

Wednesday 6 November 7pm – 9.45pm

**Present:** Anne Adams, Alan Anderson, Jo Briddock (Chair), Patrick Callaghan, Paul Duffield, Marianne Grayson, Georgina Hulse, Helen Kirk, Jim Monach, Kathy Towers (Minutes), Sally Turnbull.

Apologies: Annie Park, Jane Parkin, Jenny Swann.

## MINUTES

### **1 Apologies and reading of Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

### **2 Declaration of any conflicts of interest**

There were none.

### **3 Previous Meetings**

3.1 Minutes of meeting held on September 4th 2024 were approved as a true record.

3.2 Matters Arising - Actions from previous meeting.

It was agreed that the Ceilidh will take place in Spring 2026.

ACTION: HK to book Crookes Social Club. This social gathering to involve a fund-raising element eg a raffle.

The new management company takes over the City Hall in January 2025.

ACTION: AA to put out feelers as to new arrangements for payments to SPC etc.

The Christmas newsletter is due soon.

ACTION: JB TO DRAFT.

The issue of concert stage procedure not always being followed was raised.

ACTION: JM to remind members of protocols.

JM observed that SPC scores for loan are not listed on the Making Music website as yet.

ACTION: PC volunteered to take on the role of promoting the SPC's score loan service and was thanked for this by the Committee. He will first look at logistics and modus operandi etc.

ACTION: JM to share with PC details for access to the Making Music account.

### **4 Governance**

#### **4.1 Finance**

4.1.1 The Crystal report and Financial report were approved.

JB summarised Jane Parkin's accompanying notes in her absence. The loss incurred by the French tour has reduced significantly.

The loss for the current season is estimated to be between £2000 - £3500 as the costs of the Stella Jockel competition are covered by the legacy.

With regard to subs, over 100 members have paid or made arrangements to do so.

ACTION: JP to chase up stragglers.

PC voiced the need to look at the long-term sustainability of the SPC and all agreed on the importance of this. The issue should be added as an Agenda item for a future meeting, or it might be appropriate to create a new sub-committee to explore ideas and strategies.

#### 4.1.2 Budgets

2024 -25 budget was approved.

AA pointed out that some figures are necessarily approximate. Because costs have mostly been over-estimated, any losses are expected to be lower than indicated.

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

#### 4.2 Equality Diversity and Inclusion, including recruitment and retention

MG reported that 82 members have so far completed the EDI survey.

ACTION: AA to add the survey link to the Update after a verbal reminder to Chorus members at a rehearsal after the next concert.

It was also drawn to the Committee's attention that the Bach Choir makes special joint subs provision for couples who cannot both sing in the same concert because of childcare commitments.

ACTION: MG to raise this issue with the MD to ascertain his opinion of offering such an arrangement at SPC.

#### 4.3 SPC Strategic Plan 2024 - 2025

The Strategic and Governance Action Plan was reviewed with particular attention paid to items in red cf

ACTION: JM to ask Peter Verity about being the nominated stand-in conductor.

ACTION: AA to add a call for one additional First Aider to the Update.

ACTION: AA to upload the AGM Minutes to Sharepoint.

ACTION: MG to ask JP and DB about back-ups choir files and where these are held.

#### 4.4 Policies

##### 4.4.1 MD Agreement

AA reported that the MD is largely happy with the agreement in its current form. The wording will be used as a basis for forthcoming agreements with Maggie and Rachel.

##### 4.4.2 SPC Application Form

ACTION: MG to amend the wording with regard to disabilities to include the phrase 'reasonable adjustment'.

##### 4.4.3 Conflict of Interest Form

This was approved by the Committee.

The Committee agreed that GH will continue to offer workshops.

ACTION: AA to add this to the Action Plan.

The Committee thanked AA for all her hard work on the various policies and other documents.

#### 4.5 SPC Friends

GH volunteered to take forward the Friends initiative following KT's initial research into other organisations and how they organise their own Friends. Kirsty Christer will promote the scheme once it has been set up.

ACTION: KT to send GH her summary research document.

#### 4.6 Constitution

The date of the annual AGM has been changed as agreed.

All felt that the eight-month period after which a member will be expelled from the Chorus for non-payment of subs should not be changed. However, rule 4.1.6 regarding singing in the Christmas concert is to be updated.

ACTION: AA to draft new wording for this rule to be ratified at the next Committee meeting. Comments will be sought in the meantime via email.

#### 4.7 AGM

It was agreed that the AGM had gone very well. The Committee thanked HK and her helpers for their work organising the refreshments.

### 5. Operations

5.1 Learning points from recent activities / events None to report.

#### 5.2 Rehearsal Venue Alternatives

St Andrew's Church Psalter Lane is to be trialled at the next rehearsal. The venue offers a number of advantages over Birkdale, including good disability access, a good piano and the proximity of a pub for socialising after rehearsals!

ST volunteered to extend her duties to locking doors at Birkdale following a request from the school – and was thanked for this.

ACTION: AA to add to the Update instructions about which door to use when arriving late at Birkdale for a rehearsal.

ACTION: AA to add to the Update a mention of the proximity of The Stag if people would like to meet there after the 12<sup>th</sup> Nov rehearsal – new members especially welcome.

#### 5.3 Voice exchange

Nothing to report.

ACTION: MG to check with MD that he's happy for this to be reactivated for The Creation concert.

#### 5.4 Marketing and Publicity – Update

There was nothing new to report.

If possible, a notice about the SJ Young Composer competition will be added to the programme of the 15<sup>th</sup> November concert.

ACTION: AA to organise this.

ACTION: JB to ask Kirsty Christer about arranging for a photo to be taken of the SPC with the Halle Orchestra for future publicity.

**6. 2024 – 2025 Season**

6.1 Repertoire Planning Group

It was mentioned that there is a potential clash with the Bach Choir in December 2025. All parties are already aware of this, and it may be impossible to avoid.

PC mooted the idea of a Come and Sing accompanying a film showing – for example to accompany the film ‘Alexander Nevsky’.

ACTION: AA to raise this idea at the next RPG meeting.

6.2 Event Planning Group

All is in hand re. arrangements for the concert on 15<sup>th</sup> November at the City Hall.

ACTION: JB to set up a meeting about the Christmas concert ASAP.

6.3. Stella Jockel Young Composer competition

AA reported that all is in hand for the 2024 – 2025 competition which was launched in October.

ACTION: AA is to invite the Lord Mayor to present the prizes in March 2025 as previously.

Possible ‘MCs’ were suggested, namely: Dan Walker, Paul Allen, Tom McKinney, Sarah Walker and Paulette Edwards. One or more of these to be approached in due course.

ACTION: AA or JM depending on which individual is selected

JM reported on progress of the souvenir brochure. It was agreed that 50 copies will be printed by the SPC’s preferred printer and distributed to the competition winners in due course. Final proofs are currently in progress.

**7. 2025 - 2026 Season**

This had already been covered earlier in the meeting.

**8. Committee Officer issues/reports**

8.1 Membership Update

MG reported that there are seven new members, three or four of whom have arisen as a result of the Come and Sing.

The issue of occasionally long waits for an audition was raised and possible solutions mooted but this needs further discussion.

ACTION: MG to continue to update the Emergency Contacts list.

8.2 Social events

Nothing further to report. The Christmas concert will see the traditional sherry/mince pie refreshments and there will also be a hamper raffle prize.

ACTION: HK to organise this.

8.3 Music Scores and Library

Nothing to report other than the SPC loan service as outlined above.

8.4 Sashes

In the absence of Annie Park who is organising the survey, MG reported that 78 members have so far responded. The deadline for completing the survey is next week and AP will report back by email after this. The issue needs to be decided in time for the Christmas concert.

AP was thanked for her work in getting the survey set up and for collating the results.

8.5 Issues raised by other officers

GH reported that she has completed the current round of singing workshops and that all have gone extremely well. There have been at least eight people in every session.

### 9. Any Other Business

ST reported a member's query about the SPC not having an in-person conductor rehearsal (in the same way as the Halle) but it was pointed out that the conductor's overseas commitments had made this impossible.

JM queried the presence of historical information about SPC concerts on the Making Music website but all felt that this did not need to be removed.

Date of Trustee meetings: January 16<sup>th</sup> 2025, March 19<sup>th</sup>, May 14<sup>th</sup>, July 16<sup>th</sup>

AGM: October 7<sup>th</sup> 2025

**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 Yorkshire carol book. In progress

From 13 March 2024

- ~~BS and MG to organise to survey the chorus re diversity~~ DONE
- ~~AA to prepare paperwork for next Young Composer competition.~~ DONE
- HK to investigate and take forward possibility of an autumn Ceilidh. IN HAND
- ~~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. ACTION NOW WITH KIRSTY CHRISTER~~

From 15 May 2024

- MG to prepare a survey seeking member input re repertoire Scheduled for New Year 2025
- Trustees to check out (possible rehearsal) venues local to them using the checklist and report back IN PROGRESS
- ~~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 FIRST PART DONE BUT NO REFERENCE TO CONSTITUTION CHANGE UNDER 4.4.2 IN THE MINUTES. DONE, see agenda Item 4.6~~

From 9 July 2024

- ~~Once all above action points implemented, JP to finalise 2023-24 budget and send round to committee for final sign-off.~~
- ~~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. DONE~~
- JB to ask Darius if it is the appropriate time to renegotiate the formula with the City Hall.
- JB to draft the proposed newsletters (to Friends).
- Kirsty Christer to market the Friends Scheme once it is in place
- JM, MG and AA to review the concert stage procedure as it is not quite working as written
- ~~GH volunteered to talk to Kirsty about Canva as a software for producing high quality materials. DONE~~
- ~~CP to take forward surveying the ladies to gain views on concert dress. NB CP can't do this, MG asking Vic Seller, if not AA will do it. DONE by Annie Park~~

From 4 September 2024

JB to visit and report on Notre Dame and All Saints

Alan A to forward contact details for his daughter to HK.

KC to take forward sourcing sound files for youtube

JB to check with R4 producer Chris Taylor whether excerpts would be available, including any material that wasn't included in the programme.

~~Anne a to check whether the payment deadline date appears in the constitution before upcoming agm~~

~~Anne a to include mention of the competitiveness of spc subs in the agenda resolution.~~

~~Anne a to confirm to maggie that the fee increase for professionals is not retrospective.~~

JP to produce an annual summary of Stella Jockel competition costs

JM and MG to check on the position re. First aiders IN PROGRESS

Last-minute stand-in conductor and accompanist to be confirmed IN PROGRESS

Although AA has approached Alex Burn to write concert reviews when she can, it was agreed that more reviewers are needed. AA 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)

AA to continue to look for award opportunities

JS to start creating an annual awards calendar with opportunities, categories and deadlines etc.

JS to speak to Joe Banerjee about concert reviews and any contacts he may have

AA to continue to take forward hire agreements

~~Anne a to supply current key aims and actions for inclusion in the display~~

~~AA to amend the hire agreement document with the approved wording and progress its use with the md~~

~~JB to propose a date for a repertoire sub-committee zoom meeting as a matter of urgency~~

~~Kt to report back to the committee about the friends programme and her own involvement.~~

~~Anne a to add to item 4 (subs increases) wording to the effect that "some sheffield choirs have reached subs of £200".~~

All committee members to reflect on possible replacement administrators and pass any suggestions to JB and AA for discussion.

~~Anne a to correct two errors in first paragraph of agm comms document~~

~~Anne a to amend wording to "we are hoping to hold our usual cheese and wine evening"~~

~~Anne a to email birkdale to request permission for the cheese and wine evening~~

~~Mg to contact voice exchange choirs re. Boulanger and creation~~

AA to approach Russell to take new photos (eg at the AGM) with a focus on close-ups of members singing/chatting/interacting etc.

AA to pass to KC any contacts who might be of use for collaborative approaches

JB to pass on to KC her contact at Harmony Works

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.

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

The EPG o focus on the practicalities of planned events in the next season

RPG to focus on repertoire and the forward planning of events that meet SPC's strategic aims.

~~Anne a to create a short survey to gather members' views re sashes~~

~~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)~~

From 6 November 2024

HK to book Crookes Social Club. This social gathering to involve a fund-raising element eg a raffle.

AA to put out feelers with new City Hall management as to new arrangements for payment formula to SPC etc.

JB to draft Christmas newsletter.

JM to remind members of protocols for stage procedure

PC to look at promoting the SPC's score loan service.

JM to share with PC details for access to the Making Music account.

JP to chase up stragglers for payment of subs.

AA to add EDI survey link to the Update after a verbal reminder to Chorus members at a rehearsal after the next concert.

MG to raise the issue of combined subs for couples with the MD to ascertain his opinion of offering such an arrangement at SPC.

JM to ask Peter Verity about being the nominated stand-in conductor.

AA to add a call for one additional First Aider to the Update

AA to upload the AGM Minutes to Sharepoint

MG to ask JP and DB about back-ups of choir files and where these are held.

MG to amend the wording with regard to disabilities to include the phrase 'reasonable adjustment'.

AA to add to the Action Plan that GH will continue to offer workshops.

AA to draft new wording for rule 4.1.6 to be ratified at the next Committee meeting. Comments will be sought in the meantime via email.

AA to add to the Update instructions about which door to use when arriving late at Birkdale for a rehearsal.

AA to add to the Update a mention of the proximity of The Stag if people would like to meet there after the Nov 12<sup>th</sup> rehearsal – new members especially welcome.

MG to check with MD that he's happy for the Voice Exchange to be reactivated for The Creation concert.

AA to organise SJ Competition notice in next concert programme.

JB to ask Kirsty Christer about arranging for a photo to be taken of the SPC with the Halle Orchestra for future publicity.

AA to raise the idea of a film-related Come and Sing (Alexander Nevsky) at the next RPG meeting.

JB to set up a meeting about the Christmas concert ASAP.

AA to invite the Lord Mayor to present the prizes in March 2025 as previously.

AA or JM to invite selected MC to the March SJ Concert depending on which individual is selected

MG to continue to update the Emergency Contacts list.

HK to organise Christmas concert raffle hamper and refreshments.