

Date: Wednesday January 18th 2023, 19.00 to 21.49 at Marianne Grayson's home

Present: Anne Adams, Jo Briddock (Chair), Helen Kirk, Marianne Grayson, Jim Monach, Jane Parkin, Christine Pennington, Jenny Swann, Kathy Towers (minutes)

1 Apologies: Patrick Callaghan, Amy Howe, Paul Duffield, Sally Turnbull, Georgina Hulse, Alan Anderson

2 Declaration of any conflicts of interest: There were none.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

3.1 Minutes of meeting held on 19 October 2022 were agreed.

3.2 Matters Arising - outstanding actions were checked and updated (see action list). Amy Howe's action to contact Sheffield magazines to be removed as the latter are known to be expensive. Russell Eagling photos need to be sent to AH. Marianne G reported that the Sharepoint guide is now complete. The purchase of a new music stand is still in progress.

ACTION: AA to upload 19 October Minutes onto SharePoint and onto the Members' Area of the Chorus website.

MG to circulate the Sharepoint guide to trustees.

AA to ask Russell E and Amy H to share the photos taken at St Mark's

4 Governance

4.1 Finance.

4.1.1 Jane P reported that only two subs are outstanding – a considerable improvement on previous years. JP was thanked for her efforts. SPC's current bank balances are Co-op Bank account £45,919.48 and savings account £71,000. The finance reports were approved.

4.1.2 The 2022/23 budget was approved.

4.2 Policies

4.2.1 Role descriptions. It was agreed that these will be reviewed annually as they are invaluable for new committee members. Committee members were invited to look at their allocated tasks to see if any could be usefully delegated to volunteer chorus members.

4.2.2 Safeguarding Policy. The doc has been updated with changes to dates and the substitution of gender-neutral pronouns. Two outstanding corrections required: one he/she needs to be amended to 'they' and the wording needs to be changed so that any concerns are brought to the attention of "trustees" rather to "committee members". The Policy is to be displayed on the members' area of the SPC website. Jim Monach volunteered to assume the role of Safeguarding Officer as he has DBS clearance and was thanked for this by the committee.

4.3 SPC Strategic Plan. The MD has responded with comments on the SPC's overarching purpose/aims. He agrees with trustees that key aims should relate to achieving excellence in performance and reputation, commensurate with a choir that sings with leading

orchestras and conductors. Other desirable objectives should be considered to be secondary. It was agreed that it might be valuable to create and agree a statement of the choir's 'vision'. This should include anything that is considered to be a USP and that might encourage potential new members to choose SPC over other Sheffield choirs. The 'vision statement' will then be shared with chorus members at a rehearsal eg via a large poster that people can sign/comment on.

4.4 Recruitment and Diversity. Ideas were discussed for a concert (eg a summer elective) in the 2023-24 season that would take place elsewhere in the city ie outside the SPC's usual city centre, S10/11 venues. To be explored further at the next meeting.

4.5 Governance Action Plan. Good progress continues to be made against the items listed.

ACTION: ALL to look at their own role descriptions to see if any tasks could easily be delegated to chorus volunteers.

ALL to reflect on a sentence or two about the SPC's vision for discussion at the next meeting.

AA to make the small changes detailed above to the Safeguarding Policy doc and respond to further amendments suggested by Jim Monach.

AA to include in the next Update an appeal for a chorus member to take over website admin. The volunteer must be in a position to respond swiftly when changes need to be made.

AA to finalise the choir's purpose statement and circulate to Maggie and Rachel.

5 Operations.

The issue of chaotic security at the City Hall was raised, for example in relation to SPC members checking in/out at the Stage Door. Trisha Cooper has already complained to the City Hall and it was agreed that there is therefore no need for any further SPC action at the present time.

The committee agreed that the idea of chorus members being given a wristband to facilitate safe / easy entry was an excellent idea and worth exploring.

Trustees discussed the issue of audience members being provided with more details about the music via the concert programme, rather than these being given verbally during a concert. Some audience members have also expressed a desire to have a copy of the words. It was agreed that this should be looked at for forthcoming concerts and that words could be printed out on free A4 sheets that audience members could pick up if they wished.

There is enthusiasm among chorus members for using the organ seats rather than stage seats in the City Hall when numbers allow. It was agreed to continue with the current practice of 'drifting' onto the stage rather than queuing.

ACTION: AA to discuss with Kerry Shakeshaft at the City Hall the idea of choir members wearing an identifiable SPC wristband that will enable them to enter the City Hall quickly and securely.

Jim M to raise with the MD the possibility of using organ seats when numbers allow.

6 2022-23 season

6.1 Young Composer Competition. There have been 13 valid entries which are currently being evaluated by the judges. A shortlist of five will be announced on January 25th and the winning compositions (1st, 2nd and 3rd prize) will be decided at the end of January. It's yet to

be decided whether more than one composition will be performed in the March concert and what form of trophy will be presented. AA is investigating options for the latter.

6.2 Caroline Shaw concert on 4 February 2023. The rehearsal plan has been changed to allow for more time with the conductor. There will now be a choir-only rehearsal from 12.30 – 1pm, followed by a full rehearsal from 1.30 – 2.30pm.

6.3 Mahler 2 19 March 2023. Planning is being done by a group made up of the four collaborating organisations. All is in hand. Trustees agreed the importance of the February 19th fundraiser being well-supported by SPC members. Tickets will shortly be available online and there is a need for three more skills offers for the auction (Peter Miles has already offered one and was thanked by the committee for this).

6.4 Verdi *Requiem* 18 June 2023. All is in hand for this concert. Anne A is investigating possible venues for a rehearsal on the evening of Friday 16th June (eg Springs Academy).

ACTION: JB to remind chorus members, at the next rehearsal, of the importance of the fundraiser on Feb 19 and to encourage people to buy tickets. She will also ask for three more skills offers for the auction.

AA to continue to investigate venues for the Verdi *Requiem* rehearsal on Friday June 16.

7 2023 – 24 season and future projects

7.1 Rutter *Gloria* with Black Dyke band (self-funded concert) in October or November. Details including venue to be finalised. Black Dyke Band are also keen to record a new Christmas CD and would like this to be with SPC. The recording is likely to take place in Autumn 2023 so a venue will be needed. St Oswald's was mentioned as a possibility.

7.2 Christmas Concert City Hall mid-Dec. This will probably be afternoon-only as in 2022.

7.3 Mozart *Requiem* will be performed in Sheffield (SICS), London and Edinburgh on June 21st, 22nd, 23rd.

7.4 It was agreed that a new date after Weds July 10 and before the end of the month would be preferable for the French concert to allow enough time to rehearse and avoid a clash with the Mozart mini-tour. This to be discussed with Matthew Morgan.

7.5 Mahler 8 concert in Chester Cathedral, May/June 2025. To be discussed at a later date.

7.6 Fund-raising elective in Bakewell Church. To be discussed at a later date.

To make a complete season in 2023-24 there will need to be a self-funded concert in March /April 2024, and possibly another in autumn. Possible venues are St Mark's (autumn) and Victoria Hall (Mar/Apr). This to be discussed with Darius.

ACTION: Jo B to discuss 2023-24 season, and suggested July dates for French tour, with the MD

Anne A to report back suggested July dates to Matthew M

8 Committee Officer issues/reports

8.1 Membership. Trustees notes the stable numbers listed in the Membership reports. The group discussed the question of attendance levels and discretionary permission to sing in a concert if the required 75% has not been met. It was felt that attendance is a key element in achieving SPC's aim of excellence and that there is therefore no reason to review/alter this

policy. Chorus members are not able to go to direct to the MD but should make any appeal via their voice rep, as before.

8.2 The committee expressed its gratitude for the continuing hard work of the librarians.

8.3 Social events. Nothing to report other than Feb 19 fund-raiser as above.

ACTION: MG to pass on to Voice Reps the decision to continue with the existing arrangements about attendance and appeals.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 Sue Pennington's paper. There was great enthusiasm for the idea of a carol book such as Yorkshire Carols and the committee was grateful to Sue P for her suggestions. This will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

9.2 A member had asked that Trustees discuss the possibility of making another CD, so the request from Black Dyke Band (see Item 7.1) is very timely.

ACTION: Christine P to feedback the news about making a CD with Black Dyke, to the member(s) who raised the issue.

Items for future agendas

SPC Strategic Plan; Recruitment and Diversity; Concert in a different part of Sheffield; YouTube channel, new CD, contracts, Bring a Man for Verdi Requiem (Sally T), Sue Pennington carol book proposal.

ACTION LIST

From 10.02.22

- Amy H to design new banners with new logo and photo(s) IN PROGRESS Russel Eagling took photos on 12 November, as did Amy Howe's boyfriend
- ~~Amy H to investigate advertising in area magazines especially in S10/11~~ ABANDON

From 14.09.22

- ALL to check that they have uploaded to SharePoint their SPC documents which might be valuable to successors or in emergency IN PROGRESS
- Marianne G to create a guide to using SharePoint and circulate to trustees
- Anne A/Jane P to produce a set of Financial Procedures to include how SPC deals with payments to trustees. IN PROGRESS
- Georgina H to consider initial costs and practical details for setting up a youth choir and come back to the Committee with further suggestions

From 19.10.22

- Georgina H to send details of the RAT music stand to Jane Parkin so one can be purchased.
- ~~Paul H to ask Graham Dawson for more information about the proposed Bochum trip~~ DONE – Bochum will report when they have a new Chair
- Sally T to have sufficient sashes made to provide for new members throughout the season.

From 18.01.23

- AA to upload 19 October Minutes onto SharePoint and Members' Area of the website.
- MG to circulate the Sharepoint guide to trustees.
- AA to ask Russell E and Amy H to share the photos taken at St Mark's
- ALL to look at their own role descriptions to see if any tasks could easily be delegated to chorus volunteers.
- ALL to reflect on a sentence or two about the SPC's vision for discussion at the next meeting.
- AA to make the small changes detailed above to the Safeguarding Policy doc and respond to further amendments suggested by Jim Monach.
- AA to include in the next Update an appeal for a chorus member to take over website admin. The volunteer must be in a position to respond swiftly when changes need to be made.
- AA to finalise the choir's purpose statement and circulate to Maggie and Rachel.
- AA to discuss with Kerry Shakeshaft at the City Hall the idea of choir members wearing an identifiable SPC wristband that will enable them to enter the City Hall quickly and securely.
- Jim M to raise with the MD the possibility of using organ seats when numbers allow.
- Jo B to remind chorus members, at the next rehearsal, of the importance of the fundraiser on Feb 19 and to encourage people to buy tickets. She will also ask for three more skills offers for the auction.
- AA to continue to investigate venues for the Verdi *Requiem* rehearsal on Friday June 16.
- Jo B to discuss 2023-24 season, and suggested July dates for French tour, with the MD
- Anne A to report back suggested July dates to Matthew M
- Marianne G to pass on to Voice Reps the decision to continue with the existing arrangements about attendance and appeals.
- Christine P to feedback the news about making a CD with Black Dyke, to the member(s) who raised the issue.