

Constitution

1. Name

The name of the Community shall be the Peterborough Liberal Jewish Community, (PLJC) affiliated nationally to Liberal Judaism (LJ), a constituent member of the World Union of Progressive Judaism.

2. The Community

The aim of PLJC is the advancement of the Principles and Affirmations of Liberal Judaism within and beyond the Community.

3. The Objects of PLJC shall be

- a. To provide religious services for PLJC.
- b. To make provision for, where and when appropriate, religious education and Hebrew classes for PLJC.
- c. To make provision for the solemnisation of Marriage.
- d. To make provision for Barmitvah, Batmitvah, Conversions and Affirmations.
- e. To make provision for burial and cremation services for PLJC.
- f. To make provision for any other religious rites and ceremonies as required by PLJC.
- g. To make provision for and manage the implementation of national LJ policies and initiatives at local level.
- h. To do all such other acts and things as shall be conducive to the aforesaid objects, and in particular (but not so as in any way to prejudice the generality of the foregoing part of this sub-clause), to raise, borrow and secure the payment of any sum or sums of money, and to purchase, take on lease or agreement and hire, either in the name of PLJC, or in the name of the Trustees of the Community on its behalf, any land or interest therein, or any property of any kind, and to sell, mortgage, charge, grant leases or agreements in respect of and in any other manner deal with and turn to account any land or interest therein, or any property of any kind belonging to PLJC whether in its own name or in the name of the Trustees of the Community on its behalf.

4. Membership

There are four categories of membership available:

- a. **Full Member** : Someone over 18 years of age, of the Jewish Faith (as defined by LJ) and who subscribes to the principles and objects of LJ.

Where both partners of a family unit are eligible for Full Membership, a Family Membership subscription is available. Both partners would be Full Members in their own right.

- b. **Associate Member** : This category covers a range of circumstances

- i. Someone over 18 years of age and of the Jewish Faith who, because of a membership of another Synagogue, does not wish to become a full member of PLJC.
- ii. Someone over 18 years of age who is the non-Jewish spouse or long-term partner of a Full Member.
- iii. Someone over 18 years of age who is not Jewish, but has an interest in Judaism.
- iv. Someone over 18 years of age seeking formal conversion to Judaism.
- v. Someone over 18 years of age, wishing to re-affirm their Jewish heritage.

c. Junior Member

- i. For dependent children of members, living with their parents/parent, up to the age of 21, membership is included in their parents' or parent's subscriptions.
- ii. Young people aged between 16 – 18, whose parents are not Members may become Junior Members. There will be no subscriptions due from this group.

They will not be entitled to vote at meetings, nor stand for an elected office.

d. Student Member

A token subscription of £24 will be available to those in full-time education or training.

Otherwise the subscription for Full Membership will apply.

Applications shall be made by completion of the PLJC Application Form. The Council (see Section 6 – 9) may, at its absolute discretion, accept, refuse or adjourn consideration of the Application, and must inform the Applicant of its decision. Applicants accepted by the Council shall then become members of PLJC on payment of the appropriate subscription.

5. Subscriptions

The annual membership fee shall be determined from time to time by the Council.

Payment is due on a calendar year basis on 1st October, and is reduced pro-rata for anyone joining during the year. Payments can be spread across the year by standing order or paid in full as one lump sum.

It is the policy of PLJC that no-one should be prevented from becoming a member due to an inability to pay. The Honorary Treasurer shall have the authority to reduce the subscription of any person unable to pay the full amount in force at that time.

Unpaid subscriptions falling three months in arrears must be notified to the Council. A reminder should then be sent by recorded delivery. If the subscription is still unpaid, the member should be invited to a meeting with the Treasurer to discuss the issue. Unless satisfactory explanations are provided to the Treasurer, after six months in arrears, their membership shall cease.

6. Council

The aim of the Council is to manage and administer the daily affairs of PLJC.

7. The objects of the Council shall be :

- a. To facilitate the Objects of PLJC.
- b. To establish and manage a Community Sustainability Plan with priorities and timescales.
- c. To manage the assets of PLJC.
- d. To facilitate the adherence of the necessary legal and financial requirements associated with the management of PLJC.

8. The Council shall consist of the following Officers:

Chair
Honorary Treasurer
Honorary Secretary

There will also be two other Council roles

Membership Support Co-ordinator
Communications/Media Co-ordinator
Each of these five roles will have the right to vote on Council decisions.

9. Honorary President

The position of Honorary President may be awarded by the Community to any member in recognition of their outstanding service to PLJC. The position may be held for an initial period of 2 Years. The Honorary President will be a member of the Council but will have no power to vote. Only one person may hold the position of Honorary President at any one time.

10. Council Membership criteria

Council members shall be appointed for a period of one year, and will be eligible for re-election at the AGM.

The Chair, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary must be Full Members of PLJC.

Other posts on the Council may be held by Full, Associate or Student Members.

A Council Member who fails to attend 3 consecutive meetings shall cease to be a member of the Council if in the opinion of the remainder of the Council, it is justified and appropriate.

Should a vacancy arise, the Council may co-opt a Full, Associate or Student Member (as appropriate for the position) with full voting rights. The individual will hold the position until the next AGM, when they will be eligible for election.

Elections for all positions on the Council will be held by secret ballot.

11. Chair responsibilities

- a. To chair meetings of the Council.
- b. To hold votes on Council issues when required, and apply their casting vote in the event of a tie
- c. To drive the achievement of the Community Sustainability Plan.
- d. To prepare and deliver reports on progress to Community meetings as required.

12. Finances and Honorary Treasurer responsibilities

- a. The Council, through the Honorary Treasurer, shall keep proper books of account, recording all receipts, payments, income, donations, and contributions, on behalf of PLJC.
- b. The Council, through the Honorary Treasurer, shall arrange to maintain the primary bank account and any required subsidiary accounts, eg. High Holy Day Appeal, on behalf of PLJC, in its name.
- c. To appoint two authorised signatories in addition to the Honorary Treasurer, (all three signatories to be unrelated), to provide two signatures for any cheques or payments made from the Community's bank accounts.
- d. All money or other property held by any subsidiary or associate body or group of PLJC shall be the property of the Community. The Council shall have the power at any time to require any such body or group to provide a statement of its current financial position, and to deliver to the Treasurer, or as the Council shall otherwise direct, all monies and property held by it.
- e. The financial year of PLJC shall end on 30th April, and the Accounts of the Community and of any subsidiary groups, shall be drawn up within two weeks of that date.
- f. The Council shall arrange for all the accounts to be audited prior to presentation to PLJC at the AGM.
- g. At each AGM an auditor shall be appointed for the forthcoming year.

13. Honorary Secretary responsibilities

- a. Recording decisions made at any meetings
- b. Maintaining an accurate and up-to-date list of all members
- c. To act as a hub for correspondence from external organisations
- d. General administration

14. Membership Support Co-ordinator

- a. Initial contact, meeting and greeting of new members
- b. Guidance and support of potential converts
- c. Guidance and support of those returning to Judaism – ie. re-affirmation
- d. Organising visits to sick members
- e. Providing guidance and supporting arranging of funerals

15. Communications/Media Co-ordinator

- a. Management of Community website
- b. Preparation of Community newsletter
- c. Management of publicity and news
- d. Advertising

16. Subsidiary Groups

The Council may appoint sub-groups or Co-Opted Officers, eg. Cheder Leader, as required, eg.

Rites and Rituals

1. Shabbat Services
2. High Holy Day Services
3. Festival Services eg. Chanukah and Purim
4. Special services eg. Bar/Batmitzvah, Funerals
5. Service leadership training

Social activities

Membership of all subsidiary groups will cease at the Annual General Meeting. The Council will appoint members to any subsidiary groups as required following the Annual General Meeting. Previous members will be eligible for re-selection.

17. Meetings & Proceedings of the Council

- a. The Council shall hold at least six ordinary meetings every year.
- b. Notice of each Council meeting shall be given to each Council member not less than 14 days before the date of the meeting, unless in the opinion of the Chair or any other Council member in the absence of the Chair or if the Chair is for any reason unable to act, there is a matter requiring the urgent attention of the Council.
- c. A resolution in writing or in electronic form unanimously agreed by all members of the Council entitled to receive notice of a Council meeting and to vote upon the resolution shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a Council meeting.
- d. The Chair of the Council shall chair these meetings. If the Chair is not present then the remaining members will elect a substitute from amongst themselves.
- e. A meeting will be quorate if 3 Council members are present. Without a quorate number, no decisions can be taken.
- f. Where a vote is required for a decision, the Chair will not vote unless a casting vote is required.
- g. Minutes will be taken by the Honorary Secretary.

18. Trustees

- a. The Council shall appoint two Members of PLJC to act as Trustees for the Community and all property both real and personal belonging to PLJC shall be vested in such Trustees upon Trust for the Community and subject to the directions of the Council.
- b. The Trustees shall maintain an accurate inventory of all property both real and personal, belonging to PLJC.
- c. Whenever a vacancy occurs among the Trustees, the power to nominate a Member of PLJC to fill the vacancy shall be vested in the Council.

19. Annual General Meeting

- a. The Council will organise an Annual General Meeting each year within three months of the end of the financial year of the Community.
- b. A notice of the Meeting shall be sent to each Member of PLJC, not less than 21 days prior to the Meeting.
- c. Nominations for positions on the Council must be received by the Honorary Secretary at least 7 days before the Meeting. These must include the name of the Secunder and the agreement of the Nominee.
- d. Items for inclusion on the Agenda, and any relevant papers, should be received by the Honorary Secretary 14 days before the Meeting.
- e. The Agenda, the audited Accounts, and any related papers must be circulated by the Honorary Secretary to all Members of the Community, not less than 7 days before the Meeting.
- f. 6 Members present shall constitute a quorum.
- g. If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the time stated for the Meeting, or if during a Meeting a quorum ceases to be present, the meeting must be adjourned.
- h. The Meeting must be re-convened, no later than 45 days afterwards, with at least 7 days notice being given. If no quorum is present at the re-convened Meeting within 15 minutes of the time specified for the Meeting, the Members present at that time shall constitute the quorum for that Meeting.
- i. Every Full, Associate and Student Member of PLJC shall have the right to vote at the Meeting.
- j. Decisions shall be by majority vote, except where stated differently.

The Agenda for the Meeting shall include

1. Minutes of the previous AGM
2. Matters arising
3. A report from the Chair
4. A report from the Treasurer
5. A report from any subsidiary group as appropriate
6. The election of all Council Officers
7. Election of Honorary President (if appropriate)
8. The appointment of an Auditor
9. Any other item of which notice has been given to the Honorary Secretary at least 14 days prior to the Meeting

The newly appointed Council shall hold office from the conclusion of the Meeting.

20. General Meetings

The Council may call an Extraordinary General Meeting at any time.

The Council shall be required to call an Extraordinary General Meeting at the written request of 4 Members of PLJC. The request must include a statement as to the business to be discussed.

Notice of the Meeting must be given to each Member not less than 21 days prior to the Meeting and will include any relevant papers.

6 Members present shall constitute a quorum.

If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the time stated for the Meeting, or if during a Meeting a quorum ceases to be present, the meeting must be adjourned.

The Meeting must be re-convened, no later than 45 days afterwards, with at least 7 days notice being given. If no quorum is present at the re-convened Meeting within 15 minutes of the time specified for the Meeting, the Members present at that time shall constitute the quorum for that Meeting.

Decisions shall be by majority vote, except where stated differently.

21. Amendments to the Constitution

This Constitution may be repealed, altered or added to from time to time by a resolution passed by a two thirds majority of those present and voting at a General Meeting of the Community; provided that notice of such proposed resolution specifying the terms thereof shall be required to be given to every member of the community not less than 14 days prior to the General Meeting at which the same is to be proposed.

22. Communication

a. Intra-community communications

Any notice or document to be sent or supplied to a Council member in connection with the taking of decisions by the Council may be sent or supplied by the means by which that Council member has asked to be sent or supplied with such notices or documents for the time being.

The Community may give any notice to a Member either:

- i. Personally; or
- ii. By sending it by post in a prepaid envelope addressed to the Member at their address; or
- iii. By leaving it at the address of the Member; or
- iv. By sending it by electronic communications to the Member's address; or
- v. By placing the notice on a website and providing the Member with a notification in writing or in electronic form of the presence of a notice on the website. The notification must state that it concerns a notice of a meeting of the Community and must specify the place, date and time of the meeting.

A member present at any meeting of the Community shall be deemed to have received notification of the meeting and of the purposes for which it was called.

Proof that an envelope containing a notice was properly addressed, prepaid and posted shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. Notice shall be deemed to be given 48 hours after the envelope containing it was posted.

Proof that an electronic form of notice was properly addressed and sent shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. Notice shall be deemed to have been given 48 hours after it was sent.

b. Extra-Community communications

No Member shall speak or write on behalf of the Community unless authorised to do so by the Council.

Any Member whose actions, speech or writing endangers the reputation or security of the Community, or brings the Community into disrepute, may be liable to have their membership terminated by the Council.

23. Dissolution

If, at the request of the membership at that time, the Council considers that it is necessary/advisable to dissolve PLJC, it shall discuss the matter with the appropriate representative of LJ. Any decision taken will be referred to a meeting of all Members (with not less than 14 days notice). Further guidance should then be obtained from LJ.

Any net assets of PLJC, after all its debts and liabilities have been paid, or provision made for them, shall be applied or transferred to LJ.

In no circumstances shall the net assets of PLJC be paid to or distributed amongst the members of PLJC.