

# Minutes

CONFIDENTIAL

## Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)

**Date:** Wednesday 19 February 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 (NTCO), Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS), Named Animal Care and Welfare Officers (NACWOs) [REDACTED], [REDACTED], FELS and OES, PPL/Scientific Representatives: PPL1 and PPL2, Chair of the [REDACTED] Animal Users Group (AUG), Cancer Sciences Representative (CSU), Student Representative (SR1), Student Representative (SR2), Minutes Secretary (MS)  
**Apologies:** NACWO-FEPS, 3Rs Champions Group Lead (3RC1), Expert Independent/Lay Member/Representative (LR), Statistician (STATS)

### 1. Welcome and Introduction

CHAIR welcomed all attending the AWERB meeting held on Wednesday 19 February 2025.

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

CHAIR formally welcomed the new student representative (SR2) to members of the committee.

### 2. Disclosure of Interests

No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the committee for this meeting.

### 3. Approve Minutes from the Last Meeting Held Wednesday 18 December 2024

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 21 February 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. **Deadline:** ASAP

### 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 provided further detail on point 2 in the adverse incidents section of their report. The experiment using these mice has been halted [REDACTED]. As a result of the incident, the PPLh submitted an amendment to 4 protocols of the licence to the Home Office. The Home Office requested that these protocols be changed to severe protocols instead and the revised amendment resubmitted. This was discussed at length by the committee. Members agreed an emergency SERG meeting needs to be scheduled with the PPLh to discuss this proposed amendment further.

**Action:** MS to liaise with the PPLh to acquire dates and times the PPLh is free to meet in the immediate future. These options will be put into a poll and circulated to SERG members so a meeting can be scheduled. **Deadline:** ASAP

### **BRF operations manager (BRF) report:**

BRF summarised key points from their report.

BRF provided an update on the installation of the SMS critical alarms for monitoring temperature and humidity in the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] facilities. Both facilities have had the wiring and sensors installed but the company installing the systems is waiting for a key member of their IT team to return from leave to finish setting up the system so it's operational.

ELH raised concerns about the rainwater ingress incidents mentioned in the report. BRF provided some further information on the issue. The Trust has assured BRF that they will be investigating the issue and resolving it. They will keep BRF informed of the remedial work they carry out.

BRF and their deputy operations manager carried out mock audits of both the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] facilities in January 2025. Technicians in these facilities were not made aware this would be done. BRF summarised the feedback shared with the facilities following the mock audits and the actions that had been generated. Overall BRF was pleased with how the facilities and technicians were working. ELH suggested that BRF review these actions to see what can be passed onto users at a future BRF users meeting.

**Action:** BRF to review the actions from the mock audits and see what can be passed onto users at a future BRF users meeting, **Deadline:** Friday 21 March 2025

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

NTCO summarised key points from their report.

NTCO provided a summary of the ASRU and HOLTIF meeting they had attended with ASRU on Monday 10 February 2025.

**Action:** NTCO to edit this summary and send to MS to feature with the slides from the meeting in the BRF's February newsletter circulated to users and members of the AWERB for reference. **Deadline:** Friday 28 February 2025

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

The NIO (NTCO) summarised key points from their report.

### **Named Animal Care and Welfare Officers (NACWOs) combined report:**

NACWO [REDACTED] summarised key points from the NACWO's combined reports and noted that animal welfare in all facilities remains at a good standard.

NACWO [REDACTED] provided an update on the blocked bottles issue raised at the previous meeting in their report. This issue has been investigated and a solution has been found. BRF should also raise this at the next BRF users meeting so researchers are aware.

**Action:** BRF to raise blocked bottles at the next BRF users meeting. **Deadline:** Friday 21 March 2025

ELH had recently carried out the annual tours of the units including [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. ELH thanked the NACWOs for hosting these tours.

## **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.

The committee did however note that the 4 year report for PPL: [REDACTED] which was submitted and reviewed by the committee at the last meeting and not approved, had been resubmitted by the PPLh with requested changes made. This was reviewed by CHAIR and NTCO outside of the meeting and approved.

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

PPL: [REDACTED] (Approved)

The committee commented on how well the report had been written and appreciated the amount of detail and effort the PPLh had made to answer each question.

The committee did however note that the answer given the question 2 featured unnecessary information that should be omitted in future reports.

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

**Deadline:** Friday 21 February 2025

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

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

## 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.

Several 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.

## 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.

NTCO asked at a recent FREC (Faculty Research and Ethics Committee) meeting what the university does about following up on applications that have been sat in the ERGO II system for an extended period of time after revision is requested but not actioned. Do they follow up to check if projects are cancelled and the application removed from the system? Do they check to ensure the work does not go ahead without this ethics approval? It is not the job of the AWERB to chase these projects, FREC has stated they will investigate this.

## 8. AWERB Meeting Focus (December 2025) – The 3Rs at the University of Southampton

CHAIR summarised key points from the 3Rs champions group report.

The group intends to begin advertising for this year's 3Rs competition soon.

The group is currently scouting locations to host this year's 3Rs conference at UoS. One venue they have in mind has requested further information about the event the group is pending approval from the Legal Services team to hold the event at the venue (this request is currently with the UoS security team). ELH stated there should be no reason why this event can't be hosted at this venue and if there are any issues they would be happy to be included in any future correspondences to ensure this event goes ahead. CHAIR suggested MS chase Legal Services regarding this application.

**Action:** MS to chase Legal Services about this application.

**Deadline:** Friday 21 February 2025

## 9. Update the UoS Policy for Involving Animals in Research and Education (for UREC)

The university's Policy for Involving Animals in Research and Education requires review. CHAIR recommended a link to the policy be circulated to members for all to review outside of the meeting so comments can be addressed and any necessary changes suggested made by CHAIR and NTCO and sent to UREC for final review/approval. CHAIR requested all members review the policy by Friday 7 March 2025.

**Action:** MS to circulate the link to the policy to members of the committee.

**Deadline:** Friday 21 February 2025

**Action:** All members are to review and leave any comments on the policy.

**Deadline:** Friday 7 March 2025

**Action:** CHAIR and NTCO to address comments from members and make any changes to the policy ready to submit for review/approval at the next UREC meeting (Thursday 8 May 2025).

**Deadline:** Friday 25 April 2025

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

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

The Animal Committee has welcomed two new reviewers from SoBS (School of Biological Sciences) and OES (Ocean Earth Sciences). They will help to ensure ERGO II applications are reviewed and approved in a timely manner and with other work the committee is conducting.

#### **11. ASRU Audit Preparations (Standing Item)**

The committee read through the BRF management group's report on progress towards a future ASRU audit.

The BRF is expecting a facilities audit from the Home Office at some point in 2025 and efforts are being made to ensure facilities are ready for this.

ELH urged the BRF to continue reminding licence holders of their responsibilities. NTCO agreed but added further thought needs to be given to ensuring all licence holders carry out all necessary actions. This was discussed by the committee.

Record keeping, using the A-Tunes database and completing annual Home Office return of procedures were raised as areas that require improvement. The BRF will highlight to users what resources are already available on the BRF's SharePoint site at their next users meeting. As part of work being undertaken by the subgroup for Training and Competency, the BRF will be reviewing these resources and adding more where needed, they will also be looking into what training could be provided and when best to offer this.

The committee agreed some guidance on the minimum requirements for A-Tunes and lab book record keeping should be produced. NTCO and CHAIR will meet to discuss this.

**Action:** MS to liaise with CHAIR and NTCO to organise a meeting so this can be discussed further.

**Deadline:** Friday 21 February 2025

NTCO requested the second sentence in the second bullet point in the objectives for 2025 section of the report be removed as this suggestion had not been agreed.

**Action:** MS to remove this sentence from the report.

**Deadline:** Friday 21 February 2025

#### **Any Other Business**

Nothing to report. No items under any other business were raised by members of the committee.

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

Wednesday 11 June 2025 – 14:00 – 16:00 – [REDACTED] and Virtually via Teams (Hybrid)