



The [REDACTED] Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body

Monday September 28th 2pm  
2pm [REDACTED] Microsoft teams  
Minutes

1. Attendance and apologies.

Apologies  
[REDACTED]

**New appointments:** two new members have been appointed to the committee with expertise in large animals and poultry it was noted that the committee were delighted with these new appointments.

2. Minutes of last meeting:

The AWERB committee minutes were accepted as true record of the previous meeting that took place on the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

3. Matters arising/Action points

4. **Retrospective review:** finalising the process now and hope to have this in place as soon as possible, awaiting the final form for completion. **Summary:** agreed to re-establish the process of retrospective and/or midpoint reviews of PPLs. PPL holders will be contacted shortly once the process and forms are in place. The aim is to commence this by the end of 2021.

- **New members:** letters have been sent out to new members.
- [REDACTED]: [REDACTED] to approach her to give a short presentation on her work.

5. **NVS update:**

[REDACTED]: all facilities working well no issues.

[REDACTED]: [REDACTED] very busy, a number of studies are currently ongoing. [REDACTED] work has recently completed successfully, and protocols are being refined to facilitate further studies under containment. Preliminary work on [REDACTED] injections for gene therapy approaches have provided encouraging data.

Issues identified in relation to misunderstanding over the necessary training required to facilitate initial PK studies relating to [REDACTED] have been resolved. Noted that whilst this issue had no impact on animal welfare, the gap in understanding was illuminating. Expectations in relation to unequivocally acting on advice from named persons have been diplomatically re-affirmed with the group concerned.

**SCotpil training** (large animal) carried out last week was a success.

6. **NTCO update:** document for PIL training and competencies has been circulated to all Rodent users, this will be circulated to poultry users shortly. Large animal course, 9 attendees on this course.

7. **PEL Holder update:** issues with ASRU raised, meetings will be held going forward to meet with PEL holders

- **Reports from Facilities**

- [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]): [REDACTED], blood sampling work ongoing. Staffing levels are reduced with 2 posts vacant.

- [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]): advertised stockperson (dairy), 6 applicants received but only 1 had LA experience but limited, post will be re-advertised. Farm manager post should be re-advertised in the next few weeks. Concerns that it will be difficult to recruit due to current recruitment shortages within the UK in general. Contingency plans on how to manage the immediate shortfall in staff, and potential gaps over the winter period, are being formulated. [REDACTED] is very busy with most projects already planned and running, with very few slots left before Christmas (work is already filling up for 2022). A broad spectrum of work illustrates the scope of [REDACTED] capabilities and relevance, including research into tick-borne diseases of livestock, ovine progressive adenocarcinoma, approaches towards improving prospects for patients, including neonates, with cardiovascular, pulmonary or neurological disease, antibody production, and gene editing studies aimed towards improving livestock productivity and welfare in the face of climate change. Equally relevant planned work includes vaccine studies and work involving [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] Noted that there are some challenges when dealing with visiting groups as there may be training and other staffing issues
- **Poultry ([REDACTED] and [REDACTED])**- no major issues within the facilities. New staff member has taken up a full time position which is working very well. New [REDACTED] line has been established. Update on unvaccinated birds from [REDACTED] building which developed respiratory problems, advised that birds from this facility should not be brought down for sustained periods of time to the [REDACTED] building. **Competencies:** users advised that monitoring by facility managers would be ongoing when users are conducting experimental work,
- **Chick Embryo room** – [REDACTED]: no issues to report
- **Aquaculture Facility** - ([REDACTED]): In regard to facilities, the [REDACTED] for aquaculture, there is nothing to report, except that the aquaria have recently been serviced. No studies are currently being undertaken although it is anticipated that salmon and trout studies will be undertaken shortly.
- **Ethics, 3Rs and the culture of care:** noted that an excellent presentation was given at the AWERB hub meeting on the use of a “playroom” set up for rats. This was a large room set up with a series of enrichment activities. The AWERB hub also discussed culture of care and how this is improved and measured within establishments, noted that another NVS has been tasked with taking this forward. Other refinements were noted, one in relation to a large animal (cattle) PPL involving severe procedures. Noted that a forthcoming LAVA conference will cover “culture of care” and the NVS attending has agreed to relay details from the conference back to the committee.  
PloS one paper: illustrates the different standards adopted for culture of care and animal research across the world. Suggested that this could be discussed at a future AWERB, [REDACTED] to invite [REDACTED] to discuss this at a future meeting.
- **Statistics and experimental design:** no report tabled.

8. Licences **submitted** to Home Office since the last AWERB meeting

**New Project licences**

none

**Amended Project licences**

[REDACTED] : A51-51

[REDACTED] : A52-21

8. **Project licence applications under consideration PL28-21:** [REDACTED] additional availability

- Noted that this application has already been approved by the [REDACTED] AWERB

- **Recovery work:** concerns raised about this. This section lacks justification for the need to undertake recovery experiments, particularly in relation to the risk to animal welfare. In addition there is very limited discussion about study design, adverse effects, and humane endpoints.
- **Objectives:** largely duplicated from the previous licence - these fail to reflect the experience gained from studies undertaken thus far at [REDACTED]. For example, the scientific purpose of Protocol 2 is not explicitly stated, hence the criteria governing recovery are unknown – and the costs and potential benefits of allowing recovery to proceed cannot be discerned.
- **Collaborators:** noted that input from collaborators at [REDACTED] University has previously been useful in resolving issues needing attention. A meeting to discuss these issues will be sought ahead of the next AWERB ([REDACTED]).
- **Format:** the study design should be amended to reflect the likely staged approach to further experiments, with clearly stated “go” “no-go” criteria stated at the outset.
- **Severity:** respecting the above requirements, further justification needed for proposing recovery experiments as moderate severity.

## 9. PPL amendments under consideration by the AWERB

*None*

## 11 Overseas research application: OS6-21

The committee were happy to approve this application subject to the review points made.

- Noted that stocking densities are denser than those permitted in ASPA, clarification will be sought on this.
- Made reference to standard culling methods but these have not been specified for that country, this should be clarified.
- In the application the study’s lighting follows GAP level 1 standards. The committee would like clarity on whether the entire study is GAP level 1 standard compliant? It would be good to know if they have provided additional welfare considerations above level 1 requirements, such as enrichment or perches? It would be useful to get a better idea of the environmental conditions of these birds.
- Would it be possible to have information on the birds used i.e. breed, sex and how long they will be kept? The stocking density may be well in excess of what would be permitted in the UK.
- How will they be culled/will they enter the commercial slaughter chain?

**10. A.O.C.B:** the committee discussed the recent publication from the RSPCA which looks at the role of the AWERB and has asked AWERBs to discuss the points in the publication.

**11. Date of next meeting:** October 25th 2pm, Microsoft Teams.