

MACCLESFIELD MALE VOICE CHOIR

General Committee Meeting – Date: 6th May 2021.

Venue – Zoom On-line - 7.30 pm

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:32pm.

The Chairman asked that the Minutes record the Choir's gratitude to a number of people:

- i) Laurie Kennard and Dai Jones. They have been tireless in their efforts to promote the Choir in all available media. The results have been most encouraging. Robert Owens added his thanks.
- ii) Laurie Kennard and John Powell for their recent success in the Rotary Club Dragon's Den evening. Through their efforts we have been awarded the sum of £200. This has also opened a new relationship with the Rotary Club which may result in a new concert in the autumn.
- iii) Neil MacArthur who has kindly agreed to store the Choir staging for the time being until we can find a permanent home. The Choir has thanked Stuart Mills' family for their help in storing the staging previously.

1 - Present: Chairman-Harry Newton, Vice Chairman-John Robinson, Treasurer-Bob Jenner, Secretary-Graham Waters, Director of Music-Robert Owens. Mike Batson-(B1 Rep), John Powell-(B2 Rep), Keith Jones, Neil McArthur.

2 - Apologies for Absence: D. Collins-(T1 Rep), Bryan Peak-(T2 Rep).

3 – Minutes of Previous Meeting: Confirmed as a correct record by J. Robinson, seconded by J. Powell and approved by all present.

4 – Matters Arising from 3 above:

- a) Don Riseley had written to The Chairman asking for clarification of whether Furlough applied to the Music Team. The Chairman and J. Robinson both discussed the matter with Don and gave him details. Don has confirmed the matter had been dealt with to his satisfaction.

5 – Financial update: R. Jenner:

The Treasurer submitted the following update –

As at close of business 4th May the bank balance is **£14722**. This balance includes ring-fenced funds for Cornwall 2022 and the Uniform Fund and also recognises all known payments for May.

If we exclude the ring-fenced funds, then our balance now and at the end of May will be **£6380**.

The report was discussed in detail. The Treasurer was clear that everything depended on; the success of our first rehearsals, our Concerts in June/July, our membership numbers but he was reasonably comfortable with the current situation.

It was agreed that when we had held the first rehearsals this month and gauged the ongoing levels of attendance, plus hopefully having a clearer picture of any changes to Government guidelines that may affect our Welcome Back concert in early June, we would review the forecasts and inform the membership.

At the same time, it should be possible to set out a value for Membership Subscriptions covering the remainder of the year.

6-Strategy Group report – K. Jones.

Future Strategy: At the present time the strategy group is trying to forge a new relationship with the Town Council to see if they could help in any way with our relaunch process. We now have a concert programme in place for 2021, if all goes well with recovery from the epidemic, we feel this will be a robust way of bringing the Choir back to its best.

The Risk Assessment that was undertaken prior to the rehearsals at the end 2020 is being revisited and updated to enable rehearsals to start on the 17th May.

Communication Process: Laurie Kennard has sent out to 49 different organisations, including the media, an email saying the Choir has survived the pandemic and is in good shape to resume rehearsals. It also gives details of our new Facebook page and the new Website. The information release also gives details of the “Welcome Back” concert and the open singing day. Dai Jones has been repeating this message via social media.

Recruitment: John Robinson and Mike Batson have plans in place for recruitment and are liaising with Laurie Kennard and Dai Jones regarding publicity for the Open Day. These include recruitment events, press releases and appeals on local radio. Work has started on planning the Open Singing Day on the 10th July. A new contact card including a QR code has been produced and will be printed soon. Work has started to spread the word via the communications process and in the latest information sent out by Laurie he has mentioned that the Choir is recruiting, Dai has repeated this message via Facebook.

IT/Website: The new website is up and running and the feedback has been good. The new Facebook page is also working. We still would like more feedback from choristers especially raising any question which they feel are not adequately covered by the website. The Treasurer has cancelled the standing orders for the old website. The existing domain name will be transferred for our use on the 8th May. The official opening of the new website will be on the 9th May.

Work is underway to capture all the information on the old Sound Cloud set up. A new Sound Cloud system will be activated soon and the information from the old system transferred. Robert is liaising with Derek McBryde on the changes. The meeting expressed thanks to Derek for all his work over the years on this essential tool and we are extremely grateful that Derek has offered to continue helping us.

Uncertainties: The group does have a more optimistic view of the future. However, we feel that it’s important to realise that things can change, and not always for the better. John Powell therefore has been tasked with tracking the uncertainties so we can react if we have to. Once we are back to some sort of normality, we need to reassess the role of the Strategy Group.

The Meeting thanked Keith and the Group for the work they were putting in and asked them to continue with their plans.

7- Section Representatives’ Reports: **T1** - Nothing to Report / **T2** -Nothing to Report / **B1** -Nothing to Report / **B2**- Nothing to Report.

8- AOB

- a) **New Member Recruitment:** Robert confirmed that we had received two more enquiries as a result of the PR work done by Laurie and Dai. Both are Tenors! Robert has spoken to them and we are in the process of sending out Application forms. This brings the total potential new choristers since the lockdown to 4.
- b) **Types of Membership:** There was a general agreement that R. Jenner’s belief that we need to be more inclusive should be looked into seriously. The discussion centered around establishing levels of Membership for; Non-singers, People who didn’t want to perform, Younger age groups, Wives and partners.
- c) **Italy:** Robert would like us to seriously consider participating in a Choral Festival in the Italian Lakes. It was agreed he should get all the details and put forward a proposal. The meeting was 100% behind the idea.
- d) **Merchandising:** Robert is investigating a range of Choir merchandise. Other choirs have found this beneficial financially and socially.
- e) **Events Diary:** Now that we have 6 events scheduled for the rest of the year the Secretary will send out an Events Diary. This will be useful for PR purposes as well as showing that we are operating as near to normal as possible.
- f) **Future Events:** Robert has already started discussions with venues and artists for Events next year 2022.

9- Date of next meeting: Thursday 20th May.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 21:25.

