

CANDIDATE PACK FOR THE CHAIR



social care
institute for excellence



WELCOME

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Chair.

Our vision at SCIE is a society where everyone—regardless of age, background or circumstance—can lead fulfilling, safe and healthy lives. As an independent charity working with a wide range of partners and people with lived experience, we are dedicated to improving social care and support for adults, children and families across the UK. We believe that high-quality care and support should empower people, promote independence and tackle social inequalities head-on.

Co-production is at the heart of all we do. We co-produce solutions with people who draw on care and support, ensuring that their voices lead the change, bringing them together with practitioners, policymakers, providers and other partners to innovate and deliver tangible improvements on the ground.

Our amazing staff bring great depth of expertise and passion for the cause, and many are former social workers, practitioners, local authority professionals or researchers. Perhaps that's why our care for real impact shines through: over 90% of our annual survey respondents felt that SCIE understands and cares about making a difference to the lives of people drawing on care.

After eight successful years of leadership, our current Chair, Paul Burstow, will be stepping down in 2026. We are now seeking a Chair Elect to join us in advance of this transition to help shape our future.

This is a pivotal time in social care: a period of challenge, change and renewal. As Chair Elect, and ultimately Chair, you will play a vital role in leading SCIE through its next strategic phase. Working with the CEO, her senior team and the wider Board of Trustees, you will help us remain bold, relevant and impactful in a rapidly evolving landscape.

We are looking for a confident and values-driven leader—someone with a strong strategic mindset, commercial acumen and deep understanding of and passion for the wider health and social care environment. You will be a visible ambassador for SCIE and a champion for high-quality, equitable care. Crucially, you'll bring personal credibility, sound judgment and a collaborative leadership style that inspires trust and builds consensus.

At SCIE, we see the real-world results of our work —improved practice and stronger services across the country that make people's lives measurably better. If you share our belief in a fairer society where care and support enable people to thrive, we hope you will read on to find out more.

The SCIE Board of Trustees



ROLE AT A GLANCE

AS CHAIR OF SCIE YOU CAN EXPECT TO PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE AS :

AN AMBASSADOR

You will be well-networked and help SCIE's voice be heard as widely as possible. We'll expect you to be able to open doors and keep our profile high.

A STRATEGIC LEADER AND INNOVATOR

SCIE is forward-looking and a force for positive disruption. As Chair, you will embody this and demonstrate your appetite for continual improvement.

A THOUGHT LEADER AND EXPERT

You will be a key voice and contributor to discussions on the future of social care.

A CONVENER AND FACILITATOR

Our board is collaborative and constructive, and our Chair plays a key role in setting this tone. You will ensure Trustees feel heard, that their contributions are valued and that decisions are made collectively.

A DEVELOPER

You will drive an ethos for development, encouraging SCIE to see and optimise new opportunities.



"Leading SCIE has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. Every day, we work alongside people with lived experience, professionals, and partners to shape better care and support. As Chair, you'll have the chance to influence policy, inspire change, and help create a fairer social care system — and you'll do it with a team that truly believes in making a difference."

The Rt. Hon. Paul Burstow, Chair of SCIE



"I am hugely proud to be part of our wonderful team ensuring SCIE helps deliver better lives to those receiving care. In my 35 years' experience of social care, I can't think of a more exciting time to join us as Chair. While the sector faces significant challenges, there is real cause for optimism with new opportunities to shape the future care system. This includes influencing the work of the Casey Commission, raising standards of care, and generating new insights and ideas for improving care experiences and outcomes."

Kathryn Marsden OBE, Chief Executive of SCIE

CHAIR ELECT TIMELINE

As part of our robust succession planning process, you will initially join the Board of Trustees as Chair Elect, giving ample time for you to settle in your role within SCIE, build relationships with your fellow Trustees and the Executive and feel confident in your ability to hit the ground running as Chair in July 2026.

However, with two Trustees reaching the end of their terms in 2026, as our Chair Elect, you will have the opportunity to play an orchestrating role in the appointment of a vibrant and talented cohort of new Trustees in early 2026 – allowing you to begin to mould the Board around their vision for SCIE. Further information on the timeline for this recruitment process is shared later in this pack.

In total, we anticipate a period of five months' overlap with Paul, in which time our Chair Elect will have the opportunity to fully establish themselves into SCIE's external networks and begin to assess the successes of our 2023 – 2026 strategy.

**JANUARY 2026 – CHAIR ELECT
APPOINTED**

**SPRING/SUMMER 2026 –
CHAIR ELECT WORKS CLOSELY
WITH PAUL BURSTOW, BUILDS
ORGANISATIONAL KNOWLEDGE
AND PREPARES TO ASSUME
CHAIR POSITION**

**JULY 2026 – PAUL BURSTOW'S
TERM ENDS, CHAIR ELECT
ASSUMES CHAIRING
RESPONSIBILITIES**



ABOUT US

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is an independent social care charity with deep experience of bringing partners and people with lived experience together to collaborate and innovate to improve people's lives (e.g. national government, DHSC, local authorities, care providers, academics, foundations). In recent years we have evolved from a largely Government-funded body to a fast-moving, high-profile, more commercial organisation and thought leader. Working across social care and health for adults, children and families, we contribute to the development and implementation of better care, support and safeguarding at local and national level.

As we are not-for-profit, our income goes towards improving social care. We deliver four main offers, across all of which we support the DHSC annually:

- **SCIE Consultancy** - working with local and national organisations to identify and implement improvements that are impactful and enable effective scrutiny and accountability
- **SCIE Insights** – providing research, evidence and policy insights and thought leadership to drive innovation and influence national policy and practice
- **SCIE Training** – building leadership and capability across the social care workforce through expert bespoke online and face-to-face training, coaching and development programmes, including safeguarding, co-production and strengths-based approaches
- **SCIE Resources** – producing guidance and tools to support best practice, co-production and innovation.

Our team offer customised solutions to improve quality, safety, and outcomes in social care. Co-production with people with lived experience of social care underpins and informs what we do, and with over twenty years' experience we bring a wealth of trusted, evidence-based expertise to work together to help transform care.

Our future success depends on our ability to continue developing our range of large and small commercial projects covering our offers to complement our Government-funded commissions.

The policy and operating context is different across the four countries of the UK, and different again between children's and adult social care. We bring perspectives and learning from working with services for people of all ages, and across all areas, building on the best available evidence and learning from practice and policy – for example, when we established the What Works for Children's Social Care centre.

For further information on our 2023-26 Strategy please click [here](#).

To review our most recent annual report please visit: [Annual report - SCIE](#)

SCIE CORE VALUES

Progressive	→	Always learning and developing
Inclusive	→	Working together for equality, diversity and fairness
Credible	→	Evidence-based, robust and reliable
Transparent	→	Open and honest
Committed	→	Focused on making a difference to people's lives

PARTICULAR HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR RECENT WORK INCLUDE:



Launching the CareTech Charter in Partnership with Policy Connect.
Supporting local areas to scale up much-needed solutions for unpaid carers through the DHSC's Accelerating Reform Fund



Strengthening leadership across adult social care commissioning through our Ignite: 'Commissioning for the future' training programme.



Identifying and helping drive digital improvements and transformation for Sandwell council – just one of our many local partnerships last year.



Improving understanding of co-production impact and outcomes through an impact tool and guidance on developing better impact measurement.

To hear more on the crucial role our work plays, please follow the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_1h51N8daU



ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role title: Chair

Key relationships: Board of Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Team

ROLE PURPOSE

The Trustee Board is responsible for the long-term stewardship of SCIE, ensuring the most diligent and impactful use of its resources – people and financial – in the delivery of its mission and purpose. The Chair is expected to lead the board in fulfilling this role.

Working in tandem with the CEO, the Chair serves as an ambassador for SCIE, working to build and leverage relationships within the network of social care stakeholders – ensuring that SCIE’s voice is heard, that it maintains its seat at the relevant tables and seizes opportunity for future growth and development. The Chair is expected to bring a strong degree of personal influence and be confident in serving as an external figurehead for a thought leadership organisation.

The Chair will embody our aspiration to be a fully inclusive organisation, drawing out the uniqueness and strengths of each member of the board; ensuring the board has a fierce collective of individuals. The Chair is also responsible for ensuring a culture of high challenge/high support with the executive.

The Board is made up of eight Trustees, aside from the Chair, with the executive team led by Kathryn Marsden OBE. You can learn more [here](#)

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategy

- Lead the Board in partnership with the CEO and executive Team to agree the strategic direction of SCIE, its annual operating plans and KPIs and ensure that SCIE is structured and resourced to deliver that strategy.
- Lead the Board in monitoring the implementation of strategy and objectives by the executive and hold it to account for delivery.
- Work in effective partnership with, supporting, and providing stretch and constructive challenge to the Chief Executive and their Leadership Team.

Governance

- Exercise effective leadership of the Board in fulfilling its functions and remit, ensuring that the Board has the culture, processes, structures and relationships for effective governance and that trustees are supported to meet their legal, regulatory and fiduciary duties.
- Oversee the work of the committees of the Board and ensure that appropriate reporting lines to the Board are in place.
- Ensure the Board has the right structure in its committees, systems of control and accountability, including financial and operational controls and risk management, and procedures for handling internal grievances, conflicts of interest and whistleblowing.

Values and vision

- Embody and promote SCIE’s values, vision and reputation through inclusive and effective leadership.
- Act as an active, authentic ambassador for SCIE across public forums and with stakeholders and partners amplifying the voices of people who draw on care and support.
- Work in partnership with the CEO to represent SCIE to government and act as an advocate and influencer into Government for SCIE and matters related to the role and remit of SCIE.
- Maintain personal knowledge and expertise of issues pertinent to the work of SCIE.
- Personally uphold the highest standards of integrity and probity.

Culture, appointment and support to trustees

- Maintain an open, inclusive and learning culture on the Board including periodically reviewing governance arrangements, Board and Trustee (including Chair) effectiveness and how SCIE is meeting its aims, legal objects, vision and strategy.
- Mentor and support the Board members to maximise their effectiveness and contribution.
- Oversee arrangements for the fair and open recruitment of Trustees, working with the People and Nominations Committee.

Relationship with the Board and CEO

- Support and manage performance and ongoing development.
- Represent the Board (or delegate the task appropriately) on recruitment, remuneration and employee relations issues where appropriate.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- Demonstrable experience of chairing a Board or committee: absorbing detailed information, facilitating constructive debate, ensuring effective decision-making, demonstrating sound judgement and managing change at Board level.
- Proven experience of best practice governance and the discipline of Board leadership and management.
- Experience of engaging, influencing and advocating at the highest levels, ideally within the social care system.
- Proven ability to navigate the health, social and political landscape of the social care sector, informed by both professional practice and lived experience.
- A high degree of commercial acumen with experience or insight gleaned beyond statutorily funded environments

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Politically astute with the ability to inspire the confidence of key stakeholders and influence decision makers, leaders in social care and Government with significant networking and relationship building skills.
- Ability to lead the board in setting the strategic direction of SCIE and ensuring its effective and efficient governance and management including its financial probity and stability.
- Proven track record of exercising sound, evidence-based judgement.
- The ability to apply high level governance skills in chairing a Board and adherence to the Charity Governance Code principles of good governance.
- The ability to build excellent relationships, internally and externally, with a range of people from all backgrounds including those drawing on social care.
- Demonstrable commitment to equality and diversity and experience of championing equality and diversity matters.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Deep commitment to the benefit of collaboration and innovation and to SCIE's role in leading the way for improved social care.
- Comfort operating in ambassadorial capacity or as a thought leader within a networked environment.
- A demonstrable commitment to the Nolan principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership).
- An inclusive leadership style, focused on supporting a constructive dynamic within the board, enabling contributions from all trustees, encouraging the articulation of diverse views and consensus-building.
- A collaborative approach which brings people together to achieve great results, both internally and externally, in a way that inspires and engages others.

We welcome applications from all backgrounds, especially communities underrepresented in senior leadership roles, board appointments and those with lived experience of social care.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

REMUNERATION

This role is remunerated at a rate of £27,000 per annum. This commences when the appointed candidate moves from chair elect to chair.

TIME COMMITMENT & LOCATION

Approximately three to four days per month although flexibility will be required. The role will involve some national travel, including to London (likely to be monthly). Board meetings are currently held online with two face to face each year.

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

The appointment is made for a term of three years, renewable based on performance for a second term.

HOW TO APPLY

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/scie-chair/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out your motivation for the role and describes the specific experience you can bring to the appointment.
- If you have a disability and identify any barriers in the job description or person specification, please tell us.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE FOR THE CHAIR

Closing date: Monday 17th November 2025

Preliminary interviews: w/c 1st & 8th December 2025

Final Panel interviews: w/c 5th and 12th January 2026

We also encourage candidates to take note of the proposed timeline for our trustee recruitment given the importance of the involvement of the appointed candidate as Chair Elect.

RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE FOR TWO TRUSTEES

Closing date: Friday 12th December 2025

Preliminary interviews: w/c 5th and 12th January 2026

Final Panel interviews: w/c 26th January and / or w/c 2nd February 2026