

Minutes of the meeting on 13 September 2007

SCIE, Goldings House, 2 Hay's Lane, London, SE1 2HB

Attendance (Board)

- Allan Bowman (Chair)
- Ziggi Alexander
- Shokat Babul
- Peter Beresford
- Jon Glasby
- Jo Munyard
- Andy Nash
- Jenny Owen
- Terry Philpot
- Gail Tucker

Staff

- Julie Jones
- Amanda Edwards
- Stephen Goulder
- Don Brand
- Walt Brown
- Robert Howells
- Iris Steen (for agenda item 5)
- Pearl Sebastian (for agenda item 6 & 7)
- Amanda Francis (for agenda item 7)
- Mike Fisher (for agenda item 8)
- Colin Paton (for agenda item 8)
- Annie Goss (for agenda item 8)
- Hayley Tucker (notes)

Apologies for absence

- Nadra Ahmed
- John Fenton
- Ann Macfarlane
- Owen Stott

Welcome and announcements

1. The Chair welcomed Trustees and listed apologies from Nadra Ahmed, John Fenton, Ann Macfarlane and Owen Stott.

2. He announced that Edwina Grant, Director of Children's Services at Nottingham City Council and Honorary Secretary of Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), had agreed to join the SCIE Board and would hopefully attend the next meeting on 28 November.
3. The Chair congratulated Dr Jon Glasby on his appointment as Professor of Health and Social Care from 1st October 2007.

Minutes

4. The minutes of the board meeting held on 5 July 2007 were approved for signature.

Matters arising

5. Members noted the matters arising from the meeting on 5 July.

Chair's report

6. The Chair reported on meetings he had attended over the last two months.
7. The Chair informed members that the priorities for SCIE over the next few months were the work on the *Status of Social Care* and the Children's Centre for Excellence.
8. The Chair thanked the Board members, SCIE staff and Don Brand for their contribution over the summer to the *Status of Social Care* response to the Director General of Social Care, David Behan.
9. There has been a lot of interest from publishers in the Social Care Journal. The Chair has met with various publishers to discuss the SCIE plans and will be meeting a few other key players in the next couple of months.
10. The Chair informed members that the Welsh Assembly Government had announced that they wanted to produce guidance on leadership in social work and social care. SCIE has been asked to assist in the process and he may act as independent chair of the steering group.

Chief Executive's report

11. The Chief Executive updated members on the key issues.
12. The Chief Executive reported that she had attended the first meeting of the Social Care Skills Academy steering group.

13. The Chief Executive reported that a small consortium of partners has been formed to prepare to bid for the Children's Centre for Excellence. The partner organisations are SCIE, Research in Practice (RIP), Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and National Children's Bureau (NCB). SCIE and NCB are in discussions about arrangements to host the consortium.
14. The Chief Executive reported that Don Brand, supported by SCIE staff, is leading the work for SCIE on the Social Work roles and tasks, a project led by GSCC.
15. The Chief Executive thanked Iris Steen and her team for the work they did in raising SCIE's profile and handling issues over a very busy summer.

The Status of Social Care

16. The Chief Executive introduced the item and members joined the Chair in thanking all managers and staff for the significant piece of work produced in such a tight deadline over the summer.
17. She also thanked Board members for their time and advice during this period which was invaluable.
18. The Chief Executive reported that the letter and report, forming the SCIE response, had been dispatched to the Director General of Social Care at the Department of Health on 31 August 2007 as required to meet the 1 September deadline. No timetable or costings were included in the initial response and so further work will be carried out on this in the next phase.
19. She had met with David Behan on Monday 3 September for an early discussion of the proposals. The discussion was very positive and the DH sent a response to the letter and report on 12 September which was tabled at the Board meeting.
20. Following the Board meeting, more detailed proposals will be prepared by SCIE for discussion at the routine DH Accountability Review meeting scheduled for 11 October 2007, when SCIE's emerging 2007-08 business plan will be on the agenda.
21. Board members felt that the response from the Director General of Social Care was very positive and reflected the work carried out by SCIE.

Social Care Journal

22. There was concern around the Social Care Journal that the timescales and resources were unrealistic and there were too many conflicting interests.

23. Members felt that there was a wide and diverse audience for a Social Care Journal and different methods of disseminating would be needed depending in the audience.
24. The Head of Corporate Services explained that the Central Office of Information (COI) had been commissioned to carry out a feasibility study for the journal. A full report on the outcome of the study will come to the board away day in January 2008.
25. It was emphasised that the journal needs to be part of, rather than separate to, the identification, dissemination, development and improvement (IDDI) strategy. There was concern that otherwise the journal could distract from the overall dissemination strategy.

IDDI Strategy

26. It was emphasised that SCIE would play a critical role in dissemination but there would need to be joint working with partners. It was noted that the sector needs to be ready and committed to enable this type of cross working.
27. The Chief Executive reported that SCIE had met with key stakeholders on 20 August which had been very positive. At this meeting partners had made an offer to SCIE to use their workforce and communication channels to disseminate to the frontline. This will be followed up.
28. Some members felt that SCIE's impact in reaching the frontline is still not working as well as it should and the approach is right intellectually but not practically. It was felt that this is the opportunity SCIE needs to "get real" and identify the key people to influence.
29. It was felt that one of the best ways to reach the frontline was through training and 'training the trainers'.
30. Members reiterated the need to diversify sources of funding and encouraged SCIE to continue building relations with the independent sector.
31. There was concern among members around the final point in the letter that "all work should be planned within existing resources". It is clear that this will have significant implications for staff, the work programme and SCIE's customers.
32. Members asked management to consider whether 1) there were the skills within the organisation to carry out some of this new work and 2) what would the impact be on customers and sponsors if SCIE stopped doing the work already set in the work programme.
33. It was noted that these issues would be addressed through the review of the work programme which is running alongside and in support of the project plan.

34. The Board requested that SCIE look at ways of engaging Trustees' expertise and review the timings of the next few board meetings to ensure they meet around key milestones.
35. **Action:** Members agreed the following:
- SCIE will produce a clear, costed outline and strategic plan detailing critical milestones for the Accountability Review on 11 October. An update report will be circulated to members for the brief Board meeting on 28 November and the full strategic plan will be presented to the Board for discussion at the Board away day on 31 January.
 - SCIE will identify ways of engaging Trustee expertise as and when required for the different project strands.

Report from the Audit Committee

36. Gail Tucker, Chair of the Audit Committee, reported that the annual report and audited accounts had been presented to the Audit Committee by Amanda Francis, Partner, Buzzacott.
37. Gail Tucker reiterated that it is now a requirement that trustees confirm that they are aware of all information relating to the audit and that they take their responsibilities as directors and Trustees seriously.
38. The next triennial review of the SCIE pension scheme will report in November 2007. It was agreed that the Board review all the options and consider the pensions policy of other similar organisations, when the outcome of the triennial review is known next year.
39. The Chair announced that Gail Tucker's term of office as a trustee will end in March 2008 and her successor will be Shokat Babul. The Chair thanked Gail for her support and work as the Chair of the Audit Committee.

Annual Report and Accounts

40. The annual report and audited accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2007 were presented to the Board by Amanda Francis, Partner, Buzzacott.
41. Members referred to point seven of the post audit report which noted that SCIE's risk register did not have any measure of impact for each risk identified.
42. **Action:** Stephen Goulder reported that work was underway to review the risk register and proposed strategic risks would be brought to the Board away day in January 2008.

43. **Action:** The Board approved the annual report and accounts for the financial year ended 31 March.

Review of the Social Work Education theme

44. Mike Fisher, Director of Research & Reviews, attended the meeting at this stage along with Colin Paton, e-Learning Project Manager and Annie Goss, Media & Communications Officer.
45. The Chair announced that SCIE had recently won the Association of Learning Technology's "Best Learning Object Award 2007". The Board congratulated Colin Paton on this excellent piece of work.
46. Mike Fisher and his colleagues then gave a presentation on the Social Work Education theme which has been active as a programme since 2001 and has successfully addressed stakeholder interests, achieved a high degree of visibility in the education field, and contributed to the profile of SCIE as a provider of high quality products.
47. Annie Goss updated members on the student campaign: In 2006, SCIE launched an introductory pack for the 13,000 students on qualifying programmes (in England, Wales and Northern Ireland), and this was repeated for 6000 new entrants and 965 educators on social work qualifying programmes in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2007.
48. The Board felt that the student campaign was a very important way of disseminating SCIE's information and encouraged SCIE to continue with the campaign (and the data keys) and roll it out to a bigger audience.
49. The task now is to spread the use of these resources by means of SCIE's IDDI strategy.
50. **Action:** Mike Fisher to look into advertising and/or sponsorship for the student campaigns. EMG to discuss how to take this further as part of the strategic plan.
51. Members thanked Mike and the team for their presentation and the excellent work they had done to date on the theme.

Implications of the Charity Act 2006 and the Companies Act 2006

52. The Head of Corporate Services reported that in 2006 major revisions to charity and company law took place with royal assent to the Charities Act 2006 and Companies Act 2006.

53. He informed members of the changes that are relevant to their responsibilities as Trustees and directors.

54. Members approved the recommendations set out in the paper.

Board annual agenda

55. The Head of Corporate Services presented an annual agenda plan for Board meetings and reported that for the next meeting it would be a rolling agenda into 2008.

Performance reports

56. The Head of Corporate Services reported that the format of the performance reports was work in progress and the information had been given a RAG status (Red, Amber, Green).

57. **Action:** Members asked for a definition of the RAG rating and Stephen Goulder agreed to circulate the risk framework.

58. Members found the new format helpful.

Any other business

59. The next Board meeting will be held on 28 November 2007 and will be a joint meeting of the Board and Partners' Council.

Approved

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Name:

Position:

Date:

Actions from the Board meeting held on 13 September 2007:

Paragraph 35: *Status of Social Care*

Action: Members agreed the following:

- SCIE will produce a clear, costed outline and strategic plan detailing critical milestones for the Accountability Review on 11 October. An update report will be circulated to members for the brief Board meeting on 28 November and the full strategic plan will be presented to the Board for discussion at the Board away day on 31 January.
- SCIE will identify ways of engaging Trustee expertise as and when required for the different project strands.

Paragraph 42 & 43: Annual Report and Accounts

Action: Stephen Goulder reported that work was underway to review the risk register and proposed strategic risks would be brought to the Board away day in January 2008.

Action: The Board approved the annual report and accounts for the financial year ended 31 March.

Paragraph 50: Social work education theme

Action: Mike Fisher to look into advertising and/or sponsorship for the student campaigns. EMG to discuss how to take this further as part of the strategic plan.

Paragraph 57: Performance reports

Action: Members asked for a definition of the RAG rating and Stephen Goulder agreed to circulate the risk framework.