

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus

Minutes of Meeting 12th February 2020

Present

Paul Henstridge; Anne Adams; Graham Dawson; Sally Turnbull; Els Pearse; Marianne Grayson; Helen Kirk; Georgina Hulse; Sue Pennington; James Oliver; Ben Stone; Paul Duffield; Alan Lacey; Anne Burleigh.

Alan and Anne B were welcomed to their first meeting.

1. Apologies

Russell Eagling; Jim Monach.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of October 2019 were agreed to be accurate and signed by the chair.

3. Matters Arising not on the agenda

3.1 Sponsorship of young composers

Agreed to progress this idea. Paul will seek guidance from Darius. The fee we will offer is £500. The composer must be under 30 years of age and have local connections. If the scheme is a success we will consider making it an annual project.

3.2 Concert in Bakewell church in support of their organ appeal

Sally has checked with Bakewell choral society that they are happy for us to perform in this church. Darius has been approached and is considering this. It would be a small scale elective event. Paul will speak to Darius about this.

3.3 Action list

Most items from this list have been completed. The remaining issues were dealt with as follows:

3.3.1 Paul H to consider seeking "ambassadors." No longer relevant. Item removed from action list.

3.3.2 Paul Bedwell to update stationery items in the drop box to include the new logo. Anne A to ask Russell to progress this.

3.3.3 Paul Bedwell to circulate the revised "away" chorus bio. Anne has written this. It was approved.

3.3.4 Rachel Mallaband to investigate the use of "Easy Search." No longer relevant. Item removed from action list.

3.3.5 Anne A to prepare a press release re our new patron Petroc Trelawny and send it to him for approval. Anne has written this and will send it shortly.

3.3.6 Paul Bedwell to commission Paul Boardman to design new banners to include our logo. Anne A will ask Russell to do this,

3.3.7 Anne A to prepare a press release for the Rutter Gloria CD. This will be done when the CD is released.

3.3.8 Helen to organise a Friends event. Friends will now be invited to the Cutlers' Hall party instead.

3.3.9 Paul H has offered honorary membership to David W. No reply yet.

3.3.10 Els has asked Felicity Goodliffe about the chorus Facebook page. Felicity is now considering taking up the librarianship instead. Sally will ask Kath Eadon if she would consider taking over the Facebook role.

3.3.11 Paul H has spoken to Darius about tenors and will do so again.

4. Paid Support

4.1 For the Administrator

Anne A circulated a lengthy list of her tasks. In her view most of the items on the list are best done directly by her rather than being delegated. Anne is of the opinion that there is not enough "regular" work to make it worth paying someone to do it. The tasks she would most like to delegate are those which she has had to undertake which are additional to those in her job spec.

Outcomes:

We will not look for a paid administrator.

James offered to take over all duties associated with the stair climber. He will also do the concert risk assessments, except for Messiah which Paul H will do.

Alan offered to assist in any way Anne may suggest.

Russell has now taken over the marketing and publicity tasks which had largely fallen to Anne over the past year.

4.2 Book Keeping

Graham is still researching various possibilities. We will re-visit this at the next meeting.

5. Recruitment of Men

The "Bring a man Night" brought in lots of new potential singers, a few of whom were women. There are now 15 people on the list to be auditioned later this month. 10 of these are basses. Sadly those tenors whom came initially have dropped out.

~~Next time~~ we will target publicity in male dominated environments.

Georgina's classes went well. She brought draft copies of her new booklet to the meeting and it was warmly approved. She was thanked for her work.

An issue we should have addressed at the start of the process is audition dates. We should have had these in place before inviting new recruits so that experienced new singers could take part in concerts almost immediately. There is also a certain amount of disquiet amongst people on the audition list about which piece they will be expected to sing given that we are currently rehearsing 3 works at the same time. This needs to be clarified asap. Paul to check with Darius

6. Marketing and Publicity for 2019 / 20 season

Anne A has had 2 meetings with Russell and he is up to date on tasks.

7. Governance

7.1 Finance

Graham reported that subs collection is virtually complete with only one outstanding. The new software is helpful at tracking incoming payments. There are 160 paid-up singing members. Some of these are non taxpayers so do not attract gift aid. Some only pay for part of a year or claim the reduced rate. These are off-set by a number of generous members who over-pay on their subscription.

7.2 Transfer to CIO

Graham reported that some 10% of members had new postal addresses so that information on their payment forms did not match that on the database. He has had to cross-check all of these before being able to claim gift aid. This process is almost complete. When the gift aid issue is sorted the final transfer to the CIO can happen.

7.3 Data storage and SPC email addresses

Marianne reported that she is confident we comply with the requirements of GDPR since information we hold on members is only used for the purposes for which it was given and is only accessible to trustees and voice reps.

Data storage is now on the 1 drive. The new database has a membership list which is available to trustees.

Trustees should use their SPC email address not personal email addresses. Anne A will remove any personal email addresses from the website, and add a note to the weekly update about the need to inform SPC of change of address.

Marianne will liaise with Matthew Morgan on updating the website.

7.4 SPC Policy Requirements

Anne A circulated a chart ahead of the meeting indicating the current position on policy writing. Of the five policies which are "Required" four are complete. The 5th, the Reserves Policy, is drafted and Graham and Anne will complete it. There are two policies in the "Strongly Advised" category and these are complete. There are six "Advised" policies. We already had a set of Rules, and Anne will develop the other five – two are in development already. Conclusion – we are in good shape on this issue. Anne was thanked for her work on this.

8. Review of Recent Concerts

8.1 Christmas Concerts City Hall.

The timing of the second concert was deemed to be inappropriate.

8.2 Tickhill Elective.

The committee is in agreement with Rachel Copley on the future of this event. We will not continue with it.

9. Forthcoming Performances / Recordings

9.1 Messiah 18th April 2020.

The planning group for this concert met on 11th Feb and notes were circulated from this meeting.

Additional points:

All arrangements are in hand for ticketing.

A stage manager will be required, ideally drawn from a non-singing member of the chorus.

We will also need a team of front of house people probably volunteers from member's family / friends.

Anne to ask for people to fulfil these roles in the weekly update.

Matthew will ensure that the French singers understand that they are expected to know the work sufficiently well to enable them to look up.

The seating plan will encourage members from the various choirs to mingle – Paul H to compile as James will be absent.

9.2 Verdi Requiem 2nd May 2020.

The conductor's rehearsal at KES on Friday 1st May has a possible room clash with a Tango Weekend. Anne A has made our disappointment clear and suggested that the school will be billed for additional costs should we need to move. It is now likely we can remain in the hall until 9.00pm but no later. An earlier start might be possible if the conductor is available.

A request has been made for a 4* hotel room booking. Anne has offered a home stay. This issue is not yet resolved.

Paul H will collect the conductor from the station on the night of the rehearsal.

All other matters regarding this concert are proceeding in a satisfactory manner.

9.3 Mahler 8th Symphony 20th June

Paul Duffield has now booked the coaches for 3 visits to Manchester. It was agreed that SPC will contribute £2,000 to the bill for coaches (concert promoters to pay the rest). This concert will incur no other costs for us.

We have been instructed to split the vocal scores into 2 parts. We will need the use of a comb binder to secure the second movement music. Paul will ask Darius if the 2 sections have to be re-united before the scores are returned. Anne to add a note to the weekly update.

10. Future Planned Performances / Recordings.

10.1 2020 / 21 Season Outline (STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL and not confirmed)

Fri 6th or Sat 7th November 2020. After Hours concert. Programme to be decided

Sat 12 December Christmas concerts

Thursday 21st Jan 2021 a shortish piece with the Estonian National Orchestra. Programme to be decided

Sunday 7 March 2021 Mahler 2 in the City Hall (see below)

[Type text]

Sat 12th June 2021 in the City Hall a concert promoted jointly by ourselves and the Halle Concert Society. Probably with Manchester Camerata. Programme possibly Faure Requiem but yet to be decided - ideas to Darius.

Possibly Bakewell Church elective. See 3.2

Belshazzler's Feast to feature in the 21/22 season.

10.2 Mahler 2nd Symphony.

Sunday 7th March 2021 City Hall.

Final concert of the Classical Sheffield Festival. The costs of this concert will be shared amongst the various participating groups. Our share will be one sixth of the total. Approx £2.5K. This was approved.

11. Committee Officers Issues / Reports

11.1 The list of long-standing members was considered. Decided to keep existing system of just marking 50 years.

11.2 Issues raised by officers at the meeting. None

11.3 Issues raised by members' reps. None.

12 Correspondence None

13. AOB None