

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus Minutes of Meeting 16th October 2019

Present - Paul Henstridge; Anne Adams; Els Pearse; Graham Dawson; Marianne Grayson; Sue Pennington; Helen Kirk.

1. Apologies - Ben Stone; Sally Turnbull; James Oliver; Richard Salt; Georgina Hulse; Paul Duffield; Paul Bedwell.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 28th March 2019 and the minutes of the meeting of 4th September 2019 were agreed to be accurate records of those meetings and were signed.

3. Matters Arising from meeting of 4th September 2019

These matters were held over until the next meeting.

4. Paid Support

Ahead of the meeting Jim Monarch, tenor rep, submitted a paper for consideration. It outlined the possible advantages of paying for administrative support. Some of the trustee roles have become very time consuming. Jim suggested that in the future this will make such roles unattractive to potential volunteers.

There was general agreement to give proper consideration to the idea. It will be an agenda item. Anne agreed to review the various parts of her duties with a view to identifying those tasks which could be done by a professional from outside the chorus.

It was decided that a professional bookkeeper would be a prudent and cost effective backup to Graham's financial duties. Graham will give consideration as to how such an arrangement might work.

It was noted that chorus funds are sufficiently healthy to support this idea.

There was also discussion around using chorus funds to sponsor young local composers by commissioning small scale works such as happened as part of the recent Classical Sheffield Festival. This would fit well with our charitable aims. It was agreed that this idea should be pursued at a future meeting.

5. Recruitment Workshops for Men

Georgina has confirmed that she will be ready to deliver these workshops starting Tuesday 12th November. She was thanked. Paul H will print her booklet when it is ready.

Anne has completed the design for the publicity materials and has the printing arrangements in hand for 50 posters and 500 flyers. £45 is the likely cost. Anne was thanked.

Sue will speak to the chorus about the workshops.

6. Marketing and Publicity

Russell Eagling, bass, has agreed to stand as Publicity and Marketing officer and will start his duties after the AGM. It is possible he may also take over the graphic design at a later stage. James has agreed to help as required.

Paul B is convening a handover meeting with Russell and James.

Felicity Goodliffe has expressed an interest in being our voice on Facebook. Els will confirm with her.

7. Governance

7.1 Finance

The accounts are complete and have been agreed by Richard Pike, Independent examiner.

Graham is now using the Paxman accounting package and is satisfied with it. It uses on-line storage and offers good telephone support. Graham has sent the Gift Aid forms to HMRC and he is on-track to complete the financial migration to CIO shortly.

7.2 Transfer to CIO

Anne explained that the CIO protocol allows for greater protection for individual trustees than was the case in the Charitable Trust. However with this comes added responsibility for adhering to CIO regulations. These responsibilities include a requirement to have and use a number of new policies.

Anne has taken on the task of leading on producing these and work is already complete on Risk Management. Those policies which are in the public domain will be available on the document page of the website.

7.3 AGM Preparations

7.3.1 To Approve Annual Report

The various strands of the Annual Report were discussed and the following observations and decisions were made.

- Minor modifications were agreed to the finance report. Graham to action.
- Recent audience numbers have been disappointing. Our target numbers for the coming season to remain the same.
- Tenor attendance at concerts was disappointing. Maybe a tenor morale boost is required. Paul H will speak to Darius. Paul will ask Maggie to run group sessions for tenors.
- The conversion rate of potential members into auditioned members has fallen. Members need to work harder at making new people feel welcomed.
- The search for a new librarian is still ongoing. This is now becoming urgent. Paul to request volunteer(s) at a rehearsal. There is also a vacancy for a Making Music rep.
- There are 2 new volunteers for member reps. One each from the bass and alto sections.
- All officers were thanked for submitting excellent reports.
- The useful work John Spence has done in the past was recognised. His presentation is in hand for the AGM.

The Annual Report was approved.

7.3.2 To Approve the AGM agenda.

The agenda was approved.

7.3.3 To approve the Notification and Nomination forms.

Approved.

7.3.4 To make arrangements for a social after the AGM

Helen has this in hand.

7.4 Risk Management Policy

This policy was approved and Anne was warmly thanked. Anne and Graham have used it for each concert. In future James will complete the RA.

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It was agreed that the chorus needs to move to a more efficient and safer Cloud based storage system for databases but no action was agreed.

It was agreed to purchase a new laptop, software, and an additional licence for Filemaker. Marianne to action.

Marianne explained that it will not be necessary to delete archive records in order to comply with Data Protection legislation. We need to store them safely for longer term.

Officers and reps of the chorus should now be using the available @SheffPhil email addresses rather than personal addresses. Officers to action.

Darius is planning on meeting with voice reps to discuss the MAR system. Marianne will attend and explain how to use the new email address option.

8. Review of Recent Concerts for Learning Points

Decided to set up a concert and events subcommittee. Permanent members to be James, Paul H and Anne. Paul H will contact James in the first instance and will also convene meetings. Other people will attend as required. Ben, Graham, Sue and Marianne have volunteered to be part of the Messiah planning.

9. Forthcoming Performances

9.1 Rutter Gloria recording 21st October 2019

There are a few remaining tasks on the planner for James to complete.

9.2 After Hours concert 9th November 2019

A piano will not be required. We will use Georgina's keyboard. Paul H will fill in for James who cannot be present at this concert. Paul H will put together and print a programme. It will be double sided with our forthcoming concerts on the reverse.

9.3 Visit to Bochum 8th December 2019

This will now be a small party. There will be no cost to the chorus.

9.4 Christmas Concerts 14th December 2019

No comments or decisions.

9.5 Christmas Electives

1st December 2019 Tickhill. The newly formed subcommittee will organise this concert. Rachel Copley will conduct. It's possible Nigel Gyte and a singer will also take part in an effort to increase the audience. The cost of this is not yet known. Helen will run the raffle and organise prizes. Els will ask Kath Eaden (alto) if she would consider working on publicity for this concert.

9.6 Messiah 26th April 2020

Disquiet was expressed at the relative unsuitability of the Victoria Hall for such a large scale concert. No decision was taken.

9.7 Verdi Requiem 2nd May 2020

No comments or decisions.

9.8 Mahler 20th June 2020

No comments or decisions.

10 Future Possible / Planned Performances

10.1 Mahler 2 10th March 2020

No comments or decisions.

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11 Officer Issues / Reports

11.1 Celebration of long standing members

John Spence will be presented with his gift by Rachel Copley at the upcoming AGM. If Chris Wren is there he will be presented with his score.

11.2 Issues raised by officers at the meeting

None

11.3 Issues raised via members reps.

None

12. Correspondence

None

13. AOB

None

Date and Venue of next meeting.

To be decided