

Minutes of the Committee meeting held at 44 Beverley Crescent, Bedford on Tuesday 1 May 2018 at 7.45pm.

Present: Jeremy Hopkinson (in the Chair) (JH); Peter Snelling; Jenny Harris (JJH);
Ian Smith; Kate Atalay; David Roberts; Suzanne Minocha; Siân Rees.
In attendance: Vanessa Skelton.

1. Apologies and welcome

Apologies had been received from Michael Palmer.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes were approved without amendment.

IS had not as yet checked with John Witchell about the July rehearsals. He would do so shortly.

Action: **Ian Smith**

A full risk assessment needs to be carried. This would be done shortly and would appear on the next agenda. PS said he had submitted an H&S risk assessment for the St John's ambulance booking, and this might prove helpful as a starting point.

Action: **Jeremy Hopkinson**

3 June 2018 concert, responsibilities for all issues: Timeline update

The spreadsheet for the concert on 23 June was checked. The following points needed attention:

PS would arrange for the loan of chairs.

Action: **Peter Snelling**

JH would write to the president inviting her to the concert.

Action: **Jeremy Hopkinson**

JH would check that Eric and Helen were happy to organise the orchestra tea.

Action: **Jeremy Hopkinson**

SR would collect the podium at the last rehearsal, to take to the Church

Action: **Siân Rees**

PS would organise the front of house team

Action: **Peter Snelling**

JH would undertake setting up the lighting (as Stuart Freake was not able to be at this concert), with help from Peter Skelton and advice from DR.

Action: **Jeremy Hopkinson**

PS would talk to Michael Palmer about arrangements for the Church key.

Action: **Peter Snelling**

SR would talk to Beverley Thompson, to ask her to contact soloists in order to ascertain whether they preferred to be presented with wine or flowers. KA will purchase the flowers, and PS the wine..

Action: **Kate Atalay Siân Rees and Peter Snelling**

IS will arrange for loan of music stands

Action: **Ian Smith**

It was agreed that tickets for the October concert should be on sale at the June concert. KA and JJH volunteered to man a ticket sale desk. DR would talk to Elly Pettigrew about this.

Action: **Kate Atalay, Jenny Harris and David Roberts**

DR agreed to speak to Marian Livingstone as to whether ad could go in MKCO's next concert programme.

Action: **David Roberts**

[NB Post meeting note: DR has been successful, and an ad will be inserted in MKCO's next programme – for free]

4 Future Concerts: October, Christmas 2018, April 2019

14 October:

Venue, orchestra and soloists were all booked. Tickets were on sale on the theatre site. DR had produced the graphics and copy for the publicity, which are already up on the theatre website – it was agreed this was excellent. The flyers and posters were nearly ready to be sent to the printer and the concert was included in the BCS/BS/BSO annual flyer currently in production.

Gill Adam would not be singing in October – SM agreed to take on Gill's role re the seating plan, with help from SR.

Action: **Suzanne Minocha**

Christmas concert, 15 December:

The Programming Committee proposed Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* and Holst's *Christmas Day* for the first half, with a lighter second half. They had discussed whether a longer work could be undertaken (given the long time gap after the October concert date). Their view was that the 'Christmass-sy' longer works were very expensive for the choir to undertake given present circumstances, requiring, as they did, a full orchestra. In addition the more well known longer works (eg the Bach *Christmas oratorio* and Berlioz *L'enfance du Christ*) did not in fact have much chorus

input. They had thus proposed two 'serious' but shorter Christmas works which they felt would produce an enjoyable but meaty concert when balanced by a lighter second half. After some discussion this was approved.

6 April 2019:

Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* had originally been proposed. However, two other local choirs would be performing the work in the near future, so the Programming Committee now proposed the following works: Gorecki *Totus Tuus*; Chilcott: *A Little Jazz Mass*; Will Todd: *Songs of Peace* and Stanford: *Magnificat*.

This should be a reasonably inexpensive programme, although IS said that given the way the dates worked it might be necessary to hire the scores early in order to commence rehearsals, which would add another expense. It was agreed that the programme should be put on the website as 'provisional' for the time being, while PS worked on the budget.

Action: **Jenny Harris, Peter Snelling**

29 June 2019:

The Monteverdi *Vespers of 1610* was confirmed. Work had commenced on booking soloists etc.

Dates for the 19/20 season were noted: 23 November, 2019, 28 March and 27 June 2020. While no definite decision had been received from the MK Chorale as to whether they would be prepared to promote a joint concert in autumn 2019, the indications were that it was unlikely. The Programming Committee's suggestions were to perform the Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle* in November 2019, at Woburn Church, a version of *Carmina Burana* with a two piano and percussion accompaniment alongside the Ramirez *Missa Criolla* in March, which would give us the opportunity to try out The Venue in Walton as a location, and to perform the Vivaldi *Gloria*, together with the Vivaldi *Magnificat* and Cecilia McDowell's *Ave Maris Stella* in Woburn in June. JH thanked the Programming Committee for their hard work in coming up with these suggestions – not an easy task now expense was such a crucial issue.

5. Treasurer's report

PS said that at present a loss of £3,000 was showing for the year end (the budget had forecast a loss of £1,000 and the difference was largely due to the low tickets sales in November), but the outcome from the March concert was still in doubt, as it was likely that some cheques he had issued would not be cashed. It was certain, however, that we had made a profit on the March concert,

The budget for 18/19 was not yet finalised, as PS was waiting for some figures, such as the fee for the jazz instrumentalists and the score costs. There was some doubt in his mind as to where to set the ticket costs for the Monteverdi. The concert would be very expensive to stage, and it might be best to set a high price for tickets, with the top price at £25. He had checked other choirs, and it is clear our tickets are priced on the higher side. However, would higher prices actually lead to fewer sales? PS would consider this further and make recommendations.

It was agreed that the effort we were putting in to increasing publicity were good, for example Sheila Edwards was doing an excellent job in increasing local magazine entries. KA said that drip feeding items on concerts in the run up time to the performance on social media was helpful – Sarah Mazzone should be asked to do this on the Chorus facebook pages, but the Choir needed someone to be our promoter on Twitter.

Action: **Kate Atalay, Jeremy Hopkinson**

6. Email referring to the Yorkshire Young Sinfonia

IS had forwarded an email referring to the Yorkshire Young Sinfonia's initiative under which they were giving audience members at their concerts the option to have real-time programme notes sent to their smart phones. This was noted, as a possible matter for consideration at some point.

7. Danesborough Chorus Handbook

JJH had received comments on the draft Handbook she had prepared, including a suggestion that it should be organised under various headings such as 'job descriptions' 'policies' etc. It was agreed that policies should all have dates attached so that it was easy to confirm whether a policy was the latest that had been agreed. It would be useful if the lighting instructions could be included. JJH agreed to rework, having looked at all comments she received, and she was thanked for the work she had put in so far.

Action: **Jenny Harris**

8. Report from Constitution and Policies group

i) Draft constitution

Several comments were made, and there was discussion: as to the need to include a procedure for resigning as a member of the choir (it was agreed to leave this in, although on most occasions it was likely to be ignored in practice); on the need for the yearly subscription to be referred for approval to the AGM (this was referred back to the Constitution and Policies sub-committee for further consideration); and on whether it was necessary for the Committee to agree a role for any co-opted member before their co-option took place (it was agreed this provision could be dropped). It was also agreed that the financial year end should remain as 31 August. Several typographical amendments were suggested and SM agreed to consider these when she was redrafting the document.

Action: **Suzanne Minocha**

ii) Equal Opportunities policy

It was agreed that there should be consistency with the name used for the policy in the draft constitution, so either 'equal opportunities' or 'equality and diversity' should be used in both documents. It was also agreed that the word 'freelancers' should be replaced throughout by 'freelancers, and that a definition for 'gross misconduct' would be helpful.

iii) Health and Safety policy

Again the word 'freelancers' should be used. It was also agreed that, in the introduction under the heading 'sound safety', freelancers should be removed and a new bullet point should be added, to the effect that the orchestral manager should agree the concert seating plan for the orchestra. A requirement for electrical equipment to be tested every two years should be added.

iv) Safeguarding policy

'Freelancers' should be replaced as above. SR had kindly agreed to be the 'named safeguarding person', but the policy should not refer to her by name in the body of the text, instead there should be a space at the end for the current 'named safeguarding person' to be inserted.

v) GDPR

SM kindly agreed to be the Data Protection Officer. It was noted, however, that responsibility for compliance with the GDPR in fact lay with any processor or controller of data. SM circulated a draft 'consent form' for members of the choir to complete at rehearsals over the next few weeks. This

was approved subject to minor amendments, such as to clarify that the consent members were being asked to give was for their data to be used for purposes over and above the 'legitimate interest' purpose defined by the Regulation (it was suggested that the final 'the' contained in the first line of the fourth paragraph could be replaced with the word 'further'). A further column should be added to the table, dealing with consent to names appearing in concert programme.

A statement for inclusion on the choir's website dealing with what would be done with personal data given in connection with requests for the choir to sing at weddings etc would need to be drafted. Former members of the choir would also need to be contacted if their data was to be retained. SM, JJH and SR were working on collating what personal data was currently held and how it was so held; this would be circulated once it was complete.

Action: **Suzanne Minocha, Jenny Harris and Siân Rees**

9. Communications sub-committee report

It was agreed that the next batch of the new recruitment poster should be ordered on heavier weight paper and that a new 'choir for hire' flyer should be prepared.

To maximise the website's position in terms of responses to on-line searches, more traffic was required. PS was asked to use hyperlinks to the site whenever possible in his weekly newsletters. JJH would send him some for inclusion.

Action: **Jenny Harris**

It was suggested that someone might be asked to review the next concert for our website. IS agreed to ask around, although he was not sanguine about finding anyone very keen to undertake this.

Action: **Ian Smith**

It was agreed to re-instate the practice of leaving letters to supporters out at a rehearsal and to request members who to hand-deliver to addresses near them, in an attempt to save postage costs.

10. Future Meeting dates

These were noted as 18 September with the AGM on 17 October.

11. AOB

PS raised the matter of enabling internet banking. He had made enquiries, and it would be necessary to authorise a sole user, although a limit on the size of internet transactions could be imposed. It was agreed that PS should be the sole user, and that the limit for transactions should be set at £350. It was therefore resolved that the signing rules in the current mandate, for the accounts detailed in section 2, be replaced with section 4.