



Date Friday, 24/04/2020

Time 1.30pm

To Committee Members

At Held using Microsoft Teams

Subject AWERB Operations Committee

Attendees:

[Redacted Attendees]

Apologies:

[Redacted Apologies]

Mentioned within text:

[Redacted Mentioned within text]

1. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on Friday 21st February were approved.

2. Matters arising

None

3. Establishment Licence Holder Report

[Redacted] has been in contact to explain the process for inspecting virtually. She is likely to make phone calls to the NACWOs to gather information on compliance and request reports. This way of inspecting may continue after lockdown has ended. She enquired as to how the University was coping with reduced staff and was interested to know how much culling has taken place as a direct result of Covid 19.

[Redacted] requested reports from each of the NACWOs to be sent to her, [Redacted] and [Redacted] detailing the culling which has been a direct result of Corona Virus along with any lessons learnt. [Redacted] requested records of the two virtual inspections which have already occurred. [Redacted] also asked about [Redacted] visibility in the units and was pleased to hear of the visits planned before the lockdown. [Redacted] will recirculate the UBS contact information. [Redacted] reported that [Redacted] is impressed with how each team has been working and pulling together.

4. NACWO Reports

Each NACWO reported on how much culling has taken place in their facility.

[Redacted] shared his concerns about a delivery of marmoset pellets and fine ground diet which has not arrived. This will be chased next week.

The [Redacted] moved some animals off site within the first week of disruption but have kept their breeding programme ongoing.

[Redacted] reported that fish breeding has stopped at the [Redacted]. [Redacted] noted that the primate work is continuing but staff are being vigilant with PPE and distancing.

[Redacted] reported that she has had problems with deliveries when they have presumed the facility is closed. People are also assuming parking outside the [Redacted] is free. This may cause problems when food and bedding deliveries are due. [Redacted] advised that [Redacted] can take deliveries and then redistribute as necessary.

██████████ informed the committee that ██████████ and ██████████ have closed. No new experimental work has started and due to the rederivation project, breeding is being assessed on a case to case basis. ██████████ queried how other NACWOs have dealt with identification of mice using the MCMS database. The system is designed to track each animal but not every animal is being identified. ██████████ advised that animals can be earmarked individually rather than a whole cage.

5. Directors Reports

The NACWOs were thanked for checking in daily.

██████████ noted that he will send an update email next week.

The University has decided to reclassify its status from red to crimson which involves the planning for returning to work and what that entails.

██████████ is looking at letting some of the temporary staff go but asked for NACWOs to get in touch if they would like to keep anyone.

It was noted that the ██████████ team are remote working and have stepped up to the increase of Project Licence holders writing new licences and amendments. ██████████ summarised the licences being reviewed at the AWERB meetings in the coming months.

The ██████████ Personal Licence transfers have now been processed.

ASRU have updated ASPeL to include the upcoming Personal Licence reviews which ██████████ and ██████████ will be working through together.

██████████, a Home Office Inspector, has joined the Eastern Inspector Hub which means she will deal with the occasional University licence.

██████████ noted that she will be writing the AWERB annual report in May.

The ██████████ email helpdesk is still reportedly running but timescales may be longer, and communications reduced. ██████████ advised that while moving into the crimson phase and as University buildings are re-opened, ██████████ will be available less. Animal work will remain a priority though and it was suggested that when emailing the helpdesk, to state Animal Biofacility in the subject line.

Due to the closure of two units, spare equipment is available. ██████████ will circulate a list.

██████████ encouraged communication during this unusual time and to look out for each other.

██████████ reported receiving a notification about staff reviews and development. He queried whether these should be done now, or once normal working has resumed. ██████████ advised to carry on as best as everyone can. Appraising staff and setting targets for new staff should not be a problem even if it is difficult to complete a review as detailed as it should be. ██████████ advised that long term reviews could take place now and mini reviews be provided in six months. ██████████ encouraged managers to utilise current technology. ██████████ noted his concerns with keeping up optimism and motivation during the current working times but was happy to proceed and support staff with the process.

██████████ thanked everyone for their commitment and communication throughout the period so far.

██████████ shared his concerns for those who are in a probation period who won't be able to meet the targets that are usually expected. ██████████ reported that everyone is pulling together in the facilities.

6. NVS Reports

The vets reported that they had been working on Project Licences and PIL Course Training material.

██████████ enquired about the ██████████ health screening, the timing is to be confirmed.

██████████ also asked if any of the NACWOs have had any problems obtaining veterinary drugs or supplies. ██████████ noted that an email has been circulated to those using controlled drugs as there is an Animals in Science questionnaire due to be released.

██████████ asked everyone to be aware that there could be an oxygen shortage after the pandemic. ██████████ reported that BOC have been in touch to ask for large cylinders to be returned so that they could be supplied to the NHS.

7. Training Centre Manager's Report

██████████ informed the committee that the Training Centre are getting ready for the PIL and PPL Courses to be available online. ██████████ thanked all those who have helped produce notes for the courses. The IAT courses are continuing online and Microsoft Teams can be used for tutorials if necessary.

█ asked if anyone has experience handling and restraining hamsters. █ suggested forming a group to discuss experience and what is needed going forward. █ agreed to gather information on those who have experience and will forward on to █.

█ reported that the FELASA accreditation process is ongoing and looks positive so far.

8. 3Rs/Outreach/Openness/Report

A severity assessments methods paper from the Laboratory Animal Journal has been circulated to all licence holders and the 3Rs and AOC committees.

█ would like to interview someone from UBS regarding Covid research and is in communication with █. █ would like him to coordinate with the Silver Team who are also looking at work at the █.

A request will be made to the Establishment Licence for room changes in the █. The Home Office Inspector will contact the NACWO for a virtual check instead of a unit visit in these circumstances.

The User Group meetings scheduled for May have been postponed.

█ has circulated a survey on mouse handling and requested feedback to be sent to her.

The Concordat survey is expected to be received soon.

█ noted that six Standard Condition 18 reports have been received for █ licence. █ will forward the information to █. █ advised that she, █ and a vet will look at them before deciding if the █ should return to AWERB.

9. Any other business

█ enquired if the water and dehydration problems in the █ have improved. █ reported that further investigations have taken place and they have taken delivery of new valves which have a better flow. The Home Office Inspector has been kept up to date with the changes.

█ advised that the Fire Safety office have sent emails regarding Fire Safety training and this is a good time to get up to date with such training.

10. Discussion Topic/Presentation

None

Date of next meeting: TBC