

Wednesday 4 September 7pm – 9.50pm

Present: Anne Adams, Alan Anderson, Jo Briddock (Chair), Kirsty Christer, Jane Parkin, Jenny Swann, Kathy Towers (minutes).

Apologies: Paul Duffield, Steve Terry, Sally Turnbull, Marianne Grayson, Patrick Callaghan, Jim Monach and Helen Kirk.

MINUTES

1 Apologies and reading of Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

2 Declaration of any conflicts of interest

There were none.

3 3.1 Minutes of meeting held on 9 July 2024 were approved as a true record.

3.2 Matters Arising - Actions from previous meeting.

The Carol Book is in progress with Jenny Swann and Sue.

The Chorus Survey has been created and all members of the Committee were happy with its content and operation.

Venue survey – still in progress. It was agreed that there is a need to review further options. JB volunteered to look at Notre Dame and All Saints, Granville Rd. Other possibilities for investigation include schools in the Mercia chain, the Yellow Arch Warehouse and the Church on Brocco Bank. Volunteers needed for these sites.

ACTION: JB TO VISIT AND REPORT ON NOTRE DAME AND ALL SAINTS

The Young Composer competition is in hand with AA and to be launched soon.

Ceilidh Social – it was reported that a quote of £1000 had been received from a ceilidh band and it was agreed that this was too much. Alan A suggested a band his daughter knows of as an alternative.

ACTION: Alan A TO FORWARD CONTACT DETAILS FOR HIS DAUGHTER TO HELEN KIRK.

Uploading sound files to Youtube: Kirsty Christer volunteered to investigate possible clips that could be used with the MD's agreement. An excerpt from the R4 How to Play programme was suggested – or posting a link to the full programme.

ACTION: KC TO TAKE FORWARD SOURCING SOUND FILES FOR YOUTUBE

ACTION: JB TO CHECK WITH R4 PRODUCER CHRIS TAYLOR WHETHER EXCERPTS WOULD BE AVAILABLE, INCLUDING ANY MATERIAL THAT WASN'T INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAMME.

New payment deadline for subs

ACTION: AA TO CHECK WHETHER THE PAYMENT DEADLINE DATE APPEARS IN THE CONSTITUTION BEFORE UPCOMING AGM

4 Governance

4.1 Finance

4.1.1 The Crystal report and Financial report were approved.

JP reported on recent activities and expenditure. It was confirmed that the French trip (showing as almost £1,000 in deficit) will lose apx £450 - £500 in the end, due to payments which came in after the end of the financial year. There is an anticipated loss over the coming season of apx £14,000 although this includes £8,000 for the Stella Jockel Young Composer competition, so -£6,000.

The subs increases to £168 and £42 (concessionary) were approved. It was pointed out that SPC is still more 'competitive' than other Sheffield choirs (eg Bach Choir). This should be highlighted at the AGM when the increases are tabled.

ACTION: AA TO INCLUDE MENTION OF THE COMPETITIVENESS OF SPC SUBS IN THE AGENDA RESOLUTION.

ACTION: AA TO CONFIRM TO MAGGIE THAT THE FEE INCFREASE FOR PROFESSIONALS IS NOT RETROSPECTIVE.

4.1.2 Budgets

- 2023-24 budget (see 2023-24 Budget spreadsheet) was approved
- 2024 -25 budget was approved although it was noted that this doesn't yet include the Come & Sing. There are potential ticket sales to participants of apx £2,000 which would require a slight improvement on the previous event's attendance. The budget will be adjusted when Come & Sing figures are finalised.
- 2022-2025 (3 year) budget was deferred to the next meeting.

JP was thanked for her work in preparing the reports and budgets.

ACTION: JP TO PRODUCE AN ANNUAL SUMMARY OF STELLA JOCKEL COMPETITION COSTS

4.2 Equality Diversity and Inclusion, including recruitment and retention

The Chorus Survey, which trustees had scrutinised via email, was approved (see above) and Boo and Marianne were thanked for their work on this. The Survey will be included in the annual subscription form as a weblink.

4.3 SPC Strategic Plan: to review progress against targets in the Strategic and Governance Action Plan.

Items in amber on the Plan are in progress. Items in red on the Plan are to be completed as soon as possible by the nominated individuals, including the priorities listed below which were highlighted:

ACTION: JM AND MG TO CHECK ON THE POSITION RE. FIRST AIDERS

ACTION: LAST-MINUTE STAND-IN CONDUCTOR AND ACCOMPANIST TO BE CONFIRMED

ACTION: ALTHOUGH AA HAS APPROACHED ALEX BURN TO WRITE CONCERT REVIEWS WHEN SHE CAN, IT WAS AGREED THAT MORE REVIEWERS ARE NEEDED. ANNE A TO APPROACH MUSIC DEPARTMENTS AT SHEFFIELD UNIS TO OFFER STUDENTS A FREE TICKET IN EXCHANGE FOR A REVIEW THAT CAN BE SENT TO LOCAL MEDIA (SHEFFIELD TELEGRAPH, YORKSHIRE POST ETC).

ACTION: AA TO CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION: JS TO START CREATING AN ANNUAL AWARDS CALENDAR WITH OPPORTUNITIES, CATEGORIES AND DEADLINES ETC.

ACTION: JS TO SPEAK TO JOE BANERJEE ABOUT CONCERT REVIEWS AND ANY CONTACTS HE MAY HAVE

ACTION: ANNE A TO CONTINUE TO TAKE FORWARD HIRE AGREEMENTS

It was also agreed that it would be worthwhile to share the latest Strategic Aims with the Chorus at the upcoming AGM/Social. This would be done in the same way as last year ie a display board with key Aims plus actions to which Chorus members can respond via post-its (or via email afterwards).

ACTION: ANNE A TO SUPPLY CURRENT KEY AIMS AND ACTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN THE DISPLAY

4.4 Policies

4.4.1 Public Benefit Guidance 2024

The document was approved and trustees agreed that SPC had met its public benefit responsibilities. Anne A was thanked for her work in researching and preparing this.

4.4.2 MD Agreement

The Committee agreed on the version of the wording re. payment for that includes 15 minute provision.

ACTION: ANNE A TO AMEND THE HIRE AGREEMENT DOCUMENT WITH THE APPROVED WORDING AND PROGRESS ITS USE WITH THE MD

4.5 Trustee structure

4.5.1 Repertoire Sub-Committee: to agree membership

It was agreed that members of the Repertoire Sub-Committee will be the MD, MG, Anne A and JB as well as one Chorus Rep – to be confirmed. More members can be added if needed in the future.

The Chorus Rep to be a volunteer – selection/nomination method to be confirmed as soon as possible.

ACTION: JB TO PROPOSE A DATE FOR A REPERTOIRE SUB-COMMITTEE ZOOM MEETING AS A MATTER OF URGENCY

4.5.2 Repertoire and Event Planning sub-groups: to agree terms and conditions

T&Cs stated in the paper were agreed by the Committee.

Alan A volunteered to join the EPG and he was thanked; it was agreed that he would make a valuable addition to the team.

4.6 SPC Friends

It was agreed that a volunteer is needed to look at the recommendations and take forward appropriate strategies. KT volunteered to review the paper and inform the Committee at the next meeting whether she is able to take on all or some of the tasks.

ACTION: KT TO REPORT BACK TO THE COMMITTEE ABOUT THE FRIENDS PROGRAMME AND HER OWN INVOLVEMENT.

4.7 AGM

4.7.1 AGM AGENDA – to approve

The Agenda was approved with the addition below.

ACTION: AA TO ADD TO ITEM 4 (SUBS INCREASES) WORDING TO THE EFFECT THAT “SOME SHEFFIELD CHOIRS HAVE REACHED SUBS OF £200”.

It was agreed that at the AGM JB should draw attention to the need for more Chorus members to take on administrative/support tasks. She will also mention the requirement in October 2025 for a new Administrator to replace Anne A who is standing down. A transition / handover period will be very important for this crucial role.

ACTION: ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO REFLECT ON POSSIBLE REPLACEMENT ADMINISTRATORS AND PASS ANY SUGGESTIONS TO JB AND AA FOR DISCUSSION.

4.7.2 Trustee Annual Report – to be approved

This Report is submitted to the Charities Commission and HMRC. AA drew attention to the latest revisions and amendments and the Committee was happy with these. The Report was approved and Anne A was thanked for her considerable work on this. JB, MG and ST were thanked for their contributions.

4.7.3 AGM Nomination Form, communications and previous Minutes.

The Minutes were approved.

The Nomination Form was approved.

Comms for the 88th AGM: there were two errors in the first paragraph.

ACTION: AA TO CORRECT TWO ERRORS IN FIRST PARAGRAPH OF AGM COMMS DOCUMENT

ACTION: AA TO AMEND WORDING TO ‘WE ARE HOPING TO HOLD OUR USUAL CHEESE AND WINE EVENING’

ACTION: AA TO EMAIL BIRKDALE TO REQUEST PERMISSION FOR THE CHEESE AND WINE EVENING

5. Operations

5.1 Learning points following French Mini Tour

MG’s learning points about the Tour were shared. The tour was a tremendous success.

It was agreed that the WhatsApp group was very useful in sharing information and arrangements. Points to be implemented for future Tours are as follows:

- More information to be posted on the SPC website to minimise enquiries.
- Costs and budget to be made as clear as possible at the outset.
- All communications with the Tour organiser should be on the phone or in person, then subsequently confirmed by email.
- The Tour organiser should have an assistant to helping manage the workload both before and during the Tour.

NB An idea for a future Tour was to visit Bruges with the Flanders Symphony Orchestra.

5.2 Rehearsal Venue Alternatives

See Action point above

5.3 Voice exchange

MG has consulted with the MD re. which concerts would benefit from the exchange arrangements. The Boulanger and Creation have been nominated as suitable.

ACTION: MG TO CONTACT VOICE EXCHANGE CHOIRS RE. BOULANGER AND CREATION

5.4 Marketing and Publicity – to approve draft plan

Kirsty Christer was present for this item and shared details of her marketing proposals. She reported that the Radio 4 How to Play broadcast attracted thousands of views on Facebook and has been excellent publicity for the Chorus.

All agreed with her comment that more high-quality visual and audio materials are needed to enliven social media output and the website. Any audio materials will need to be of excellent quality if they are to be posted and made accessible to the public.

ACTION: AA TO APPROACH RUSSELL TO TAKE NEW PHOTOS (EG AT THE AGM) WITH A FOCUS ON CLOSE-UPS OF MEMBERS SINGING/CHATTING/INTERACTING ETC.

It was reported that links to the SPC website from external sites are by the far the best way of optimising visits to the site (SEO).

Kirsty also highlighted the publicity value of collaborations with other local music organisations such as English Touring Opera (newly located to Sheffield).

ACTION: ANNE A TO PASS TO KC ANY CONTACTS WHO MIGHT BE OF USE FOR COLLABORATIVE APPROACHES

ACTION: JB TO PASS ON TO KC HER CONTACT AT HARMONY WORKS

The Committee thanked Kirsty for her work on the Marketing Plan and was enthusiastic about her ideas, giving the go-ahead to her proposals for the coming season.

6. 2023-24 season: French Mini Tour

See learning points above.

7. 2024 – 25 Season

The EPG report was viewed and key items needing decision were discussed.

A date for the Come & Sing must be agreed as a matter of urgency. The Venue in Stocksbridge looks ideal but a date is needed so that it can be booked.

ACTION: JB TO DISCUSS THE COME & SING WITH THE MD TO AGREE THE MUSIC AND THE DATE – EITHER MAY 17 OR 24 DESIRABLE TO COINCIDE WITH BOCHUM VISIT AND TWINNING CELEBRATIONS AND AVOID CLASHES WITH MAJOR EVENTS.

ACTION: JS TO CHECK WHETHER STOCKSBRIDGE VENUE WOULD BE AVAILABLE ON MAY 17 OR 24, ALSO CC'ING AA SO SHE CAN TAKE FORWARD AS APPROPRIATE.

ACTION: THE EPG TO FOCUS ON THE PRACTICALITIES OF PLANNED EVENTS IN THE NEXT SEASON, AND RPG TO FOCUS ON REPERTOIRE AND THE FORWARD PLANNING OF EVENTS THAT MEET SPC'S STRATEGIC AIMS.

8. Future Projects

These to be reviewed by the Repertoire Planning Group as appropriate.

9. Committee Officer issues/reports

9.1 Sue Milchard has been offered and accepted Honorary Membership.

9.2 Summer Social feedback

It was agreed that the Social was a huge success in a beautiful setting.

9.3 Concert dress – women’s sashes

ACTION: ANNE A TO CREATE A SHORT SURVEY TO GATHER MEMBERS’ VIEWS

9.4 Flowers and card for Rachel Copley’s 80th birthday

ACTION: JB TO ORGANISE AND PRESENT THESE AT THE REHEARSAL ON SEPTEMBER 10 (OR ANNE A TO TAKE TO RACHEL’S HOUSE IF SHE ISN’T PRESENT)

9.4 Other issues – Lili Boulanger scores

Alan A reported that he has had to make photocopies to generate sufficient Lili Boulanger scores for the first rehearsal(s). The photocopies will be destroyed when additional copies arrive – the problem is only one UK supplier.

It was agreed that it will be worthwhile for SPC to have difficult-to-source scores like these to offer for hire via the website.

The score-hire initiative to be added to the Agenda of a future meeting.

10. Any Other Business

Tenor Bursaries have been offered to Joe Banerjee and Chris Kingdom. MG has said that she thinks she can secure sponsorship for this scheme next year if it exceeds the agreed budget.

It was reported that a small number of members of Sheffield Chamber Choir have asked to audition for SPC.

The Committee expressed its thanks to Marianne for offering use of her house in her own absence and for the very thoughtful hamper of refreshments that she provided.

Date of Trustee meetings: 9 Oct 24, 6 Nov 24

Items for future agenda:

YouTube channel, new CD, new banners, SPC score-hire service, Chorus Rep on Repertoire Sub-Committee

ACTION LIST

From 8 March 2023

- **GH and JS** plus Sue Pennington and Helen Eyre to meet to develop a feasibility study re the proposed book of the MD’s arrangements. IN PROGRESS

From 10 January 2024

- **EPG** to flesh out ideas for making self-funded concerts more popular and financially successful (eg concert with youth choir, twinning with school or youth choir, video game music) also meeting SPC’s

aims of inclusiveness and diversity ~~IN PROGRESS~~ RESPONSIBILITY PASSED TO REPERTOIRE PLANNING GROUP

- ~~JM to investigate Making Music Awards~~ **DONE**

From 13th March 2024

- ~~KT to investigate expanding the SPC Friends programme~~ **DONE**
- JB, AA and PC to meet to finalise the risk management policy as a matter of priority.
- ~~BS and MG to organise to survey the chorus re diversity eg via Survey Monkey~~ **DONE**
- People responsible for evaluating each new venue to be allocated **IN PROGRESS**
- AA to prepare paperwork for next Young Composer competition. **IN PROGRESS**
- HK to investigate and take forward possibility of an autumn Ceilidh. **IN PROGRESS**
- MG to ask Cath Eadon if she is able/willing to upload selected soundfiles to the Youtube channel. ~~MG HAS ASKED MATTHEW FOR SOUND FILES TO UPLOAD. DONE~~ **TAKEN OVER BY KIRSTY CHRISTER**
- AA to ask Silver Plate (college restaurant) for potential dates for 2025 for President's Dinner. **DONE – THERE IS NO AVAILABILITY IN 2025**

From 15 May 2024

- MG to prepare a survey seeking member input re repertoire **SCHEDULED FOR THE NEW YEAR**
- ~~AA to bring forward preparations for the AGM to enable the new earlier date, and include on the agenda the change to the Constitution as agreed in Item 4.4.2~~ **DONE; NO NEED FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE**
- ~~AA to make the agreed amendments and upload the new version onto Sharepoint and the Chorus website~~ **DONE**
- ~~KT to ask Rachel for her own recording (by email) as a recording is required for the submission.~~ **DONE**
- ~~JM to investigate what other information is required and to collate MD's and other judges' notes/comments for the submission.~~ **ABANDONED – DEADLINE MISSED**
- ~~ST to ask for potential candidates via the Hallam Journalism course. Comp tickets would be a carrot.~~ **DONE**
- ~~JM also suggested Paul Allen (ex Kaleidoscope R4) and will contact him. Comp tickets would be offered.~~ **DONE**
- ~~GH to check out St Mary's Bramall Lane and Bent's Green Methodist Church.~~ **DONE**
- Trustees to check out venues local to them using the checklist and report back **IN PROGRESS**
- ~~GH to talk to Kirsty about Canva as a software for producing high quality materials.~~ **DONE**
- ~~MG to remind the MD that June 4 can't now be a half-rehearsal.~~ **DONE**
- ~~JP to calculate exact cost when she has all the latest figures.~~ **DONE**
- ~~MG TO email participants to inform them that costs have risen and asking if people can contribute more to reflect this. This will be included in the email about rehearsals.~~ **DONE**

- ~~MG to ask Matthew Morgan for a list of people who have already contributed £40 and to request that he doesn't send any further communications about money until the current situation is clarified. DONE~~
- ~~KT to send MG potential wording. —DONE~~

FROM 4 SEPTEMBER 2024

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