



Scottish Council of  
Jewish Communities

**Annual General Meeting**  
**Sunday 29th June 2014 at 1.30 pm**  
**in the Jewish Community Centre, Giffnock, G46 6UE**

Papers are also available online at <http://www.scojec.org/members/council/council.html>

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome, sederunt, apologies
2. Minutes of AGM of 9th June 2013 and Council of 23th March 2014
3. Matters arising from minutes
4. Cooptions and confirmation of membership  
    Micheline Brannan (Edinburgh)      Simon Dover (Glasgow)  
    Neil Livingstone (Glasgow)         Judith Sischy (Edinburgh)  
    Evy Yedd (Glasgow)
5. Report from the Chair
6. Financial Report and adoption of accounts
7. Appointment of Independent Examiner
8. Reports from Director
9. Election of office-bearers:  
    Chair  
    Vice-Chair  
    Hon Secretary  
    Hon Treasurer
10. Reports from Communities
11. Date of next meeting: Sunday 5th October
12. Discussion topic: *Being Jewish in Scotland after the Referendum*
13. AOCB



Scottish Council of  
Jewish Communities

## **Minute of Annual General Meeting**

**9th June 2013**

### **Glasgow Jewish Community Centre**

**Present:** Hilary Rifkind (Chair), Yossi Bodenheim, Ephraim Borowski, Edward Green, Micheline Brannan, Norman Crane, Sharon Levy, Philip Mendelsohn, Paul Morron, Gillian Raab, David Rose, Bill Shackman, Judith Sischy, Paul Spicker.

**In attendance:** Fiona Frank, Linda Martin.

**Apologies:** Edward Isaacs, Neil Livingstone, Nicola Livingston, Frank House, Daniel Clapham.

#### **1. Welcome, sederunt, apologies**

Hilary opened the meeting by thanking Dundee for their hospitality, and in particular Joe Azulay for preparing the barbecue. She welcomed Norman Crane, the new Chair of ELJC, to his first meeting, congratulated Paul Morron on his election as President of the Glasgow Representative Council, and thanked Gillian, Neil, and Sharon, who were standing down as Vice Chair, Hon Treasurer, and Small Communities representative respectively, for all their help and support during their terms of office.

#### **2. Minutes of AGM of 24th June 2012 and Council of 10th March 2013**

The minutes of the AGM had already been approved and were noted. The minutes of the last Council meeting were approved without discussion.

#### **3. Matters arising from minutes**

There were no matters arising.

#### **4. Cooptions and confirmation of membership**

It was noted that Nicola, who was previously a co-optee, was now the representative of the Chaplaincy Board, and that Paul Spicker wishes to step down. The following co-options were then confirmed: Micheline Brannan (Edinburgh); Neil Livingstone (Glasgow); Simon Dover (Glasgow); and Judith Sischy (Edinburgh).

The communal representatives from Glasgow (5), Edinburgh (3), Dundee (1), and Aberdeen (1) would be appointed by the relevant bodies following their AGMs.

#### **5. Report from the Chair**

Hilary referred to her report, which had been posted on the website and circulated in advance. She said there had a huge amount happening to which SCoJeC had to respond, but that since Leah was no longer able to attend meetings, this had fallen almost entirely on Ephraim, and the burden had become increasingly unsustainable. Making a new appointment had been put on hold while the Executive and Council conducted a review of strategy, but now this had concluded that we are doing the right things and doing them well, this would now be addressed as a matter of urgency. Her report was adopted without discussion.

#### **6. Financial Report and adoption of accounts**

In the absence of the Treasurer, Ephraim summarised the highlights of his report. In Financial Year 2012, the Council had almost exactly broken even on its unrestricted funds and the main Scottish Government Equality Fund grant. The balances shown for the various restricted funds arose from the funding being received in one year and expended in another.

In reply to Edward Green, Ephraim said that communal fund-raising was a matter that he had asked the Executive to address; and to Judy that contributions from BEMIS had been ad hoc, but that the Board of Deputies had last year given an undertaking to contribute £2500 per annum. Both would be approached shortly.

The Independent Examiner had approved the accounts without qualification.

The adoption of the accounts was moved by Micheline and Sharon, and agreed *nem con*.

## **7. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Ephraim thanked the current Independent Examiner, Lewis Osborne, for his diligence, and reported that he had indicated his willingness to continue. Hilary and he proposed his reappointment, and this was agreed *nem con*.

## **8. Report from the Director**

Ephraim referred to his report which had been circulated and posted on the website, and noted that this also included a detailed report from Fiona on her Outreach activities.

He thanked the Executive and Council, and particularly Hilary and Neil, for their support, and reiterated what Hilary had said about the urgent need to appoint additional staff. He proposed proceeding to advertise a 2-day per week part-time post, if possible before the summer. In reply to Paul Spicker, Paul Morron said it would provide greater flexibility if the working hours were not specified, and Micheline and Ephraim agreed that flexibility is a requirement of the post, even though part-time. Fiona and Linda added that it is also an advantage to the appointee. In reply to Judy, Ephraim said that the Executive had agreed the need for additional staff, and he was asking this meeting to approve his proposal because of the need to have someone in post for the start of the new session. Paul Spicker said he objected to having the proposal sprung on the meeting, but Paul Morron responded that it was implicit in the strategic discussion at the previous Council. Judy asked that the details of the post be circulated to Council before being advertised, and the proposal to proceed was then agreed with one contrary vote.

Norman Crane said he wished to comment on relations with the Church of Scotland. He said he thought the statement issued by the Director to be intemperate and inappropriate. He thought the Church and Society report appalling, but he had watched a recording of the debate, and at no time had the Assembly rejected dialogue. Meanwhile, through the Edinburgh Interfaith Association, he has arranged a meeting with Sally Foster Fulton and Chris Wigglesworth, which had been very fruitful; they want to learn and have arranged further meetings.

Paul Spicker said he objected to the response to the original report because it strayed beyond SCoJeC's remit, but Ephraim said the statement had been agreed unanimously by the Executive. In reply to Norman, Paul Morron said that he had been present at the Assembly, and had an entirely different impression. Seeing the atmosphere and nonverbal communication gave a more rounded picture. The atmosphere was hostile to the few speakers who spoke of our concerns. Most speeches were political polemic, and dialogue was not central to the debate. He said he was interested that the Church wants to learn; in that case why had they broken off dialogue till the intervention of the CCJ? It's all very well after, but the time for dialogue is before. Part of the Deliverance instructs them to promulgate the report; if they had genuine good faith, they would offer to circulate our concerns in parallel. He pointed out that Norman had said he was also horrified by the report itself, so how could he suggest we say nothing? Business as usual would be wrong message, and it was naïve and dangerous to allow the Church to select one community to talk to rather than community as a whole; dialogue can only be at the national level with the national Church.

Paul Spicker said that what this meeting has to consider is not the position of the Church but of SCoJeC. The view of the Liberals may be different from others', but we have protocols to deal with that. SCoJeC should not speak where that is the case, unless it is agreed to represent the different voices, as we did successfully about sexuality. However in this case, he did not think consensus possible.

Ephraim pointed out that the Assembly had two opportunities to add continuing dialogue to the Deliverance without deleting anything else; it was not true that the alternative was for the report to be rejected. This was not an isolated instance: the Church had responded to complaints about their support for Sizer by simply reproducing his own defence; the issue was super-sessionist theology, not the middle east; they had not responded about planning a second pilgrimage; and they had ignored several requests to discuss the findings of the Being Jewish in Scotland project.

David Rose said he felt used and lied to. He had been shown a draft of the report in February and been told there was no rush to finalise it. He had asked Chief Rabbi David Rosen for comments and forwarded these to Chris Wigglesworth, so he knew that the report was

objectionable, but did not tell Sally Foster Fulton. The Liberals were now being used; the Church was saying “If you won’t speak to me, I’ll speak to Jews who will speak to me.” They cannot be allowed to choose which Jews to speak to; there is no point in SCoJeC if others go ahead and undermine it.

Judy pointed out that there was no disagreement that the Church and Society report is shocking and unacceptable.

Gillian said a lot of the dispute was about interpretation, and it might have been possible to resolve the disagreements in advance if the statement had been circulated to all communities, and not just the Executive; SCoJeC does a wonderful job, but it doesn’t have remit to stop others talking. Ephraim responded that it is sometimes not practicable to consult everyone and then await their responses, amend a statement and then do so again. Paul Morron pointed out that we knew that the media were waiting to interview Sally Foster Fulton immediately after the Assembly.

Ephraim added that the door is not closed to any further dialogue, on this or any of the other matters to which they had not responded; there are other channels such as interfaith activity, local engagement, and the CCJ’s initiatives, but the Church will have to take the first step to undo the damage they have done.

Paul Morron said that the Glasgow Representative Council had found the assistance of Fiona and the interns very helpful, and he particularly welcomed the plans for “Outreach in the cities”. Sharon said he also wanted to thank SCoJeC for all the support they had given the Dundee community.

#### **9. Election of office-bearers:**

The following were proposed, seconded, and elected unopposed:

Chair:	Hilary Rifkind
Vice-Chair:	Micheline Brannan
Hon Secretary:	Nicola Livingston

It was noted that Paul Morron, as President of the Glasgow Rep Council, and the new Chair of the EHC Management Board would be ex officio members of the Executive. It was agreed to ask Frank House to become the representative of small communities.

There was no candidate for Hon Treasurer, but Ephraim said that he and Nicola were in touch with a suitable candidate with both communal and other relevant experience. It was agreed that if he was prepared to be nominated, because of the urgency, the Executive would be asked by e-mail to approve his appointment, and Council informed as soon as possible.

Hilary again thanked Gillian, Neil, and Sharon for their contribution to the work of the Executive, and thanked them for agreeing to continue their involvement in other ways.

Norman asked about the position of the ELJC chair, and Ephraim replied that it was a matter for the Edinburgh community to agree its representation on Council.

#### **10. Reports from Communities**

Paul Spicker commented that SCoJeC has an important function in making Jews in Scotland aware of what’s going on in Scotland.

David Rose said he was concerned about contact with Aberdeen as he is no longer going once a month. Ephraim said that we had tried to arrange AGM there; he was grateful to Sharon for his efforts, but it had proved impossible. Fiona said she was aware of events in Aberdeen, and 4 people came to Limmud. Yossi said he would try to arrange events.

#### **11. AOCB**

Fiona said we are seeking funding to recruit and train communal volunteers, and suggested undertaking a training needs analysis.

#### **12. Date of Next Meetings**

Sunday 29th September (note change)

Sunday 15th December

(venues to be confirmed)



## Minute of Council Meeting

Sunday 23rd March 2014

Jewish Community Centre, Giffnock, G46 6UE

### 1. Welcome, sederunt, apologies

**Present:** Hilary Rifkind (Chair), Micheline Brannan, Walter Hecht, Paul Morron, Raymond Taylor, Philip Mendelsohn, Gillian Raab, Joe Goldblatt, Judith Sischy, Evy Yedd, Ephraim Borowski.

**In attendance:** Nicola Livingston, Linda Martin.

**Apologies:** Frank House, Edward Isaacs, Neil Livingstone, Simon Dover, Edward Green, Fiona Brodie, Fiona Frank, Daniel Clapham.

Hilary welcomed Evy to her first meeting, and Nicola back after her surgery.

The meeting also wished mazaltov to Ranit on the birth of a son, and Leah on the birth of two grandchildren.

Before the formal meeting, Linda gave a presentation about the SCoJeC-CoNNeCT discussion forum, and explained the background of the project, its content, and how to register. Judy said this is an excellent resource, and congratulated those involved in setting it up. Joe agreed, and welcomed the fact that it would include information from individual communities' calendars, etc.

### 2. Minute of Council meeting of 15th December 2013

Adoption of the minute was proposed by Hilary and Raymond, and agreed *nem con*.

### 3. Matters arising from minutes

No matters were raised.

### 4. AOCB

No additional matters were notified.

### 5. Governance and Staffing

**Co-option:** It was noted that the Executive's proposal to co-opt Evy Yedd had been circulated to Council by e-mail, and there had been no dissent. The meeting unanimously approved this decision.

**Staffing:** Paul reported that the Glasgow Representative Council had appointed a new administrator, and was discussing whether she might be able to take on tasks for other bodies including SCoJeC.

### 6. Finance

**2013 Annual Accounts:** Walter spoke to the circulated income and expenditure account for 2013. He said the independently examined accounts will be finalised shortly, after some adjustments, mainly in order to charge a proportion of central costs to restricted funds.

He noted the pattern of overspending grants, and said this needs to be controlled, along with Head Office costs. The overall deficit was a matter for concern, especially as the accounts did not yet reflect the full cost of employing Nicola.

Paul again commented on the fact that the accounts do not reflect the true situation because the CEO is unpaid.

**2014 Budget:** Ephraim noted that the Executive had agreed to discontinue *Update* as a separate publication, and instead use the back page of the Rosh HaShanah *Four Corners* for an annual report. He also said the success of the targeted fund-raising for the photography project was something we should emulate for core costs.

## **7. Parliament and Government**

**Consultations:** It was agreed that we should again submit a single cross-communal response to the Health and Sport Committee's call for evidence on **Margo Macdonald's Assisted Suicide Bill**, reflecting the differences of opinion on this matter.

**Death Certification:** Ephraim commented on the sympathetic response his paper had received from the Chair of the National Advisory Group and the new Senior Medical Reviewer, and drew attention to the key points on which improvements were now being proposed. This was unanimously welcomed as a significant achievement.

**Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill:** There was a brief discussion of the significance of whether or not kashrut supervisors would be exempted from the Equality legislation as religious functionaries.

**Hate Crime:** In reply to Judy, Nicola said that the proposed extension of the *Being Jewish in Scotland* project was in order to be able to include new information that Fiona reports from almost every event she arranges.

**Police:** Judy congratulated Ephraim on his appointment as Chair of the new Police Scotland National Independent Strategic Advisory Group (NISAG). In reply to her question he said it was a personal appointment, but undoubtedly reflected his experience of diversity policy principally in SCoJeC and Bemis.

## **8. Interfaith and Community Relations**

**Church of Scotland:** The improvement in our relationship was welcomed, although their prevarication about the arrangements for their own forthcoming interfaith discussion about proposals for a written constitution was noted. In reply to Gillian, Nicola said that it had emerged that the paper for this meeting had been produced by the Church and Society Council. Ephraim reiterated that it is for individual faith communities to determine who is appropriate to represent them, and said that he and Nicola would attend this meeting, but not the immediately following "Faith Leaders" meeting.

**CCJ:** Paul expressed concern about David Gifford's continuing efforts to set up an ecumenical "Scotland forum": they can consistently failed to respond to direct questions about its purpose and membership; it had originally been mooted when relations with the Church of Scotland had broken down, but was no longer appropriate now that direct contact had resumed; the proposed dates had repeatedly ignored Chaggim; and it now seemed that they were attempting to dictate the membership of the group in a way that ignored significant interests on the Jewish side. He and Ephraim would respond to the latest flurry of e-mails.

**Edinburgh Inter-Faith Association:** Concern was expressed at a number of initiatives emanating from the General Secretary of EIFA. Joe welcomed the fact that we are monitoring this and responding. Judy suggested taking this up with the Church of Scotland, and that ideally we should be able to call on an appropriate scholar to respond. Ephraim said he was in touch with a former CoS official who could advise and that Jewish members of EIFA should raise the matter internally.

**Inter-Faith Scotland:** Raymond said that David Rose's resignation from the Executive of IFS and as Prison Chaplain was a symptom of his long-standing view that SCoJeC should pay EHC for his time. Ephraim commented that irrespective of that, it had often been unclear in what capacity he was attending meetings, and that seemed to remain the case despite his resignation.

## **9. Projects**

**Outreach:** Fiona's detailed report was commended.

**YaCHaS:** After a brief discussion, it was agreed that we should not seek to impose any particular standard of kashrut on events that we are merely supporting, although we should ask organisers to ensure that all participants will feel comfortable with the arrangements; however if SCoJeC is hosting an event then only approved food would be served.

## **10. Other Matters**

The remainder of the circulated report was noted without discussion.

## **11. Dates of next meeting**

The AGM will be on Sunday 8th June in either Dundee or Glasgow.

Judy asked for papers to be circulated in better time before the meeting.