Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)

19/11 A meeting of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB) was held in Room G03 Henley Business School, Whiteknights House on Thursday 23 May 2019 at 10.00 am.

Present: [Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]

[Redacted, Section 40]

In attendance: [Redacted, Section 40] (for Minute 19/16 only)
[Redacted, Section 40] (for Minute 19/16 only)

Apologies: [Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]
[Redacted, Section 40]

[Redacted, Section 40]

19/12 Minutes of the last meeting
The minutes of the last meeting held on 17 February 2019 were approved as a correct record subject to minor amendment.

19/13 Matters Arising

19/03 Matters Arising

18/21 Severity Data

The Board was advised that [Redacted, Section 40] had received the data but that it was not yet available on the website.

Action: [Redacted, Section 40]

18/21 Work undertaken on non-ASPA Regulated Projects

[Redacted, Section 40] confirmed that dialogue with the two providers of petting zoos had been circulated and investigations had been undertaken. So far as could be ascertained they were compliant and nothing adverse had been found. Members of the Board were satisfied that there was now evident due process

18/21 Pro-forma for mid-term and end of contract review

It was noted that the pro-forma had been completed and those on the Schedule had been notified on the changes to the pro forma.

18/22 Standard form of wording for project licence amendment

It was noted that no need had been identified and there did not appear to be a need for a standard form of wording at this time. This action was now closed.

18/23 Workshop on the 3Rs

It was noted that NC3Rs were in principle happy with the suggested workshop. A date would be fixed for the autumn term, but no specific date had yet been agreed. [Redacted, Section 40] had put together a suggested programme which had been circulated by colleagues before the meeting.

The Board agreed that it was important that the date should be fixed as soon as possible and the event publicised ensuring that all [Redacted, Section 40] for whom the event would be relevant were made aware of the event.

Action: [Redacted, Section 40]

19/04 Health and Life Sciences Building

It was reported that a date had been agreed – 27 June 2019, for the lunchtime session with staff regarding Home Office updates. This had now developed into a day event.

19/05 Design of Experiments

It was noted that discussions were taking place regarding the design of experiments. It had been agreed that it would be important to included user input into any procedure adopted.

19/14 Technical Services Report

The Board received the report and in particular noted:-

- 16 strains had been sent for cryopreservation, with 2 remaining to be sent.

- The [Redacted, Section 40] would be invited to the information day organised for all users on 27 June 2019
- With regard to the Health and Life Sciences Project and the BRU, it was no anticipated that the BRU would be handed over in January 2020, following which there would be a deep clean before any transfer to the unit, now anticipated to be Easter 2020.

19/15 University Animal Research Policy

The Board reviewed the current policy, agreeing it was general fit for purpose. Minor amendment was made to the section entitled "Overview" – second paragraph, so that it now read
"*Much of this research is conducted without the use of live animals. However, the University permits the use of animals in research only when this is necessary……".*

In addition, [Redacted, Section 40] suggested some changes in wording to the Links section at the end of the Policy, which had already been sent to [Redacted, Section 40].

The Board approved the revised Policy.

19/16 Mid Term and End of Contract Reviews

The Board received presentations from [Redacted, Section 40], [Redacted, Section 40] and [Redacted, Section 40] in respect of their current Project Licences

[Redacted, Section 40]

The Board noted that the model used had not produced the evidence expected, to the extent that there were questions regarding the model used.

Although the Project licence continued until 2021 and permitted the use of further animals, given the negative result achieved this far, [Redacted, Section 40] did not intend to continue using the current model.

Thus, this mid-term review would in effect be and end of licence review.

Whilst difficult, [Redacted, Section 40] intended to publish in some form the results of the Project.

The Board questioned [Redacted, Section 40] regarding the results and commended her intention to publish believing there was a moral duty to do so in light of the questions arising regarding the model.

It was noted that if there was no intention to proceed further, it would be appropriate to close the Licence if would not be used.

[Redacted, Section 40] would circulate the review form following the meeting.

Action: [Redacted, Section 40]

[Redacted, Section 40]

The members asked about correlation between changes in blood vessel morphology (as detected by imaging), external signs of ill health and welfare observations. [Redacted, Section 40] explained that the behaviour of *hypertensive* rats was essentially unaltered whereas the onset of cardiac failure was accompanied by obvious 'illness'. He explained that increased blood vessel wall thickness was a reliable indicator of impending dysfunction and so triggered more frequent welfare observations. He noted

that their studies had revealed earlier changes in blood vessels than had been reported previously in the literature.

Asked about the potential for reducing animal numbers, given the precision and reliability of the blood vessel imaging measurements, [Redacted, Section 40] commented that he had experienced resistance from publishers who were not keen to accept results which used fewer animals than had been common practice in previously published studies.

[Redacted, Section 40]
The members asked about the preferred method for sequential blood sampling. Explaining that the analytical technique required only very small volumes, [Redacted, Section 40] said that the most refined method was tail-tipping. The tipping procedure was done only once, the animals were free-running between samples and the sampling technique required only a brief wipe of the tipped tail with a damp cloth to acquire sufficient blood.

The members asked if in-diet administration of test substances could be used as a refinement in preference to oral gavage. [Redacted, Section 40] explained that since administration to humans would typically be as a pill, animal modelling of pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics necessitated similarly 'episodic' dosing. This could only be achieved with gavage.

Asked about the 'due diligence' procedures undertaken before embarking on work with novel compounds, [Redacted, Section 40] described the detailed information that was required from clients at the outset. Wherever possible this included information on mode of action and reference to all preceding *in vitro* and *in vivo* safety testing. Where compounds were being used in animals for the first time, tolerance testing was an obligatory prequel to substantive pharmacokinetic studies.

19/17 Dates of meetings in the Session 2019-2020

Wednesday 11 September 2019 at 10.00 am
Thursday 6 February 2020 at 10.00 am
Thursday 14 May 2020 at 10.00 am