Zebra fish ○ Movement of guppies to more naturalised surroundings is ongoing. ○ Looking at options for non-animal health screenings moving forwards (rodents) ○ Recent revision of fish feeding, now up to 5-6 types of food per day now, rather than two or three. ○ NACWOs looking at developing protocol for methods of termination for non-protected species such as decapods and applying the same standards of welfare as we do for protected species. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Update from BSU Board meeting</u> Governance discussion ongoing. NC3rs self-assessment tool discussed and potential Biostatistician cost implications. • <u>Estates</u> Movement of facilities discussed regarding both campuses. • <u>NTCO update</u> <p>Training and Reassessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunnel and cupping handling mice • Schedule 1 training carried out for fish and rodent researchers • Non schedule 1 training method: mouse neonatal pup decapitation • Tumour cell implantation and Intra mammary fat pad mice • Training for a BSU licenced Technician on mouse anaesthesia and recovery • Local module training carried out for technicians • PIL Practical's for both rodent and fish researchers • PIL A/B course for wildlife researcher this month <p>Conference and Courses</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We held a PIL refresher course back in February overall had really good attendance and have received good feedback, there will be another PIL refresher course coming up Technicians attended IAT congress last week. Exeter is attending a 3H's launch event (Housing. Handling and Habituation of rodents) in Bristol. The 3H's framework has been developed by a team of neuroscientists. The event is being held to launch the 3Hs website and online resources, including a CPD accredited training course. There is also a live webinar on this day. We have the upcoming Zebrafish workshop, aimed at improving welfare and reproducibility in Zebrafish research in April. <p>Other News</p> <p>We are launching a CPD page on our BRF SharePoint site. Advertising various courses, conferences, webinars and 3R's resources. We also aim to circulate a monthly bulletin email to all users highlighting the events of the month. Comms will be sent out this week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>CoC update</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BRF staff had an 'away day' recently which was a success. We now have a working group for CoC. Topics covered included: communication; PDR/CPD; integration with researchers, managing workload. This group has met twice already including post the 'away day' and a list of actions will follow shortly which we also intend to share with AWERB. <p>Thanks also to lay member for support with reference to office space issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>HOLC update</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the recent HOLTIF meeting there were no significant updates in terms of what will affect us in the immediate future, although potential changes in the near future were discussed. Recently DSIT publicly announced that it will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> publish a plan to accelerate the development, validation and uptake of technologies and methods to reduce reliance on the use of animals in science. double specific investment in 3Rs research and the development of non-animal alternatives. restart the public attitudes to animal research survey, with the next results published this autumn. <p>In addition, the Minister publicly announced that the HO will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase the fees for licences; and review the duration of licences to explore whether a shorter duration than five years would be appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regarding the Forced Swim Test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was publicly announced that The HO will further restrict the use of the forced swim test and apply enhanced scrutiny to any proposal to use the forced swim test. Aim to completely ban the use of the forced swim test in the near future. This will require the validation of suitable appropriate alternatives. 	
6.	Named Veterinary Surgeon's visit (<i>verbal update</i>)	
	The NVS updated members on recent visit.	
7.	End of PPL Reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AWERB/2324/31 End of PPL review Decision: APPROVED 	AWERB/2324/31 AWERB/2324/32

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AWERB/2324/32 End of PPL review Decision: to revise <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of detailed feedback in this form is rather limited. • Mentions the studies furthered the basic understanding, will this be shared with the community and published literature. 	
8.	Update on Publishing AWERB minutes Chair updated members that after consulting with various universities who publish their AWERB minutes we feel that it would be a positive step towards transparency and will be publishing our minutes annually. This will be approved by RIEC firstly and then engagement with IG and Comms team.	
9.	Update on Chair's Action <u>Regulated</u> Urgent amendment in relation to sc18 keeping alive request was endorsed and by secondary availability. <u>Non-regulated</u> Two applications in review currently but not ready for endorsement yet. <u>Proformas endorsed</u> Updated Unsupported Procedures Request Form endorsed.	
10	Any Other Business none	
11	End	

Date of next meeting:

Tuesday 23rd April 2024 (online)