SCIE minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees

Held on Thursday 25 November 2004, 11.00 - 16.30

1) Attendance

Board: Jane Campbell (Chair), Peter Beresford, Ratna Dutt, Janet Lewis, Paul Martin, Diana McNeish, Terry Philpot, Roy Taylor, Gail Tucker.

Staff: Lisa Bostock (Staff Representative), Don Brand (Consultant), Amanda Edwards (Head of Knowledge Services), Robert Howells (Staff Representative Elect), Bill Kilgallon (Chief Executive), Emma Brooks (minutes).

Also in attendance: Anthony Land (Agenda item 5 - Guidance for trustees), Pearl Sebastian (Agenda item 7 - Financial Report), Professor Peter Gilbert and Professor Nick Gould (Agenda item 8 - Work of the NIMHE/SCIE Fellows), Nasa Begum (Agenda item 10 - Partners' Council Progress Report)

Apologies: Shokat Babul, Jon Glasby, Geraldine Macdonald and Victoria McNeill (Head of Corporate Services & Company Secretary)

Welcome and announcements:

SCIE staff were welcomed to the meeting. Victoria McNeill was unable to attend due to commitments on another board.

2) Declaration of any other business

The updated 'Forthcoming dates for the Board', 3 new SCIE publications - 'Facing the Facts: Social Care in England' (CSCI, GSCC, SCIE); 'Guide 6: Promoting Resilience in fostered children and young people' (SCIE) and 'Race Equality through Leadership in Social Care' (SCIE, CSCI, ADSS, REU) - and copies of all the press releases since the last board meeting were distributed. Board members were asked to note the dates for future board meetings.

The appointment of a new trustee for Northern Ireland had not yet been endorsed by the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

Action When endorsement was received Board members would be notified by email and asked to approve the appointment.

This was Paul Martin's last meeting as a SCIE Board trustee although he would attend the Board appraisal on 16 December 2004.

The Board expressed their thanks for being such a productive and helpful member of the Board.

3) Minutes and matters arising

Minutes of the board meeting held on 9 September 2004 were approved by the trustees for signature with the following amendment:

Item 4: Improving the use of research in social care: Knowledge Review 7: Discussion of the presentation, page 3, final paragraph:

The following phrase would be added to the final sentence: 'but a broader understanding of such evaluation might be helpful'.

Matters Arising:

Minute 3: Participation Strategy:

The Participation Strategy was not on the agenda for discussion. A final version had previously been circulated to board members for their comments. It was suggested that a detailed implementation plan for the Participation Strategy should be prepared for a future board meeting.

Action Implementation plan for the Participation Strategy to be put on a future Board agenda.

Minute 5.2: Chief Executive's Report:

The Topss England Leadership and Management Strategy recommendations had been circulated by email and approved by the Board.

Minute 7: Care Services Development Initiative (CSDI):

The CSDI work programme had been drafted.

Action The CSDI work programme would be on the agenda of the next work programme sub-group meeting.

It was agreed that all SCIE documents would be in plain English.

Minute 8: Practice Partners Network:

Jane Campbell and Bill Kilgallon would be meeting with the Big Lottery Fund in February 2005 and would discuss research funding and service user participation. Peter Beresford had been asked to provide the Fund with service user participation training.

Minutes of the Extraordinary Board Meeting held on 4 October 2004:

The minutes of the Extraordinary Board Meeting were tabled.

Action Board members were asked to send Jane Campbell any comments on accuracy by 10 December 2004.

4) Care Services Improvement (CSIP) Update
Amanda Edwards was invited to present the update.

The paper described the systems and structures which had been created to take the CSIP implementation forward and included the details of the establishment of the Joint Implementation Group (JIG) and the structure to support the JIG, including how it was envisaged that work would be divided between staff from SCIE, CSIP and DH. The paper also gave updates on the recruitment of the CSIP National Director, legal matters and communications.

The fluidity of the CSIP structure had its advantages and disadvantages. The communication strategies of the different organisations and the messages about CSIP that were delivered to staff and the media have varied. A meeting had been held between the SCIE communications team, CSIP communications team and CSIP agencies' communications teams regarding developing a common message - which relied on developing a common understanding. The first JIG meeting would include discussion of communications. It was planned to hold staff meetings between CSIP and SCIE staff, focussing on those staff who would transfer into SCIE.

The seven agencies were in the process of becoming a partnership - the first management board of CSIP had only just been held. SCIE would be represented at this board at future meetings. This would allow SCIE to influence the development of the partnership - including the alignment of systems and business processes with SCIE's operations.

Action A briefing on the seven agencies would be sent to Board members.

Although initial publicity in Community Care regarding SCIE's takeover of CSIP had been negative, the feedback that SCIE had received from its stakeholders had been generally positive. John Ransford, from the LGA, had been particularly supportive. A further, more positive article, was due to be published in Community Care.

A SCIE staff meeting had been held to consider the concerns that staff had regarding CSIP. Gail Tucker and Jane Campbell had attended the meeting to represent the Board. Many of the concerns regarded human resources, including security of employment and pensions. Staff had been pleased to learn that most of the CSIP staff were practitioners, which would give SCIE a stronger practice base. Concerns had also been expressed about cultural differences but it had been noted that several of the agencies had similar cultures to SCIE, and indeed SCIE could learn from their practices, for example the Valuing People Support Team.

The meeting had been very reassuring to staff. Staff saw CSIP as an opportunity to make a difference in practice, and were keen to own and influence the implementation of CSIP. However staff wanted a recommitment to SCIE's approach to knowledge, although some of the agencies based their work on evidence-based knowledge.

Shortlisting for the post of National Director would occur on 30 November. The post had been advertised in a variety of media including Disability Now and The Voice.

At the Extraordinary Board Meeting it had been agreed to proceed with the implementation of CSIP if the board criteria for implementation were met. These criteria had been accepted by Antony Sheehan and Stephen Ladyman MP, and gave very clear grounds for proceeding with implementation.

The Board CSIP sub-group would act on the Board's delegated trust to ensure that its criteria for implementation were met, including regarding user involvement. Board members were urged to keep the sub-group informed of their views. (Sub-group members were: Shokat Babul, Jane Campbell, Roy Taylor and Gail Tucker).

Key strategic issues (such as the SLA and work programme) would be brought to the full Board for discussion and agreement. The first JIG meeting would consider the critical issues that the Board would need to agree by 1 April 2005, and the structure of the agendas of the JIG would take into account the date of the Board meeting on 24 February 2005.

Action It was agreed to consider the structures within SCIE that supported participation at the next meeting.

Action The Board requested that all the CSIP agencies give presentations to the Board, including practitioner input.

Action The suggestion that a working group should be established to consider how SCIE monitors and evaluates its work would be considered and brought back to the next Board meeting.

Action Amanda Edwards and Bill Kilgallon would meet SCIE's links in Northern Ireland to discuss CSIP and its implications for Northern Ireland.

5) Guidance for trustees

Jane Campbell explained the context for the Guidance for Trustees, which had arisen from a risk assessment of SCIE carried out by auditors. The auditors recommended that guidance be publicly available particularly for new trustees without much knowledge of charity governance. The guidance was designed to be easily understood by anyone we might to choose to engage as a trustee.

Jane Campbell invited Anthony Land to present his paper. He explained that the paper was not an attempt to replicate the NCVO good trustee guide, previously circulated to all SCIE trustees.

The guidance was instead set in the context of SCIE, and aimed to clarify trustees' roles and responsibilities and act as an effective welcome.

The guidance noted:

1) The implications of charitable and company status:

Independence of decision-making and action
Eligibility for grants e.g. from charitable trusts

Tax breaks

Limited exposure to financial risk (for Board members/trustees)

External regulation (the Charity Commission)

2) The role of Board members:

Safeguard independence, governance and assets

Develop and approve broad strategy (which falls to the Chief Executive and Chair to ensure this happens)

Approve annual operational plans

Hold Chief Executive and his/her team to account

Provide leadership, act as ambassador, contribute ideas, contacts, relevant expertise

3) The role of the Chief Executive in relation to the Board:

Deliver broad strategy

Develop and execute annual operational plans

Provide management reports to facilitate Board oversight

Action Anthony Land's presentation would be circulated to Board members.

There was much discussion regarding the tone of the paper. Some of the Board felt that the paper was too informal and chatty whilst others welcomed its accessibility and welcoming tone. It was generally agreed that the paper was more inclusive than previous guidance, and this was welcomed.

It was noted that the guidance should be part of a wider trustee induction programme.

Action The role of trustees, including the difference between strategic and operational issues, would be discussed at the Board appraisal on 16 December. Any issues arising from the appraisal would be fed in to help with the revision of the guidance.

The Chair thanked Anthony for his paper.

6) Reports of Chief Executive and Chair

6.1) Chair's Report

The Chair highlighted the following points from her paper:

Jane Campbell had held positive meetings with Antony Sheehan with regard to the Care Service Development Initiative (CSDI), and Stephen Ladyman MP with regard to CSIP developments.

SCIE had been involved in the seminars and consultation on the draft Adult Social Care Green Paper, which now appeared more identifiable with SCIE's aims.

The launch of the SCIE Practice guide 3: Fostering, hosted by Hilton Dawson MP at the House of Commons, had been very well attended. Margaret Hodge MP had spoken at the launch and been very supportive of SCIE's work.

A draft programme for the Board appraisal had been written. The day would celebrate what the Board had achieved to date and look at what kind of Board will be needed to address the challenges of the future.

Action The programme for the Board appraisal would be circulated for comments.

A meeting of the Chairs and Chief Executives of the social care organisations (CCESCO) had been chaired by SCIE. The meetings had now moved away from information sharing and it was hoped they would lead to more productive partnership working. Kathryn Hudson, National Director for Social Care, had joined the group for dinner.

Jane had met with the DH Patients Experience Team regarding work on patient experience in health care. It was useful to have involvement with a strand of work on health care.

The Chair noted how pleased she was that Bill Kilgallon had returned to work looking so well.

6.2) Chief Executive's Report

The Chair invited Bill Kilgallon to present his paper. Bill thanked Jane Campbell, Amanda Edwards and Victoria McNeill for their support in his absence, and thanked everyone for their good wishes during his time off.

It appeared that the Green Paper would be published before Christmas (Editor's note: This had not occurred). Bill was on the project board for the paper. The DH had appreciated the contributions from SCIE, particularly the reports from Gerald Wistow, the report from the Shaping Our Lives National User Network Focus Groups and the analysis of responses to the consultation. SCIE was still pushing hard for the paper to be based on evidence.

"Personalisation" would be a key word in the paper, and SCIE was undertaking work with the Disability Rights Commission and National Centre for Independent Living with regard to Independent Living and personalisation.

Action A briefing on SCIE's work linked to Independent Living and other issues around personalisation would be on the next Board agenda.

7) Financial Report

Gail Tucker, Chair of the Audit Committee, highlighted that the triennial actuarial review was imminent. The next Audit Committee meeting would meet in early February to enable discussion of issues around pensions before the next Board meeting. The Audit Committee had asked SCIE's accountants to provide a report on the range of options available to SCIE in the likelihood of a pensions deficit.

The Audit Committee had considered the implications of the CSIP proposals on SCIE's financial controls and had considered that SCIE had an established and capable finance team. The team's skills base would be sufficient to cope with the financial changes leading from the integration of CSIP, but the team might need to be expanded to cope with the extra workload. It might also be necessary to consider having a trustee with high-level financial experience, particularly from an entrepreneurial field.

A very thorough first draft of SCIE's business continuity plan had been presented at the Audit Committee meeting.

SCIE would commission work to review SCIE's VAT position in the light of the CSIP integration. It was thought that the integration would not affect SCIE's insurance but advice would be sought regarding whether SCIE had sufficient professional indemnity cover and business risks insurance.

Pearl Sebastian was invited to present the half-year financial results. There was a surplus of £395,859 in unrestricted funds. The majority of SCIE's restricted funds were held for future projects. The interest from these funds would be retained by SCIE.

At the end of financial year SCIE would have at least £800,000 in reserve available to set off deficits in the pension scheme.

8) Work of the NIMHE/SCIE Fellows

The Chair introduced the SCIE/NIMHE fellows, Professor Peter Gilbert and Professor Nick Gould, who are now one year into their three-year fellowship, and invited them to present the work they have done to date.

The Fellowship was created by NIMHE to provide national leadership in mental health development with regard to social care. Professor Gould's focus was research and practice, whilst Professor Gilbert's focus was policy and practice, and they had a shared brief to focus overall on policy, establishing the knowledge base, research and practice.

The fellows hoped to provide a counter-balance to the clinical dominance of mental health.

Research:

Professor Gould was leading for SCIE in its joint work with the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), acting as joint technical lead for the technology appraisal of the effectiveness of parenting programmes for children with conduct disorders, thus broadening the work to look at social, as well as clinical, outcomes and evidence. He also acted as deputy chair of the guideline development group to produce joint guidance for the NHS and social care on dementia care.

He had also helped set up a NIMHE/SCIE Social Care Research Forum which had been given a grant to produce a report identifying resource priorities in social aspects of mental health.

Policy:

Professor Gilbert had co-authored the NIMHE/ADSS National Guidance document: "Positive Approaches to the Integration of Health and Social Care in Mental Health Services" and worked closely with the DH and ADSS on mental health issues.

Workforce:

The fellows were looking at developing an action plan to address issues regarding morale in mental health social work (summed up by the term 'abandonment').

They had also been involved in work on social exclusion in regard to mental health, alongside the Social Perspectives Network (SPN), located at SCIE

The fellows were consulted on SCIE's work programme and had had excellent support from the Knowledge Management team.

Future work:

It was suggested that the fellows might look at the work done on mental health and social care in Northern Ireland from which a number of useful lessons had been learnt.

The integration of CSIP could be used as a basis for expanding SCIE's work on mental health, including issues around the impact of mental health issues in economic terms.

Action The fellows would be asked to contribute to SCIE's response to the Green Paper.

Action It was agreed that the notion of leadership should be discussed at a future Board meeting. This should include service user leadership.

The Chair thanked Professor Gould and Professor Gilbert for their papers.

9) Work programme planning and progress report

The Chair invited Amanda Edwards to present her regular progress report on the work programme. Amanda noted that the next progress report would not include completed work, which would instead be presented in a separate document.

The last meeting of the Board work programme sub-group had considered how to decide what is included in the work programme and the process and timing for developing the work programme. SCIE would move to planning for a 2-3 year period whilst retaining the flexibility to respond to topical issues.

Action Board members were asked to feed any ideas for the work programme into the Board sub-group.

Action It was agreed that SCIE's work on race equality should be made explicit in the work programme, and SCIE should urgently develop specific work on race.

It was agreed that the format of the work programme progress report was not easily accessible, however it had been created as an internal document and a much more accessible public document was also available. Amanda would give some consideration to whether the format could be changed to make it more accessible.

Action The full work programme for 2005/6 would be discussed at the next Board meeting.

10) Partners' Council Progress Report

Nasa Begum was invited to present the Partners' Council progress report.

At the last Partners' Council a number of issues were raised about the difference the Partners' Council makes to the work of SCIE, their inclusion within different parts of SCIE, and the future role of the Partners' Council as the organisation takes on new functions with CSIP.

The Partners' Council wanted to generate new ideas for SCIE and contribute to SCIE's priorities. They were particularly keen to be given a proper role in contributing to the consultation on CSIP.

The Board agreed to the following recommendations:

Partners' Council members would be invited onto project advisory/steering groups, tender boards, reference and quality assurance groups.

Four meetings would be held each year to enable the Partners' Council to have an input into the work programme planning process

The Partners' Council in February 2005 should include consideration of the implications of the integration of CSIP into SCIE. The members would also be invited to contribute to the CSIP consultation.

The Participation team would continue to review and change the way it works to be as inclusive as possible.

Membership of the Council would be extended to 3 years.

A role and expectations agreement with Partners' Council members would be created.

Action These recommendations would be implemented.

It was agreed that it was too early to formally evaluate the impact of the Partners' Council but it would be useful to learn from the process of creation of the Partners' Council and how it currently works - 'capturing a process'. This should be through participative evaluation with an external facilitator.

Action The Partners' Council would be asked to consider how this could be done.

It was suggested that Partners' Council members should be consulted as individuals by email, as well as being consulted as part of the collective Partners' Council at Council meetings.

Action It was agreed that the Board would make a formal response to the Partners' Council with regard to these issues.

11) Next meeting

The next Board meeting would be held on 24 February 2005, 11am at SCIE.