Board meeting minutes

social care
institute for excellence
scie

6 July 2006, 12.00-15.30
Goldings House, 2 Hay's Lane, London

1. Attendance (Board):

Allan Bowman (Chair), Ziggi Alexander, Shokat Babul, John Fenton, Jon Glasby, Geraldine Macdonald, Diana McNeish (from item 4 on), Terry Philpot (from item 6 on) and Gail Tucker

Staff:

Amanda Edwards (Head of Knowledge Services), Robert Howells (Staff representative), Bill Kilgallon (Chief Executive), Victoria McNeill (Head of Corporate Services), Emma Brooks (minutes), Pearl Sebastian (Director of Finance) – for item 4, Iris Steen (Director of Communications) – for item 6, Gavin Nettleton (Principal Adviser e-learning) - for item 7.

Also in attendance:

Amanda Francis, Buzzacotts – for item 4

Apologies:

Peter Beresford, Ratna Dutt, Janet Lewis and Roy Taylor

Welcome and announcements:

SCIE trustees and staff were welcomed to the meeting.

New publications since the 4 May 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 4 May 2006 were approved for signature by the trustees with the following amendment:

Item 8. Corporate plan 2006-2009:
The third action should be reworded to read:
Action: It was agreed that an internal piece of work should be done to explore the implications of an 'outcomes-based approach' - this should include a brief exploration of possible approaches to focusing on outcomes, but then concentrate on the implications

of this for core aspects of SCIE's work (for example, its work programme planning, assessing impact and value for money etc). This is an important piece of work that should help to inform future ways of working and hence one that should be seen as a priority.

Action: It was agreed that the action plan would also be amended to reflect this change, and the completed work on outcomes would come to the board for discussion in September 2006.

Matters arising:
The matters arising paper was presented. There were several updates to the paper:

Minute 4.2: Chief Executive's report
SCIE had now received notification from the Department of Health (DH) that the core grant would be the same as last year, £4,430,000. The provisional budget which had been approved by the Audit Committee was therefore now the confirmed budget.

Minute 6: Race equality scheme
The consultant recommended by the Commission for Racial Equality has nearly finished the editing the race equality scheme and a revised, edited draft will shortly be available.
Action: Ziggi Alexander agreed to review the draft.

Minute 8: Corporate plan 2006-2009
The final version of the corporate plan will be available for circulation by 14 July 2006. (Editor's note: The date for circulation had been slightly delayed.)

Minute 8: Corporate plan 2006-2008
Amanda Edwards and Jon Glasby have met to discuss the piece of work on 'outcomes' and agreed how to take it forward.

3.   Annual report and accounts

New Charity Commission requirements meant that the annual report was more comprehensive than before, with more detailed information on SCIE's past, current and future work programme.

Amanda Francis from Buzzacotts presented the annual report and accounts for 1 April 2005-31 March 2006.

Gail Tucker, Chair of the Audit Committee, recommended the accounts for approval by the board and this was unanimously agreed.

4.1 Chair's report:

The Chair referred the board to his written report.

The Chair and Chief Executive had held a very positive meeting with Paul Goggins, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland). The Minister was yet to receive advice from his officials on the funding of a SCIE post in Northern Ireland but he was aware of the social care agenda and understood the importance of SCIE's work.

SCIE would continue to push for funding for a SCIE Director in Northern Ireland.

Meetings had now been arranged with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Care Services, Ivan Lewis MP, and with Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, Parmjit Dhanda MP.

Letters had been written to the Rt Hon Hilary Armstrong MP, Minister for the Cabinet Office and for Social Exclusion and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Scottish Executive Ministers, requesting meetings.

4.2 Chief Executive's report:

Chief Executive presented his paper. The Chief Executive highlighted the following:

The accountability review meeting held on 22 June had been very positive. The Department of Education and Skills (DfES) had been particularly keen to emphasise their appreciation of SCIE's work for them.

The budget for 2006-7 has been confirmed and Wales have now confirmed their funding. Notification of funding from Northern Ireland was still awaited. SCIE was making an application to the DH for capital funds for SCIE's office re-configuration and IT capital costs.

David Behan, Chief Inspector of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) had been appointed as Director General for Social Care at the DH. This should strengthen social care's position within the department. The Director General will be the sponsor for SCIE.

Graham Williams, Chief Inspector of the Social Services Inspectorate in Wales had left to run the NHS Mid and West Wales regional office. Reorganisation in the department may involve a change of sponsorship for SCIE.

The Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland has led to the establishment of a new health and social services authority from April 2007 and the responsibility for sponsorship of SCIE will be reviewed in the light of that development.

The Chairs and Chief Executives of Social Care (CCESCO) meeting had been attended by David Bell, the new Permanent Secretary at DfES. He had been very positive about SCIE's work. SCIE had also met with the Children's Services Advisers at DfES to explain SCIE's role.

An interim appointment would be made to the post of Head of Corporate Services and Company Secretary.

5.   Communications report:

The Chair welcomed the report and expressed the thanks of the board for the hard work that has resulted in the achievements documented in the report.

Iris Steen, Director of Communications presented the report.

Progress 2005-2006:
In 2005-2006:
- SCIE had produced 36 new publications and products, doubled the number of products distributed, doubled the number of visitors to the website, doubled the number of downloads from the website and more than tripled the number of people registered for email updates (this has now increased to 9 times).
- SCIE had held 30 SCIE events, had 58 exhibits at external events, had undertaken 130 speaking engagements, increased its public affairs work and now had 11,500 contacts on its database (as at July)
- There had been a 9% increase in media releases, 21% decrease in coverage (NB the previous year much of the coverage focused on SCIE's potential take over of CSIP), 13,000 students had been targeted, and of these 1,500 had been signed up for email updates, and there were now 77 external networks with SCIE representation

Since April 2006:
- Communications theme leads had been established
- SCIE's media profile had increased (up 2.5 fold in first quarter compared to 2005)
- Communications network had been established
- Northern Ireland communications strategy had been drafted
- New email newsletter had been established
- Impact survey had been designed
- Internal seminars on communications work had been held and the team had been involved in developing the new intranet site
- Plans to improve monitoring (e.g. of diversity) had been developed
- Review of value of money provided by suppliers to the Communications team had begun

Recognition survey:

The results of the recognition survey had been received. 925 people had been interviewed, the majority who came from provider organisations, many drawn from non-SCIE contact lists. A small sample had been from Northern Ireland.

27% of all people who were contacted had used SCIE's services. There was a high awareness of SCIE amongst service users and service commissioners. Of the products that were used Social Care Online had the highest use (32%), whilst practice guides had been used by 24% of those who had used SCIE services.

Information had also been collected on the other organisations that respondents used whose role it is to improve social care by developing and promoting knowledge about good practice in social care. This information would be used to help SCIE develop partnerships.

The results of the survey were a positive baseline from which SCIE could develop.

Action: Recognition survey results based on respondents from Wales and Northern Ireland would be sent to Shokat Babul and John Fenton respectively.

Action: Survey results would be analysed looking at the difference in responses from those who had been in SCIE's contacts systems and those who were independently sourced by the consultants.

Action: The full recognition survey report would be sent to the board.

Communications strategy:
The communications strategy will support SCIE's corporate strategy, and influence and inform future corporate strategies, so that SCIE can meet and anticipate the social care market's needs.

The strategy would be based upon offering value for money and would be evidence based.

The strategy would be developed over the following stages:
- Stage 1: Agree framework and resources
- Stage 2: Develop brief
- Stage 3: Market research (including Board)
- Stage 4: Initial analysis, implications, recommendations and targets
- Stage 5: Approval by steering group & Board
- Stage 6: Launch and implementation
- Stage 7: Review and update

The proposed timetable was:
July:
- Board comment on framework and resources
- Steering group approves brief

- Desk research commenced

August – October:
- Original research, presentation to steering group

November:
- Present interim report to Board

February:
- Present final report to Board

This timetable was critical as the budget was set in February and the communications strategy needed to be completed by then to inform the budget.

It was agreed that there should be steering group and this would consist of Allan Bowman, Terry Philpot, Amanda Edwards and Iris Steen.

Action: It was agreed that it was crucial to get staff buy-in on the strategy and the possibility of another member of staff being on the steering group who was at a more operational level would be considered.

It was agreed that the Communications strategy should be informed by the evaluation of the Partners' Council.

Action: It was agreed that an external consultant should be employed to manage the development of the communications strategy – in particular to ensure it completed on time.

6.   Work in the e-learning theme:

Bill Kilgallon reminded trustees that SCIE's e-learning work was not funded from the core grant, but by specific funding from the DH and additional funds from PROLIX, a European Union project, and was only for England.

Gavin Nettleton, Principal Adviser e-learning, presented the report, demonstrating some of the work which was currently in development, including work with higher education to develop e-learning to support teaching and learning in the social work degree and the development of SCIE products to provide e-learning materials.

To support work on e-learning infrastructure, MORI had undertaken a survey on the e-learning readiness of the social care sector. Their initial findings appeared to suggest that the sector had a greater capacity for using e-learning than originally thought.

Action: It was agreed that these findings should be carefully checked as they did not match the experience of some trustees.

Work is also being undertaken to improve work-based learning. This includes the Supporting Induction in Social Care (SISCo) project and the in-house development of a Social Care Online tutorial.

Future work includes a project with the Rix Centre working with people with learning difficulties to develop online tools for their own learning.

7. Annual review of human resources activity:

Victoria McNeill presented the review.

SCIE had generally been successful in recruiting to posts but was still having difficulties attracting and appointing BME candidates in Practice Development.

There was now significant justification to take positive measures to encourage BME candidates to apply for roles in Practice Development.

Action: SCIE wanted to learn of other ways to attract BME candidates and was keen to have help from the board in this regard.

Victoria also highlighted the following:

- An administrative support assistant with learning difficulties had been appointed in July 2005. This had been a very positive appointment and she is fully integrated into SCIE.
- Nearly half of all staff did not take a single day's sick leave in 2005-2006, and the average days lost to sickness was 3.9 days. This compares to the 2005 Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development employee absence survey report which revealed an average of 8.4 working days lost per employee.
- SCIE was doing a lot of work towards Investors in People accreditation. A large bank of information was being developed on an employee's 'journey' through SCIE including a section on SCIE's new Intranet site.

8. SCIE in Northern Ireland:

The Chief Executive noted that the report presented to the board had been sent to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to brief the new Minister and in advance of the SCIE accountability review meeting.

It was a comprehensive report of SCIE's work in Northern Ireland and substantiated SCIE's request for a Director based in Northern Ireland.

Health and social care in Northern Ireland was about to undergo substantial restructuring and there was a risk that this would lead to a focus on structures. If SCIE had a member of staff in Northern Ireland they could help keep the focus on the outcomes of social care.

9. SCIE policies and procedures:

Victoria McNeill presented the report.

Whistle blowing policy:
Action: The following changes would be made:
- Under point 2, policy, it was agreed that line 1 of paragraph 1 would be changed to read:
  'Where an employee thinks an action presents a serious risk to others (e.g. service users, people connected with this charity, beneficiaries of this charity or the public), the employee has a duty to disclose this information to an authority figure.'
- Under point 4, procedure, it was agreed that line 2 of paragraph 2 would be changed to read:
  'An individual may choose to be accompanied or represented by their professional organisation or by their trade union or by another member of staff at any stage of this procedure.'

Point 4, procedure, referred to a 'nominated trustee'. Ziggi Alexander agreed to be the nominated trustee.

With the above changes the whistle blowing, complaints and gifts and hospitality policies were agreed.

Action: It was agreed that a facilitated joint staff and board seminar should be held on looking at the risks for SCIE now and in the future.

10. Audit committee report:

Gail Tucker presented the report.

She highlighted that at the last meeting of the committee it was decided that SCIE should effect a system of physical off-site backups as part of its business continuity procedures.

The audit committee was delegated to take certain decisions with regard to SCIE's business risks on behalf of the board.

Action: It was agreed that future audit committee reports should be clear where points were recommendations from the committee to the board, and where decisions had actually been made by the committee.

Action: The audit committee had agreed new wording for the register of interests and forms had been circulated to trustees. Forms should be returned to the Chief Executive by 27 July 2006.

11. Any other business

The process of recruiting new SCIE trustees would be set in train. New trustees would be recruited in the autumn and spring. Representation by older people, young people, Directors of Children's Services and Directors of Adults' Services would be sought.

The board formally recorded their congratulations to Jane Campbell, SCIE's previous Chair, who had been made a Dame in the Queen's birthday honours list for her services to social care and disabled people.

The board formally recorded their appreciation of all the work Victoria McNeill had done for SCIE as Head of Corporate Services and Company Secretary. They wished her all the best in her new role as Head of Law at Norfolk County Council.

Board meetings outside London:
The budget for this year does not include provision for a board meeting to be held outside London. It was agreed that board meeting planned for Wales and Northern Ireland should be linked to an event such as the launch of new product.

12. The next Board meeting would be held at 11.30am on 14 September 2006 at Goldings House.

Approved

…..................……………………
Name:

Position:

Date:

ACTIONS FROM THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2006:

1. Item 2: Minutes and matters arising
Action: It was agreed that an internal piece of work should be done to explore the implications of an 'outcomes-based approach' - this should include a brief exploration of possible approaches to focusing on outcomes, but then concentrate on the implications of this for core aspects of SCIE's work (for example, its work programme planning, assessing impact and value for money etc). This is an important piece of work that should help to inform future ways of working and hence one that should be seen as a priority.

2. Item 2: Minutes and matters arising
Action: It was agreed that the action plan would also be amended to reflect this change, and the completed work on outcomes would come to the board for discussion in September 2006.

3. Item 2: Minutes and matters arising
Minute 6: Race equality scheme
Action: Ziggi Alexander agreed to review the draft race equality scheme.

4. Item 5: Communications report
Action: Recognition survey results based on respondents from Wales and Northern Ireland would be sent to Shokat Babul and John Fenton respectively.

5. Item 5: Communications report
Action: Survey results would be analysed looking at the difference in responses from those who had been in SCIE's contacts systems and those who were independently sourced by the consultants.

6. Item 5: Communications report
Action: The full recognition survey report would be sent to the board.

7. Item 5: Communications report
Action: It was agreed that it was crucial to get staff buy-in on the strategy and the possibility of another member of staff being on the steering group who was at a more operational level would be considered.

8. Item 5: Communications report
Action: It was agreed that an external consultant should be employed to manage the development of the communications strategy – in particular to ensure it completed on time.

9. Item 6: Work in the e-learning theme:
Action: It was agreed that the MORI survey findings regarding the e-learning readiness of the social care sector should be carefully checked as they did not match the experience of some trustees.

10. Item 7: Annual review of human resources activity:
Action: SCIE wanted to learn of other ways to attract BME candidates and was keen to have help from the board in this regard.

11. Item 9: SCIE policies and procedures:
Whistle blowing policy:
Action: The following changes would be made:

- Under point 2, policy, it was agreed that line 1 of paragraph 1 would be changed to read:
  'Where an employee thinks an action presents a serious risk to others (e.g. service users, people connected with <u>this</u> charity, beneficiaries of <u>this</u> charity or the public), the employee has a duty to disclose this information to an authority figure.'

- Under point 4, procedure, it was agreed that line 2 of paragraph 2 would be changed to read:
  'An individual may choose to be accompanied or represented by their professional organisation or by their trade union or by another member of staff at any stage of this procedure.'

12.
Action: It was agreed that a facilitated joint staff and board seminar should be held on looking at the risks for SCIE now and in the future.

13. Item 10: Audit committee report:
Action: It was agreed that future audit committee reports should be clear where points were recommendations from the committee to the board, and where decisions had actually been made by the committee.

14. Item 10: Audit committee report:
Action: The audit committee had agreed new wording for the register of interests and forms had been circulated to trustees. Forms should be returned to the Chief Executive by 27 July 2006.