

Annual General Meeting
Sunday 2nd June 2019 at 1.00 pm
at Aberdeen Synagogue, 74 Dee St, Aberdeen AB11 6DS

A light lunch will be available from 12.30 pm.

Agenda:

Guest speaker: Barney Crockett, Lord Provost of Aberdeen

1. Welcome, sederunt, apologies
2. Minutes of AGM of 10 June 2018 and Council of 7 April 2019 (attached)
3. Matters arising from minutes
4. Cooptions and confirmation of membership:

Micheline Brannan (Glasgow)	Debby Taylor (Aberdeen)
Joe Goldblatt (Edinburgh)	Carol Levstein (Edinburgh)
Henry Lovat (Glasgow)	Stephen Silver (Glasgow)
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 Council meetings:

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

The meeting will be followed by a discussion with members of the Aberdeen Community.

*There will also be short event to mark the closure of Dundee Synagogue at 5.30 pm.
Transport will be available to the synagogue, St Mary Place, Dundee, DD1 5RB*

1. Sederunt: Micheline Brannan (Chair), Nicola Livingston, Evy Yedd, Raymond Taylor, Hilary Rifkind, Simon Dover, Alan Kay, Danielle Bett, Henry Lovat, Ephraim Borowski

Observers: Alan Anderson, Margalit Borowski

Apologies: Fiona Brodie, John Danzig, Debby Taylor, Gillian Raab, Fiona Frank, Joanne Gabbay, Frank House, Stephen Silver, Linda Martin, Judy Sischy.

Welcome: Micheline welcomed Marie van der Zyl, who was recently elected President of the Board of Deputies, and Sabir Zazai, the new Chief Executive of the Scottish Refugee Council.

Marie expressed appreciation of all the work done by SCoJeC, and especially by Micheline and Ephraim. She said London has a lot to learn from the rest of the country, especially Scotland – a dynamic community with a lot to offer. At her meeting with the First Minister she will emphasise the needs of the Jewish Community, call on the FM to express more warmth to Israel, recognise the effects of extreme pro-Palestine activity, and thank her for adopting the international definition of antisemitism.

Marie spoke about antisemitism in the Labour Party and the successful Board/JLC campaign, but noted there is more to be done. She referred to a number of other concerns, including the North London Coroner's (failed) attempt to impose a "cab rank rule", attacks on Milah in Iceland and Denmark, the Board's briefings for local councillors, and the need to promote a sympathetic view of Israel. The Board has also been visiting mosques and participating in the dialogue with the Church of Scotland. She also referred to the Board's role in authorising Secretaries for Marriages, and expressed pride in the success of Jewish schools. Marie promised "to be a President for the whole community", and to work with the regional Representative Councils, SCoJeC, and JLC.

Nicola asked about the seminars for Councillors and commented that issues in Scotland are different. Marie replied that these are held on a regional basis. Ephraim added that many of the topics that Marie had mentioned, such as Coroners and Secretaries for Marriages, did not apply in Scotland, which is why it is important for the Scottish Community to speak to Scottish politicians in Scottish terms. Henry asked how the relationship between SCoJeC and the Board is structured in practice and suggested that there could be a small standing committee to coordinate activities. Marie suggested that agreed spheres of influence could be set out in a formal document, and Henry suggested that that should reflect the distinction between Devolved and Reserved issues in the Scotland Act.

Marie said the Board is actively pursuing interfaith activities and building relationships, including with the Muslim community over common interests. The Board successfully lobbied MPs over an attempt by Lancashire to ban on non-stunned meat which would have mainly affected Muslims. She added that another of her priorities is the "Invest in Peace" initiative.

Sabir Zazai then addressed the meeting. He thanked Ephraim for inviting him and said he looked forward to working together as part of Refugee Festival Scotland.

Sabir began by describing his own journey. He was born in Afghanistan shortly after the Soviet invasion. Kabul had missed much of the conflict, but he could hear the bombing, which his parents had told him was a noisy wedding. His family were forced to leave and were internally displaced, moving to Jalalabad with 100 000 other refugees, living there for ten years with inadequate water and food. Because the Taliban expected people like him to join them, his parents decided to send him abroad; he eventually arrived in a lorry at Dover. Under the new policy of dispersal he was told he was being sent to Coventry, and didn't understand why the Home Office officials laughed when they said that. He hadn't known what to expect – coming from a monoculture, he expected a Christian city, but found it very multicultural, with programmes around Cathedral to promote reconciliation. He lived there for 20 years. He had worked with the Voluntary Services Council and even became a member of the Cathedral Council, and had not planned to move, but he saw Scotland as a place of hope, welcome, and hospitality that fosters connections between faiths and communities; Scotland has strategy for integration, when England doesn't.

In summary, Sabir said he took three messages from his journey and his work: putting understanding and forgiveness into practice; welcoming diversity, sharing and working together; and working across faiths to tackle antisemitism and islamophobia.

Sabir agreed with Ephraim that there is a very different sense of “multiculturalism” in Scotland; some people are uneasy with it in England, but that is not a problem in Scotland although it is not perfect and we are still on a journey.

Micheline then thanked both speakers and wished Sabir an Eid Mubarak.

2. Minutes of AGM of 11 June 2017 and Council of 11 March 2018 (circulated)

Adoption of the minutes was proposed by Simon and Evy, and they were approved *nem con*.

3. Matters arising from minutes

No matters were raised.

4. Cooptions and confirmation of membership:

The following cooptions were approved *nem con*:

Micheline Brannan (Glasgow)	Frank House (Highlands)
Joe Goldblatt (Edinburgh)	Henry Lovat (Glasgow)
Carol Levstein (Edinburgh)	Stephen Silver (Glasgow)

Ephraim reported that Debby Taylor (Aberdeen) wished to stand down, and Aberdeen would now be represented by Mark Taylor. The meeting unanimously agreed to record its appreciation of all Debby's work on front line over many years, culminating with the triumphant reopening of the shul the previous month.

5. Report from the Chair

Micheline said SCoJeC is continuing to do surprisingly well given its minimal resources and how these are distributed. She instructed Ephraim to record thanks to Ephraim for the immense workload he takes on; to Leah for undertaking all the grind, including managing the website, drafting consultation responses, MEMO, PAD, etc, which all depend on her huge appetite for detail; to Hilary for managing PVG in a voluntary capacity; to Fiona, currently on sabbatical, for planning wonderful events; to Joanne and the three new volunteers as well as

Margalit, Debby, and Joe, who now visit schools; and to Lea Balint and Melissa Eisenberg (who has recently taken over from Shayna Conn) for their help with events.

Micheline welcomed Danielle to her first AGM since taking up the JLC post, and said she is getting to know the Community and the organisations we interact with. She also thanked Evy, Nicola, and Orli for the excellent relationship that we now have with the Glasgow Rep Council. Evy responded that the relationship is working well in both directions.

Micheline also thanked the Communal Trusts – Pears, Netherlee and Clarkston, and the Community Trust – who make our education and outreach activities possible. She was also pleased to note that her appeal letter circulated with previous issue of *Four Corners* had raised around £2000.

However, she expressed concern at the level of hostility in some quarters that can spill over into antisemitism.

Alan asked whether there was any sign of the Board of Deputies renewing financial support. Evy commented that the relationship appeared to be improving; Alan replied that cooperation works both ways, and Evy agreed that the Board should consult before doing anything on this side of the border. Henry reiterated his suggestion for a formal Memorandum of Understanding, and Ephraim reported that he had a positive discussion on that point with the new Vice President who will chair the Defence Division. Micheline commented that she is willing to try anything as they can't give less than nothing.

6. Financial Report and adoption of accounts

Ephraim spoke briefly to the Annual Report and Accounts, which had been circulated. He noted that the reported deficit was largely the result of the unprecedented number of events we had held during the bicentenary year of the Community, and that we roughly broke even in the year from July 2017 to June 2018. He noted that the Pears Foundation grant for educational activities had been received in the previous year but spent in the current year, and singled out the Netherlee and Clarkston Trust for their exceptionally generous support for community-building events throughout the country. He also thanked Micheline for her fundraising efforts, and added that a further £2000 had been raised by collections at events.

Alan expressed disappointment at the reduction in Scottish Government funding and commented that they get a lot more than they pay for, especially from Ephraim and Leah. Micheline commented that there is a need to rationalise and restructure and welcomed the conversation that is taking place with the Glasgow Rep Council about a closer relationship. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Alan and Joe, and they were formally approved *nem con*.

7. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Ephraim proposed the reappointment of Lewis Osborne and this was agreed *nem con*. The meeting also expressed condolences to him on the recent sad loss of his wife and mother.

8. Reports from Director

Ephraim spoke to his circulated report and those from Leah, Joanne, and Danielle. He expressed thanks to them, and to Fiona, Melissa, and all the others who assist on a voluntary or sessional basis. In particular, he again thanked Fiona, Shayna, Joanne, and Leah for contributing to the effort that had produced a strap-line that admirably encapsulates the three

pillars of the Council's work. He just regretted that so much time and effort is required by defensive fire-fighting, rather than more positive activities.

Ephraim again singled out the Glasgow Jewish Community Trust and the Netherlee and Clarkston Trust whose generosity had made it possible to continue the previous level of activity despite reduced Government funding. He said that regular meetings to coordinate activities with the Glasgow Rep Council and the JLC were very productive, and he thanked Nicola, Evy, and Danielle for their collaboration and support. Ephraim also expressed his appreciation of the support and assistance of Micheline and the Executive and Council in helping to squeeze a quart out of a pint of resources.

Alan then asked about staff workload and how much the JLC post could assist. Evy commented that it takes time for any new person to learn the contacts, and Ephraim said that Danielle had already been of assistance in sharing some of the load.

Simon asked whether major national trusts had been approached, and Micheline replied that their priority generally appeared to be welfare. Ephraim added that it seemed to be easier to obtain funds for the past of the community than for its future, but Henry commented that these should not be incompatible.

Micheline again thanked Ephraim for all the work he does and has done for nearly 20 years for no remuneration, and added that without him SCoJeC would not exist.

9. Data Protection and Privacy Policy

Ephraim spoke briefly to the circulated draft policy which was required to comply with the new Data Protection Regulations that came into effect in May. He also asked for authority to make minor amendments as required without having to bring these back to Council and this was unanimously agreed.

10. Election of office-bearers

The following were elected unopposed:

Chair: Micheline Brannan

Vice-Chair: Fiona Brodie

Secretary: Simon Dover

Micheline said that it had not been possible to find someone willing to be Treasurer, but she would do so herself if there were a suitable candidate for Chair.

11. Reports from Communities

Ephraim said that although previous meetings had requested this item to appear on every agenda, in practice community representatives did not submit reports, resulting in extra work and delays to circulating papers. He recommended dropping this item and this was agreed.

12. Dates of next Council meetings:

It was noted that neither the proposed date of Sunday 2 September nor the Sundays before and after were suitable and it was therefore agreed to poll weekday evenings at the end of August.

The subsequent meeting remains on Sunday 2 December.

13. AOCB

There being no other business, the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the chair at 3.45.