

Annual General Meeting
Sunday 28th June 2020 at 3.00 pm
by Zoom

The AGM will be preceded at 2.00 pm by a discussion led by Stephen Bush, Political Editor of the New Statesman, who has been appointed by the Board of Deputies to chair a new Commission on Racial Inclusivity in the Jewish Community.

This is SCoJeC's contribution to the (virtual) Great Get Together in memory of Jo Cox MP.

The Zoom "waiting room" will be open from 1.45pm.

Agenda:

1. Welcome, sederunt, apologies
2. Minutes of AGM of 2 June 2019 (attached)
3. Matters arising from minutes
4. Cooptions and confirmation of membership
5. Report from the Chair
6. Financial Report and adoption of accounts (circulated)
7. Appointment of Independent Examiner
8. Reports from Director
9. Election of office-bearers
10. Dates of next meetings:
 - Sunday 30 August in Aberdeen.
 - Sunday 13 December (with Chanukah party) – venue tbc.
11. AOCB



Sederunt: Micheline Brannan (Chair), Danielle Bett, Ephraim Borowski, Hilary Franklin, Philip Mendelsohn, Gillian Raab, Mark Robertson, Paul Spicker, Mark Taylor, Evy Yedd.

Observers: Paul Edlin, Sarah Bronzite, Ehud Reiter, Evan Harrow, Naomi Jacobs, Liz Byrne, Debby Taylor, Daniel Franklin.

Apologies: Fiona Brodie, John Danzig, Simon Dover, Fiona Frank, Joanne Gabbay, Joe Goldblatt, Edward Green, Frank House, Carol Levstein, Nicola Livingston, Henry Lovat, Linda Martin, Hilary Rifkind, David Rose.

Guest speaker: Barney Crockett, Lord Provost of Aberdeen

After a brief introduction Lord Provost Crockett took questions and discussion, covering the local economic climate, intimidation of Jewish and Israeli businesses, relations with the Labour party, policing of demonstrations, community relations and interfaith activity, planning and building security, and the history of the Scottish community. He agreed to push for the adoption of the internationally accepted (“IHRA”) definition of antisemitism by Aberdeen City Council.

1. Minutes

Adoption of the minutes of the AGM of 10 June 2018 was proposed by Paul Spicker and Danielle Bett, and of Council of 7 April 2019 by Mark Robertson and Hilary Franklin. Both were approved without dissent.

2. Matters arising from minutes

Referring to the inauguration of the new facility in St Andrews following the previous meeting, Paul noted the closure of the Dundee synagogue with ceremony that evening. He said there had been a shul in Dundee since the 1880s, and the building dated to the 1970s, but it could no longer pay its way and would be sold. Activities would move to St Andrews, but it would not be possible to purchase new premises, so its artifacts were being donated to other communities. Paul commented that most local Jewish people would not have met had there not been a building, but that communities are changing and now it is through networks like SCoJeC that people meet. Micheline replied that that raises general issues that we should discuss at a future meeting, and the meeting joined her in wishing the community well for the future.

3. Cooptions and confirmation of membership:

It was noted that a number of communities might change their representation on Council following AGMs in June, and it was therefore agreed that the present coptions should stand and be revisited at the next meeting.

Paul Edlin suggested that only the nominated members should be eligible to be elected as office-bearers. Micheline said he could raise this point at a future meeting.

4. Report from the Chair

Micheline spoke to her circulated report. She said that SCoJeC's team is large and growing, and she thanked everyone for their support. We work closely with the Glasgow Rep Council, and the relationship has never been so good, and having Danielle as part of the mix has greatly increased what we are able to achieve. She said she felt generally positive as a result of the Scottish Government and Education Scotland distancing themselves from the proposed "Israel/Palestine teaching resource", and the Church of Scotland rejecting boycotts and adopting the international definition of antisemitism. Micheline thanked Ephraim for all he continues to do for SCoJeC in a voluntary capacity, Leah for all the various tasks she undertakes, from producing daily and weekly briefings to responding to huge numbers of miscellaneous enquiries, Fiona and Joanne and their team for delivering so many successful events, the volunteers who represent Judaism in schools, and our Executive and Council members for their support.

5. Financial Report and adoption of accounts (circulated)

Ephraim spoke briefly to the circulated approved accounts and the current financial report, and highlighted that the strategy outlined at the previous AGM had been successful – we had to reduce some activities, but succeeded in breaking even in 2018, and were on target to do so again. He thanked Glasgow Jewish Community Trust and Netherlee and Clarkston Trust for their generosity, and Micheline for raising funds from individual donors. We had also been more successful in collecting donations from participants in events. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Evy Yedd and Philip Mendelsohn, and agreed without dissent.

6. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Micheline and Ephraim proposed the reappointment of Lewis Osborne and this was agreed *nem con*.

7. Reports from Director

Ephraim referred to the circulated reports and reiterated his thanks to all who support SCoJeC, and through it the entire Jewish Community of Scotland, and in particular Leah, Fiona and Joanne, Danielle, and the growing band of volunteers.

Mark Taylor asked if there are too many representative orgs. Micheline explained the background and said that Henry Lovat had been asked to consider how the community is represented; his conclusion was that while the status quo is not perfect, there is no reason to think any alternative would work better. Ephraim added that SCoJeC and the Glasgow Rep Council are the only umbrella organisations, and they have different focus, and each has significant brand recognition in its own sphere that it would be unwise to risk losing.

Paul Spicker said SCoJeC is not only about representation, but also supporting and connecting Jewish life in Scotland. Most of Jewish life in Britain is locked into an old model that no longer reflects reality. We need networks to support small and ailing communities and make it possible to live a Jewish life wherever people are, and SCoJeC has taken huge steps in that direction.

Paul Edlin said the Board of Deputies is trying to encourage larger communities to support small, but we can't avoid facts of economic life. He said he can only praise SCoJeC for all

it does, and looks to working more closely together during his term as President of the Glasgow Rep Council. Paul Spicker responded that the obstacle is not economic, but a structure that concentrates resources on where people once were. What is needed is a reorganisation of community life; instead of talking about “small communities” we should recognise that SCoJeC *is* the community.

Mark Taylor said that buildings do provide a focus. He said that the Glasgow community had been very generous to Aberdeen, and asked what could be done to assist Inverness, where there may be more Jewish people. Mark Robertson commented that the history of redistributionism did not provide a very good model! Gillian Raab said that buildings can also be a liability – too much effort can go into the building, and not enough into people. She added that what Paul Spicker had described is exactly what SCoJeC has been doing – and yet some people criticise us for that.

Debby Taylor added that the Student Chaplains travel round the country and so could be a resource to support isolated groups and individuals. Ephraim responded that SCoJeC provides funding to the Chaplaincy Board with that intention.

Paul Edlin asked how do we reach out to Israelis and other groups, and Danielle said that Israelis are now recognised as a cultural minority in Scotland; SICA is not a political organisation, and has support from Bemis. SCoJeC is also engaged with other equality groups across all sectors.

Micheline thanked everyone who had spoken. and said the discussion had yielded a pool of very positive ideas that we could discuss further.

8. Election of office-bearers

Mark Robertson proposed the re-election of the existing office-bearers en bloc, and the following were elected unopposed:

Chair: Micheline Brannan
Vice-Chair: Fiona Brodie
Secretary: Simon Dover
Treasurer: Philip Mendelsohn

9. Dates of next Council meetings:

Sunday 8th September (SCoJeC's 20th anniversary) – Glasgow
Sunday 1st December – Edinburgh

10. AOCB

There being no other business, the formal meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

The meeting was followed by an informal discussion with members of the Aberdeen Community, and a number of members then travelled to Dundee for a short ceremony to mark the closure of Dundee Synagogue.