

MACCLESFIELD MALE VOICE CHOIR

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Held 5th December 2023 at Macclesfield Methodist Church

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|----------------|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| PRESENT | Mr Mike Batson | Mr Ciaran Fleming (Chair) | Mr Keith Jones |
| | Mr Laurie Kennard | Mr Neil McArthur | Mr Paul Nadin |
| | Mr Tim Neale | Mr Shane Owens | Mr Bryan Peak |
| | Mr John Robinson | | |
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1 Welcome – CF welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 **Apologies** Mr David Coggan Mr Chris Cromar Mr Robert Owens

3 Minutes of the previous meeting

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

4 Matters arising

- **Grant Applications** - Ongoing. **Action: NM**
- **Choir photos** – Ongoing, the target is completion by the end of year. **Action: NM and TN**
- **Recruitment** – CF and GW are drafting a short questionnaire to members and will then map out the way forward. **Action: CF and GW**
- **Choir Recording** – The audio file has been produced and will be passed to BP for uploading to the website. **Action: PN and LK**
- **PR photo** – a photo was taken at the SftS concert and will be added to the gallery on the website. It is available from the Secretary for anyone who needs it for publicity purposes.

5 Financial Update

5.1 Forecast 2023

The projected end of year balance is now £9,834 (Nov £8,496) including restricted funds of £587. This still presumes net concert income of £2,000 for the rest of the year.

5.2 Budget 2024

Based on a “worst case” scenario of bearing full costs of a musical director, the budget for 2024 has expenditure of £14,076 and income £9,475. We shall therefore need net concert income to generate around £5,000 to produce a balanced budget. If all goes to plan re Robert’s return, our expenditure may be substantially less.

6 Events

6.1 Remembrance Concert –

TN reported on the outcome of the concert. The audience was small but tends to be for this event. The concert is likely to have a small deficit or break even and we did agree to make a donation to SSAFA from funds if necessary. This will be decided when all costs are known. TN expressed disappointment he had had no response from SSAFA for any publicity material.

Whilst accepting that the concert is appreciated by some members, we need to consider whether we continue with it in the future, when there will always be other similar concerts taking place at the same time. We could perhaps review whether there are other organisations we could join with as used to be the case.

6.2 Songs from the Shows

MB gave feedback on the concert. From a professional point of view, the “noise” getting on and off stage was noticeable though it was felt there was little that can be done to reduce it. It was perhaps more noticeable because of the number of times the choir moved on/off. Going forward, if the choir is not seated at performance positions, such movements need to be reduced.

MB was of the opinion that we may struggle for audience if we repeat the concert again more so without a significant change of programme. It was accepted it was difficult to change the programme a great deal this year. MB suggested we could consider broader themes using existing but not recently used repertoire.

There was concern that the audience had problems hearing well in what is a large singing space, especially with some of the solo items. We may need to consider amplification for both choir and soloists.

It was generally agreed that we need to be more proactive with our marketing and, in particular, not wait for one concert to be over before concentrating on the next. Social media should have a greater emphasis and Amber is to be thanked (via SO) for the work she does.

SO suggested that, as part of our charitable activities, we should donate some tickets to local charities, care homes, etc. Hopefully this would not only be good for image but may encourage return visits.

Pending final expenses, net profit is expected to be around £1,000.

6.3 Tytherington Golf Club

Confirmed we shall perform at 7:00 pm on 16th December for around an hour with some breaks.

6.4 Park Mount

We shall perform on 12th December at 3:30pm. They currently have building work under way which restricts on-site parking. We can though use parking at the Flower Pot.

6.5 Mottram Hall

Still planned for Christmas Eve from 4:00 to 6:00pm. Rehearsal in the preceding week will be Wednesday (20th) not the Monday.

6.6 The Bridges - Monday 29th January 2024 instead of a normal rehearsal.

6.7 Joint concert with Bollington Singers

Now booked for Poynton Civic Hall on Friday 15th March. CC is not free that date but hopefully RO will be available. If not we shall need to look at other options. Finance arrangements tba.

6.8 Concert with Gemma Sutton

RO has arranged a very good deal for Gemma and the group she performs with to join us on 23rd March. It was agreed to investigate using Macclesfield Academy for the concert. Alternatively, we could consider Macc URC which is a good venue other than the restricted view from the balcony. An option is to offer discounted tickets.

6.9 Future dates/venues

- Caravanettes joint concert – JR has been to one of their concerts and advised they sounded very good. Several members' wives belong to the choir. Agreed to suggest a joint concert in May 2024.. **Action: BP**
- Cheshire A Cappella – KJ has received an invitation to join them in a joint concert at Wilmslow URC. He has asked for more information for the proposal but no response as yet.
- Overall plan for 2024 – The committee discussed at length the issues that need addressing for the future and in particular the points raised by LK. It was agreed that we must remain marketable which means having a concert repertoire that will appeal to choir and audience. With that in mind, it was agreed that, although the MD has overall control of concert programmes, they should be confirmed in conjunction with the committee, including the use of soloists. We need to avoid being seen as just a backing act to any guests.

It is further essential that the overall programme of concerts is agreed in principle for the year at least as far as dates and type of concert are concerned. This reinforces the need to have an active Concert Secretary who is responsible, in conjunction with the committee, for planning the outline concert programme and arranging the venues. The individual is not expected to manage the detail of the concerts themselves.

7 Section Representatives

Nothing to report.

8 AGM Arrangements

Agreed to hold the AGM on 22nd January BP will issue the formal notice. It was accepted that the accounts may not have been audited by that date. **Action: BP**

9 Any other business

None

10 Date of next meeting - Tuesday 9th January 2024.

Signed

Ciaran Fleming..... 9th January 2024