SCIE minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees

Held on Thursday 23 October 2003, 12.30 - 15.30 at St David's Hotel and Spa, Cardiff

1) Attendance

(Board): Jane Campbell (chair), Shokat Babul, Peter Beresford, Geraldine Macdonald, Terry Philpot, Roy Taylor, Gail Tucker.

Staff: Bill Kilgallon (Chief Executive), Amanda Edwards (Head of Knowledge Services), Enid Levin (Staff Representative), Victoria McNeill (Head of Corporate Services & Company Secretary).

Apologies: Ratna Dutt, Jon Glasby, Janet Lewis, Diana McNeish, Paul Martin

Observers: Susannah Walker, Mutale Nyoni

2) Identification of any other business

All the trustees of SCIE being members of the organisation, and due notice having been given to the members on 24 September 2003, Jane Campbell convened an extraordinary general meeting and produced to the meeting the following two resolutions:

Special Resolution I: that article 18 of the Articles of Association be amended to read,

"The number of trustees shall be not less than two and no more than fifteen."

Special Resolution II: that article 26 (6) of the Articles of Association be amended to read,

"all trustees other than the first trustees or additional trustees shall be appointed for a period of three years."

Both resolutions received the unanimous approval of the members and Victoria McNeill was requested to record the agreed changes to the Articles of Association and inform the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Jane Campbell drew the trustees' attention to the additional papers provided for the trustees' information: a publications list, a list of upcoming dates for board members and an expenses claim form. A "conflict of interest" form was being circulated at the meeting for trustees to sign.

Jane Campbell reminded trustees that SCIE's annual conference would take place in Birmingham on 10 December 2003, with SCIE trustees hosting a dinner on the evening of 9 December 2003. Trustees were asked to forward to Victoria McNeill promptly the names of those they would like to invite to the dinner, particularly from social care, health, higher education and other related fields, in the West Midlands.

3) Minutes

Minutes of the board meeting held on 11 September 2003 were approved by the trustees for signature by Jane Campbell, with the following clarifications:

Item 4 (page 2), Chief Executive's Activity Report: Bill Kilgallon clarified that John Reid, Secretary of State for Health, had announced at the Annual Social Services Conference that the title of the new social care head in the Department of Health (DH) was "Director of Social Care." John Reid's description has led SCIE to conclude that this post will be a "czar" - a part time post to run a particular agenda or project. Roy Taylor underlined the critical relationship between SCIE, the social care head in DH and the Children's Commissioner in DfES

Item 7 (page 5): Jane Campbell clarified that the reference to "guidelines" in paragraph 8 was to the DDA.

4) Reports of Chief Executive and Chair

Chief Executive's Report

Bill Kilgallon highlighted the following from his report:

SCIE's visits to the party conferences, where SCIE and GSCC held joint fringe meetings, had been very worthwhile. He asked for, and received, the board's approval to attend the conferences in 2004 and to hold fringe meetings.

The outline terms of the service level agreement with Northern Ireland have now been agreed.

Bill Kilgallon asked Amanda Edwards to report on her work with Wales. Amanda Edwards reported that she had had some very constructive meetings with key stakeholders in Wales, and the way SCIE and its Welsh stakeholders were working in Wales was a useful model for aspects of SCIE's work in England and Northern Ireland.

Chair's Report

Jane Campbell highlighted the following from her report:

She is now very involved in the "patient choice" agenda with the NHS. As well as participating in a patient choice seminar at 10 Downing Street, she has also met with Sir Liam Donaldson, Sir Nigel Crisp and other leaders of the patient choice agenda. There is a keenness for SCIE to work with DH on aspects of this agenda.

Thanks were extended to all trustees who had attended the Brighton Conference. Jane Campbell had already thanked staff and noted that SCIE's stand was busy and vibrant throughout the conference, a focus and meeting place for all those involved in knowledge-base building.

Jane Campbell and Bill Kilgallon will be meeting with Denise Platt and David Behan, Chair and Chief Executive of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), to discuss the different roles and responsibilities of SCIE and CSCI and how to champion social care together.

Roy Taylor said that he found the Chair's and Chief Executive's activity reports helpful and asked that the information continue to be as full as possible, as it was very useful in keeping abreast of SCIE's top level activities and sharing that information with outside agencies.

5) Practice Partners

Jane Campbell invited Amanda Edwards to tell the board about SCIE's Practice Partners' Programme.

Amanda Edwards explained that the Practice Partners' Programme arose from SCIE's commitment to finding a systematic way to get stakeholders involved, to understand what SCIE's work means for them. Amanda Edwards drew the trustees' attention to the list of 25 organisations approached to date, pointed out that they had now identified in addition a user-led organisation and a provider of homes for older people, and invited the trustees to suggest additions to the list. After discussion, the trustees concluded that a service provider to BME groups should be invited as well as a service provider from the independent sector.

Action

Amanda Edwards to consult with Gail Tucker and Shokat Babul on finding a service provider from the independent sector.

Amanda Edwards will report back to the trustees on the Practice Partners' Programme at the March 2004 board meeting.

6) Parliamentary and political links

Bill Kilgallon was invited to present his paper to the trustees.

Bill Kilgallon highlighted the following points from his report:

The paper refers to the political system in England only

SCIE should not be seen to have party political allegiance. It is important to establish strong links with Ministers responsible for social care in DH and DfES but also important to establish links with those responsible for social care in the other main parties.

SCIE has been invited to support and service the All Party Group on Personal Social Services and welcomes this opportunity.

Whilst it would not be right for SCIE to be a resource for individual MPs, it should be recognised that SCIE's resources, particularly eLSC, are very useful for politicians and policy makers and their researchers.

Action

Bill Kilgallon to pursue SCIE's involvement in supporting and servicing the All Party Group on Personal Social Services.

SCIE will consider making a presentation on its resources and their relevance to these groups in the near future.

7) Research Governance Framework

Amanda Edwards was invited to take the trustees through this paper, prepared by Mike Fisher, SCIE's Director of Research & Review.

Following previous discussions within SCIE, at board and officer level, SCIE had provided DH with a response to their implementation plan for the Research Governance Framework (RGF). The trustees were invited to note SCIE's response.

Amanda Edwards highlighted the key messages from SCIE's response:

Because of the lack of consensus within the social care research community, significant work still needs to be done before an implementation timetable can be agreed.

More needs to be done to engender ownership of the RGF.

The primary task at present in relation to ethical review is to construct a valid participatory process.

Don Brand pointed out, and Amanda Edwards confirmed, that the consultation process was a continuing one and SCIE should continue its involvement.

Action

Jane Campbell to give a copy of this paper to former trustee Mike Oliver. Amanda Edwards and Don Brand to keep the board updated on this issue.

9) Organisational Development

(Jane Campbell requested that agenda item 9 be taken before agenda item 8 as one of the attendees had to leave early.)

Jane Campbell invited Bill Kilgallon to explain the context of Don Brand's paper on organisational development.

Bill Kilgallon explained that the paper, which should be read in conjunction with the Corporate Plan, was intended to stimulate ideas for discussion at SCIE's Awayday for staff and board on 4 December 2003. He hoped that through the Awayday SCIE would start to plan its routemap for the medium to long term.

Don Brand highlighted the key features of his report:

SCIE's strategic development agenda

The priorities for organisational development, in order to deliver the strategic development agenda

The resource implications for SCIE.

Roy Taylor said that he would welcome at the Awayday an opportunity to discuss what the organisation wishes to represent for its stakeholders in the long-term.

The trustees agreed that Don Brand's paper was an interesting starting point for working up a framework for SCIE's Awayday.

Action

Jane Campbell and Amanda Edwards would work up a framework for SCIE's Awayday based on this paper and the Corporate Plan.

8) SCIE's response to the Green Paper - "Every Child Matters"

Jane Campbell explained to the trustees that SCIE is in the process of developing its response to the Green Paper "Every Child Matters." She asked Amanda Edwards to present SCIE's thoughts on the response to date and invited the trustees to comment on, and provide direction for, SCIE's response.

Susannah Walker congratulated SCIE on the work that had gone into the response but stressed that SCIE's most important function would be in supporting the implementation of the final proposals.

Roy Taylor pointed out some of the pluses (e.g. bringing managers of different services together) and minuses (e.g. separating children's issues from family issues) of the Green Paper. He requested SCIE network with other organisations providing a response on the Green Paper, such as LGA and ADSS, so that the principal omissions, such as human rights for children and service for children with disabilities, could be approached with a common thrust.

Peter Beresford asked that the response highlight the absence of children's involvement from the proposals in the Green Paper. One area of SCIE's involvement in implementing the proposals in the Green Paper could be in providing the evidence base and practice guidance for children's participation.

Terry Philpot suggested that SCIE's response should address the issue of private fostering, which was omitted from the Green Paper. Given the strong emphasis on child protection SCIE's work on the registration of childminders and its implications for private fostering should be highlighted.

Don Brand viewed the Green Paper as having two strands. The government would be looking to implement some areas, such as accountability, very quickly. Other areas, such as changes to services, would be developed over the longer term. It is in these other areas that SCIE can have most impact.

Geraldine MacDonald asked that SCIE highlight the absence of references to additional resources being made available to social care to implement the proposals.

Gail Tucker suggested that a warning should be given in relation to the Green Paper that we might lose even greater numbers of experienced workers from the social care sector if all the responsibility for change falls onto the social care workforce.

Action

Amanda Edwards would review SCIE's response in the light of the comments from the board and would circulate a copy of SCIE's final response.

10) Financial Report

With the Finance Director on leave, Victoria McNeill was invited to present the financial report, as at 30 September 2003, to the trustees.

Victoria McNeill highlighted these areas:

1) We have a substantial surplus at present but this is largely due to delayed expenditure on a number of projects. As these projects near completion, the funds allocated to them will be spent.

2) The single HR framework for SCIE is nearing agreement. Back-pay of salary increases from April 2002 to date will be paid out if and when staff transfer to the new framework.

3) The rapid response fund of £200k set aside by the board for projects arising during the year is currently being used for:

Future thinking in social care: the formation of the "Blue Skies" group

SCIE's work on adopting a human rights approach to social care

Work with Shaping our Lives and others on payments to service users

Work with Gerry Zarb on a cost/benefit analysis and other aspects of independent living

SCIE's extra conference in Wales in July 2003

SCIE's pre-conference dinner in Birmingham

SCIE's promotional DVD for the national social services conference

Board and staff awayday.

Trustees are invited to let Jane Campbell know if there are other areas they feel should be met from this fund.

11) Section 64 of the Health Services and Public Health Act

Jane Campbell invited Victoria McNeill to present the key features of the DH review of Section 64 powers.

Victoria McNeill explained that the review underlined DH's commitment to SCIE and the long-term nature of its commitment. In view of that long-term commitment, the review recommended that DH should, in due course, look to see whether a contract basis for payment of SCIE might be more suitable than a grant basis.

Action

As a change from a grant basis to a contract basis requires legislative change, it is not likely to happen quickly. However, SCIE's officers would keep the board informed.

12) Message from Jane Campbell

Jane Campbell thanked the board for coming to Cardiff, attending the board meeting and meeting with so many of the leaders in social care in Wales over the two day period. She referred to the morning's presentation made to Susannah Walker, now retiring as a trustee, and reiterated the board's thanks to Susannah for all her hard work in the first two years of SCIE's existence.

Jane Campbell reminded the board to note that in place of the next board meeting SCIE would have a board and staff Awayday at Chelsea Village on 4 December 2003, to be preceded by a dinner for board members on the evening of 3 December 2003, also at Chelsea Village.

Details of the next board meeting: 15 January 2004.