The University of Manchester

ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW BODY

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2024

Present: [redacted]

Apologies: [redacted]

In attendance: [redacted]

1. Minutes

Agreed: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2024 were approved subject to the correction of attendance.

2. Applications for New Project Licences

2.1. [redacted], Mechanisms & Therapeutics For Brain Disease

Considered: A completed AWERB form, PPL application and presentation.

Interviewed: [redacted]

Discussed with applicant:

- No epileptic crisis (status epilepticus) has ever been observed in the applicant's experience in his previous work.
- The typical experience of a mouse having seizures was explained, including the frequency and severity.
- The scientific rationale for doing the surgery after inducing the pain in Protocol 3 was discussed, with the applicant being advised to seek advice from the Named Persons.

Revisions: It was explained to the applicant that the committee had provided comments to the Secretariat prior to the meeting and while some would be discussed in the meeting, the list below includes all the comments whether they were raised in the meeting or not.

- As discussed in the meeting, please discuss with the Named Persons in the animal facility the model for Protocol 3, and if inserting the canula prior to inducing pain would be more suitable than the model currently outlined in the application. The committee understand the rationale for carrying out the procedure after pain has been induced in order to mirror what happens clinically, however a discussion about other options should take place.
- Page 55 of 65 - In the NTS (p.5 of 65) it says the likely severity level is moderate (this focusses on surgery but presumably includes the teratogenic work in protocol 5). Protocol 5 says that the severity will be moderate but then also says 80-90% pups are likely to experience "higher severity". This may be confusing. Please can you explain, as you did in the meeting, that mothers are expected to experience 'mild' severity and pups are expected to experience 'moderate' severity, (the latter of which is the 'higher severity' that you had referred to).
- A number of comments were made regarding your Non-Technical Summary which are listed below. Please update your NTS based on the comments and send it to the following lay members for their review [redacted]
    - Page 2-3 of 65 (Aims) - Rather than "We want to" you might consider "We aim to" which responds to the question more directly. The first sentence then answers the question clearly and concisely.
    - "Our approach will use advanced technologies to deliver therapeutic genetic material directly to the brain, which will correct/counteract the known deficits in these diseases. Such treatments hold great promise because they are not known to have any severe side effects, and their therapeutic benefits last for a long time. This has the potential to revolutionise the treatment of brain disease and change the lives of people who have these diseases." These sentences go beyond the scope of the question arguably extending the text for no purpose (a one or two sentence answer is requested). This information could be covered later in the NTS."
    - Page 3 of 65 (why) - Good clear statement. Could "lead to" or "may lead to" be more accurate than "offer" or are you absolutely certain new therapies will be offered as a direct result of this work? Throughout the tone adopts a sense of certainty and if we are certain of success this is appropriate; however if certainty is not certain then perhaps be more cautious?
    - Page 4 of 65 (maximise outputs) – "In some cases (notably the development of novel therapeutic approaches), public dissemination may be delayed until intellectual property is first secured in order to protect any future potential commercial interest." This is fine but already covered by "where

appropriate" in the prior sentence; maybe consider removing unless there is a clear need to indicate commercial considerations will outweigh public interest?

- Page 4 of 35 (explain why) - Protocols will not be available for public access and should not be mentioned in the NTS. Please remove reference to the protocol and perhaps lead with the detail in parenthesis instead. However, this protocol detail is also covered in the next section (typically what will be done) in this section you only need explain types and lifestage of animals and rationale for choice.
- Page 5 of 35 – Please explain the symbol "~" in "~1 week" as it may not be known to lay members what it means.
- Page 5 of 85 "what are" - Reference to protocol - again perhaps explain in concise lay terms instead.
- Page 5 of 85 "expected severities" - stereotaxic - is there a non-technical way to express this?
- Page 6 of 65 rather than "heterogeneous" would "varied" or a similar non-technical term work?
- Page 7 - Please include some wording in the licence, as discussed in the meeting, about the frequency and severity of seizures.
- Page 7 - Perhaps add into the NTS under "what will be done" a brief summary of the behavioural testing? Though they do not induce suffering it's good to provide full information.
- Page 7 – please remove or explain the phrases “factorial experimental design” and “randomised block designs” as these terms will not be known to a lay audience.
- Page 9 – please remove names from this section as the NTS is made a public document so should not include names or people or institutions.
- General - An aim that stood out to me was the " how epilepsy medications pose neurodevelopmental risks to the foetus when taken during pregnancy" as this would be of potential strong public interest. However, it as then rather tricky to see where this element of investigating teratogenic mechanisms was being addressed. The information is there, in the NTS, but not as clear as it might be. I wondered if where it is mentioned on p.4 of 65 it could be made clearer - as the question asks for information on life stages?

Outcome: The study was given provisional approval based on the applicant making the changes/clarifications listed above to the satisfaction of the Chair/AWERB.

3. Report on licences processed from 11/04/2024 to 08/05/2024

The following amendments were approved by the executive committee.

3.1. Amendments to Project Licences

[redacted], Mechanisms of Fungal Infection & Drug Resistance

[redacted], Understanding the Mechanisms & Pathophysiology of Heart Failure & Atrial Fibrillation

3.2. Amendments to Project Licence [redacted], Breeding and Maintenance of Genetically Altered Rodents

[redacted], Creation of Alpk1 floxed Mouse Line Using CRISPR

3.3. Applications for Category C work

[redacted], Comparative Species Analysis Utilising Small Spotted Catshark Scyliorhinus canicular

4. Update on applications outstanding from previous meetings and upcoming Project Licence applications

4.1. The committee were provided with a document showing the status of applications considered previously and those pencilled in for future meetings.

5. Director and NACWO report

5.1. AAALAC council have reviewed the application for accreditation and approved it.

6. BSF annual report

6.1. The Academic Director of the BSF noted there are some issues in the facility but the challenges are being dealt with positively and always with animal welfare in mind.

7. Any other business

7.1. AWERB Hub Workshop at the University of Oxford

On 21 June, the University of Oxford and the RSPCA are holding a workshop on Maximising the effectiveness of your AWERB similar to the one previously held at the University of Manchester. [redacted] are going and members of AWERB are invited to attend.

The next meeting will be on 20 June 2024 at 10am-12.30pm.

Dates of meetings for the 2023/2024 academic year are:
25 July 2024
August break

Dates of meetings for the 2024/2025 academic year are:
19 September 2024
17 October 2024
14 November 2024
12 December 2024

30 January 2025
27 February 2025
27 March 2025
24 April 2025
29 May 2025
26 June 2025
31 July 2025
August break

Dates of meetings for the 2025/2026 academic year are:
25 September 2025
23 October 2025
20 November 2025
18 December 2025