

Board meeting minutes



23 November 2006, 12-16.00

Prospero House, 241 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1GB

1. Attendance (Board):

Allan Bowman (Chair), Shokat Babul, Peter Beresford (for items 6-12), Jon Glasby, Geraldine Macdonald (for items 1-8), Diana McNeish, Terry Philpot, Roy Taylor (for items 1-5) and Gail Tucker

Staff:

Amanda Edwards (Head of Knowledge Services), Walt Brown (Staff representative elect), Robert Howells (Staff representative), Bill Kilgallon (Chief Executive), Hilary Simon (Interim Head of Corporate Services), David Ellis (Principal Adviser Adult Services) – for item 6, Rebecca Goldman (Senior Research Analyst) – for item 7, Iris Steen (Director of Communications) – for item 8

Apologies:

Ziggi Alexander, Ratna Dutt and John Fenton

Welcome and announcements:

SCIE trustees and staff were welcomed to the meeting – including Walt Brown, the new staff representative elect; and Hilary Simon, at her last meeting as interim Head of Corporate Services.

This was Roy Taylor's last meeting as a trustee, and Geraldine Macdonald's last board meeting before her term ended in March 2007 and they were both thanked for their huge contributions to the board.

New publications since the 14 September board, forthcoming dates for the board, a media update and press cuttings were presented.

2. Minutes and matters arising:

Minutes of the board meeting held on 14 September 2006 were approved for signature and the report on matters arising was noted.

The board discussed issues around the SCIE's recruitment policy following the appointment to two posts in Practice Development after recruitment for just one

position. Issues of equality and diversity, business needs and SCIE's charitable status were considered.

Several options were considered:

1. Amend recruitment policy to state that if a second post arose whilst recruiting for a single post, this second post should be advertised as normal.
2. Continue to ensure that the recruitment process is fair and attracts diverse applicants, but if a second post arises whilst recruiting for a single post, and two appointable candidates are interviewed, both posts should be filled.
3. Continue to ensure that the recruitment process is fair and attracts diverse applicants, and if a second post arises whilst recruiting for a single post the matter should be referred to the Chair and Chief Executive to decide what action to take.

Action: It was agreed that option three should be adopted. This would mean that SCIE's recruitment would continue to be guided by principles of equality and diversity, but business needs would be taken into consideration.

3.1 Chair's report:

Allan Bowman referred to his written report.

In addition to his report he highlighted that he had been asked to join the Conservative party's Social Workers' Commission, run by Tim Loughton MP.

An assessment had been made of the effectiveness of hosting fringe meetings at the political party conferences. In future the Chair and Chief Executive would attend the conference for a couple of days, as a networking event. SCIE would not host a fringe meeting but would be available to speak at others' meetings.

3.2 Chief Executive's report:

Bill Kilgallon highlighted SCIE's successful bid for capital funding. This would enable SCIE to reinstate some work programme projects, including work on the social care contribution to civil contingencies. Communications work would also be funded with these monies, including a joint student education, e-learning and social care online campaign. USB memory sticks, containing SCIE's resources and a link to SCIE's website would be distributed to new social work students and departments.

Action: Trustees asked that they receive the USB memory sticks too.

Useful meetings had been held with Ivan Lewis MP, Minister for Care Services, and David Behan, Director General for Social Care.

A meeting had been held at DfES to consider a proposal to create a centre of excellence for children's services.

SCIE had established a very positive relationship with the Regulation, Quality and Improvement Authority (RQIA) in Northern Ireland. The RQIA had signed a partnership agreement with SCIE and a framework of joint work was being considered.

SCIE's new Head of Corporate Services and Company Secretary, Stephen Goulder, would join SCIE in January 2007.

Dame Denise Platt had been asked to consider a leadership academy for social care by the Minister for Care Services.

The All Party Parliamentary Groups on Social Care (administered by SCIE) and on Primary Care and Public Health had published the report of their joint inquiry into the White Paper, Our Health, Our Care, Our Say, and particularly its implications for partnership working across social care, primary care and public health. Senior members of the two All-Party Groups are due to meet Ivan Lewis MP and Lord Warner in January 2007 to discuss the inquiry's findings.

Action: The report would be circulated to trustees.

4. An outcomes based approach at SCIE:

Jon Glasby presented a paper on outcomes. This had been previously requested by the Board as a contribution to delivering Corporate Plan commitments around re-balancing SCIE's work towards embedding good practice in everyday practice.

A discussion was held about the paper, with support overall for the key recommendations. It was noted that desired outcomes will often vary for different groups, and that future work programmes would need to include outcomes for a range of different stakeholders. User outcomes should also be central given the importance of this for SCIE and the people with whom it works.

Action: It was agreed that the overall approach in the paper be adopted, with further consideration of the implications of this decision for SCIE's role and internal processes. In particular, the principles of the paper will inform the next work programme.

Trustees would need to take on a larger responsibility with regard to the planning of SCIE's work programme.

5. SCIE's work in Wales:

Bill Kilgallon presented his paper on SCIE's work in Wales, and highlighted the huge amount of work that Vicky Allen had done as Practice Development Manager with specific responsibility for Wales. The paper demonstrated the value of having a member of staff based in Wales.

SCIE was developing a good relationship with Care Forum Wales and SCIE had agreed to hold a joint conference with Care Forum Wales and the Care Council for Wales in 2007. SCIE had also established a good relationship with the Minister for Health and Social Services, Brian Gibbons AM. Amanda Edwards was SCIE's main contact in Wales at an official level and had strong connections with our sponsors.

6. Work in the adults' services theme:

David Ellis presented his paper on work in adults' services theme and highlighted the breadth of work covered by this theme.

He highlighted that SCIE had met with Rob Greig, Director General for Learning Disabilities, to discuss possible work that SCIE might undertake following the recent inquiry into abuse in Cornwall.

SCIE had also been asked to consider undertaking some work on autism – particularly with regard to transitions and the fact that autism did not neatly fit into either learning disability or mental health services.

The magazine, Mental Health Today, were going to publish a major piece of work on the NICE/SCIE dementia guidelines in January.

It was suggested that SCIE should consider doing a piece of work pulling together the lessons learnt from social care commissioning in adult services.

7. Interim findings from the impact survey:

Rebecca Goldman presented the interim findings from the impact survey which was on track to deliver on time.

A quantitative survey had been carried out across eleven defined stakeholder groups on SCIE's contact management system. Two case studies were also being carried out to provide qualitative research - one investigating the impact of SCIE's fostering resources, based on our 2005 launch/dissemination events, and collaboratives project in 3 social work delivery orgs in which SCIE had had an active input into practice development; and a case study using research amongst educators and students in 5 universities to investigate the impact of our resources.

The initial results of the survey were quite positive.

Some points that were highlighted included that:

- SCIE's website, practice guides and knowledge reviews are the most commonly used resources
- Only very small numbers of people reported no impact of using SCIE resources.
- 92% of contacts had used the SCIE website and of those 65% found it easy or very easy to use
- 61% of contacts had used Social Care Online, and of these 57% found it easy or very easy to use

Additional survey topics which would be included in the final report included:

- Views on how SCIE responds to needs of service users and practitioners, and partnerships with other organisations
- Staff welcome and receptiveness to enquiries (efficiency and helpfulness)
- Impact of SCIE being in London, and whether SCIE in touch with different countries/ regions
- Overall views on SCIE performance and services (overall quality, accessibility, up-to-date, usefulness)
- How SCIE could improve and enhance its services and products

Sub-groups of our stakeholders would also be considered including gender, ethnicity, disabled stakeholders, different countries and regions, different sectors of service provider organisations.

Action: Trustees would be sent the interim report and were invited to suggest other analyses to be done for the final report.

8. Communications strategy:

Iris Steen presented the interim findings from the communications research. The interim findings were based on research with four focus groups: statutory providers and commissioners (London), voluntary providers (London), private providers (Leeds) and frontline workers - domiciliary care (Cardiff); a social care communicators questionnaire; basic analysis of publication orders, and interviews with some trustees and staff, and external interviews.

Further research would be carried out including more telephone interviews, questionnaires, emails to social care Chief Executives, analysis of contacts on CMS and qualitative analysis of press coverage.

Initial findings suggested that the rigour behind SCIE's research was valued, but that the language used could be 'too sophisticated'. There was a high demand amongst the groups surveyed for practical resources such as toolkits.

9. Audit committee minutes:

Gail Tucker presented the audit committee minutes. Several items in the minutes had been considered at the private meeting of the board which preceded the full board meeting.

The audit committee was continuing to review the pensions situation. Amanda Edwards had attended the audit committee meeting to present a report on the changes to SCIE's commissioning practice. The registered providers scheme for children's and adults' services had proved to be a success.

Action: Trustees agreed the recommended changes to SCIE's commissioning guidelines for tenders:

- £10,000 or less (**Change from £5,000 or less**)
 - Project lead may allocate, having regard to established criteria (fairness, quality, value etc.)
 - Letter agreement based on standard form, together with project outline, to be issued by SCIE and signed by commissionee.

- £10,001 to £75,000 (**Change from £5,000 to £50,000**)
 - Project lead to invite proposals from at least 3 sources and make decision on established criteria
 - Appointment to be approved by Head of Knowledge Services
 - Contract based on standard form, together with project outline, clear timeline and cashflow, to be issue by SCIE and signed by commissionee

- Over £75,000 (**Change from over £50,000**)
 - Formal tender process
 - Sign off by Head of Corporate Services

- The requirement to see independent expert assessment would be raised to £75,000 (**Change from £30,000**)

Action: The board agreed that the changes to the membership of the audit committee included in the terms of reference should become effective from 1 April 2007 and that there should be phased renewal of the membership of all committees of the board.

10. Review of board committee terms of reference:

Bill Kilgallon presented the terms of reference for the board committees (work programme, audit and remuneration) for agreement. All terms of reference were agreed, with those of the audit committee coming into effect from 1 April 2007.

11. The next Board meeting would be held at 11.30am on 15 February 2006, venue to be confirmed.

Approved

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Name:

Position:

Date:

ACTIONS FROM THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2006:

1. Item 2: Minutes and matters arising:

Action: It was agreed that option three should be adopted - to continue to ensure that the recruitment process is fair and attracts diverse applicants, and if a second post arises whilst recruiting for a single post the matter should be referred to the Chair and Chief Executive to decide what action to take. This would mean that SCIE's recruitment would continue to be guided by principles of equality and diversity, but business needs would be taken into consideration.

2. Item 3.2: Chief Executive's report:

Action: Trustees asked that they receive the USB memory sticks which would be distributed to social work students and departments too.

3. Item 3.2: Chief Executive's report:

Action: The report of the joint inquiry into the White Paper, Our Health, Our Care, Our Say, by the All Party Parliamentary Groups on Social Care and on Primary Care and Public Health would be circulated to trustees.

4. Item 4: An outcomes based approach at SCIE:

Action: It was agreed that the overall approach in the paper be adopted, with further consideration of the implications of this decision for SCIE's role and internal processes. In particular, the principles of the paper will inform the next work programme.

5. Item 7: Interim findings from the impact survey:

Action: Trustees would be sent the interim report and were invited to suggest other analyses to be done for the final report.

6. Item 9: Audit committee minutes:

Action: Trustees agreed the recommended changes to SCIE's commissioning guidelines for tenders.

7. Item 9: Audit committee minutes

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