

# Minutes

CONFIDENTIAL



## Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)

**Date:** Wednesday 11 June 2025 **Start:** 14:00 **End:** 16:00  
**Location:** [REDACTED] and Virtually via Teams (Hybrid)  
**Present:** AWERB Chair (CHAIR), Establishment Licence Holder (ELH), Manager of the BRF (BRF), AWERB Administrator/Home Office Liaison Contact/Named Training and Competency Officer/Named Information Officer (NICO), Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS), Named Animal Care and Welfare Officers (NACWOs): [REDACTED], FELS, FEPS and OES, PPL/Scientific Representatives: PPL1 and PPL2, Chair of the B85 Animal Users Group (AUG), Cancer Sciences Representative (CSU), Student Representatives: SR1 and SR2, Expert Independent/Lay Member/Representative (LR), Statistician (STATS), Minutes Secretary (MS)  
**Apologies:** 3Rs Champions Group Lead (3RC1)

### 1. Welcome and Introduction

CHAIR welcomed all attending the AWERB meeting held on Wednesday 11 June 2025.

Apologies from members not in attendance were noted by the group (as above).

### 2. Disclosure of Interests

The committee noted that the 2 year report received for PPL: [REDACTED] was submitted by PP1.

SR2 raised that they conduct work under the PPL: [REDACTED] that submitted a 2 year report for this meeting.

### 3. Approve Minutes from the Last Meeting Held Wednesday 19 February 2025

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and approved by the committee. These minutes will be redacted and added to the public-facing website.

**Action:** MS to make suggested redactions to the minutes and add these to the public-facing website.

**Deadline:** Friday 13 June 2025

### 4. Discuss Matters Arising and Review/Update on Ongoing Actions from Previous Meetings

The list of the AWERB's ongoing actions from previous meetings was reviewed by the committee and updates were provided by members. The actions overview spreadsheet will be updated following the meeting.

**Action:** MS to update the actions overview spreadsheet and circulate this to the committee for reference along with the minutes from this meeting.

**Deadline:** Monday 6 October 2025

### 5. Received Reports from Named Persons

Discussion of key points from tabled reports

#### Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) Report:

NVS summarised key points from their report.

NVS discussed the recent screen results of mice and provided further information for the adverse effect incidents 1 and 4 from their report. LR questioned what the group had learned from the incident detailed in point 4. It was suggested that the group should have liaised with other groups with expertise in this procedure. CSU noted that after discussing the incident with the researchers involved, advice could have been given on how to avoid or minimise these adverse events, such as not administering multiple treatments which would not have led to the mouse anti-human response triggered by the antibodies used. These groups will be advised to liaise more closely going forward.

#### BRF operations manager (BRF) Report:

BRF summarised key points from their report.

The soft refurbishment of the Level G facility is due to commence week of Monday 23 June (beginning with the SPF area). This refurbishment will be phased with different areas being worked on at the same time and is scheduled to conclude in January 2026.

BRF discussed that they will appointing two new NACWOs in the conventional and SPF area whilst NACWO-Level G goes on maternity leave from September 2025. BRF will provide an update on who they have chosen to fill these roles at the next meeting.

#### **Named Training and Competency Officer (NTCO) Report:**

NTCO summarised key points from their report.

The group discussed potential non-compliance incidents. All incidents have received formal outcomes from ASRU that no further action will be taken bar one involving animals being singly housed without authority in the Project Licence. This has resulted in a minor breach of Standard Condition 19. An amendment has since been submitted to singly house animals.

LR advised thinking about group housing of male mice in general and the issues this can cause - LR advised looking at the 3Hs initiative and resources they have.

NTCO reported that Ethical Framework on Obtaining Materials from Sentient Animals has been published on UKRIOs website. This will be featured in the BRFs June newsletter that will be circulated to animal users. NTCO will liaise with the university comms team to inform them this has been published and enquire how it can be communicated to the wider university.

NTCO highlighted that they had recently received an FOI request from PETA (which had been sent to other establishments also) asking about a Non-Technical Summary; whether the work had been conducted at the establishment and requesting a copy of the full Project Licence. NTCO confirmed the work was not conducted at Southampton.

#### **Named Information Officer (NIO) Report:**

The NIO summarised key points from their report - no comments or issues were raised.

#### **Named Animal Care and Welfare Officers (NACWOs) Combined Report:**

No comments or issues were raised by members on the NACWOs combined report.

#### **6. Discuss and Approve Updated/Amended Outstanding PPL Review – 2 and 4 Year Reports from Previous Meeting**

No outstanding 2 and/or 4 year reports were due for review at this meeting.

#### **6. Discuss and Approve PPL Review – 2 Year Reports**

PPL: [REDACTED] (Not Approved)

The committee felt the report was overall well written and all questions were well considered. LR however queried the answer provided for question 5b and asked if the PPL holder could clarify the number of animals that had required re-suturing and percentages.

**Action:** NTCO to pass this feedback onto the PPL holder and to request the report is amended. Members were happy for the report to be approved post-meeting if key persons were happy with the changes.

**Deadline:** Wednesday 25 June 2025

PPL: [REDACTED] (Approved)

The committee commented on how well the report had been written and appreciated the amount of detail and effort the PPL holder had made to answer each question. CHAIR highlighted that the group has implemented some good practices that were discussed in the 3Rs section of the report. The PPL holder should be encouraged to apply for a future 3Rs competition.

**Action:** MS to pass this feedback onto the PPL holder.

**Deadline:** Friday 13 June 2025

## 6. Discuss and Approve PPL Review – 4 Year Reports

No 4 year reports were due for review at this meeting.

## 6. Discuss and Approve PPL Retrospective Assessment for Submission to ASRU

PPL: ██████████ (Not Approved)

This retrospective assessment was circulated to members only a few days prior to the meeting and a few members raised that they had not had a chance to review this report.

LR noted that the report references retro-orbital bleeds conducted by the group prior to relocating to the UK. As this is not permitted in the UK, LR advised removing it from the report.

ELH commented that more detail and consideration for potential 3Rs improvements (even if there hasn't been a chance to implement any changes to date) could be provided to the 3Rs section of the report.

NTCO stated that they are also liaising with the PPL holder regarding some missing information from the report.

**Action:** NTCO/MS to circulate this retrospective assessment again to members and request feedback and comments that weren't raised at the meeting.

**Deadline:** Wednesday 18 June 2025

**Action:** NTCO to liaise with the PPL holder regarding this report and to pass feedback from the AWERB onto the PPL holder.

**Deadline:** Wednesday 25 June 2025

Members were happy for the report to be approved post-meeting if key persons were happy with the changes.

## 7. PPL Applications, Amendments and Approvals

A list of PPL applications and amendments submitted to the Home Office (or in the process of being submitted) since the last meeting was noted by the committee.

Some PPL applications and amendments are currently in a queue awaiting the Home Office's review/approval. NTCO is working with applicants to address comments from the Home Office, so these are ready to be resubmitted. No concerns with any applications/amendments were raised by members.

## 7. ERGO Applications and Approvals

A list of ERGO (ASPA and non-ASPA) applications that had been submitted and their review outcomes since the last meeting was noted by the committee. No concerns with any applications were raised by members.

## 8. AWERB Meeting Focus (June 2025) - Animal Research at UoS Website and Openness

MS discussed through their report on moving the website over to Drupal (the new university website developer/hosting platform). MS recently met with the Digital Users Experience (DUX/comms) team to discuss what this move entails and has produced a draft of revised text for the new website which has been passed onto CHAIR and NTCO to review - once this draft has been finalised a small focus group will be convened to review and provide feedback so changes can be made to the draft before a finalised proposal of the new site pages can be circulated to the AWERB for approval. These finalised pages can then be sent to the DUX/comms teams to produce a mock of the site for the AWERB to approve before it is made live.

NTCO has recently held a meeting with a member of the university's procurement team who had queried about the University's use of animals in research. NTCO explained about some of the work done by the university using animals and the associated facilities. NTCO noted that the meeting went

well with the individual seeming reassured and more interested in the work the BRF does after the meeting. As a follow-up, three members of the procurement team have been invited for a facilities tour in the beginning of July. Members supported this.

NTCO asked if more could be done to communicate that animal research was performed at the university and to inform staff about the BRF facilities if necessary. Following discussion, all agreed an effort should be made to reach out to internal departments/services that the BRF facilities and other animal holding facilities use (like finance, estates, security etc.) to give them general information on the work the facilities do and about the research the university does using animals. Members suggested if groups or individuals had interest or concerns, we could offer to meet and discuss this work and facilities with them and offer them a tour of a facility and that this would be good for internal openness. Members also agreed it was not appropriate to include at interviews the mention of animal use in some of its research (the majority of whom will never be involved with animals or those using animals in research). Separate communications across the wider university could be made in the future if ever needed, or upon request.

#### **9. The 3Rs at the University of Southampton (Standing Item)**

CHAIR summarised key points from the 3Rs Champions Group report.

Unfortunately, efforts to book a space in [REDACTED] as previously planned have fallen through and the group have been in contact with the [REDACTED] to enquire about availability. The group asked members if anyone had any reservations about holding the meeting on Friday 5th September. All members agreed to this date but queried if the group could get the conference agenda ready in this short period of time. It was advised that a slightly later date be considered.

**Action:** MS to pass this feedback onto the 3Rs Champions Group.

**Deadline:** Friday 13 June

The 3Rs Champions Group along with CHAIR and NTCO have reviewed and updated the policy on the 3Rs and their implementation at UoS. This will be shared with the AWERB in due course for members to review and give their comments on (if possible, ahead of the AWERB away half-day meeting).

**Action:** MS to tidy up this document and circulate this to members to review.

**Deadline:** Monday 14 July 2025

The university held its second annual 3Rs competition this Spring and both staff and students across the faculties using animals in research were encouraged to enter.

Only refinement applications were received this year which were circulated to AWERB and 3Rs champions group ahead of the meeting to review, score and provide feedback on. Scores and applications were discussed by members at the meeting and all agreed that due to the low number of applications this year as well as the strength of the two applications received, all should be awarded a certificate and prize.

**Action:** MS to notify applicants of the AWERB decision and pass their details onto the Dean's Office. Winners will be invited to the FMED faculty conference scheduled for 25-26 June so they can be presented with their prizes by [REDACTED].

**Deadline:** Friday 13 June

**Action:** Request 3RC1 and 3RC2 produce certificates for the winners and send these onto MS to print and give to the Dean's Office.

**Action:** Request 3RC1 and 3RC2 to review and collate comments from the AWERB and 3Rs champions group and feedback to applicants. Applicants to be requested to write a short lay-language friendly synopsis of their work and its 3Rs impact so this can be added to the public facing website and also featured in a future edition of Re:Action and newsletters etc.

**Deadline:** Friday 20 June

## 10. Update on AWERB Sub-Committees and their Work (Standing Item)

NTCO highlighted key points from the AWERBs sub-committees and working groups.

NTCO updated that RIS has confirmed the requested changes to the ERGO II system questionnaire have now been implemented.

The Animal Committee (AC) have discussed and agree that guidance on using invertebrates is needed and has commissioned a small working group to draft this guidance. NACWOs FELS and OES agreed to help writing this guidance.

**Action:** MS to liaise with NACWOs FELS and OES and the AC co-chair 2 to meet and discuss this guidance in more detail.

**Deadline:** Thursday 31 July

## 11. ASRU Audit Preparations (Standing Item)

Members discussed the report from the BRF on progress towards the ASRU audit.

ELH emphasised the importance of ensuring all documentation is in place and ensuring researchers are informed of what documentation, records etc. need to be updated and put in place.

**Action:** Highlight to the user community the importance of having documents (SOPS, RAs etc.) and records (animal health records, training records etc.) in place.

**Deadline:** Thursday 26 June

NTCO and NACWO [REDACTED] agreed to meet so there is continuity across sites for training delivered and ensuring trainers/assessors are delivering DOPS as intended.

NACWOs FELS and OES met Tuesday 3 June where NACWO FELS shared the Code of Practice they are using to cover all areas ASRU will be focusing on for the audit. NACWO-OES has been given a copy to adapt for their facility and this will also be shared with NACWO-FEPS.

Members discussed the actions the AWERB has been given as part of the audit:

- The AWERB Terms of Reference (ToR) will be reviewed again at the first meeting of the academic year. The AWERB will need to ensure the ToR is compliant with statutory requirement and move it onto the accessible template UREC has rolled out.
- Members agreed the minutes from meetings could be improved to demonstrate that the AWERB conducts all functions required by ASRU guidance and if minutes or supporting documents demonstrate the reviews and advice given by AWERB to various licence holders, Named Persons etc. and demonstrates follow up on such advice. CHAIR, NTCO and MS will discuss how minutes could be improved to document this better.  
LR suggested the AWERB produces a document listing 1) where the AWERB etc. currently is 2) where it wants to be 3) how it intends to get there and an update on if it is there or not after a set period of time has passed. Members agreed this would be beneficial. LR and NTCO will advise on this.
- Metrics demonstrating the effectiveness and impact of AWERB activities. This document will be updated and discussed by NTCO and CHAIR ahead of the AWERB away half-day.

## Any Other Business

CHAIR, NTCO and LR met Thursday 29 May to plan and finalise an agenda for the upcoming culture of care workshop currently planned for Wednesday 25 June.

CSU noted that the proposed date coincides with the FMED faculty conference, so several researchers won't be able to make the session. It was agreed that the workshop should be rescheduled to later in the summer.

**Action:** MS to liaise with LR, CHAIR and NTCO about rescheduling this workshop.

**Deadline:** Wednesday 18 June

Once a new date is finalised, invites will be circulated to Named Persons, members of AWERB etc. that we would like to attend. Members of the user community have also been approached about attending the event.

NCO and LR discussed the resource for AWERBs on scientist-AWERB engagement that was published by the RSPCA Animals in Science Department in March 2025 - This resource was shared with members for reference as well as a wider discussion at the AWERB away half-day in July.

#### **Date of Next Meeting**

AWERB Away Half-Day - Monday 21 July 2025 - 13:00 - 16:00 - [REDACTED] and  
Virtually via Teams (Hybrid)