**Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Zoom**

**08/11/23**

**Committee Meeting**

* Apologies:, Paul Goss
* Present: John, Gwyneth, Dave, Jacqui, Mark Warrington, Gillian, Mary, Tim, Paul Burfitt, Sue Mason, Laura, Neil, Susan.

**Rehearsal times**

Pete asked if there was a reason we started at 7:30 rather than 7 to 9:30. People tired at the end of rehearsal. Discussed and aware of a number of people who may struggle with the earlier start time with travel and work commitments. Committee felt that unless that there was a very good reason to change that we would not really want to.

**Chair role**

John’s 8th year as Chair and so John feels it is time to stand down at the end of this season. John would like to give the Committee as much notice as possible to give adequate time to find a suitable replacement. The committee thanks John for letting us know.

Committee request that we draft a job spec for the Chair with core activities and then outlining other activities undertaken to be circulated to the committee.

Laura asked whether John feels that he needs to stand down or that he feels that its about duration in role

John feels that it was raised as a point and on reflection it has made him think about it further.

Committee discussed whether other roles duration need to be considered.

Historically was 3 yrs for chair but committee felt that this was potentially too short from a long term planning perspective 5 made more sense

How do we select – how chooses the Chair? Committee/Choir

Use first 30 mins of next meeting to discuss process

**Vocal coaching**

1. List not filled for next Tuesday – Can we move any names forwards from Committee for Sops/Tenors.
2. Important people do sign up due to Gift Aid. Reading the guidance John felt that there is no issue if activities are directed to all members, if directed at individuals then causes an issue.
3. So need to change auditions policy to make it less optional. Committee agree to remove this
4. Will announce that Vocal coaching part of the choir, expect everyone to take part and in order to maintain Gift Aid
5. Will need to record vocal coaching slots on the membership form.

**2024/2025 Season**

* Suggestion of Bruckner Mass in E minor for one concert. Double chorus and wind band. Look to add Lili Boulanger motets, Saint Saens motet
* Vierne/Widor for one concert
* Nov RNCM – Bruckner as 200th anniversary
* Singing Day – possibly Carmina Burana - Neil to consider – would need 2 pianos. Bach Magnificant, Karl Jenkins – The Armed Man. Look at something populist to bring in a higher participant number.
* Apr 5th Bramhall – Looked at what not done for 10 years or what left on 5 year plan not done. Dave put forward like to do some Handel – perhaps the Alexanders Feast. Would be a full programme. Or Theodore. Theodore needs 5 soloists. Neil to review both to see what he prefers and what he thinks would work.
* June 28th - St Georges Stockport – Vierne/Widor – need to check on Organ situation. Needs good organist, set as if 2 organs. Widor 2nd choir with lower voices – maybe a useful collaboration – possibly with Halle academy choir? John to speak to Joe Judge
* Minutes of previous meeting approved. Correct attendees to include Jo and Susan
  + List for singing day with John
  + Recommend Gretchaninov Vespers for 25/26 season
  + Storage for docs on website in committee area for all to look at and upload.

**Conflict of interest declaration**

Jacqui has put together a table which she will share with Laura to clarify wording before sharing. Laura suggested that for other organizations there is a brief template that is filled in annually. Proposed adopt this instead

**Financial Report**

Jacqui asked if 100 club/Friends contributions are slightly down, they are slightly against previous years but not much

Suggestion if finances are healthy could we look at Bridgewater Hall for 2 years time? Laura suggested aligning this for 3 years time for the Choir’s 70th Anniversary. Could collaborate for this to bring in more audience but risk is lose revenue. If it’s a celebration for St Georges then look to do a scoping exercise to see if this is even vaguely realistic. Estimate £25k for hall hire currently.

**2023/2024 Season**

**Spring/Summer**

* Need to boost numbers to get Choir numbers up to 150 so that big enough to match the orchestra. Speak to Halle Youth and the academy.
* Do we charge for this. Need to check with Gwyneth she has enough copies. Is it too complicated or do we just let them join. Need to stick to the min rehearsal requirement. Mary said that people pay for Cheshire Chorale. What problem are we trying to solve – if we need numbers are we over complicating it. Suggest £20 but to be confirmed.
* More tenors and basses but could take more Sops too.

**Open day – to replace tour**

50% deposit needed when book in 2/3 weeks. Will need £50 deposit, £60 next April – should also cover cost of music.

Suggestions that came up from Choir were things like Rogers and Hammerstein etc. Others were keen on the Dido and Anais. Or the English Church music book.

Looking at the financial risk aspect of foreign tours something committee needs to take onboard for future.

Sue Mason mentioned that worked when she organized tour to China that worked because linked with Choir in the country so we had a contact there, used a company for hotel, travel etc.

Could allocate part of reserve as tour reserve – no-one should consider themselves personally at risk.

Learning point: Needed to have started sooner in preparation

Laura will draft something for the trustees meeting

**Musical Directors feedback**

Question raised around Sops section – feedback not as strong recently – is there something specific driving that – numbers etc.

**Sections reps**

* Paul Burfitt – Basses – couple of basses mentioned that when music chosen for concerts we do consider its attractiveness with our audiences. Believe it’s a balance where consider audience but also pieces we as a choir find it attractive and want to sing.
* Mark – Tenors – no issues raised
* Gillian – Sops – no issues raised
* Sue Mason – Feeling slightly anxious in terms of tough programme etc, schedules seem heavy.
  + New altos great to welcome
  + Tuesday after Easter Monday – do we need to have this rehearsal – it’s a good time to have a little break.

**AOB**

Life friends – we don’t have any specific criteria or guidelines about what makes a life friend

Next year Connie will have been in choir 50 years – would this constitute. Agree that we should recognise this in some way.

Look at who is a life friend and is there something that qualifies them. Maybe we have some simple guidance on this. In the gift of the committee

* Extraordinary service to the Choir – roles, tenure

**NEW ACTIONS**

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|  | Action | Owner |
| 1 | Chair election process – next agenda | Jacqui |
| 2 | Chair role profile to be drafted | John |
| 3 | Review Handel pieces for April concert | Neil |
| 4 | Speak to Joe Judge about collaboration for Vierne/Widor | John |
| 5 | Scoping exercise for Bridgewater Hall costs | Laura |
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