

Land of Joy Buddhist Centre trustees meeting 25th January 2020 - synopsis of minutes

This synopsis attempts to cover all the main items that were discussed, while excluding anything of a personal and confidential nature.

The meeting began with a motivation by Charlotte & approval of minutes from the October meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT –

Accommodation & House maintenance Unanimous agreement that LoJ should remain a small, quality retreat centre & to plan for long term accommodation for staff & retreatants. It was agreed to earmark a portion of unrestricted large donations & legacies to develop a 'House Deposit'. Ongoing research is required to rebuild the garden wall. No decision was taken to add a bathroom to the east wing.

Infrastructure Development - It was unanimously agreed that building the third retreat hut is a priority. As a secondary priority the Board agreed the Director to follow-up on architectural plans, planning permissions & costs to redevelop the community courtyard for final approval. Advertising for advice to help LoJ become more energy efficient & sustainable was suggested.

Income Generation –It is essential that LoJ covers more than just running expenses. To this end a business development team is required to progress the ideas of purchasing/building options for flexible use & small scale business options servicing the local and regional communities. No decisions were taken.

RETREAT PROGRAMME 2020 – Julie will continue as Acting SPC to April. Geshe Tenzin Namdak will teach in the spring, Osel may return in June, Geshe Jamphel may return later this year to teach Lam Rim. There are no group retreats scheduled during December. The increased number of personal retreat requests in this period means that the team has no real downtime. The Director will seek Rinpoche's advice for merit making activities.

Geshe Samten returns to Kopan on 13th February. The Board agreed to offer Geshe-la a cash leaving gift in addition to his monthly stipend.

Summer Gathering confirmed for 5th–6th September 2020. Board Members are warmly recommended to attend & enjoy the weekend with other visitors. Bob Charlton to invite Khenchen Tenzin Khentse Rinpoche currently at Leeds for a visit.

2021 – good base for programme planning in place, teachers and retreats, which will ease process during SPC transition period. Invitations will continue to be sent out to visiting lamas. Annual invitations to Rinpoche and Khadrola will be sent.

FINANCE – The generosity model continues to work well for group retreats & LoJ continues to cover its outgoings. It was suggested we ask other Centres how they ensure the costs of long private retreats are covered. The SPC is making clear to private retreatants that they need to be able to afford the costs of long-term retreat.

FUNDRAISING - Kerrigan Bell will follow up the agreement that sponsoring the purchase of trees, memorial trees & scattering ashes in the woods as a potential source of income. It was suggested that a Branches of Joy co-ordinator to outline the benefits of membership & co-ordinate events could help members connect more closely with LoJ.

VOLUNTEER STAFF – Jenny will continue as Centre Director. Talks are under way with a potential Centre Manager & there is interest from an experienced SPC. No interest in the housekeeping position. One Team review has been undertaken & others will follow. Julie will advertise in the newsletter for one or two people to develop the website.

SAFEGUARDING – Following the retreat recommendations from Jamyang Leeds discussions focussed on process, procedure for appropriate care & safeguarding of retreatants. Shan Tate led a discussion around safeguarding issues. The Board thanked Shan for her excellent delivery and deep knowledge of the issues. They expressed a greater confidence of the issues & their abilities to safeguard. It was agreed to upgrade current insurance to cover Trustees.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS - Geoff Jukes stepped down after 9 years. A gift was agreed which Charlotte Elliott will follow-up. Shan Tate & Dan Cutts were officially welcomed to the Board as Trustees. Bob Charlton will stay on as Treasurer until a new person, who ideally has an understanding of Buddhism, is appointed. The position will be advertised in the LoJ newsletter & FPMT outlets. It was agreed to increase the number of Board members from six to seven.

Companies House & the Charities Commission will be updated with Trustee names and Annual Accounts. It was agreed that a link to the Charities Commission should be put on the website.

Dedication led by Shan.