

PATH TO PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

MERGER INFORMATION PACK SUMMARY

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IN APRIL 2023, THE MOVEMENT FOR REFORM JUDAISM AND LIBERAL JUDAISM ANNOUNCED PLANS TO CREATE A NEW UNIFIED MOVEMENT FOR PROGRESSIVE JEWS IN THE UK.

Over the past 18 months, the movements have conducted an extensive feasibility study, including financial and legal due diligence, and began professional collaboration. An Advisory Board has overseen the process, and in November 2024, recommended proceeding with a full legal combination. The new movement aims to support and amplify the voices of Progressive Jews in the UK, reflecting the view that a unified movement will be more effective.

The next steps involve formal votes by member communities in mid-May 2025, with the goal of completing the legal combination by the end of 2025. Member communities will need to decide how to use their votes at the upcoming Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) and engage their membership in the decision-making process.

GOVERNING ARRANGEMENTS

The new Movement will be incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), providing limited liability and allowing immediate incorporation after EGMs, unlike a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which requires prior

approval from the Charity Commission. The new Movement will consist of autonomous communities, most of which are independent charities, with membership open to communities rather than individuals. A membership agreement will clarify the relationship and responsibilities.

The new entity will have two main decision-making bodies: the Board of Trustees and the Forum of Members. The Board of Trustees will handle legal, financial, and operational management, while the Forum of Members will meet quarterly to discuss strategy and development. Voting at membership meetings will be restricted to member communities only, with a weighted voting system based on community size. Clergy and associate members will be able to attend and speak but cannot vote.

The Trustee Board will consist of up to 12 members, including a Chair or Co-chairs, an Honorary Treasurer, an Honorary Secretary, two representatives from the Clergy Bodies, and up to seven other Trustees. The Board will be elected by members and clergy nominees.

The Trustee Board will go through three phases: initial implementation of trustees, a 'launch' Board, and the final Board elected from the first AGM. Each phase has specific responsibilities and composition.

Member communities can terminate their membership with twelve months' notice. The Movement can terminate membership in limited circumstances following a dispute resolution process. The dispute resolution process involves three stages: a meeting between the Chairs of the Board of Trustees and the community, engagement of a neutral facilitator, and termination consideration if facilitation fails.

A review of contributions and governance arrangements will be conducted after the first few years of operation, with recommendations to be implemented in 2029.

MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

The Movement for Progressive Judaism (MPJ) is composed of autonomous communities, most of which are independent charities. The membership

MEMBERS MEETING

THURSDAY, 24 APRIL, 8PM

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Join us in person or on zoom for a Community Consultation to share your views about the possible coming together of Liberal and Reform Judaism into the new Movement for Progressive Judaism.

It is critical for the synagogue board to hear your perspectives on the future of our movement.

This is an event for our members and supporters only.

Please let us know if you are planning to attend by completing the registration form at arksynagogue.org/merger.

agreement outlines the benefits, rights, and responsibilities of these communities, as well as the dispute resolution process and constitutional documents.

MPJ communities are diverse in various aspects, and each community has its own governing body. The MPJ Board of Trustees, elected from affiliated communities, oversees legal, financial, and operational management. Membership provides access to national movement benefits, such as strengthening, supporting, and connecting communities, promoting values, inspiring future generations, and fostering inclusion.

Member and Associate communities gain access to various services, including Beit Din, resources, support services, communications, clergy support, events, and publications at preferential rates. Communities commit to contributing to shared infrastructure costs, protecting the reputation of Progressive Judaism, and ensuring lawful operations and high standards in safeguarding, recruitment, and conduct.

MPJ and its communities aim to resolve disputes non-confrontationally. The process includes confidential meetings, neutral facilitation, and, if necessary, ruling by the Forum of Members.

The constitution of MPJ is set out in its Rules and Articles of Association, which govern the relationship between MPJ and its Members and Associates, prevailing over any inconsistencies in the membership agreement. In the case of an organisation which is not incorporated (such as a trust or an unincorporated association), the organisation must nominate one member of its congregation to be recorded in MPJ's registers as a Member (or Associate) representing the organisation.

PROPOSED FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

An independent financial due diligence process in 2023 revealed the financial strengths of both MRJ and LJ. Despite differences, the proposal is seen as a partnership of equals. The proposal includes a phased equalisation of financial contributions from MRJ and LJ

communities over three years, with LJ communities' contributions reducing to match MRJ's current levels. This ensures that no community pays more during the transition.

The new Movement expects to save on core expenditures, particularly staffing costs, and avoid duplicating significant future costs. Current staff are already working across both organisations. It is not possible at this point to provide a budget for the new entity, as many of the variables are dependent on the decision of whether to proceed, while others involve decisions that by their nature will belong to the new Board. Consent to proceed with the formal legal combination will enable identification of areas of strategic priority for the new Movement, which will shape the budget for the first year of operation.

To access the information pack, feedback form and to register for the community consultation evening go to arksynagogue.org/merger.