

**JOSEPH COWEN LIFELONG LEARNING CENTRE CIC  
SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
FRIDAY 15TH APRIL 2016  
LECTURE THEATRE, MINING INSTITUTE NEVILLE HALL**

**UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

**Present:**

**JCLLC/Explore Members:** Sheila Armstrong, Myra Bavridge, Ann Bayliss, Margaret Brown, John Bundock, Anne Bundock, Lily Burnett, Christine Burrridge, Bronwen Calvert, Joan Campion, Joan Day, Louise Freeman, Maria Goulding, Patricia Halcro, Rowland Hill, Eileen Martin, Colm O'Brien, Edward Pennie, Elizabeth Powell, Henry Rose, Joy Rutter, Raymond Shepherd, Kathleen Smith, Dorothy Stainsby, Geoffrey Taylor, Susan Ward, Helen Watson, Janet Widmer, Anne Williams, Kenneth Young, Angela Young

**Explore only members:** Martin Buckley, Jenny Peace, Pam Farrin, Barbara Parker, Tom McQuillin

**Staff:** Rachel Simmons

**Apologies:** Linda Allen, Sue Brophy, Helen Cook, Mike Cornish, Elsie Denham, Stephen Fry, Margaret Hepplewhite, Myra Giesen, Gloria Grice, Jack Massey, Tina Massey, Ray Taylor, Helen White, Rosemary Zakrzewski

1	Dorothy Stainsby welcomed JCLLC-CIC members to the AGM and also, for the first time, Explore members not members of JCLLC-CIC who were also very welcome but reminded them that they were not eligible to vote.	
2	Minutes of the First Annual General Meeting 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2015 were confirmed and accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.	
3	<p><b>Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise covered by the Agenda</b></p> <p>A member referred to a clause in Item 5 of the minutes, Future Arrangements for the AGM. The Chairman confirmed that as there had been insufficient votes cast in favour of the Special Resolution held following the AGM there was still no obligation to hold an AGM but nevertheless an AGM would continue to be held annually. The aim was to set a date as early as possible to give members more notice than previously.</p> <p>Questions were also received with reference to another clause in Item 5, Terms of Office of Directors. The Chairman responded that at a Board meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015 it had been agreed that Election of Board Members would be held every two years. Term of office would be limited to two years but Board members would be eligible to stand for election for a second term but for a second term only. There would have to be some flexibility initially to ensure continuity. Should a Board Member wish or need to resign within their term of office the Board would be free to co-opt a replacement for the period prior to the next election. The Board also has the authority to co-opt a new member in order to augment skills and expertise within the Board as necessary.</p>	
4	<p><b>Reports</b></p> <p>The first 3 reports below are available on <a href="http://www.josephcowen.org.uk/">http://www.josephcowen.org.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Chair's Report</b></p>	

The Chair thanked her predecessor, Bea Groves, for her leadership over the past year and looked forward to her continuing involvement as tutor and supporter in the future. She also thanked the two retiring Board Members, Sheila Armstrong and Mike Leddra, and welcomed two newly-elected Directors Jack Pennie and Christine BurrIDGE. Ken Young, Joy Rutter, Louise Freeman together with the academic leads Bronwen Calvert and Colm O'Brien continue as Directors. The Chair went on to underline the dependence of Explore on the help of the voluntary teams and individuals who give of their time on a regular basis to make an essential contribution to its smooth running. Notable developments over the year had included the transformation of the Explore office since the appointment of Rachel Simmons as Office Manager and the success of the Bookshop set up by Anne and John Bundock which now provides a significant income stream.

Lastly she thanked Ampersand, Jonpaul and Peter, for all they do to make Floor 4 at CUH such a congenial and comfortable place.

The Chair continued with a summary of Explore's position half way through its third academic year. The number of teaching hours and attendance records show that quantity of provision is being maintained and it continues to offer its unique scope and quality. Membership retention is a healthy 80 per cent but a matter of concern was that of the 44 new members recruited in 2014, 20 did not rejoin this year. So far this year we have had only 24 new members.

Joseph Cowen LLC-CIC has now had its first elections and the new board is considering how to develop a plan for the future. The input, involvement and ideas of the members will be integral to this process.

Two Directors added observations to the Chair's report. Joy Rutter commented that she had been advised that a loss of 20 per cent of members a year was to be considered normal as members' circumstances change but the loss of 50 per cent of the new members in the previous year must be a concern. Louise Freeman reported that she had surveyed the non returners and had received 7 responses. Their overwhelming reason for not returning was that they had found they were not able to attend enough sessions to make the outlay worthwhile. In response to one of the questions asked, all replied that they were also involved other forms of learning.

### **Director's Report from the Company Secretary**

The Company Secretary explained that this report is an annual requirement to be lodged with Companies House within a set timescale.

### **Finance**

Having presented the accounts for the year 2014-15, the Treasurer went on to outline JCLLC's current financial position. The financial year 2015-16 started with a healthy bank balance of £30,783, underpinned by income from annual subscriptions and book sales. But he sounded a note of caution. Expenditure at current levels will lead to a small deficit by the end of the year. Income alone is not quite covering costs and JCLLC will have to dip into its currently healthy reserves, set aside to meet exceptional calls upon funds, to make up the shortfall. Explore needs another ongoing 20 to 30 members to remain sustainable. JCLLC is looking into free consultancy from local universities to help in this area.

### **Programming**

Colm O'Brien explained that he and Bronwen oversee the team of Explore

members who manage the speaker programming and said that new members are welcome to come forward to shadow and later replace team members. Season 1 of 2016-17 is currently in production and should be available before the end of the present season. Explore, since it has been run by JCLLC-CIC, has seen an increase in the number of visiting speakers with a corresponding increase in the range and variety of talks and more sessions on science, film and practical art. It is hoped to avoid tightly drawn subject perimeters and to introduce more cross disciplinary and interdisciplinary subject matter. Evening and Saturday sessions have had low attendance but are seen as essential so as not to exclude those in work and to support the ethos of lifelong learning. The team in future would like to consult members and it is planned to hold occasional forums on Floor 4 in between Explore sessions when members will have opportunity to make suggestions and provide feedback. The sign-in sheets give quantitative information on attendance and the forums should provide qualitative information as well. In 2015/16 Explore will offer 845 hours of contact time, which is 28 hours per week or five hours every weekday and three hours on Saturday. After expenses this works out at £57 per one hour contact time and one subscription buys five hours of contact time. This figure and an anticipated 20 per cent drop in membership a year, translates into the need to recruit at least 50 new members annually if Explore is to continue in its present form. Looking forward the aim should be to have 250 members by October 2018 which would cover three more 90 minute sessions or 18 more short courses.

Colm finished by thanking and congratulating the members of the programming team.

### **Open Forum**

After a break for refreshments members were invited back into the hall for a question and answer session. Provision had been made for questions to be submitted in writing either through the website or at the Explore Office but could also be raised from the floor.

Joan Day asked in a written question how concurrent programming could be avoided, and other members raised related questions, in particular if it might be possible to rerun affected sessions. It was agreed that in principle, at members' request, this could be attempted, dependent on tutors' availability and budget.

Sue Ward asked about the printed publicity strategy. She felt that as the tri-fold leaflet containing the programme had a short shelf life and the cheaper A5 flyer was more general and therefore had longer currency, the content should be reversed, ie the leaflet should be more general and the timetable be printed on the A5 sheet. Louise Freeman who leads on publicity replied that prospective members were interested to know what the current programme offered. She also made the point that it was increasingly necessary to pay for space in leaflet racks.

Maria Goulding, bringing together three strands referred to during the AGM, asked how can we sustain the present fantastic programme, was CO'B's target of 250 members achievable or would it have consequences for accommodation and other limited resources, and should we in fact be considering raising the subscription rather than increasing membership? Other members commented that many people were already put off by the cost and when the treasurer reported that at present only three members had applied

	<p>to pay in instalments, it was suggested that this option should be better publicised. Another member said that one problem was that people did not want to commit for a whole year but the treasurer responded that at present an annual subscription was the only way that the programme could be funded. Joy Rutter reported that a member, Jenny Peace, had proposed a solution through a local credit union. In response to a suggestion that it might not be viable to run courses with low attendance, however desirable in other ways, CO'B replied that Joy is doing an analysis of courses and there are some members who only join in order to attend just one session a week, for example Mike Green's music courses. Other points made were that Explore did need to offer choice, that maybe consideration could be given to moving some of the more popular courses to evenings and weekends and that in the end it came down to a question of balance. In response JR said when looking at attendance it was useful not to think only of numbers but of spread, for example some courses attract a large attendance which is made up of the same members at each session while others may attract less per session but overall a wider spread of members.</p>	
	<p>The meeting was closed at 5.25pm.</p>	