

MEETING HELD: Wednesday 11 March 2026 at 7pm, Shirley House, St Andrew's Psalter Lane Church.

Present: Jo Briddock (Chair), Alan Anderson, Paul Duffield, Marianne Grayson, Georgina Hulse, Anita McKay, Annie Park, Christine Pennington, Kathy Towers (Minutes), Sally Turnbull, Patricia Wake, Alex Walton.

1. Apologies and EDI Policy

Apologies: Helen Kirk, Boo Spurgeon, Jane Parkin, Ros Hobson and Rebecca Hutten.

As usual the Committee was reminded of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

2. Conflicts of Interest – there were none.

3. 3.1 Minutes of meeting held on 14 Jan 2026 were approved as a true and correct record.

3.2 Matters Arising were checked and the Actions list updated accordingly (see below)

4. Governance

4.1 Finance

4.1.1 The Finance Report was read and reviewed. It was noted that the Christmas concert at the City Hall was virtually sold out but nevertheless made a loss.

ACTION: This is to be raised by JB at the next RPG meeting.

4.1.2 The Crystal Report was approved

4.1.3 The 2025-26 budget was reviewed and approved. There were a small number of queries which MG and ST will raise with the Finance Officer by email.

4.2 SPC Strategic Plan.

JB reported on progress with regard to items in the Strategic and Governance Action Plan. It was noted that some had been updated more recently than the Plan seemed to indicate (cf Recruitment Procedures and Role Descriptions). Role descriptions are posted on the website but may need updating.

ACTION: CP and MG to review the role descriptions and amend as necessary, especially in light of the change of roles and dilution of Secretary role.

ACTION: JB is to update the Governance Plan to make sure correct dates are shown and that items in red should remain in red. JB also to review the approach to policy reviews.

It was noted that all AGM papers need to be prepared over the summer so they can be signed off at the first committee meeting of the new season in early September – ahead of the annual AGM at the beginning of October.

Recruitment (finance officer, librarian, social events officer)

Jane Parkin the current FO is standing down in October. She is to be replaced by Pam Leon. The handover is already in progress.

Both Alan and Rosemary are standing down from their librarian roles in October. Anna Benson has volunteered to take on the role with another.

ACTION: JB to speak to Patrick Callaghan to ascertain whether he is still willing to take on this shared role.

Helen Kirk is standing down as Social Events Officer in October. Janet Michalowski has volunteered to take on this role.

Trustee Declaration of Interest forms: Patricia Wake is to print out blank forms and bring to next rehearsal so SP can upload photos to Sharepoint file.

5. Operations

5.1 There was discussion of the issue of unhelpful behaviour by two basses at the most recent rehearsal which was taken by Naomi. The two individuals have a history of muttering and dissenting during rehearsals and other members of the Chorus have noticed this and expressed their annoyance. The most recent episode has been reported to the MD who has expressed his concern. It was agreed that the first step will be for the 1st bass voice rep (Richard Salt) to speak to the individuals concerned.

It was also agreed that a formal process is needed to deal with any such issues and that this is to be addressed as soon as possible. Once agreed, the process should be incorporated into the Chorus Rules.

ACTION: JB to use the next Notices slot to remind SPC members of the importance of remaining quiet during rehearsals and of not creating distractions or interrupting when the MD / conductor is speaking to the Chorus.

This issue will be discussed further at a future meeting.

CP raised the issue of Chorus members accessing the City Hall via the stage door rather than the main door when arriving for the pre-concert rehearsal. This is a health and safety issue as it means they do not report and sign the check-in register.

ACTION: MG is to ask the City Hall stage door official to redirect all Chorus members to the main entrance.

5.2 Survey results

The Committee expressed huge gratitude to Marianne for all her work in preparing the Member Survey and in collating and presenting the results. All agreed that the report was full of interesting and valuable material that had been presented in a very digestible way. It was also noted that the report findings will yield useful insights for all sorts of future discussions and decisions.

It was agreed that the findings will be shared with SPC members via a link in the Weekly Update.

ACTION: MG to send results to CP with a draft cover note / introduction.

MG referred to the Proposed Next Steps section of the Report, which recommends the setting up of four working groups. It was agreed that it will be desirable to encourage people who are not already on the Committee to take on ad hoc tasks relating to the running of the Chorus (eg rehearsal notes).

ACTION: AP and Rebecca H to look at the repertoire section of Marianne's report as a first step in forming a working group and identifying useful findings within the Survey.

ACTION: CP to add a request for volunteers to take rehearsal notes to the next Weekly Update. A volunteer for each voice part would be an ideal outcome.

ACTION: MG volunteered to create a simple 'How to' guide for the Financial Sustainability Working Group (in partnership with Jane Parkin).

ACTION; JB to add the creation of the four working groups to the Agenda for the next Committee meeting.

5.3 Marketing and Publicity

The report prepared by Kirsty Christer was reviewed and all agreed that encouraging progress continues to be made.

It was pointed out that the SPC should not contribute to marketing costs for the Brigantes concert.

The Committee agreed to ordering yellow pencils and erasers as suggested by KC so that these can be sold to Chorus members.

5.3 St Andrew's Health & Safety

Christine Pennington reported back to the Committee having carried out a review. She outlined key requirements – all eight front doors to be opened at the beginning of the rehearsal, the fire exit beyond the piano to be opened, no car parking at the bottom of the church steps, chairs to be locked together and restored to their original positions after the rehearsal.

ACTION: GH to take a photo of the layout of chairs before the next rehearsal.

6. 2025-26 season and beyond

6.1 Repertoire Planning Group

A brief summary of the meeting on 9th March was given by MG. It was pointed out that 2025/26 season will make a loss.

6.2 Event Planning Group.

There was discussion of the proposed Ceilidh. The recent show of hands at a rehearsal indicated insufficient interest and it was agreed that the Ceilidh is not financially viable. There was, however, lots of enthusiasm for the idea of a post-concert gathering/social event in Sheffield immediately after Elijah.

There was discussion of arrangements for the Come & Sing and it was agreed that the refreshments need to be properly organised as HK will not be present. Anita, Patricia and Alex all volunteered to take this on and were thanked for doing so.

ACTION: JB to check overall arrangements to ensure that all will go smoothly on the day.

ACTION: Anita to check refreshment arrangements with Helen K.

ACTION: JB to ask for volunteers to act as 'marshals' on the day at the next rehearsal.

7. Committee Officer issues/reports

7.1 Membership Officer

There was nothing new to report.

7.2 New Membership Officer

Sally T reported that four new members have joined the Chorus. One tenor is awaiting audition and there are 10 potential members-in-waiting, with six or seven auditioning soon.

7.3 Social Events Officer

Nothing further to report.

7.4 Librarians

Nothing further to report although the need for new storage remains.

ACTION: JB to add this to the Agenda of the next meeting.

7.5 Education and Outreach Officer

Georgina reported that her sessions are going extremely well and the Committee agreed that they can be continued until Easter – following popular demand!

7.6 Other Officers

There was nothing to report.

8. Any other business

Annie Park asked about progress with name badges.

ACTION: AP to ask Helen K for an update.

Providing additional financial support to Naomi to help with her travel from Manchester was mooted and the Committee agreed that a contribution could be made.

ACTION: MG to discuss an appropriate amount with the MD.

ACTION LIST

From 10 Sept 2025

- Anne A to check the status of contracts with both Kirsty Christer and Georgina IN HAND

From 14 Jan 2026

~~ACTION: The matter of women's concert dress (including the question of brooches) is to be revisited at the end of the season and a discussion point added to a future Agenda.~~ **May meeting**

ACTION: CHRISTINE P to check the current status of professionals' contracts (ie Darius, Maggie and Rachel Fright) with Rachel Mallaband and Anne Adams. **ONGOING**

~~ACTION CP: Guidance as to how members can log into the SPC website with their own passwords is to be added to the Update.~~ **DONE**

ACTION JB: Winners of the Young Composer competition to be contacted (via Anne A) to see whether they would like to receive the spare scores of their compositions.

~~ACTION CP/JB: A reminder about returning music on time is to be added to the Update—the note to reiterate that there will be a fine for late returns.~~ **DONE**

~~ACTION: Marianne G to discuss EDI incident with BS in case any action needs to be taken.~~ **Chair discussed with EDI officer.**

ACTION CP: to update the Trustee information pack

CP: to check all signed declarations of interest are uploaded to Sharepoint and remedy if this is not the case. CP to upload her own declaration.-ONGOING

~~CP: to check voice coach and accompanist contracts.-DONE with RM.~~

~~JB: to update lines 27 — 32 of the Action Plan and make any further changes as required.-
DONE~~

ACTION: JB to check that all names in the Risk Assessment document are current and correct.

ACTION: JB to review insurance requirements to check whether there is scope to streamline SPC's health and safety documents.

~~ACTION: MG to add request for emergency contact details to the next subs form.~~

~~ACTION: JB to draft a note for the Update inviting expressions of interest for the Librarian role. This can be a 'job share' as is currently the case. **DONE**~~

~~ACTION: JB to confirm with Pam L that she is willing to stand.-**DONE**~~

ACTION: CP to explore and pursue alternative library provision ONGOING

~~ACTION: GH to revisit platform etiquette at the on-the-day rehearsal, specifically with reference to how folders are to be held.~~

~~ACTION: GH to discuss this with MD. Adding an extra row at the front at St Andrew's rehearsals, as some members find it difficult to hear the MD.~~

~~ACTION: CP to make Ceilidh tickets and to contact HK and JB to firm up costs and plans.~~

~~ACTION: GH to check with the MD as to the safety of the rostrum. If it's not adequate there will be a need for a replacement.~~

~~ACTION: Christine P to check whether there is a Risk Assessment for this rehearsal venue (eg one was potentially prepared by Jim Monach).-DONE~~

ACTION: CP to review the honorary membership programme and recommend any addition provisions that can be made for these members.

~~ACTION: JO B to speak to Penny Webster about a possible display at the next AGM.-
DONE~~

FROM 11 MARCH 2026

Loss made by Christmas concert to be raised by JB at the next RPG meeting.

CP and MG to review the role descriptions and amend as necessary, especially in light of the change of roles and dilution of Secretary role

GH to investigate a new (safer) rostrum and discuss options with the MD.

KT and GH to add honorary members to the ongoing review of the SPC Friends Programme.

JB is to update the Governance Plan to make sure correct dates are shown and that items in red should remain in red. JB also to review the approach to policy reviews.

It was noted that all AGM papers need to be prepared so they can be reviewed at the July 2026 committee meeting – ahead of the annual AGM at the beginning of October.

Trustee Declaration of Interest forms: Patricia Wake to print out blank forms and bring to next rehearsal so SP can upload photos to Sharepoint file.

JB to speak to Patrick Callaghan to ascertain whether he is still willing to take on this shared role.

JB to use the next notices to remind SPC members of the importance of remaining quiet during rehearsals and of not creating distractions or interrupting when the MD / conductor is speaking to the Chorus.

MG is to ask the City Hall stage door official to redirect all Chorus members to the main entrance.

MG to send results to CP with a draft cover note / introduction.

CP to add a request for volunteers to take rehearsal notes to the next Weekly Update. A volunteer for each voice part would be an ideal outcome.

JB to add the creation of the four working groups to the Agenda for the next Committee meeting.

GH to take a photo of the layout of chairs before the next rehearsal.

JB to check Come & Sing arrangements.

Anita McK to check refreshment arrangements with Helen K.

JB to ask for volunteers to act as 'marshals' on the day at the next rehearsal.

JB to add library storage to the Agenda of the next meeting.

AP to ask Helen K for an update on name badges.

MG to discuss an appropriate amount for Naomi's travel with the MD.

Date of Trustee meetings: ~~12 November 2025, 14 January 2026, 11 March 2026~~, 13 May 2026, 15 July 2026.