



Joseph Cowen
Lifelong Learning Centre
A Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Annual General Meeting

Monday 25th May 2023 - 10.30am

Face-to-Face (Brunswick MC Hall) & Via Zoom

Unconfirmed Minutes

Present:

JCLLC CIO Trustees

Malcolm Grady (chair), Dorothy Stainsby (chair), Jo Champion, Louise Freeman, Anthea Lang, Simon Pallett, Rita Prabhu, Joy Rutter

JCLLC CIO Members:

F2F: David Allen, Sheila Armstrong, Marie Browne, Trevor Buck, Gloria Grice, Quentin Mitchell, Hazel Mitrani, Elaine Owen, Joan Oliver, Kath Smith, Jan Widmer, Anne Williams,

Zoom: , Margaret Adams, Myra Bavidge, Nova Brockbank, Barbara Buck, Anne Bundock, John Bundock, Elsie Denham, Pamela Denham, Ian Fletcher, Nick Johnson, Liz Hole, Eileen Martin, Jennie Peace, Ann Petrie, Chris Petrie, Lesley Pringle, Ray Oughton, Roger Reeves

In Attendance: Nancy Isherwood (minutes)

	<p>Welcome Malcolm Grady opens the AGM and welcomes all in attendance, both at Brunswick MC and via Zoom. Reflects on a recent C&S course by MG & AL and the cultural history of eating 'nuncheon', serving as a respectful reminder for those on Zoom that they are visible to the F2F audience at BMC.</p>
1	<p>Apologies: Helen White, Peter Fuller, Pat Fuller, Stephen Fry</p>

2	<p>Minutes of meeting 16th May 2022</p> <p>MG outlines the previous minutes page by page and requests any comments or suggested amendments to the proposed minutes – none noted.</p> <p>MG asks for those in attendance F2F to show agreement and JB runs poll to complete voting process for Zoom attendees.</p> <p>Vote to accept minutes of last meeting as a correct record – minutes accepted.</p>
3	<p>Matters arising from minutes</p> <p>MG runs through minutes page by page and confirms that SP will update re financial position separately. No matters arising from minutes. Thanks to NI for minute taking.</p>
4	<p>Statutory Financial and Trustees Report for year ending 31st August 2022</p> <p>Simon Pallett introduces Financial Report and shares screen to show simplified figures to aid understanding (Excel of Income and Expenditure) Gives context for time period covered and highlights key variations/figures. Notes that the time period covered reflects a very different day-to-day situation than we are in currently/post-Covid.</p> <p>Income – Subscriptions are down, noting that Explore has done well but some loss during/following Covid inevitable. Explore had expected/planned to make a loss but due to the extension of the pandemic impact various costs were reduced for longer than expected so the loss was minimised. This will not be the case this year.</p> <p>Donations and Gift Aid down but still generous – (also in response to Chat question from RR noted below), notes that we can only claim Gift Aid on Donations and only those where the box is ticked to confirm consent. Gift Aid can not be claimed without permission and can not be claimed on subs/fees.</p> <p>Restricted Grants received for Philosophy strand from the estate of Mary Midgely. Some activity has been spent this year already - confirms that, as restricted funds this can not be spent freely but can be spent over the next few years to help subsidise new Philosophy programming costs.</p> <p>Thanks to A&JB for income raised by some extra book sales.</p> <p>Expenditure – staffing costs are reduced in the time period compared to previous, but this is due to impact of NI maternity. No SMP income but</p>

	<p>equally no additional related costs for Maternity cover (this had previously increased wages due to overlapping staff costs etc)</p> <p>Rental costs were minimised longer than expected due to loss of CUH and ongoing online format/extended pandemic impact, however expenditure for rental (teaching rooms hire and office rental) are now ongoing.</p> <p>For an organisation our size we have relatively low costs which helps give a 'smoother landing' when facing reduced income/losses. We have sufficient reserves to manage losses, however this can not be an ongoing situation as income must eventually balance expenditure to survive.</p> <p>HM thanks SP for clarity of presentation (SP notes the importance of demystifying accounts for all to understand)</p> <p>RR asks about maximising Gift Aid & claiming on subs (as noted above also) SP confirms that HMRC rules are very strict about this and we claim all that is permissible (donations only, consent box ticked)</p> <p>SP asks for any other questions – none.</p> <p>MG asks for F2F attendees to vote to accept Accounts. Poll run for Zoom attendees to accept Accounts. Accounts agreed.</p> <p>MG thanks SP, explains that he does an extraordinary amount of work behind the scenes to keep Explore safe financially and notes that his quiet authority is very reassuring. Thanks offered to members for continuing to support Explore and that, although we hope to engage more new members, it is our current members that support Explore – thanks to all whether present today or not.</p>
5	<p>Appointment of Trustees</p> <p>DS reminds members that at our previous AGM this item was presented by Geoff Taylor, and notes the devastating loss following his death. We miss him enormously, his quiet reassurance, authority and acerbic wit.</p> <p>JP & JR are stepping down – thanks to them both. JR was a founding member and has contributed so much to the organisation. JP brought a new perspective to Explore plus common sense and warmth. We wish them well in their 'retirement'.</p> <p>TB has agreed to stand as Trustee – with thanks to TB.</p>

	<p>DS, LF & RP retire by rotation and have agreed to stand for re-election for a further 3-year term. All nominees are duly proposed and seconded.</p> <p>As there are 4 nominations for 7 vacancies we don't need an election but we do need members' approval. Request for a show of hands in the room and Zoom poll.</p> <p>All approved.</p> <p>MG explains that members had previously been invited to stand and this had been successful, for example TB got in touch following the appeal last year. If anyone would like to join the board as an observer and to see how it works, and consider co-option, please do. For the last three years we have had new joiners to the board who have made a binding contribution to JCLLC, so please do contact us if you are interested in joining the board.</p>
6 & 7	<p>Any Other Business (member questions) and Open Forum Discussion (<i>Items combined</i>)</p> <p>MG explains that since August various things have happened – as a Board we now have themed items to focus on during meetings, recently reflecting on partnerships and specifically Explore's partnership with BMC. In the past year, this relationship has become more embedded (eg office space) and more adaptable to our needs.</p> <p>A second area of focus was curriculum – the programme team, the 'engine house of Explore', have continued to develop ideas, formats, tutors and are very conscious of the need for an evolving curriculum. Feedback and areas of interest are always welcome from members.</p> <p>A third area of focus has been Succession Planning. The Trustees are very conscious of this at board level, but also in other areas of the organisation, for example JR has been very proactive securing succession in programming with JO, LP & MB.</p> <p>The board will continue to look at thematic areas for attention and a key area to look at is membership. We have data [about attracting & retaining members] however we really need members' support as that peeral linkage is key to our survival.</p> <p>DA asks if there is a systematic way of finding out about non-renewal. LF explains that we do have data [eg non-renewal feedback surveys] and generally it's that individuals have experienced a life change (eg increased caring responsibilities) It's not that they don't like Explore</p>

generally but that something has changed in their life. We are slightly flatlining with numbers, but having read a lot around post-covid activity and learned that our demographic and activity [education, cultural engagement, older age group] has seen a drop-off, so we are actually doing ok in comparison.

LF explains that the Gordon Brown Memorial Lecture will be hybrid format as our online reach extends much further so helps attract new people. Appealing for new joiners is carefully managed for example at F2F public events, welcoming a few people who are likely to join covers the cost of the Taster.

LF stresses the need for people to encourage/introduce friends as this is so important and we know this is our most successful strategy – no magic answer but importance of continuously thinking about this in a post-covid world.

RR asks about how delivery format is decided as some sessions work better than others? MG explains that the programme team try to balance formats but this is largely down to tutor preference and also practicalities as different technology requires more volunteers in sessions. RP explains that some sessions simply don't work as hybrid so in general the tutor decides which format.

SA asks about occasions when tutor hasn't turned up/session cancelled? MG explains that the office is very quick to get information out to members, but that unfortunately occasional tutor absence is inevitable unavoidable [eg tutor sickness]. SA asks if tutors 'don't think we're important' – MG explains that no, tutors are very committed and often put in much more work than they are paid for, some even waiving their fee, in support of Explore.

JR explains that LF works very hard on marketing but that she is not in control of the product. Working within the programme team reveals that changes to our situation has affected supply too; it is very difficult to get new speakers due to the universities' changing situation. JR is very dedicated but it is important to continuously develop the programme to appeal to NEW joiners, not just existing members. To get people to join we need to give people enough choice, and quality choice, which is difficult.

A&JB speak via Zoom (difficult to hear in Hall so MG also summarised afterwards) – (AB) A&JB have been involved with Explore throughout and recognise the difficult situation for the board and programmers, and would like to thank everyone for their efforts. In terms of membership the biggest way to recruit is through friendships so please encourage friends, but that also applies to recruiting tutors – members can speak

to potential tutors and introduce them to Explore, take details and pass on to programme team. Acknowledge that Programme Team do something tremendously difficult so thank you for all that they do. JB expresses thanks to RP for all her work on all sides, programming, technical & Board, having taken on substantial coordination and training for volunteers to make sure things run smoothly – ‘it doesn’t work by magic!’ Very special thanks to RP.

HM notes that many people are too busy once they have already retired, so important to catch people pre-retirement before they fill their time. MG & RP add that previously Local Authorities and universities arranged pre-retirement meeting to help with wellbeing however these no longer take place so very difficult to reach people in the same way as previously.

SA suggests more advertising in public spaces and suggests we ask Fenwicks to put posters up.

LF explains that there are so many options of what we could do but that not all are likely to be successful but will cost a lot of resources. It is important to try to focus on what actually works.

HM notes difficulty trying to recruit tutors and precariousness of depending on existing tutors to fill large amount of programme (eg PQ) – suggests some speakers can repeat some sessions from previous years as many will not have seen them before, others may have forgotten details and others are happy to revisit and update. MG agrees that this is a good idea and general approval from attendees also.

JW explains that as a non-local she has might offer a new perspective for recruitment, and asks that we make more use of Zoom. She has attended various online events and this has allowed both speakers and audience to attend from much further afield. The Zoom element to our programme has been very beneficial for her and might be helpful attracting other new members and speakers, suggesting Zoom-only memberships.

PD reinforces A&JB suggestion re members helping to recruit speakers noting that it is useful and works as long we can follow it up quickly. Notes that speakers can help recruit other speakers/colleagues.

MG explains that in his experience it was much easier to recruit speakers in the past but it is a changed world now. Supports idea of tutors revisiting previous talks.

JR requests an update on our current financial position – SP expects a £5000-£10000 deficit at the end of the current year which can be

	<p>covered by reserves in the short-term but stresses that our expenditure cannot be above income ongoing. We need more members – the more members we have the less individual members need to pay.</p> <p>DS offers big thanks to all the people who have stepped up to volunteer this year – their help has really made a difference and shown that there are ‘many lights under bushels’. Thanks to NI, who is also grateful to the board, volunteers and members.</p> <p>MG closes meeting with thanks to all members for the continued support, with waves from Hall and Zoom.</p>
8	<p>Date of next meeting – May 2024</p> <p>Specific date TBC</p>