

MACCLESFIELD MALE VOICE CHOIR

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Held 1st February 2022 at Macclesfield Methodist Church

PRESENT	Mr David Collins	Mr Mike Devaney	Mr Bob Jenner
	Mr Keith Jones	Mr Neil McArthur	Mr Robert Owens
	Mr Bryan Peak	Mr John Powell (Chair)	Mr John Robinson

1 Welcome

JP welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new committee. He expressed his view that the choir now has a good opportunity for going forward though there were concerns that need addressing. The committee must be prepared to listen to any views put forward by members and supporters.

2 Apologies – none

3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held 7th December 2021 were agreed and signed.

4 Matters arising

JR stressed that it was important that previous actions should not be overlooked. All identified actions will be allocated to a named person, who will report back as appropriate.

5 Appointments

The following individuals have agreed to serve:

5.1 **Director of Music** – Robert Owens **Action: BP/BJ to prepare contract**

5.2 **Principal Accompanist** – Tatyana Goncharuk **Action: BP/BJ to prepare contract**

5.3 **Librarians** – John Robinson and John Webster

5.4 **Fire Safety/Security Steward** – Ron Gould

5.5 **First Aider/Health Risk** – Mike Devaney and Mike Batson

5.6 **Padre** – Dai Jones

5.7 **Membership Secretary/Registrar** – Geoff Molyneux has stepped down as Registrar and responsibilities for concert attendance records etc. have been passed to Section Representatives. BJ advised that there is still a need for someone to “control” membership. See also item 9.2. **Action: BP to thank GM**

5.8 **Uniform Secretary** – The roll-out of the new uniform is almost complete other than ties and pocket squares. In future there will not be a great deal to do but someone other than the current uniform sub-group is needed to take on the job of dealing with new/retiring members and to manage the small stock. **Action: All**

It was noted that the first two appointments are self-employed contractors and not employees of the choir. The remainder are volunteer positions.

6 Finance Update

There is currently £11,039 in the bank account including the remaining uniform grant monies of £3,752. To date nineteen subs payments have been received of which five are part payments. RJ advised that generally all first payments are received within a month of the AGM. The meeting confirmed the policy that new members should pay for remaining quarters proportionally once their probation period is complete. The budget should be on track though we need to be mindful of the impact of changes to the concert programme.

It was confirmed that this year’s Remembrance concert would be on a break-even basis.

7 Events

7.1 Backbeat

KJ & DC will still lead this concert but it is now not taking place until October. This postponement will of course impact the planned concert revenue. **Action: KJ & DC**

7.2 Llandudno

The committee discussed the paper prepared by Graham Waters, containing various options. It was agreed that, as well as being for the concerts, an equally important aspect is for it to be a social event for members and partners. We should therefore arrange accommodation in one or possibly two hotels for all those attending, together with a coach for those wishing to use it. The preferred dates are 29th-31st July. To keep costs reasonable, it was proposed we go with the cheaper hotel (which also has the most appropriate lounge/bar space) at £55 per person per night which provides bed and breakfast.

RO will ask for a show of hands at rehearsal to gain an initial view of numbers. Depending on response, GW will then be asked to make formal arrangements. RO will also then book appropriate concert venues.

Action: RO

7.3 Gala

The proposed date has had to be changed because of the clash with Queen’s Jubilee holiday. New date and venue are to be confirmed. The theme will still be A Night at the Opera and RO anticipates at least one soloist at a cost of

c. £400 and he is also investigating inviting an orchestra to join us. As with the concert last December, this event has to be well advertised in order to generate significant income. Hence the venue needs to be large enough for 300-400 people. The various options for venues around Macclesfield do not present any obvious first choice but the Academy may be a possibility, with 200 tiered and another 100 seats, plus good facilities. Letting out is not something they have previously done.

Action: RO/BJ

8 Venue Hire Agreements

RJ suggested that we should consider venues other than churches. For whatever venue, we need to take into account performance licences (this should be the responsibility of the venue), policy on raffles, sale of alcohol etc.

9 Strategy – outline debate only

9.1 Membership categories

We currently have only two, i.e. member or patron. Do we need further categories covering for instance people who are on probation, those who do not wish to sing in formal concerts or competitions?

9.2 Governance and Management

Is there a case for splitting the formal governance from the day-to-day management such that, for example, Section Representatives do not attend committee meetings? It was recognised that, during lockdown, the Strategy Group did a lot of work moving the choir forward. Perhaps some form of the Group would still be appropriate.

9.3 Feasibility of achieving concert income targets

Does our concert programme fit with the target income? RJ said that we normally take a middle-of-the-road view and, so far, he remains optimistic. However there is uncertainty around the programme. Clearly finding the most appropriate venues is key.

9.4 Repertoire development

JP advised that he has received a few concerns from members about the current repertoire. RO stressed his previous comments that the music now in rehearsal is not indicative of everything to come. This point will be incorporated into the next newsletter currently being prepared by NM.

Action: NM/RO

9.5 Future programme plans

Covered by 9.4

9.6 Events publicity

BJ advised that John Wilkin had previously advertised via a Macclesfield online events forum, which not only gave details of our events but enabled us to see those of other organisations. Could our website link to this? RO said it may be possible but it would work only if the link automatically updated.

Action: BP/RO

10 Section Representatives

10.1 T1

Concerns re repertoire already covered above.

10.2 T2

Section generally happy!

10.3 B1

It was felt a note of thanks should go to John and Jan Wilkin following John's retirement from the choir, for all the work they have put in over recent years.

Action: JP

10.4 B2

Nothing specific to report

11 Any other business

There is still no news on the whereabouts of the piano. If we are to make an insurance claim, it will need reporting to the police for a crime reference number. JP will check with Harry Newton to try to establish "its last known address"!

Action: JP

There needs to be a review of the ticketing process to cover the introduction of online purchase, need for numbered tickets to control attendance, do we want concessions etc?

Action: include with Strategy

BP reminded members who are trustees to complete the Charity Commission self declaration form and return it to him.

Action: All

It was agreed that Laurie Kennard should proceed with the Dragon's Den submission.

Action: BP

12 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 1st March – main agenda items will be more discussion on items 9.4 and 9.6 above.

Signed

John Powell.....1st March 2022