

Tues 9 July 2024 7pm – 10.00pm

Present: Alan Anderson, Rosemary Anderson, Anne Adams, (AA), Jo Briddock (JB) (Chair), Patrick Callaghan, (PC), Georgina Hulse, (GH), Marianne Grayson, (MG), Helen Kirk, (HK), Jim Monach, (JM), Christine Pennington, (minutes) (CP), Paul Duffield, (PD), Jane Parkin (JP) (part of meeting).

Apologies: Jenny Swann, (JS), Steve Terry, Kathy Towers, Sally Turnbull.

MINUTES

- 1 Apologies and reading of Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- 2 Declaration of any conflicts of interest
- 3 3.1 Minutes of meeting held on 15 May 2024 were approved as a true record.
- 3.2 Matters Arising

Actions from previous meeting

Yorkshire Carol book, still in progress with GH, JS, and Sue Pennington.

Making Music Awards, JM reported we were abandoning this action now as deadline has passed and unable to provide necessary evidence.

Young Composer competition, in progress with AA.

Autumn Ceilidh, agreed to postpone possibility of this till after Xmas as so much on in autumn.

Unpaid subs, all members now paid up after action from JB.

4 Governance

4.1 Finance

4.1.1

The committee agreed to JP's recommended increases for professionals. The increases approved are as follows and these are based on an inflation rate of 2.3% in April 2024;

	Session fees	Retention fee
Music director	£226	£1,075
Accompanist	£112	£360
Voice coach	£202	

Concert fee for Darius increased to £560.

ACTION: JP to write to all 3 professionals to inform them of the agreed increase to their fees for 2024-25.

There was discussion on how to pay Darius, Maggie and Rachel Fright for extra hours worked on reauditions when they are tagged onto the end of rehearsals, they don't always claim for

the extra time worked, even though it is in their current contracts that they will be paid for time worked. It was noted they may prefer to do them as extra sessions outside of normal rehearsals but extra travelling needed may influence this.

ACTION: MG to ask Darius, Rachel Fright and Maggie whether they would prefer extra sessions for reauditions or to tag them onto the end of rehearsals.

The committee agreed to JP’s proposal to increase members’ subscription fees by 8%. This would result in the following fees, it was agreed the reduced rate would be £42 for a full year.

8% increase		
Subs	Full	Reduced
1 year	£168	£42
2 terms	£112	£28
1 term	£56	£14

It was also agreed that undergraduate students should have free membership for the duration of their undergraduate study. All other students, including postgraduates should pay the reduced rate.

4.1.2 Budgets

The Crystal report and Financial report were approved.

4.1.3

- 2023-24 budget

There was discussion on why we are forecasting an overall loss including on the Mozart tour, the Come and Sing and the Victoria Hall concert.

Rachel Copley has not submitted an invoice for the Bents Green concert.

ACTION: AA to ask Rachel Copley to send an invoice to JP for the Bents Green concert.

French tour – there are still outstanding costs to clarify with Matthew Morgan.

ACTION: JB to write to Matthew Morgan to ask participants to pay their contributions immediately to JP.

ACTION: JP to rename coach costs for the French trip to “participant costs” for clarity.

ACTION: JP to separate out stairclimber costs from admin and IT on budgets from now on for clarity.

ACTION: Once all above action points implemented, JP to finalise 2023-24 budget and send round to committee for final sign off.

- 2024-25 budget

In order to improve income it was agreed to charge a flat rate of £5 for music hire to each member for each concert, regardless of actual cost.

ACTION: JP to reflect changed music hire costs in 2024-25 budget onwards, and to update with new agreed professional fees and member fees, the latter subject to approval at the AGM.

The City Hall formula which dictates how much the chorus receives for City Hall concerts was discussed, noting the sensitivity of this and the imminent changes in ownership of the City Hall.

ACTION: JB to ask Darius if it is the appropriate time to renegotiate this formula with the City Hall.

- 2022-2025 (3 year) budget

It was agreed to defer the 3 year budget to next time.

The committee thanked JP for all her work on the budgets.

4.2 Equality Diversity and Inclusion, including recruitment and retention

4.2.1 Diversity survey

This is in progress with MG and Boo Spurgeon E and D officer.

4.2.2 Recruitment especially of tenors

There was discussion and agreement on the positive contribution made by the extra tenors to the Mozart concerts. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to pay a bursary to prospective tenors in the future.

4.3 SPC Strategic Plan and Governance Action Plan

Review of outstanding actions on the Strategic Plan

Row 30 – Finalise programme for 2024-25, self-funded concert – in progress with Darius and JB.

Row 34 – Review and agree Reserves Policy – agreed see 4.4.2

Row 35 – Review financial procedures as part of annual finance review – in progress with AA and JP.

Row 46 – Seek and make good use of a reviewer for all concerts – Alex Burns will review our concerts in return for a free ticket assuming no clash with a Halle concert which she must prioritise – Steve Terry’s suggestion of Hallam university journalism students, it was agreed that they can only do a review if they are suitably familiar with classical music.

Row 47 – Seek ways to increase percentage concert participation – put MG as lead for this

Row 50 – Enter SPC or SPC member in Making Music awards – not now being done, see 3.2 above.

ACTION: AA to amend Strategic Plan with the above updates.

4.4 Policies

4.4.1 Risk Management Policy (see paper)

This was approved.

4.4.2 Reserves policy (see paper)

This was approved.

ACTION: AA to put these two policies into the Governance Action Plan.

4.5 Trustee structure

It was agreed that the full committee should meet every two months as now, and that we should look for suitable opportunities for sub-committees including a repertoire sub-committee and an external events/tours committee to ease the work of the EPG.

4.6 SPC Friends Scheme (see paper)

The committee agreed with all KT's suggestions in her paper. Kirsty Christer will be asked to implement them and work through the practical details.

ACTION: JB to go back to KT and inform her of agreement to her suggestions. JB to draft the proposed newsletters.

5 Operations

5.1 Brief review of learning points from Mozart tour.

PD thanked AA and MG for their challenging work on sorting the transport issues for the tour.

There was discussion on the sometimes conflicting guidance on concert stage procedure.

ACTION: JM, MG and AA to review the concert stage procedure.

There was discussion on a couple of issues which arose at the concerts/rehearsals and all agreed that committee members should call out inappropriate behaviour where they see it, in a diplomatic manner.

ACTION: AA to amend the chorus rules to clarify about use of mobile phones in rehearsals and concerts.

5.2 Rehearsal Venue alternatives

Reports on various venues were discussed.

Bents Green Church – piano not suitable. St Mary's possible, Darius would need to check the piano. St Andrew's Psalter Lane, good but expensive, £240 per session, but no second rehearsal room. Wesley Hall Crookes, not available Tuesdays. Holy Trinity Millhouses not suitable.

5.3 **Voice Exchange – Jo I've got nothing on this in the minutes, was there anything to add?**

5.4 Marketing and Publicity Update

AA met with Kirsty Christer who is making good progress as the new M and P officer. Kirsty is working on a marketing plan. It was noted we need to get her full admin rights on Facebook.

ACTION: GH volunteered to talk to Kirsty about Canva as a software for producing high quality materials.

6 2023-24 season: progress reports from the EPG

6.1 French trip (see EPG report paper)

AA reported that all outstanding actions for this on the report were now complete.

6.2 23-24 Young Conductor Sponsorship

This is all sorted apart from confirming Darius's fee for this which will be less than the amount budgeted for.

- 7 2024-25 season: Updates from Event Planning Group (EPG)
All in progress.
- 7.1 Fri 15 Nov 2024, City Hall SICS - Lily Boulanger piece
- 7.2 Sat 14 Dec 2024, Christmas Carol Concert at City Hall SICS
- 7.3 Sun 15 Dec 2024, St Luke's Carol Service, elective
- 7.4 Sun 23 Mar 2025, final concert Classical Sheffield Festival Weekend, Young Composer Competition winner(s), two new works commissioned by Stephen Johnson, Faure *Requiem* (self-funded, part-sponsored by Stephen Johnson)
- 7.5 April/May 2025 – MD suggests another Come and Sing – non-trad venue? Needs to be as profitable as possible as rest of season will make a loss
- 7.6 Sun 8 Jun 2025 City Hall SICS – Haydn *Creation* Halle.
- 7.7 Stella Jockel Young Composer Competition 2025 (funded from legacy) – 2 poets KT and Susie Wilson are discussing how this will work, which poem will be used.
- ACTION: JM confirmed that the misunderstanding on the souvenir programme had been clarified and appropriate action would be taken by him.**
- 8 Future Projects
Deferred until next meeting.
- 9 Committee Officer issues/reports
- 9.1 Membership Update and HM appointments
MG reported we have 156 active members, up from 151 at the start of the season. There are 165 members in total.
It was agreed to offer Su Milchard HM and to send her flowers and a card in recognition of her long membership.
ACTION: HK to send flowers and card to Su Milchard.
It was noted that it will be Rachel Copley's 80th birthday in August and it was agreed to mark the occasion with flowers and a card at the first rehearsal in September.
- 9.2 Summer Social: 13th August, 6.30pm start.
HK reported this is all in progress, the event is now full with c30 members due to attend.
- 9.3 Concert dress
The issue of sashes for the ladies concert dress was discussed along with the wider suggestion of relaxing the rules on what can be worn, eg to allow lace. PC proposed we should not wear sashes for the next couple of concerts, this would leave us time to conduct a survey of the ladies to gain views on whether to continue with sashes and whether to widen/relax the rules on what can and cannot be worn.
ACTION: MG to tell ST that there is no urgent need to reorder material for sashes.
ACTION: CP to take forward surveying the ladies to gain views on concert dress.

9.4 Issues raised by other officers
HK asked if she could be a full member of the EPG and invited to all its meetings.

10 Any other business
Nothing was raised.

Date of Trustee meetings: 4 Sept 24, (required to approve AGM papers) 6 Nov 24, 16 Jan 25, 19 Mar 25, 14 May 25, 16 July 25.

Date of AGM: 1 October 2024

The dates of trustee meetings and the AGM were approved. It was noted that in order to meet the deadline for the October AGM, much work would need to be done by committee members over the summer to prepare papers.

ACTION: JB to forewarn Richard Pike of the earlier AGM in order for him to fulfil his role of externally approving the financial papers.

Items for future agenda:

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.

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**
- **JM** to investigate Making Music Awards **IN PROGRESS**

From 13th March 2024

- ~~AA to check the latest version of the inclusion and diversity policy is on Sharepoint. DONE, also on website in Members Area~~
- **KT** to investigate expanding the SPC Friends programme **IN PROGRESS**
- ~~AA to send KT any info she has.~~
- ~~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 **IN PROGRESS**
- ~~MG to take forward the voice exchange initiative as detailed in the governance action plan. DONE~~
- ~~AA to create checklist for new venues to be formalised. DONE~~
- People responsible for evaluating each new venue to be allocated **IN PROGRESS**

- AA to prepare paperwork for next Young Composer competition. **IN PROGRESS**
- ~~JM to request a meeting with Birkdale deputy head/head via his contact Michelle. JM to attend this with AA. **DONE but no meeting agreed**~~
- AA to confirm to Kirsty Christer that the role is a paid one. The existing contract can be shared with her. **DONE**
- JM to liaise with MD to make necessary arrangements for vic hall concert. **DONE**
- Outstanding performer contract to be signed for Vic hall concert – Shaun Brines. AA to expedite. **DONE**
- AA to circulate details of Mozart mini tour as soon as these become available. **DONE**
- ~~HK to investigate and take forward possibility of an autumn Ceilidh. HK IS LOOKING INTO VENUES AND IDEAS. CROOKES SOCIAL CLUB MOOTED AS POSSIBLE VENUE?~~
- 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.
- ~~MG to offer honorary membership to departing member Malcolm Johnson. **DONE**~~
- AA to ask Silver Plate (college restaurant) for potential dates for 2025 for President's Dinner. **IN PROGRESS**

From 15 May 2024

- ~~AA and JB etc agree a date for an urgent meeting to discuss this issue.~~
- ~~Jo B to write to each and cc JP so she can arrange payment.~~
- MG to prepare a survey seeking member input re repertoire
- 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
- AA to make the agreed amendments and upload the new version onto Sharepoint and the Chorus website
- ~~JB to contact members who still haven't paid and remind them of the current Chorus rules.~~
- ~~JP to provide JB with a list of names.~~
- ~~AA to change 'immediately' to 'within 48 hours' on the website in the sentence about the wait before audition results are passed on to the auditionee.~~
- 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.
- ST to ask for potential candidates via the Hallam Journalism course. Comp tickets would be a carrot.
- JM also suggested Paul Allen (ex Kaleidoscope R4) and will contact him. Comp tickets would be offered.
- GH to check out St Mary's Bramall Lane and Bent's Green Methodist Church.
- Trustees to check out venues local to them using the checklist and report back
- GH to talk to Kirsty about Canva as a software for producing high quality materials.

- MG to remind the MD that June 4 can't now be a half rehearsal.
- JP to calculate exact cost when she has all the latest figures.
- 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.
- 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.
- KT to send MG potential wording. DONE

From 9 July 2024

- JP to write to all 3 professionals to inform them of the agreed increase to their fees for 2024-25.
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- JB to write to Matthew Morgan to ask participants to pay their contributions immediately to JP.
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- AA to put these two policies into the Governance Action Plan.
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