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 06/10/2020
Microsoft Teams

1. **Welcome** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending,

2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 3rd September 2020:** *approved*
3. ***Scientific presentation:*** the committee heard a very interesting presentation on the work of a new project licence which will focus on the [redacted] to address chronic liver disease.

4. Matters arising and action point summary

- **AWERB video:** request for clips to submitted by December, recognised that AWERB members currently have other challenges. ***Action****:ongoing* [redacted] /AWERB video clips to be submitted.
- **Confidentiality documents signatures:** most documents submitted outstanding ones to be submitted to [redacted] as soon as possible: **Action** [redacted]: *to finalise outstanding documents.*
- **Prepare plan for the monitoring of external companies and reviewing experimental request Action** [redacted]

5. Named person and Director updates

Directors update:

- **SCotpil:** the new online course has been accredited and the first online course and examination has been completed with everything running very well. The director commended everyone involved for their hard work with the course and its organisation and development.
- **Caesium irradiator:** a working group has been convened to look at potential replacements for gamma radiation sources following a UK wide consultation with the home office.
- **AWERB hub:** an online meeting will be held on the 21st October.
- **Antibody use:** consultation with LERU about the use of animals for the production of antibodies.

Deputy Directors update:

- **Caging:** it was noted that all caging is moving to IVC where possible
- [redacted] **merger:** this is currently ongoing and work on the air handling unit is being progressed. It was recognised that there are currently a number of challenges but it is anticipated that any disruption, when work is moved to [redacted] temporarily, should be kept to a minimum.

NVS update

- Some variations in health status were described (possibly related to new health screening processes) as well as steps to investigate and treat where possible.
- A new species- the spiny mouse is being investigated as several groups are interested in bringing this to Edinburgh

Covid-19: A reduction in the number of in person NVS visits will be implemented in the face of the second Covid wave. Assessments will be considered on a case by case basis and the NVSs will continue to make good use of MS teams to connect with facilities and researchers

NACWO update:

- [redacted] **water ingress**: this occurred during recent storms however roof repairs and gutter cleaning have subsequently been carried out.
- [redacted] **facility equipment:** : a recent failure in the air handling unit occurred which has now been repaired. Additional issues with chillers have also occurred and the facility manager, director and deputy are working with the estates dept to resolve this.
- [redacted]**:** we continue to plan for this facility with these building issues in mind in discussions with senior staff and estates.

NTCO update

- **Scotpil**: this is currently in progress, the course has been very well organised and has involved a great deal of organisation and hard work with those involved.

6. Project licences under consideration:

PL23-2020

This project licence is a renewal from an experienced group leader with the aims to [redacted] using the Zebrafish as a model. The committee and AWERB review panel felt that this was a well justified project licence with clear scientific benefits, it was noted that the applicant was a world leader in the field.

Summary: The application was approved subject to the revision of the points detailed below:

- CNS injury model: Some additional information and justification of the CNS injury model is required.
- A number of grammatical issues were noted within the application and should be addressed
- Mutant models: some clarification/justification for the use of the CRISPR models is required.
- The applicant should clarify the severity limits in some protocols as it is not always clear if this is mild or moderate.
- Clarify the use of analgesics for pain in certain studies – the committee tasked that the text relating to analgesia use was changed to reflect expected practices.

PL24-2020

This project licence is a renewal from an experienced group leader which focuses on [redacted] neurodevelopmental diseases. Models have been produced which will be used for gene therapy studies to look at therapeutic potential; it was noted that the application was well written and the committee agreed that the application was ethically and scientifically justified.

Summary: The committee were happy to approve the application subsequent to the revision of the AWERB review summary and following points:

- Mandatory steps: the applicant should revise the protocols section to include at least one mandatory step to each protocol.
- Severity limits: discussion on requirement for severe protocols but clarified that this may be required in some cases.
- Non-technical summary: the language is overly complicated and there is no details on the severities in the non-technical summary.
- Protocol duplication: Consider if the duplication of the protocols downstream of the breeding protocols with different severity limits are necessary.

PL25-2020

This project licence renewal is from a new PPL holder who is now part of a commercial company (previously employed by the University of Edinburgh) with strong collaborative links with University academics, it was noted that the application has been very well written. The committee were happy to support the application and agreed that it could be submitted to the home office for approval once the following points are addressed.

- **Humane endpoints:** some clarification is required here as there is not enough detail in places.
- **Protocols:** these have been adapted from an existing PPL and cover the most refined techniques.
- **Commercial PPL aspects:** the monitoring of experimental work on "commercial licences" was discussed. This could involve regular reviews and reports from these companies in addition to existing measures such as experimental request forms. It was agreed that further discussion between the vets would be progressed on how to monitor these licences going forward and the AWERB informed of this process.

PL26-2020

This new project licence renewal is from a clinician scientist who is very well recognised within the field of research into depressive disorders. It was noted that whilst the application has generally been well written there are some issues related to funding of the work which require clarification before the application can be progressed.

Summary: further information on funding should be obtained before the application can be progressed.

- Further clarification on current and proposed future funding for experimental work should be provided before the application can be progressed.

- It was noted that the applicant may return to clinical practice, therefore details of who would supervise this work in the applicants absence would be required. A potential timescale for the return to clinical practice would be very helpful for the committee.
- The numbers requested within the application should be revised to reflect the current level of funding.

PL27-2020

This project licence renewal is from an external group, the licence has been very well written, with no major issues noted. The committee were happy to support the application and agreed that it could be submitted to the home office for approval subject to clarification of the process for reviewing ongoing experimental work from commercial licences.

Summary: approved subject to revision of the following points

- In-vitro models: there are very limited details included on the in-vitro models that are planned for the application, this should be expanded.
- Genetically altered animals: there are very little details on the GA lines which will be bred under moderate severity. More detail of potential phenotype, genetic modification, scientific justification and potential adverse effects are required for these moderate transgenic lines
- Commercial work: as noted in the review for PL25-20 more detail is required going forward in terms of the internal review process for proposed studies.

7. a. Amendment applications submitted to the full AWERB:

A40-20 [redacted]: approved

A42-20 [redacted]: approved

b. Sub-committee amendment applications:

Approved: A41-20

8. Overseas Research Proposals

OS12-20 [redacted]: Approved: subject to consideration of the following minor review comments:

- The form referred to studies within other PPLS but without saying what procedures would actually be done could some examples be given.
- Some animals will be bred as moderate with no further details of these lines and no details on who was doing the actual studies (tech or scientist). Could some clarification be given on this.

OS13-20 [redacted]: Approved

Date of next Meeting: 3rd November 2020 10am MS teams