



Minutes of the Board meeting – 24 June 2022

Present:

Professor Kevin Shakesheff (KS) *Chair*
Dr Robin Buckle (RB)
Professor Paul Evans (PE)
Professor Paul Garside (PG)
Professor Christopher George (CG)
Ms Linda Horan (LH)
Dr David Lovell (DL)
Dr Tom Matheson (TM)
Professor Cathy Merry (CM)
Professor Nick Plant (NP)
Dr Sally Robinson (SR)
Dr Vicky Robinson (VR)
Dr Clive Roper (CR)
Dr Sadhana Sharma (SS)
Professor Jon Timmis (JT)

Apologies

Professor Jane Hurst (JH)

Office:

Dr Anthony Holmes (AH)
Ms Kayleigh Purdon (KP) *Secretariat*
Ms Suzanne McArdle (SM) *item 7*
Dr Mark Prescott (MP)
Dr Fiona Sewell (FS) *item 5*
Ms Emma Stokes
Dr Cathy Vickers *item 5*

1. Welcome

1.1. KS welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Board minutes 22 February 2022

2.1. The minutes from the February meeting were agreed to be an accurate account of the discussions.

3. Chief Executive update

3.1. VR updated the Board on business activities. The update included:

Working with the five European 3Rs Centres

The NC3Rs continues to collaborate with the five European 3Rs centres, Charité 3R, The Danish 3R-Center, The Swedish 3Rs Center, The Swiss 3R Competence Centre and 3Rs-Centre Utrecht Life

Sciences. Recent activities have included hosting a series of joint webinars to highlight the latest 3Rs opportunities and collaborating on the translation of the ARRIVE guidelines into French and German.

The NC3Rs statement on MBR Acres dog breeding facility

The Board reviewed a statement summarising the NC3Rs position on the animal rights campaign against the MBR Acres dog breeding facility in the UK. The statement was prepared in response to a number of queries received from the public and the increased activity from lobbying groups.

Financial accounts 2021/22 – Year end

The NC3Rs final accounts for financial year 2021/22 were presented to the Board. The year finished with an underspend of £60k.

NC3Rs staff update

Co-funding for the NC3Rs Oxford and GW4 Regional Programme Manager roles has been renewed for an additional two years.

4. Review of the NC3Rs strategy 2022 to 2024

4.1. The Board reviewed the proposed NC3Rs strategy to 2024. Members were fully supportive of the plans outlined and put forward suggestions to elaborate specific points within the strategy. This included the programme of work to increase replacement technologies, the adoption of non-animal derived antibodies and strengthening the statement on equality, diversity and inclusion as part of best practice.

5. NC3Rs workplan 2023/24

5.1. The theme leads for the Safety Sciences and Innovations programmes provided the Board with an update on activities to date and the planned activities for 2023/24.

Safety Sciences

- FS presented the workplan for Safety Sciences which included accelerating the development of new approach methodologies (NAMs) and the establishment of an expert Oversight Group to help identify priorities in this area. The Toxicology team also plan to raise awareness of NAMs through a series of workshops and events and will publish the outputs from the joint NC3Rs, Health and Safety Executive and the British Toxicology Society workshop.
- The Board also noted the other areas of focus for the Safety Science programme for 2023/24. This includes working with one of the Centre's funders, the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, to reduce the use of non-human primates in pharmaceutical development.

Innovations

- The Board noted the planned activities and competition budgets for financial year 2023/24. CRACK IT Challenges for the 2023/24 competition will be identified through an open call or developed by the NC3Rs NAMs Oversight Group.
- Members were also supportive of the plans to support the wider uptake of prototypes developed through the CRACK IT programme and the use of Researchfish data to generate detailed case studies and impact summaries to showcase their outcomes.

6. Annual review of the NC3Rs event attendance policy

6.1. The Board reviewed and endorsed the attendance policy for NC3Rs events. Members noted the importance of providing a safe environment to allow free and frank discussion but also that there may be occasion for the policy to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

6.2. The Board agreed that the policy should be reviewed as and when required rather than on an annual basis as outlined in the NC3Rs Governance framework.

Action: SM to amend the NC3Rs Governance framework to reflect the above.

7. Summary of the NC3Rs Board and Chair performance review

7.1. KS and SM thanked members for their participation in the recent NC3Rs Board and Chair performance review. SM provided a summary of the main findings and actions being taken forward by the Centre which includes exploring additional opportunities for Board member participation in specific projects within relevant areas of expertise.

8. AOB

8.1. There were no AOB items.