



Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting

When: 29 March 2018

Where: Meeting Room 1, Watson House, 54 Baker Street, London, W1U 7EX

Present (Board)

- Paul Burstow, Chair
- Alex Fox
- Tina Coldham
- Mary McKenna
- Ossie Stuart
- Peter Hay
- Sally Warren

In attendance

- Tony Hunter (Chief Executive)
- Stephen Goulder (Company Secretary)
- Ewan King (Director of Development and Delivery)
- Michaela Gray (Executive Assistant) – minutes
- Carmen Colomina (staff representative)

Apologies

- Annie Hudson
- Fionnuala McAndrew
- John Evans
- Bev Searle

Apologies and welcome

1. PB welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies.

Minutes of the Board meeting of 30 November 2017 and matters arising

2. The minutes were agreed with minor amendments.
3. OS spoke about the accessibility of SCIE's new offices. He was concerned about car parking. The lift was tight but manageable for him. OS stated this would always be an issue for SCIE to be mindful of. PB stated that he understood SCIE's

accessibility policy and statement has been published on our website and visible to all staff. TH added that we are identifying other meeting facilities available to book to ensure accessibility is not an issue. TH asked the board to let him know of any worries.

4. TH noted that regarding paragraph 23, neither V-Inspired nor BASW moved with us so we could therefore host other organisations. TH asked the board to let him know of anyone who might be interested. SG added that with the increased use of hot desking, we could offer up 10 desks.

Chief Executive's report

5. TH gave an overview of his report. TH commended the professionalism of staff during difficult times.
6. TH stated that he is looking forward to the staff meeting next week, which is entitled 'Accelerating Growth to Achieve Sustainability'. TH noted his thanks to OS and PH who are able to join the event. TH had also been working with Carmen Colomina, Sheila Fish and David Cundy to prepare for the day, which Chris Bones would facilitate.
7. TH stated that SCIE is continuing to work well with Wales and Northern Ireland. TH added that SCIE is also continuing to keep close to DHSC and offer help as appropriate, e.g. the pilot health assessments which were announced last week. SCIE has been asked to outline what a 10% reduction on the core commission would look like and is seeking to mitigate this by offering additional work on Innovation. TH noted that SCIE needs to show added value.
8. The Collaborating Centre contract formally finishes on the 31 March 2018. The work has all gone well, TH noted his thanks to the staff. There is now a contract for Quick Guides which will run over the next two years.
9. TH highlighted paragraphs 14-16 and noted that in 2014, SCIE had some broad criteria for what work we would take on, and we need to judge opportunities against these criteria.
10. TH noted that while working with the Church of England (CoE), we did not include the involvement of survivors initially but it was agreed to be a future requirement of the CoE. TH gave an overview of a complaint which had been received regarding the lack of involvement of survivors. The Chair noted this pre-dates his arrival but he is anxious to have a discussion at the board and asked PH to give an overview of the complaint.
11. PH commended TH, SG and the rest of the team for their openness and reflectiveness. PH stated the desired outcome was the best outcome for survivors and the inclusion of survivors. PH noted that part of the complaint was about the preservation of anonymity, for which SCIE apologised, rectified and as a result changed its process. PH then raised the issue of coproduction, which involves management of values and [whether it is possible managing relationships if to do](#)

coproduction safely is to be done well in this context. ~~Our position is~~ it is clear that through SCIE's work we have encouraged the Church to be more open and the development of survivor work is still ongoing. We have robust and independent verification of that with evaluation reports. The core issues are how we want to consider working with people who have suffered historic abuse. This is about transparency and bravery. We also need to think of the rules of engagement both with survivors and organisations and in a way that we remain the go-to offer.

12. TC noted that ~~she~~ the complainant had received a letter in confidence and asked if there was any further action for ~~her~~ them. SG replied that he had responded. A full anonymised copy of PH's complaint report is available to Trustees on request.
13. OS asked if the board should be involved in what is a very complex issue. PH replied that it comes back to what the motives are of organisations who approach us but and how we protect ourselves. SCIE needed to think about its positioning. The process has been productive and if we retreated from that it would be inconsistent with our values around improving people's lives. SCIE needs to think about how it positions itself and how it makes clear that its values are key to its offer.
14. TC noted that she could see where other survivors would feel left out of the process so we need to think about we manage that in future. PH added that the complainant in this case saw SCIE as an independent body and more than a consultancy. We should use this as a strength – we are not simply a 'for hire' consultancy and we could develop further our leverage to change and improve practice in organisations.
15. SW noted that when SCIE first started this work, it was quite different in scope and scale. SW suggested that we build in regular reviews of our work with partners and gateways in the event that the context or work changes to the point it no longer aligns with our vision and values. There is learning from this process about how the Trustees support the delivery of SCIE's values in situations of complexity and risk.
16. EK advised the board that negotiations are currently underway with the Church regarding the cost of the next stage of work, and it may not be possible to do with the proposed budget of £180k p/a over three years. EK suggested that in future decisions like this could be taken to the board.
17. PH noted that if we were unable to complete the next stage of work it could have ramifications for the Church. SCIE could become clear that its offer is a strong, values based, one. TC added that safeguarding is becoming a more prominent issue and she felt it is not something we should stay away from as it's about the good of people in the future.
18. SW suggested a board committee be available to provide commercial advice on contract negotiations. OS noted the importance of having a robust vision.
19. The chair thanked the board for a helpful discussion and summarised it, noting it would be good to codify our rules of engagement with organisations who have survivor issues. PB added there is also something around SCIE being confident in asserting what it is about, and that we should not under-price-value ourselves. SCIE should establish a panel of trustees to be available to act as a sounding board for

the Chief Executive and his team. Ideally this should include one trustee with lived experience when considering issues around safeguarding.

20. The chair summed up that codifying our statement is essential, and that's where lessons learned are shared with staff. The chair added that dealing with an individual complaint is not something that should be shared with staff or Board members until it is at a stage where that is necessary.

Audit and Risk Committee Report

21. SW gave an overview of the report, and added that much of what was discussed is on today's agenda.
22. SW reported on discussion of the reserves policy and noted that we had £4.4m in our unrestricted reserve fund to 31 March 2017. It is likely this will fall to approximately £3.3m by the 31 March 2018. The committee considered what the new position should be what SCIE's key liabilities are, e.g. three months' operating costs, cash flow and other liabilities such as pensions.
23. SG stated that it is now more important for us to be able to use the reserves to manage our cash flow.
24. The chair noted the importance of making it clear that the cash flow issues are different from the issues around cost base and margins. The chair added that we have to make sure we don't see the reserve as a cushion but a mechanism to invest in improving our trajectory.
25. SW highlighted that all three members of the Audit and Risk Committee joined at the same time and will therefore leave at the same time, so there is the issue of succession planning to consider.
26. The recommendation that the reserves policy should be £3m was agreed.

Accelerating growth to achieve sustainability

Developing our purpose

27. TH gave an overview of the objectives and timeline for accelerating growth, and discussions with OS, MM and PB regarding SCIE's purpose. The chair asked the board for their thoughts.
28. OS stated that we need to have something about people themselves, and how they make better informed decisions for themselves. OS added we should also say why we do that.
29. EK raised his concern that the purpose seems very adult social care oriented. SW stated that "people" covers both adults and children, but EK was concerned that it is more associated with adults.

30. The chair noted OS's point about articulating the why, and asked if what we say is enough. The purpose will go to the staff session next week with a final version to the board after that, but the chair asked the board to reflect on OS's challenge and pick up EK's point about the wording.
31. AF stated that the purpose feels very 'organisational'. PH suggested moving the word "practice" before "policy" to make it sound more children's social care oriented. SW suggested removing the word "planning" since that is covered by "policy".
32. CC suggested that as we work with Health a lot, we may need to think about the terminology to reflect that. TH noted that this is deliberate to reflect the other areas of our work. OS noted that from a user perspective, SCIE will be seen as a vehicle.
33. The chair noted that the costs of changing SCIE's brand are very high so the name will not be changed but we should make sure we don't articulate our offer to only certain types of organisation.

Analysis of margins

34. SG gave an overview of the report and noted that the first thing it draws attention to our financial structure and the accounting rules we are required to comply with. SG explained the methodologies used to allocate overheads including that which we use based on headcount. The biggest issues in the current year are that we are receiving less income than planned and also receiving payments late.
35. SG explained some apparent anomalies in the report: the Big Lottery is showing 100% but we have not yet received payment. The funds allocated to the Residential Care Pilot work was reallocated by DHSC to support brokerage. The grant to support BSF was not agreed until March 2018 and so has not been included in the report, based as it is on the financial position as at 31 January 2018. The Collaborating Centre is not achieving a margin for technical reasons as we carried forward money from last year, and this is the end of a 5 year contract.
36. SG noted that this analysis provides information to help us make informed decisions and is more important when we look at more commercial work going forward. SG added that there are judgements to be made about loss leaders.
37. The chair agreed that a further report be provided in May.

Identification of potential enhanced propositions

38. TH stated that SCIE had identified three areas for income growth. These areas are safeguarding, integration, and children's services.

Safeguarding

39. EK stated that this was a very challenging task for an organisation like SCIE, since we don't develop products, we provide services and the expectation of clients is a

bespoke consultancy offer. MM suggested an effective way of making services more bespoke would be the use of things like AI.

40. EK explained that one idea would be an adult safeguarding helpline. MM suggested approaching the big telephone companies about providing a helpline as part of their services. AF noted that as a former Childline volunteer, we should be careful about the economics involved. AF added that we should also look at existing services like Silverline. The chair also suggested looking at Action for Elder Abuse as a funder. MM also added that the Samaritans have done a lot of work looking at using modern technology.
41. EK thanked the board for their suggestions. EK stated that we have a range of products on safeguarding but we are expanding out of social care and have been very successful working with faith communities. EK also noted the lack of confidence in big charities at the moment. The chair also noted that there is increasing pressure from the Charity Commission.

Integration

42. EK stated this is about converting tools into products which can be used locally. TC raised her concern that there may not be much appetite for integration at local levels. EK stated a lot of funding is still through NHSE. CC noted that a lot of local authorities are now going to consultants, many of whom are former staff members or other existing connections so there is funding there but it's a question of how to access it.
43. OS stated that the nature of integration is about delivering services differently, and that means we need coproduction.
44. MM drew the board's attention to paragraph 14 regarding data analysis and suggested that if we don't have these skills in-house, we need to either grow them in-house or hire a small group of people to do in-house. The chair noted that we will need to look at what is necessary and what is affordable, and what the implications are.
45. PH stated that integration is a process rather than a thing, and creating a space to talk and develop the mediation offer could help. PH also suggested doing preparation for inspections on local authorities above and beyond what the CQC offer locally.
46. AF agreed with MM on the importance of data, and added we could make more use of the social workers who visit our website. AF suggested strategizing what we could do to help them generate data for us that could help form an offer. AF added that the offers currently aren't very strong on coproduction and we should consider how to change this.

Children's social care

47. EK acknowledged that this is a crowded sector but our work on the WWC provides an opportunity. There are two opportunities at the moment: WWC offer on using evidence to improve services, and the Newton offer.
48. MM asked how big Impower and Newton are. EK replied that they have about 40 staff each.
49. PH felt that the improvement consultancy idea had potential and that we have traction and reputation. PH suggested that this might feed into a longer term offer.
50. TH acknowledged that there are issues around how coproduction meshes in and the extent to which we could or should do something distinct, but added that we need to be practical and while coproduction is our USP, we will have to consider whether it can generate income in Oxfordshire. In the meantime it's about how it adds to our offers.
51. The chair noted there is a need to crystallise our offer on coproduction and the work in Oxfordshire is where it begins. The chair thanked the CED for the three papers and noted they would be road tested at the staff session next week.

Implications for our digital strategy

52. TH added that part of the discussion on 24 May would include the implications for our digital strategy.

Business plan 2018-19

53. SG gave an overview of planning assumptions and scenarios and EK gave an overview of the pipeline position. SG then talked the board through the leadership of delivery programmes, and the reserves position required to be sustainable in different scenarios. SG provided an analysis to assure the board that SCIE is sustainable to the 31 March 2019.
54. PH stated that he liked the format which he felt clearly showed the variables.
55. The chair agreed that the format is helpful and added having this as a regular tracker for the board would be useful. The chair noted that the 10% reduction from DHSC does put us very close to our minimum reserves position and we need to reflect that in our language with DHSC. SG stated that the Audit and Risk Committee will have an additional meeting and he will be speaking with BS on a monthly basis.
56. TH noted that with 43 staff, we need a line for objectives and appraisals, and we also need to work together to combine capacity, effectiveness and capability.
57. The board agreed the report and approved the setting of budgets.

Performance report

- 58. SG noted that much of the Performance report has been discussed in earlier items and asked if there were any questions. SG added that the board may wish to re-visit and refresh the Risk Register in May.
- 59. TH noted the outstanding action in paragraph 20 for revised metrics, and added that he, SG and EK have summarised priorities in metrics which will be brought to the Board in May.
- 60. The chair asked if it would be possible to pick up MM's challenge regarding the importance of data captured by the website. EK responded that he could mock up hits on our consultancy pages and training enquiries. EK added that we have started a PowerPoint dashboard with some data and our interpretation.
- 61. SG gave a brief overview of the Risk Register and noted that the issues around NICE and accommodation have mainly been resolved. The chair stated that the board needs to look at the levels of risk it is prepared to tolerate.
- 62. The board agreed the report.

Board annual agenda plan

- 63. The board annual agenda plan was agreed.

Any other business

- 64. The chair noted that this was TC's last meeting as trustee, and thanked her for her service to the board and to SCIE.

Date of next meeting: 24 May 2018

Approved: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____