



Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Minutes 31/03/20

The University of Edinburgh

Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986

Minutes of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body held 31/03/2020

Microsoft teams

1. **Welcome** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending, particularly during current times.
2. **Attendance and Apologies**– please see separate sheet
3. **Minutes of Meeting held on 25/02/20: to be confirmed**

4. Matters arising and action point summary

- **ASPA provisions for visits to facilities:** awaiting clarification from ASRU whether NVS visits should continue during Covid-19 crisis: **Action** [REDACTED]: clarify with ASRU
- **Communication from AWERB chair:** a communication from the AWERB chair would be sent to all facility staff thanking them for their help and continued support during this time : **Action** [REDACTED]: *complete*

Named person update

Directors update: this focused on the Covid-19 outbreak and the impact on facilities.

- **Staffing:** current staffing is approx. 70%, 4 hour rota system in place due to be extended by the end of April.
- **Facilities:** To ensure animal care and welfare could be maintained cage numbers have been reduced through early completion of some studies and culling of breeding stock and WT animals.
- **Experimental work:** Following the announcement by the science minister essential scientific research can continue which is being assessed on a case by case basis by senior academics and NVS.
- **Staff:** The morale of staff has been a priority and a number of emails and other communications have been sent out.

NVS update

- **NVS updated re health status across facilities****Remote working:** all going well, animals being looked at via video-cam where needed, vets in regular contact and can come in where needed
- **Review of studies:** meeting has been convened to consider studies on a case by case basis. Other issues include downstream analysis of tissues where building access may be restricted.
- **ASPA provisions:** [REDACTED] to get clarification on vet visits to facilities, very likely visits will only be in critical situations.

NACWO update ([REDACTED])



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Facility staff: Some staff self-isolating due to underlying health issues. Rota system working well to allow social distancing within facilities, staffing levels approx. 70%.

PL07-2020

This project licence is from an experienced group leader who has held several project licences previously. The application was approved pending revision of the minor points below:

Main points:

- **Funding:** more clarity required here, unclear what level of funding is in place.
- **Action plan and benefits:** further justification for the use of sham surgeries is required within the action plan. In general the action plan requires expansion to justify the science of the project.
- **Severity limits:** some clarification of severity required
- **Breeding and maintenance:** use the standard guidance documents as supplied.
- **Breeding and maintenance protocol:** this should be protocol number 1 as standard.
- **Steps section:** ensure the final step in each protocol is the method of killing, issues with the new system mean this is not always clear to the applicant.

PI08-2020

This project licence is from an experienced group leader/clinician and it was noted that this was a straightforward application with well-established models and a strong emphasis on translational science. The application was approved pending revision of the minor points below:

- **Controls:** clarify if the vehicle (olive oil) used to deliver CCL4, is required as a control.
- **GA models:** clarify how are these going to be used in the context of this licence, this is currently not clear.
- **Humane endpoints:** some revision is required; for example some wording is a bit vague, and unclear at which points animals will be killed.
- **Appendices** will need to be incorporated into the project plan or relevant protocols as these are no longer permitted in the project licence.

PL09 -2020:

This is a renewal application and has generally been well written with some points for consideration as detailed below. The application was approved subject to revision of the below points:

- **Objectives and action plan:** these need to be completely revised as these currently do not relate to the experimental protocols and action plan. It was noted that this section needs the most work.
- **NTS:** it was noted that this is overly complex with too many scientific terms which would not be understandable to the general public and needs revision.



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- **Terminology:** in some places the use of jargon/inappropriate language has been included in the application and should be removed.

PL06-2020

This application is from a group leader and the project continues a long-term research project on neurodegeneration; the applicant has been undertaking this work for a number of years. The application was approved subject to the revision of the following points:

- **Breeding and maintenance:** more details on GA lines is required in the relevant protocols.
- **Action plan:** more justification is required to clarify and justify the science and the work within the protocols. For example, multiple routes of inoculation are included but no justification has been given for this.
- **Monitoring and Scoring:** future considerations/discussions could be given to updated monitoring and scoring systems and earlier disease detection methods.
- **SOP:** it was noted that an SOP will be produced for different routes of inoculation and this will be reviewed by the NVS and NACWO

Amendment applications submitted to the AWERB: none for full review

Sub-committee review: All approved

5. **AOCB:** It was agreed that a communication from the AWERB chair would be sent to all facility staff thanking them for their help and continued support during this time
Summary of above details in matters arising

Date of next Meeting: to be advised