

**Scottish Council of Jewish Communities AGM  
Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, 26 November 2006**

**Present:** Ephraim Borowski, Daniel Clapham, Kenneth Collins, John Cosgrove (chair), Gerald Gordon, Frank House, Philip Mason, Sharon Schlesinger, Raymond Taylor, Paul Spicker, Diane Wolfson

**In attendance:** Leah Granat

**Observers:** approx. 20 members of the community.

**Apologies:** Paul Edlin, Stephen Kliner, Philip Mendelsohn, Hilary Rifkind

**1. Welcome**

Mr Cosgrove welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Minute of the AGM of 4 December 2005**

The Minute was proposed by Dr Collins and seconded by Mrs Wolfson.

**3. Matters Arising**

Mrs Wolfson informed the meeting that the Youth Fund is still open for applications.

**4. Co-options**

It was agreed that Mr Cosgrove, Mr Clapham, Mr Malcolm Livingston, Sir Gerald Gordon and Mrs Wolfson should continue as co-opted members of the Scottish Council, *Proposed by Dr Collins and seconded by Mr House.*

**5. Constitutional Amendment**

Mr Borowski informed the meeting that the proposed change to the constitution was not substantive but was required due to changes in the management structure of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation.

*Proposed by Mr Cosgrove, seconded by Prof Spicker and carried unanimously.*

**6. Chairman's Report**

Mr Cosgrove thanked Mr Borowski and Mrs Granat for their work on behalf of the Scottish Council.

*The adoption of the Chairman's report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, was proposed by Dr Collins who also thanked Mr Cosgrove for his work as Chair during the past year.*

## **7. Director's and Public Affairs Officer's Reports**

Mr Borowski and Mrs Granat invited questions on their reports which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

- The necessity of raising the profile of the Scottish Council was discussed. Despite regular front page reports in the Jewish Telegraph many people in the community remain unaware of the Scottish Council and its activities. Similarly, the Board of Deputies appears unaware of the range and scope of work being done in Scotland.
- Prof Spicker expressed his appreciation for the work of the Scottish Council in supporting the smaller communities. Initiatives such as Four Corners, the redevelopment of the website and the staging of events in Dundee and elsewhere play a significant role in integrating people into the community.
- Concern was expressed about recent antisemitic contributions to the Scotsman blog which use 'Zionist' as a euphemism for 'Jew'. In particular there were a number of unpleasant entries in relation to advertising of the recent Lyceum production of *A Merchant of Venice*. Mr Borowski informed the meeting that the PPC has said they are now able to accept complaints about newspaper blogs.
- The Management Team thanked Mrs Granat for her work which generally exceeds her contracted hours.

*The adoption of the Director's and Public Affairs Officer's Reports was proposed by Prof Spicker and seconded by Dr Mason.*

## **8. Treasurer's Report**

Mr Clapham apologised for having omitted to thank GJRC for their donation to the Scottish Council, and invited questions on his report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Mr Clapham informed the meeting that there have been anxieties about cashflow during the past year but he anticipated that the Scottish Council would break even by the end of 2006.

Mr Cosgrove informed the meeting that Edward Green has agreed to advise the Scottish Council about fundraising.

*The accounts were proposed by Dr Collins and seconded by Mrs Wolfson.  
It was agreed that Lewis Osborne should be asked to continue as auditor.*

## 9. Election of Office Bearers

Chair: John Cosgrove *proposed by Mr Clapham and seconded by Mrs Schlesinger*  
(Mr Cosgrove indicated his desire not to stand for re-election but was persuaded to remain as chairman until April 2007.)

Vice-Chairs: Kenneth Collins (GJRC)

Hilary Rifkind (EHC)

Frank House (JNAH)

Secretary: Paul Spicker *proposed by Mr Clapham and seconded by Dr Mason*

Treasurer: Daniel Clapham *proposed by Mr Cosgrove and seconded by Mr Taylor*

## 10. AOCB

There was no AOCB.

## 11. Reports from Communities

### ELJC: Mrs Catherine Lyons

- Membership is increasing with an age range from 6 months to 90 years old.
- The community has an active education programme with many different groups meeting each month.
- Foster Rabbi Mark Solomon visits 6-weekly.

### Dundee: Prof Spicker

- The community is lurching from crisis to crisis; recent incidents include a leaking roof and a burst water main. However, there are many positive areas including:
- The monthly Shabbat service continues, and High Holy Day services this year had an attendance of 30+
- As mentioned earlier, the events held by the Scottish Council are very important to the community.
- Rabbi Rose has begun to visit on a regular basis.

### JNAH: Mr House

- Social networking is very important.
- Visitors to Gairloch will be very welcome and may even get a cup of tea!

### Aberdeen: Rabbi David Rose

- Rabbi Rose visits regularly.
- There are regular communal Shabbat meals.
- Last year's Chanukah meeting and the Shabbaton in March were very successful, as was the Purim party and megillah reading at the University of Aberdeen.

### **Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation: Dr Mason**

- EHC is actively developing stronger links with both Dundee and Aberdeen communities.
  - Rabbi Rose regularly visits both communities.
  - Young people from both communities will be invited to a weekend event being planned by EHC education committee.
- Thanks to Rabbi Rose and Rose Orgel for their work in Edinburgh Interfaith Association.
- Thanks to the Scottish Council for their valuable work.

### **Glasgow: Dr Collins**

- Despite being the largest Scottish community, Glasgow is not without challenges such as those due to demographic change.
- GJRC is engaged in interfaith activity; Mrs Wolfson is the Convener of the Scottish Inter Faith Council.
- Jewish Care and Calderwood Lodge both work in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council.
- The Chief Rabbi recently gave a lecture in memory of Judith Tankel.
- The situation in Israel over the summer has affected the community. Dr Collins gave a number of media interviews and was at pains to point out that
  - the Scottish Jewish community is not a representative of the Israeli government,
  - the community is concerned at the increase in antisemitic incidents attributable to the situation in the Middle East.

### **12. Guest speaker, the Very Reverend Finlay Macdonald**

Mr Cosgrove welcomed the Very Reverend Finlay Macdonald, Principal Clerk to the Church of Scotland. During his Moderatorial year, 2002-3, he led a multifaith delegation to the EU in Brussels which included Mr Borowski and Mr Kliner.

(The text of the Very Reverend Finlay Macdonald's speech is available online at [http://www.j-scot.org.uk/Events/06xi\\_AGM/06xi26\\_Finlay\\_Macdonald\\_speech.pdf](http://www.j-scot.org.uk/Events/06xi_AGM/06xi26_Finlay_Macdonald_speech.pdf) )

Dr Collins thanked the Very Reverend Finlay Macdonald and expressed the hope that our communities will continue in sympathetic discussion for many years to come.

-----

The AGM was followed by an excellent lunch, hosted by John and Hazel Cosgrove in celebration of John's retirement. Ephraim Borowski thanked them for their generosity, and everyone joined in giving particular thanks to Irene Mason for taking charge of the catering.