

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Dr Sally Robinson  
Chair of the Animals in Science Committee (ASC)  
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Dear Sally,

Thank you for your letter of 9 December 2025 outlining the Animals in Science Committee's proposal to adopt a thematic approach for reviewing project licence applications. I am grateful for the Committee's clear analysis and the constructive explanation of the benefits of this change, including case studies of where this approach has yielded demonstrable success.

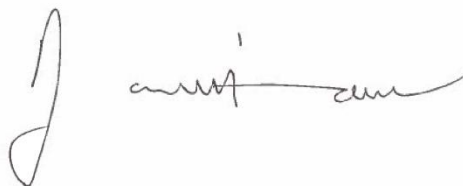
I am pleased to confirm that the Home Office accepts the proposal to move to a thematic model as the default approach. Grouping similar licences for review will enable more consistent, strategic advice and broaden the impact of the ASC's advice across the licensing system. Having considered your proposal and its risks and mitigations, I also agree the ASC should retain the ability to review individual applications where novel or contentious issues arise. This will retain responsiveness and flexibility in the system, allowing the ASC's expert advisory capacity to be applied in a targeted way where it can add the greatest value.

This approach aligns well with the direction set out in the government's Alternatives Strategy. A more structured and thematic method to examining project licences will improve protections to animals and build a stronger evidence base for advancing alternatives

I have asked officials in the Animals in Science Regulation Unit and the Animals in Science Regulation Policy Unit to work with the Committee on the transition to this new model.

Thank you again for the Committee's continued contribution to animal protections through the provision of high quality, independent advice.

Yours sincerely,



**Lord Hanson of Flint**