

Minutes of the Board meeting

29 January 2013

Present:

Board:

Professor Ian Kimber OBE (IK, Chair)
Dr Phil Botham (PB)
Professor Maggie Dallman (MD)(12pm onwards)
Professor Jamie Davies (JD) (left at 3.30pm)
Dr Lesley Heppell (LH)
Dr Tony Peatfield (ACP)
Dr Ian Ragan (IR)
Dr Vicky Robinson (VR)
Mr Neil Yates (NY) (left at 3.30pm)

Office:

Dr Rubina Ahmed (RA)
Dr Kathryn Chapman (KC)
Dr Anthony Holmes (AH)
Dr Nathalie Percie du Sert (NPdS)
Dr Mark Prescott (MP)
Mr Dan Richards (DR)
Ms Ashley Scott, Secretariat (AS)
Ms Caroline Shriver (CS)
Ms Emma Stokes (ES)
Dr Cathy Vickers (CV)

Apologies:

Dr Malcolm Skingle CBE (MS)

Invited attendees:

Dr Adrian Biddle
Dr Adjanie Patabendige
Dr Claire Richardson
Dr Amanda Tatler

1. Welcome

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the twenty sixth meeting of the NC3Rs Board.
- 1.2 Members welcomed Mr Dan Richards who joined in December as Communications Manager and Dr Catherine Vickers who joined in January as CRACK IT Programme Manager.

2. Minutes of the meeting on 24 October 2012 and matters arising

- 2.1 The minutes from the October 2012 meeting were agreed to be an accurate record of the discussions.
- 2.2 There was one matter arising from the previous Board meeting:
 - 2.2.1. 10.3 – Members asked if it would be appropriate to appoint a deputy Chair. Members were informed that Professor Jamie Davies had subsequently agreed to be deputy Chair.

3. Financial Information

- 3.1 Members agreed the proposed budget for FY 13/14.
- 3.2 Members noted income and expenditure to date.

4. Review of meetings attendance policy

- 4.1 Members reviewed the [policy on attendance of NC3Rs meetings](#) and agreed that the policy continues to meet the NC3Rs needs and should remain unchanged on the NC3Rs website.

5. Risk register annual review

- 5.1 Members reviewed the high level risks registered on the MRC's risk management system (Easy Risk) and were satisfied with the measures in place.
- 5.2 Members also asked the Office to include other existing controls on the risk register for example for website security.

6. Branding refresh

- 6.1 Members were given a preview of the refreshed [NC3Rs logo, strapline and branding](#).
- 6.2 ES and DR informed the Board that the refreshed logo and font would encourage the use of our branding with easier to read font and more flexible and versatile logo design. The refreshed design should also make the NC3Rs name easier to pronounce.
- 6.3 Members noted that the refreshed brand would be used for the first time in the 2012 Annual Report design which would be launched at the Annual Science Review meeting on 26 February.

7. Updates

7.1 CRACK IT

Members noted that:

- 7.1.1. The CRACK IT Review Panels for the [2012 CRACK IT Challenges \(Rodent Little Brother, ProBE IT, DRGNET, and PREDART\)](#) met in December 2012 to review applications, and had made ten Phase 1 awards totalling £993k.
- 7.1.2. Phase 1 awardees have been funded to conduct six month proof of concept studies and will be invited to submit a Phase 2 application in June for review by the Challenge Panels in July 2013.
- 7.1.3. The [CRACK IT Mini Challenge](#) Panel met on 14 January and had awarded Origin Product Design Ltd £50k for a four month project.
- 7.1.4. Progress was being made with the [2011 Challenges](#) with some projects nearing completion.

7.2 Coalition pledge

- 7.2.1. VR informed the Board that the Office was continuing to discuss opportunities to deliver the [Coalition Pledge](#) with Ministers and colleagues in other government departments and an update would be provided at the next Board meeting.
- 7.2.2. Members were informed that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills had awarded the NC3Rs an additional £500k as part of the £600 million extra funding for science announced in the 2012 Autumn Budget Statement. This would be used to fund the new [Infrastructure for Impact Award scheme](#) which would be launched at the Annual Science Review meeting on 26 February.

7.3 Board Chair and Panel Member recruitment

- 7.3.1. Members were informed that the Office would shortly commence recruitment of new members for the Grants Assessment (nine vacancies) and Studentship (seven vacancies) Panels.
- 7.3.2. Members noted that MS term as Studentship Panel Chair had ended and recruitment for a new Chair would be done at the same time as the Panel member recruitment exercise. Members were reminded that Chairs of the NC3Rs Funding Panels were automatically appointed to the NC3Rs Board and therefore applicants for this position would be interviewed.
- 7.3.3. Members were informed that IK would step down as NC3Rs Board chair after the July 2013 meeting. Recruitment of his successor would be managed by the MRC as Chair of the NC3Rs Board is an MRC appointment.

8. Strategic plan update and annual work plan

- 8.1 KC and CS summarised the progress of the NC3Rs in achieving its strategic priorities, as set out in the 2009 Quinquennial Review.
 - 8.1.1. The focus has until now been on project establishment and embedding the 3Rs in research. The majority of the deliverables had been met.
 - 8.1.2. As part of this evolution the Centre has reviewed its business processes and centre-led programmes and has consolidated programmes and restructured internally to increase overall effectiveness and highlight the impact the centre-led activities are having on 3Rs in research
 - 8.1.3. For 2013 – 2014 the NC3Rs will concentrate on dissemination and communication to embed outcomes of centre led programmes into practice.
- 8.2 Members noted the Office's annual workplan which highlighted the key activities for 2013.

9. Suggested scoring system from Professor Jamie Davies

- 9.1 (6.2 from October 2012 Board meeting - Members agreed that JDs proposal for a scoring system to better quantify levels of animals used based on species and severity should be discussed further at the next Board meeting.)
- 9.2 Members discussed the scoring system proposed by JD and agreed that whilst the system was worthy of further consideration it was not appropriate for the NC3Rs use.
- 9.3 It was agreed that further consideration should be given by the office to a labelling system which could be applied to the NC3Rs activities. This would be discussed in further detail at a future Board meeting.

10. Presentations by NC3Rs Fellows

- 10.1 Members welcomed the 2012 NC3Rs David Sainsbury Fellows to the Board meeting.
- 10.2 Drs [Adrian Biddle, Queen Mary University of London](#); [Adjanie Patabendige, University of Liverpool](#); [Claire Richardson, Newcastle University](#); and [Amanda Tatler, University of Nottingham](#) gave presentations on their NC3Rs funded research.
- 10.3 Members agreed additional guidance on how present 3Rs impacts should be developed as part of a communications strategy to help support fellows and PhD students.

11. AOB

11.1 There were no items of other business.

11.2 The date of the next Board meeting will be 15 July 2013.

12. Summary of activities

12.1 Members noted progress with a range of activities including:

- Joining the [RCUK Research Outcomes System](#) (ROS) to capture the outputs and impacts of NC3Rs funded research;
- [Twelve awards made by the Studentship Panel](#) in December 2012;
- Planning of the 2013 grant holders and joint NC3Rs/Society of Biology meetings was underway;
- Establishment of two new working groups: Chronic Implants in Neuroscience Working Group and 3Rs and Epilepsy Models Working Group;
- [Four awards](#) made by the 3Rs Prize panel on 10 January: a winner and three highly commended awards.

12.2 Members were informed that the Office planned to run the Animal Technicians' Symposium on a biennial basis and the next meeting would be held in 2014.

12.3 Members noted the number of applications involving cats, dogs, horses and primates which had peer reviewed by the Office for the other Research funders and asked that in future the updates reflect the number of applications reviewed since the last Board meeting.

12.4 Members noted that progress with the Chemicals Industry programme of work was on hold until a new Programme Manager had been appointed.

NC3Rs

February 2013