Minutes of East London & Essex Liberal Synagogue AGM 7 June 2018

(Subject to formal approval of the members at the next EGM or AGM)

Chair: Stewart Spivack (SS)

Minute taker: Jonny Hurst (JH)

1. **Opening prayer**

Rabbi Richard Jacobi (RRJ) started the meeting with a short reading and the community recited the Shehecheyanu together as this was the first AGM for ELELS.

2. **Attendees and apologies**

See list of attendees at the end of these Minutes. Apologies were recorded from Adam Crego, Claire Crego-Molloy, Ben Fryer and Zara Fryer, Shirley Forbes, David Forbes, Sonia Muscovitch, Caroline Charles and Sue Nathanson, Rose Lautman, Sue Powell, Philip Aston.

3. **Approval of minutes of EGM on 14 January 2018 and any matters arising therefrom**

These were approved. Matters arising: none.

4. **Reports Part 1**

4.1 Chair's report: this had been posted online prior to the meeting. SS focussed on some of the key areas of his report. SS mentioned that the legacy BT members has lost their building as well as two pivotal members, Jo Swinburne (z"l) and Sidney Sanders (z"l). SS said that we also remembered Jenny Sclaire (z"l) as well as many other members we had lost in the last 12 months. Thanks were recorded to the outgoing vice-chairs, Bob Kamall (BK) and Shirley Forbes, for their work in steering the merger and chairing the interim council before SS's election. SS confirmed that Rachel Kamall (RK) is stepping down as Cheder Head Teacher. Thanks were recorded for RK's 11 years association with the cheder, the admin staff and our rabbis.

4.2 Joint Rabbis' report: the two rabbis delivered a pre-prepared oral report. Rabbi David Hulbert started and the rabbis alternated the paragraphs. A copy of their report will be posted online with the other reports.

Action: RRJ to email a copy of the rabbis' report to JH and BK for BK to post a written copy of their report on the website with the other reports so those not attending the AGM can read it

4.3 Treasurers: their report had been posted online prior to the meeting as had the short form accounts. Tina Gold read the Treasurers' report. Thanks were recorded to Donna Faber and Robin Muswell for assisting the treasurers in the bookkeeping and preparation of the accounts.

The team of treasurers (AM, TG and MeMi) collectively answered the following questions from members:

Is it an issue that the accounts are in deficit? Will membership fees have to increase? Fees will always have to increase over time as expenses increase. The plan to harmonise the fees paid by legacy BT members and legacy WLS members will continue to achieve parity in due course. JH made the point that the Treasurers run a balanced budget and should be applauded for keeping so close to budget as the deficit was so small.

Why is Gift Aid only £19K? Partly because we are an aging membership but also, as a new community, we had to start again for Gift Aid and only claim for those members who sent new forms back. The treasurers have worked very hard to chase members to complete Gift Aid declarations.

What were the sale proceeds of PFR: £1.51m gross; the net proceeds were £1.49m.The funds are currently with Lloyds Bank. We will be splitting the proceeds of sale between 18 different accounts so that maximum sum held in each account qualifies for the Financial Compensation Scheme. A vote of thanks was recorded for AM for setting up the scheme in which we are depositing the proceeds of sale.

Money from the WLS Building fund? TG said it had been ring-fenced. Members have been offered and can still ask for it to be returned.

The 2017 accounts were approved unanimously by the meeting
(Proposed by Gary Freedman, seconded by Elliott Porte)

5. Reports Part 2

Written reports had been posted online prior to the meeting for all of the following.

5.1 Membership – Merle Muswell (MeMu) read her report. MeMu recorded that ELELS had 606 members on 5 May 2018 and that we have gained 48 new members since January 2017. Rabbi David Hulbert reported that 30 members had passed away since January 2017 and that there were 7 B'nei Mitzvot during this period.

5.2 Magazine report – BK confirmed apologies from the magazine editor. BK read Claire Crego-Molloy's written report. Judy Toffell asked whether we have advertised the cost of advertising a whole/half/quarter page space in the magazine. BK said that we had not yet.

Action: BK will ask the Treasurers and get a price and to advertise the costs of advertising in the next edition of the magazine. BK to ensure JN's Safeguarding articles is in the next edition of the magazine.

5.3 Safeguarding – Josh Newham summarised the man contents of his report and explained what safeguarding is and who the Safeguarding team is.

5.4 Education – Sharon Law read her report.

5.5 Security – David Gold read his report. No incidents to report. Thanks were recorded to those who have been on security duty.

5.6 Events – David Gold read his report.

5.7 Friendship Club – Zara Fryer is in Israel so SS summarised the report. It was sadly recorded that Jenny Sclaire, who had played a significant role, is greatly missed.

5.8 Care – **In touch Group**. Sonia Muscovitch had sent apologies in advance and so SS summarised her report.

5.9 Marriage – Peter Ordever summarised his report. There have been 3 weddings since Jan 2017.

5.10 Board of Deputies – Hanan Charles was present and SS summarised HC's report.

A break followed at 9.00pm when a 54th anniversary cake was delivered to:
Marguerite and Gerald Wimborne

6. Reports Part 3

Written reports had been posted online prior to the meeting for all of the following.

6.1 Burial & Cremation – Warran Rolnis read the report in behalf of the new burial secretaries.

Mel Millenbach (MeMi) thanked Tracey Grant and Dan Janoff (the legacy Burial Secretaries from WLS) and SS and GF who had assumed the role for BT. MeMi produced the financial report: 23 members passed away in 2017. Funds are spread over various accounts. There are £266,570.88 is the total burial funds.

Action: MeMi's written report to be posted online by BK.

6.2 Rites & Practices – Elliott Porte focussed on some of the main parts of the R & P report and confirmed that the three-year lectionary has been adopted by ELELS for the time being. We have held our first combined HHD for ELELS. Feedback has, in the main, been very positive. Ben Glassman also mentioned that combining Minchag is work in progress. We had a very large and successful communal seder. Thanks were recorded for the whole R & P team.

6.3 Property Action Group – Thanks were initially recorded to Richard Stevens (RS) and MeMi for looking after the MR building.

RS summarised the PAG report.

Is the Mosaic model still being explored? BK reported that we have had several meetings with SWESRS but Sukkat Shalom don't want to get involved. The Masorti is happy to be involved but will only rent and will not make any capital contributions. SWESRS are not responding to

messages/correspondence. BK said we haven't stopped looking at the Mosaic option but things won't get any further unless SWESRS respond.

Where is the church building that the PAG has expressed an interest in?
It is very close to the Roding Valley Station, there is land for car parking and close to a bus stop.

Thanks were recorded to all the members who had prepared reports and the huge team of volunteers.

7. Elections

7.1 New council members: none.

7.2 New officers

7.1.1 SS reported that BK and SF are stepping down as vice-chairs and that he has received two nominations for vice chairs: Richard Stevens and Elliott Porte Their election was passed unanimously having been proposed by Gary Freedman seconded by Tina Gold.

7.1.2 SS reported that there had been one nomination for the vacant position of Secretary: Jonny Hurst, whose election was passed unanimously after having been proposed by Rachel Kamall and seconded by Elliott Porte.

7.3 Appointment of new directors of ELELS -

JH explained that he, Alice Wilcock and Ashley Marks would be remaining as Directors of ELELS. BK and SF were stepping down from council like Gary Freedman, who stepped down in January 2018, so that meant losing three of the six directors.

JH explained that for reasons of good corporate governance, as ELELS is a limited company, all other council members should be formally appointed as directors of ELELS. JH proposed the election of the following council members as directors of ELELS, which was seconded by BK:

- Stewart Spivack
- Merle Muswell
- Jan Martin Ellis
- Ben Glassman
- Phil Aston
- Tina Gold
- Richard Stevens
- Michelle Levy
- Elliott Porte
- Mel Millenbach
- Josh Newham

This was carried unanimously by the meeting.

7.4 Re-appointment of auditor/accountant: Robin Muswell was reappointed. Nominated by SS, seconded by David Gold. Carried unanimously.

7.5 Board of Deputies: Hanan Charles was nominated by BK and seconded by MeMi as ELELS's delegate once again on the BoD .

Action: Chair to ask Hanan to arrange a talk re: BoD's work.

The meeting discussed whether ELELS should have a second delegate on the BoD. Simon Benscher asked whether the community could fund a further deputy (which our size could justify) to enhance the liberal voice on the BoD. BK said we would take this back to council to consider and invite the wider membership to apply. HC advised (for anyone considering putting themselves forward) that the BoD meets once a month for 4 hours, with sub-committees (if you decide to serve on one) meeting every per week.

HC's re-election as BoD delegate was approved unanimously by the meeting.

Action: JH to file appointments and resignations of Directors at Companies House

8. Other resolutions -none

9. Any other business

9.1 Peter Ordever mentioned Ellie's fund (which needs biscuit wrappers, stamps etc).

Action: We will put a box in shul to collect these items and advertise its location in the magazine with a posters. Lupus UK also need plastic tops from milk bottles. We'll similarly collect them in a box.

9.2 RRJ mentioned that a sum of money which was collected at the late Father Robert's funeral had been stolen. He was a founder of the Three Faiths Forum with RDH. RRJ announced that following a discussion with the treasurers, we will give a total donation of £150 from the synagogue and the rabbis' Discretionary Fund.

9.3 RRJ said we have received a donation of a mantle for the Czech scroll from Jenny Sclaire's cousin in her memory.

9.4 Simon Benscher plugged the LJ Biennial in four weeks time and asked for more sign-ups from ELELS.

9.5 A request was raised to discuss the Leah Jordan Kaddish issue. As the issue was not formally raised with the Chair prior to the meeting, it was not discussed.

After the Chair's closing words, the meeting ended at 10.15pm

List of attendees:

Alice Alexander, Peter Benscher, Simon Benscher, Susan Billingham, Judy Berkowicz, June Bradbury, Hanan Charles, Steve Fenton, Sue Fenton, Anne Fishman, Gary Freedman, Helen Freedman, Ben Glassman, A.D. Gold Tracey Grant, David Gold, Tina Gold, Fiona Hancock, Ruth Harris, Fiona Hulbert, Rabbi David Hulbert, Jonny Hurst, Lynn Jacobi, Rabbi Richard Jacobi, Bev Jacobs, Bob Kamall, Di Kamall, Rachel Kamall, Ron Kennard, Anthony Kerstein, Judy Kosky, Sharon Law, Michelle Lester, Michelle Levy, Deborah Lewis, Paul Ludwin, Diane Manning, Harvey Manning, Ashley Marks, Jan Martin-Ellis, Mel Millenbach, Sylvie Millenbach, Kackie Morrison, John Morrison, Merle Muswell, Robin Muswell, Josh Newham, Pam Ordever, Peter Ordever, Elliott Porte, Jane Porte, Warran Rolnis,Miriam Sanders, Ruth Seager, Ruth Spivack, Stewart Spivack, Richard Stevens, Jean Summerbell, Ed Taub, David Toffell, Judy Toffell, Alice Wilcock, Caroline Wimborne, Gerald Wimborne, Marguerite Wimborne