

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the members of Liberal Judaism (ULPS) - known as Council, held on Tuesday 4th July 2017 at The Montagu Centre, 21 Maple Street, London W1T 4BE

Subject to sections 26-32 of the Memorandum and Articles of Liberal Judaism (ULPS)

PRESENT	
PRESIDENT/ VICE PRESIDENTS	Henry Cohn, Jeromé Freedman, Louise Freedman, Andrew Goldstein (President), Harry Jacobi, Frank Maxwell, Corrine Oppenheimer
OFFICERS (DIRECTORS)	Simon Benscher (Chair), Graham Carpenter, Ruth Seager, Rosie Ward
RABBIS	Danny Rich (Chief Executive), Charley Baginsky, Janet Burden, Deborah Kahn-Harris, Lea Muehlstein
COUNCIL	Geoffrey Ben-Nathan (Bedfordshire), Janet Berkman (Peterborough), Daniel Brown (Mosaic), Ros Clayton (Reading and York), Bryan Diamond (LJ Hon. Archivist), Barbara Fidler (LJS), Judith Fox (West Central), Peter Gordon (Nottingham), Jane Greenfield (Southgate), Bob Kamall (ELELS), Karen Katz (BHPS), Lauren Keiles (LJ BoD rep.), Josie Kinchin (Finchley), Stuart Macdonald (LJ BoD rep.), Amanda McFeeters (South Bucks), Leslie Moss (NPLS), Michael Regan (BHPS), Robin Samson (Kehillah), Martin Silk (Finchley), Alan Solomon (Mosaic), Gabriel Webber (LJ BoD rep.)
IN ATTENDANCE	Daisy Bogod (minutes), Janet Darley, Becca Fetterman, Carrie Shaw, Shelley Shocolinsky-Dwyer, Hannah Stephenson
1	OPENING PRAYER Rabbi Janet Darley led the opening prayer; Rabbi Harry Jacobi led a <i>shehecheyanu</i> for the 1st Council meeting held in the refurbished Montagu Centre
2	GUEST SPEAKER: GUSTI YESHOSHUA BRAVERMAN Gusti Yeshoshua Braverman (Chair of Department for Diaspora Activities at the World Zionist Organisation) addressed the council about the Kotel, conversion and other issues facing Progressive Jews in Israel
	PART 1 - ANNUAL REPORT
3	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES APOLOGIES from Stephen Bogod (ELS), Toby Friedner (South Bucks), Aaron Goldstein (NPLS), Sharon Goldstein, Val Harrison (Birmingham), Ed Herman (BoNO), Lucian J. Hudson (BoNO), Margaret Jacobi (Birmingham), Richard Jacobi (ELELS), Alex Kinchin-Smith (FPS), Mimi Konigsberg (NPLS), Jennifer Lennard (BKY), Robin Moss (BoNO), Tony Myers (WCLS), Rosita Rosenberg (Vice President), Tamara Schmidt (BoNO), Ruth Selo (Eastbourne), Joan Shopper (Vice President), Richard Stevens (ELELS), Natalie Towle (Gloucestershire), Alexandra Wright (LJS)
4	MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, HELD ON 2TH JULY 2016 The minutes were signed as an accurate record. RS asked about what is happening regarding the Siddur (mentioned in AoB), and how we are raising money for it. DR responded that a discussion will take place at the end of

	<p>the year when we have draft materials, and AG noted that fundraising should be organised in the same successful manner as it was for <i>Siddur Lev Chadash</i>.</p>
5	<p>ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE BOARD to fill the vacancies of: Treasurer, Vice Chair and four Officers</p> <p>Rosie Ward stood uncontested for re-election as TREASURER; Ruth Seager stood uncontested for re-election as an OFFICER and election for VICE CHAIR; Jackie Richards and Robin Moss stood uncontested for re-election as OFFICERS; Ros Clayton and Amanda McFeeters stood uncontested for election as OFFICERS. All were unanimously voted in, with SB noting that there is space for at least one more Officer on the Board.</p>
6	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>Gabriel Webber has resigned from his position as one of the LJ representatives to the Board of Deputies, due to his beginning rabbinical training in September. Lauren Keiles was unanimously elected to replace him for the duration of this term (until June 2018).</p> <p>Lucian J. Hudson has resigned from the Board of National Officers, and so SB nominated him to be a Vice President. This was seconded by JF and pass unanimously by all represented parties.</p>
7	<p>CHAIR'S REPORT – SIMON BENSCHER</p> <p>Simon gave a report on his activities of 2016, highlighting the EUPJ conference and our Biennial, the appointment of Rabbi Charley Baginsky as Director of Strategy & Partnerships, our difficult financial situation and the fundraising initiatives to counteract it and the tensions of the Progressive Alliance.</p> <p>HC asked about the cause of the tensions between LJ and the MRJ; SB comments on the certainty of there not being a merger; AG noted the positive outcome of the Alliance being meetings between him, SB, DR and their equivalents at the MRJ, and that it is a good forum for smoothing over difficulties. HJ noted that this is the most amount of co-operation he has seen between the movements in a long time.</p> <p>AG asked if anyone would be interested in joining him as an LJ representative on the EUPJ Board, as currently he is the only active member.</p>
8	<p>PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015 – Rabbi Danny Rich</p> <p>DR presented the financial report, noting that there are some minor changes to be made but that none of these affect the bottom line. He asked for comments to be emailed to him, SSD or RW. RW commented that the deficit is only 3% of our annual income, but there are new strategies being put in place to make us less reliant on unpredictable non-member funeral rates and to build up our reserves.</p> <p>HC noted the mistake in the report stating that there are 0 administrative employees, which was a mistake made by the auditors. DR pointed out that the numbers of employees is calculated by full-time equivalents rather than actual numbers of personnel, but that there is a significant lack of administrative support due to financial pressure, and this will be prioritised when the financial situation allows us to do so.</p>

	<p>SMD noted that he has a template of a guide to understanding accounts, which he is to share with SSD for editing and administering to the Council.</p> <p>RW re-explained the £61,000 loan from communities in order to purchase land at Edgwarebury, noting that this does not mean community's levies will increase.</p>
	PART 2 - REPORTS AND MATTERS FROM 2017
9	<p>MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING, HELD ON 25TH APRIL 2017</p> <p>SB thanked the LJS for hosting the last Council meeting, and DR for his tireless work.</p> <p>The minutes were signed as an accurate record.</p>
10	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
11	<p>CHAIR'S REPORT - SIMON BENSCHER</p> <p>SB presented a report on the success of the Day of Celebration weekend, noting thanks to Rabbi Rebecca Birk and Tom Rich for the day, Ruth Colin for the music day beforehand and Rabbis Richard Jacobi, Dean Staker and Michelle Sampson for the Kabbalat Shabbat Britannia. He also commented on the success of the Patrons' Dinner, the WUPJ conference, Ordination and welcomed Carrie Shaw as the Israel Desk for Progressive Judaism & Alliance for Progressive Judaism Co-ordinator.</p>
12	<p>REPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Day of Celebration: SB reported on the success of the Day of Celebration in the absence of Rabbi Rebecca Birk b) Rabbinic Conference: a report was submitted from Rabbis Richard Jacobi and Alexandra Wright c) Leo Baeck College: a report was submitted from Deborah Kahn-Harris, alongside a plea for a lay representative from LJ to help review the vocational training offered at the College and for people to participate in the Lehrhaus education programme. HC asked how many of the newly ordained rabbis were going to LJ communities, to which the answer is none of this year, but that it is not an issue as different numbers go to each movement every year. DKH also noted that there are four new rabbinical students who come from the Liberal movement.
13	<p>AOB</p> <p>A discussion was had about whether the Council should make a statement of support for the meeting between leaders of the progressive movements and the Israeli Embassy this week, about the issues surrounding the Kotel and conversion. No decision could be made regarding what this statement would say, so the discussion was continued by interested parties outside of the meeting.</p>
14	<p>DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING</p> <p>Tuesday 21st November 2017</p>