



Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities

Annual General Meeting

Sunday 14th June 2015 at 1.45 pm

at the Aberdeen Hebrew Congregation, 74 Dee St, AB11 6DS

Lunch will be available from 1pm.

Agenda:

1. Welcome, sederunt, apologies
2. Minutes of AGM of 29th June 2014 and Council of 22nd March 2015
3. Matters arising from minutes
4. Amendment to the Constitution proposed by Executive (see next page)
5. Cooptions and confirmation of membership:
Itamar Nitzan has been elected to represent Israelis in Scotland.
Micheline Brannan (Edinburgh) Fiona Brodie (Glasgow)
Howard Gordon (Glasgow) Edward Green (Edinburgh)
Walter Hecht (Glasgow) Judith Sischy (Edinburgh)
6. Report from the Chair
7. Financial Report and adoption of accounts
8. Appointment of Independent Examiner
9. Reports from Director
10. Election of office-bearers:
Chair, Vice-Chair, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer
11. Reports from Communities
12. Date of next meeting: Sunday 20th September (Glasgow)
13. AOCB

The AGM will be followed at 3.30 by a meeting with Police Scotland.

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

4) Amendments to the Constitution

1. Title and constitution

Amend

a. The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities ("the Council") shall be constituted by the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, the Aberdeen Hebrew Congregation, the Dundee Hebrew Congregation, the Jewish Network of Argyll and Highlands, and such other Jewish communities or congregations as may from time to time exist in Scotland, together with the body representative of Jewish Students in Scotland.

to

a. The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities ("the Council") shall be constituted by the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, the Edinburgh Jewish community, the Aberdeen Hebrew Congregation, the Tayside and Fife Jewish Community, and such other Jewish communities as may from time to time exist in Scotland.

3. Membership

Amend

a. The membership of the Council shall be:

- i. the President and two other members of the Management Committee of the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, and two other persons representative of the Jewish Community of Glasgow and west central Scotland;
- ii. the Chairman of the Board of Management of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation and two other persons representative of the Jewish community of Edinburgh and the Lothians;
- iii. one representative of each of the Jewish Communities of Aberdeen, Dundee, and Argyll and Bute, and such other Jewish communities or congregations in Scotland as may from time to time be properly constituted;
- iv. one representative of the Northern Region of the Union of Jewish Students, who shall be a matriculated student of a Scottish institution of Higher Education;

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- ii. the Chairman of the Board of Management of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation and two other persons representative of the Jewish community in Edinburgh and the Lothians;
- iii. one representative of each of the Jewish communities of Aberdeen, Tayside and Fife, and such other Jewish communities in Scotland as may from time to time be formally constituted;
- iv. one representative member of each of the other organisations or groups of Jewish people in Scotland listed in Schedule A.

Schedule A:

The following organisations or groups of Jewish people in Scotland shall each be entitled to appoint one voting representative of Council:

- Jewish students studying at an institution of higher education in Scotland;
- the Jewish network of the Highlands and Islands;
- Jewish people of Israeli origin or citizenship living in Scotland.

Notwithstanding (7a) above, this list may be amended by a simple majority of Council.



Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities

Minute of Annual General Meeting
Sunday 29th June 2014
Jewish Community Centre, Giffnock

Present: Hilary Rifkind (Chair), Walter Hecht, Paul Morron, Philip Mendelsohn, Gillian Raab, Evy Yedd, Fiona Brodie, Chrissie Nyssen, Ephraim Borowski, Nicola Livingston, Sharon Mail, Alan Kay, Derek Livingston.

Apologies: Micheline Brannan, Raymond Taylor, Frank House, Paul Spicker, Judy Sischy, Edward Green, Neil Livingstone, Joe Goldblatt, Fiona Frank, Daniel Clapham, Linda Martin.

1. Welcome, sederunt, apologies

Hilary opened the meeting by congratulating Micheline on being elected Convener of Bemis in succession to Ephraim, and Neil on being elected Vice-President of the Glasgow Jewish Representative Council.

2. Minutes of AGM of 9th June 2013 and Council of 23th March 2014

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

3. Matters arising from minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Cooptions and confirmation of membership

It was noted that Simon, who was previously a co-optee, was now the representative of the Chaplaincy Board, and that Fiona Brodie has been nominated by the Glasgow Rep Council. The following co-options were then confirmed: Micheline Brannan (Edinburgh); Edward Green (Edinburgh); Neil Livingstone (Glasgow); Judith Sischy (Edinburgh); and Evy Yedd (Glasgow).

5. Report from the Chair

Hilary referred to her report, which had been posted on the website and circulated in advance. She referred to the "mind-blowing amount" of work that had been done, as listed in the other reports, all of which had all been achieved with very slender resources. She expressed enormous thanks to Ephraim, Leah, Nicola, Fiona Frank, and all the others who had supported them.

Her report was adopted without discussion, save a suggestion that in future the reports should include a list of publications.

6. Financial Report and adoption of accounts

Walter summarised the main points of his report and said that the Independent Examiner had approved the accounts without qualification.

In Financial Year 2013, the Council had almost exactly broken even on its unrestricted funds, but this belied the volume of work done, much of it on a voluntary basis. There was a significant deficit on the Equality Fund grant, but the balances shown for the other restricted funds arose from the funding being received in one year and expended in another.

He pointed out that many communal organisations were benefitting from SCoJeC, but were not contributing. Recently Ephraim had been successful in obtaining contributions from 3 organisations – it was an easy sell, and we need to do more. We also need to plan on the basis of funding the work that Ephraim does for nothing.

Neil agreed and said that both the Community and the public come to us for answers, but expect them for nothing; he suggested we should always slip into responses that our services are not funded. Ephraim added that the community takes these successes for granted, and so does not value them. Simon suggested charging for services such as PVG checks (“Disclosure”), but Ephraim said that would increase the risk that organisations would not comply, with a consequent risk to the good name of the Community, and Paul said that this would not yield significant amounts.

Neil added that we had been very successful in raising funds for specific projects; what we need is more funding for core activities, but funders do not support that. In reply to Simon, Ephraim said that we include overhead costs in grant applications where permitted, and Walter said the accepted figure is 7.5%.

Paul said that the biggest structural problem is that everything depends on Ephraim working for nothing, although Nicola pointed out that we now include a notional salary in grant applications.

Ephraim pointed out that the present Equality Fund grant ends in March, and there was no guarantee either that the Fund would be continued, or if so, that we would receive a grant. In reply to Fiona, he said that we need to consider opportunities for sponsorship, cast the net wider for donors for specific projects, and approach communal organisations who benefit. However, there was some skepticism about whether the welfare organisations, which are the largest, would contribute.

Paul said that the Referendum adds to the uncertainty, but whatever the result, we should look to the Board of Deputies and JLC for a level of support appropriate for the work that they would otherwise have to do in Scotland. Philip said that this discussion was premature, and Ephraim said that he would expect to raise these issues with the Board once the result is known.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Gillian and Paul, 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. It was noted, however, that he had held this position since the Council was established, and Paul said it is good practice to change auditor from time to time. It was agreed therefore to remit this matter to the Executive.

8. Reports from Director

Ephraim spoke to a number of key points in his circulated report, and drew attention to the LEAP report on the Equality Fund grant, and said this gave a good idea of the detail of our activities that his own report covered largely in generalities; parts of this had been substantially revised by Nicola, which would establish an excellent foundation for future funding applications. He reiterated his thanks to all the staff and Executive and Council for his support. He said he was not the only one who contributes in kind: Leah continues to fit more into every day than most people do in a week, and Fiona and Nicola also contribute far more than we are able to pay for.

Simon suggested the LEAP report be posted on the public web-site, but on balance it was agreed that this would be unwise as it has to include frank assessments of risks and challenges.

Alan referred to the Inter-Faith Scotland guide to faith communities, and suggested that SCoJeC be listed as the only Jewish contact, so that enquiries could be directed appropriately.

Paul commended the paper by Ephraim and Leah on the Independence Referendum that had been published by the JLC and was included in the AGM papers.

9. Election of office-bearers:

The following were proposed, seconded, and elected unopposed:

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

Walter said he did not feel able to devote as much time to the treasurership as it deserves, and would like to step down, but would remain in post pro tem while a successor is sought. It was agreed that this be remitted to the Executive.

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

10. Reports from Communities

EHC (Hilary on behalf of Raymond Taylor):

The highlight of the year was the visit of the new Chief Rabbi to the Community.

The annual Civic Service, Holocaust Memorial Day, and Yom Ha'Shoah are important occasions, and were attended by the Lord and Lady Provost, who showed genuine delight at being there and also visited the Lunch Club during Chanukah.

Much time has been spent on completing the requirements to become a SCIO, and this finally happened on 7th May. The property has now been transferred, and after many discussions with the Bank the financial transfer is almost complete.

The shul building required new cookers and a new boiler in order to meet current standards, and the community has agreed to sell the house currently occupied by the rabbi.

The Cheder continues to do well.

Sukkat Shalom (Gillian)

There have been 2 weddings in June, the Cheder flourishing, with 8 new children, and a new portable Ark will be presented at the 10th Anniversary service on 12th September.

Aberdeen (Chrissie):

The recent AGM had resulted in the first change of office-bearers for several years: Yonni Shoshan is now President, and Chrissie is Treasurer.

Renovations of the building have exhausted resources. The basement is now let out.

Numbers are small, but there is a minyan for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, and the shul was crowded for the two recent bar mitzvahs.

Nicola said the Jewish Student Society had just reformed, and suggested inviting the Chaplain to arrange joint events.

Glasgow (Paul):

This is the Rep Council's centenary year, and Paul distributed a commemorative brochure and the Council Year Book. A Civic Dinner is being planned at the City Chambers in November.

There had been large attendances at the JNF Question Time and a hustings meeting.

An increasing amount of work is related to Israel: the Council arranged a public meeting at which Humza Yousaf gave some important public commitments; a joint group has been established with Glasgow Presbytery to look at the General Assembly document.

The West of Scotland CCJ marked the centenary of the Council with a meeting in Giffnock addressed by the immediate past Moderator.

The Council is developing a relationship with the Central Mosque with reciprocal visits, and has now set up 3 working parties.

There is a modernisation agenda: next year they plan to become a SCIO, and are setting up action groups to get more people involved, but as well as volunteers, they need a staffing structure and training.

Paul thanked SCoJeC for its support, especially with interfaith work and social media, and added that SCoJeC needs a strong Glasgow base: the Community has lost 1000 people in the last decade, and needs support.

Alan drew attention to the Inter-Faith Scotland reception (with kosher food) on 20 July.

Chaplaincy (Nicola):

Yossi has completed his second year as chaplain, building successfully on his first year, and will be returning for a third. Thereafter the possibility of splitting the post between East and West coast is again being discussed.

As anticipated, an increasing number of young people are staying in Scotland to study, but spread across more universities. This first year has seen the first cohort of graduates who stayed in Scotland, but it is too early to tell whether they will be more involved. There is also a trend for other graduates to come back because they can't get jobs, or can't afford to live elsewhere. Chaplaincy is trying to create conduit to that generation.

Tayside and Fife:

Ephraim reported that Dundee had now successfully changed its name and converted to a SCIO. Its constitution provides for an "independent trustee", and he was invited to take that position. There had been some internal issues but there was some interest in developing an East Coast structure.

Paul commented that this is workable – there could be a single person serving the communities and students on East coast – and noted that the Board is also moving to consider local clusters. Hilary added that this would be an ideal model.

11. Date of next meeting:

The proposal of Sunday 5th October was agreed; Edinburgh if possible.

12. Discussion topic: *Being Jewish in Scotland after the Referendum*

It was agreed to defer this discussion until after the Referendum.

13. AOCB

Nicola mentioned that it had been some time since there had been a community briefing as there had been little relevant new legislation; however it might now be appropriate in the autumn.

Fiona said that discussions were under way with the Church of Scotland about a joint conference around social welfare arising from out *Being Jewish in Scotland* report and their document on One Scotland. In this way dialogue had been resumed after the difficulties caused by their adoption of the *Inheritance of Abraham* document.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chair proposed by Paul.