

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

Minutes of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body held 1/10/19 and 22/10/19 combined

1. **Welcome** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.
2. **Attendance and Apologies**– please see separate sheet
3. **Minutes of Meeting held on 28/8/19:** Approved

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**4. Matters arising and action point summary**

- Forced swim test - there are ongoing discussions around this test, which is on a very small number of licences. It is clear that some PPLs contain it but do not ever use it. Where that is the case PPL holders are removing it. One further licence (submitted October 2019) has a modified version of this test used for anxiety which will remain on the licence with amended wording. Action complete
- **Review form:** amend to include the new parts in the form. Action ongoing: [redacted] to review relevant parts of review form and revise based on new PPL form

**5. Named person update**

**NVS update: issues discussed**

- Communications – the need for clear communication between PIL and PPL holders and NVS where there are any issues with studies was discussed. This needs to be timely. Recently a PIL holder has been stopped from undertaking further work on a specific PPL owing to lack of communication with the NVS and PPL holder to the detriment of animal health and welfare. : issues with lack of communication between PPL and PIL holders and named vets where experimental deaths have occurred but not reported to the vets. The HOI were informed and a meeting convened and action has been taken to prevent the PIL holder in question conducting further work under this PPL.
- **Exceeding numbers:** one PPL holder has exceeded the number limits on a PPL which the Home Office has been made aware of. Following this action has been taken to remind PPLs about PPL numbers which has prompted additional amendments
- **NSG mice:** issues with NSG mice moving from one facility to another and developing infections were discussed. Not all cohorts of animals are affected, including cage mates and the time taken to develop infection is variable; issues being considered include transport, isolators and alterations in the microbiome however there is currently no clear cause.

**NACWO update :**

- Tunnel handling: one of our big facilities is now completely tunnel handling, all going well and no issues with the users. Training of techs from other facilities will happen to roll out

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throughout the university. It was suggested that for scientists writing papers that this could be noted in the publication

- Single needle use: posters to be displayed in the facilities.
- Considering how to consolidate wild type breeding and optimise the use of in house colonies.

NTCO update: issues discussed

- course held with new presentations/format which went very well and was part of the re-accreditation of the course. It was noted by the committee that the NTCO was central to the success of this re-accreditation and made an excellent job of organising this.
- Single needle use policy implemented and poster submitted to all facilities.

6. Consideration of Project licence applications and amendments

PL24-19 This project licence is from a very experienced group leader and is a proof of concept study using gene drive technology in rodents

The committee suggested that due to the novel nature of this application the applicant should be invited to present this work at the next AWERB: **Action** to organise presentation.

- Rephrase “under-powered” to “proof of concept”
- It was noted that due to the content this application may be referred to the animals in science committee.
- The licence is only a 2 year licence and is only a proof of concept: clarification is required for the overall aim.

PL29-19

This is a very straightforward renewal application from an experienced researcher, the application mainly includes breeding and maintenance and superovulation protocols.

The application requires minimal revision and was approved by the committee subject to the following minor comment:

- Non-technical summary: the language is not sufficiently lay and requires revision.

PL30-19

This licence application from an existing project licence holders aims to understand the control of parasites/nematodes in wild rodents to prevent the spread of specific diseases within an agricultural setting. The application was approved subject to the consideration of the following comments:

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- **Protocols section:** unclear what animals will experience, include typical and maximal experience within relevant protocols.
- **Funding:** clarify how well supported this application is, this seems rather vague currently.
- **NTS:** numbers within the NTS inconsistent with application. Remove reference to “sacrifice” in the NTS, this should be “killed”.
- **Summary:** well written application, minor revisions required.
- **Check that all techniques listed are actually required.**

PL31-19

This is a renewal of an existing project licence from an experienced group leader which aims to understand how axons are myelinated and locate ion conductance channels correctly. It was noted that this was a very well written application with only minor revisions required to the application. The application was approved subject to the completion of these revisions:

- **Non technical summary:** some wording is not sufficiently lay, this is partly due to issues with the form and not the fault of the applicant.
- **Protocol 1 breeding/maintenance (mild)** one specific line (plan of work) isn't mentioned in the list of GA animals.
- Clarify injection routes and age of animals involved in different routes
- Some minor typos remain throughout
- The clinical scoring sheets should be included with the application - is this possible with this format of the application form?

**PL32-19:** This is a renewal application from an existing project licence holder. It was noted that this was a well written application which has been well funded and some funding has been sought by the NC3Rs.

- Some of the experimental approaches are described as vague by the reviewers, again this is thought to be the result of the new form and the lack of project plan section which makes it more difficult to assess.
- There is mention of ageing animals within the application for which there is no justification.
- **Outputs:** some discrepancies between what is being completed in this section, some applicants are treating this differently depending on the application. It was noted that further information on these sections may be provided by the home office at a forthcoming meeting
- **Non- technical summary:** there needs to be more detail on the harms, it is not made clear in the application.

**PL34-19:** This is a renewal application from a very experienced researcher which aims to understand the role of mitochondria in diseases such as MS and Motor Neurone disease. The application was approved subject to the consideration of some minor points as detailed below:

- Consider whether the dose finding protocol currently included is still required, this may have been a requirement in the previous licence.

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- There are a number of spelling errors within the application.
- Clarify species and numbers to be used Protocol 2: no clear humane endpoints, only detail is the loss of body weight @20%, which is not a clear humane endpoint.
- Some discrepancies between severities in sections, this needs to be clarified for example one protocol is moderate but there is mention of severe procedures within the protocol.
- Suggestion by reviewers to combine some protocols together and use optional steps instead of three separate protocols.

### Project licence application and presentation PL24-19

This application was originally discussed on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 however, the committee requested that the applicant (or applicants group) gave a presentation to the committee to clarify some issues surrounding the application.

Following the presentation to the committee the following summary was conveyed to the applicant and it was agreed that a revised application could be presented to the sub-committee and then to the AWERB for information:

#### Summary of comments:

#### PL23-19:

This application was originally presented at the August AWERB meeting however due to significant issues within the application it was returned to the applicant for revision. It was noted that although the project plan is much improved, there are still a number of issues remaining within the protocols section of the application (summarised below). It was agreed that the named vet would discuss the issues within the protocol section with the AWERB reviewer and agree a plan of action to move the application forward; once a revised application is available, it will be returned to the committee:

#### Summary of comments:

- Movement between experimental protocols: Still some issues where animals can still move between protocols (experimental), this would not be permitted normally by the home office.
- Tumour cell injections- justification of routes
- DSS models: there are some issues around this model, consider how this is used in other project licences.
- Single housing: no clear justification given for the use of this in the application, this needs clarification.
- Grammar issues remain throughout the application.
- Humane endpoints: these need to be made much clearer within the application.
- Give consideration to a much shorter application with reduced protocols

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7. AOCB: none

8. Relevant points detailed in the action summary.

**Date of next Meeting: 5<sup>th</sup> November**