

MINUTES of 87th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 21st November 2023 at 8.30pm at King Edward VII Upper School, Sheffield

Approximately 110 members present.

1. Apologies for Absence

Hugo Ferguson, Robert Harrison, Ruth Johnson, Jim Monach, Annabel Park, Izzie Rider, Vic Seller and Veronica Sullivan.

2. Minutes of the AGM of 2022

The minutes of the 2022 AGM were proposed as an accurate and true record by Pam Leon seconded by Graham Dawson and approved unanimously via a show of hands. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

There were none.

4. Proposals requiring Member decision

The resolution '*That the annual subscription fee for the 2023 – 24 season be increased to £156 and £42 for the full and concessionary rates respectively.*' was proposed by the Chair on behalf of the trustees.

The Committee recommended the above 4% increases to take account of rises in venue and music hire fees. The increases are below the rate of inflation, to reflect the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on Chorus members' budgets.

An amendment was proposed by Madelene Lake and seconded by Georgina Hulse, namely that the concessionary rate remain fixed at £40 for the forthcoming year.

The amendment was carried by a majority following a show of hands. There were 13 abstentions. The resolution as amended was also carried.

5. Constitution changes

No changes are required.

6. Trustee Annual Report 2022 - 2023

Chairman's comments.

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Jo Briddock was pleased to make her first comments as the new Chair. She observed that 2022 – 2023 had been a rich and varied year, with many positive achievements. She noted that the Chorus had achieved its key purposes and that the journey to achieve charitable status had finally been completed. She added that Chorus membership is growing, the payment of subs has been streamlined and improved, and that the Chorus has been particularly successful in one of its key aims of supporting young musicians (notably via the Stella Jockel Young Composer competition).

She added that the SPC's Vision and Aims/Objectives are currently being defined and finalised, and encouraged those present to review these on the display panels when the formal proceedings were over. Any comments could be made via sticky notes or by sending a follow-up email.

- Administrator's comments

Anne Adams talked about the aims of the Chorus and was pleased to report that the event planning group (EPG) has now been set up and is fully operational.

She outlined plans to expand and enhance the SPC's activities and reach, and appealed in particular for suggestions/ideas as to how to further boost Chorus numbers and how to do more to support young, female and disadvantaged musicians.

She also reported that there will soon be more to report about an exciting new initiative: a project to provide young and aspiring conductors with opportunities.

- Finance Officer's report

Finance Officer Jane Parkin presented the annual accounts. She reported that the Chorus broke even in 2022 – 23 and thanked members for paying their subs on time. She added that some concerts were profitable (eg the self-funded St. Mark's concert) but that the Verdi *Requiem* reported the largest loss because of the high cost of paying soloists and lower-than-desirable ticket sales.

She noted the valuable extra funds from the Stella Jockel bequest, some of which will be allocated to the new Young Conductor in initiative in 2024. The Chair reminded those present that the bequest is ring-fenced for special projects and is never used to subsidise the general activities of the Chorus.

There was a question from the floor (Boo Spurgeon) about ensuring diversity and fairness in how the bequest is spent and the Administrator reassured those present that the Committee is mindful of this concern. The Young Conductor initiative will actively seek to recruit participants from non-traditional/disadvantaged backgrounds, and this approach can also be replicated in the Young Composer competition in 2025.

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- Independent Examiner's report

Richard Pike reported that the accounts and finances were in good order.

- Formal adoption of Trustee Annual Report 2022 – 2023

A vote was taken to agree adoption of the 2023 Annual Report, proposed by Angela Argenzio and seconded by Steve Terry. This was carried unanimously following a show of hands. The report was therefore adopted.

7 Election of Officers and Members' Representatives to the committee

All Trustees must stand down at each AGM. All current Trustees are willing to stand again. Having been proposed and seconded in accordance with procedure, the Officers and Members' Representatives in the table below were elected unopposed.

Position	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded
Chair	Jo Briddock	Rachel Mallaband	Kate Reece
Vice Chair	Steve Terry	Richard Salt	Kathy Towers
Finance Officer	Jane Parkin	Helen Eyre	Jim Monach
Administrator	Anne Adams	Rachel Copley	Graham Dawson
Membership Officer	Marianne Grayson	Anabelle Park	Rebecca Hutton
Librarian	Alan Anderson	Alan Lacey	Boo Spurgeon
New Members Officer	Sally Turnbull	Patrick Callaghan	Pat Hall
Rehearsals and Events Officer	Jim Monach	Duncan Noble-Nesbitt	Paul Henstridge
Social Events Officer	Helen Kirk	John Morgan	Els Pearse
Education and Outreach Officer	Georgina Hulse	Janet Beddus	Catherine Pumphrey
Transport Officer	Paul Duffield	Keith Alford	Corey Wood
Minutes Secretary	Kathy Towers	Steve Terry	Peter Miles
Member Representative	Christine Pennington (Yr 2 of 3)	Su Milchard	Chris Waldren
Member Representative	Jenny Swann (Yr 2 of 3)	Valerie Greaves	Diane Dalby
Member Representative	Patrick Callaghan (Yr 2 of 3)	Anita McKay	Victor Brooks

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus	SHEFFIELD PHILHARMONIC CHORUS	Registered Charity Number 1175185
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Member Rep	VACANCY		
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All officers were duly elected following a show of hands.

8. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Richard Pike was thanked for his excellent work as Independent Examiner. Having agreed to continue in 2024, he was duly re-appointed as Independent Examiner.

9. Chair's Remarks

On behalf of the members, Jo Briddock thanked the Committee for their hard work in supporting the Chorus and looked forward to working with them in the year to come.

She made a special vote of thanks for the work of our three professionals, Music Director Darius Battiwalla, Accompanist Rachel Fright and Voice Coach Maggie McDonald, to whom the Chorus owes a debt of gratitude.

Hearty applause signified agreement.

10. President's Remarks

President Rachel Copley spoke with warmth and enthusiasm about the 2022-23 season, drawing attention in particular to major concerts such as the Verdi Requiem and the Classical Sheffield finale concert, and to the success of the Young Composer competition.

She observed that the concert at St. Mark's (which included two of the Young Composer pieces) had been particularly challenging in terms of musical difficulty but that this proved to be a positive and enriching experience. She felt that the Chorus should be encouraged by this success and should therefore feel equal to taking on further musical challenges.

She also spoke more generally about the power of music and of singing together, particularly when personal and world events present difficulties. Hearty applause signified that members agreed with her moving comments about the transformative benefits of belonging to a Chorus like the SPC.

The meeting was closed at 9.05pm.