

MACCLESFIELD MALE VOICE CHOIR
EXTRA GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Held 1st November at Macclesfield Methodist Church

PRESENT	Mr Bob Jenner	Mr Keith Jones	Mr Neil McArthur
	Mr Paul Nadin	Mr Bryan Peak	Mr John Powell (Chair)
	Mr John Robinson		

1 Welcome – JP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies Mr David Coggan Mr David Collins Mr Robert Owens

The meeting was called at the request of BJ, primarily to review and discuss next's year budget, over which there are concerns.

BJ outlined the current draft figures:

- The only “confirmed” income is members’ subscriptions and associated Gift Aid amounting to £7,500, on the premise of 40 members @ £150 each. In addition we may receive some donations via e.g. patrons but none of this is guaranteed.
- The major known costs are the music team and rehearsal venue which are ££14,700 for the former (based on 48 weeks and a 10% increase) and £4,000 for the latter (again on 48 weeks and a 5% increase). Other costs add another £700 or so. Subsequent discussions agreed a higher % increase for the music team around 14% to bring into line with market needs.
- There is therefore an operating deficit of nearly £12,000. Currently the only source of income to fill this gap is profit from concerts.

The committee first discussed options for reducing expenditure. Clearly the only option here that produces large savings is to reduce the number of rehearsals. Various permutations to do so were put forward:

- One rehearsal per week – not believed to be acceptable if we wish to continue to perform at a high standard.
- One rehearsal per week but with extras leading up to concerts – would likely have a medium impact in view of the number of potential concerts.
- Continue with two rehearsals until Llangollen but then revert to one – produces the time needed to achieve a good standard for the competition and introduce new items for the spring concerts but may then restrict ability to introduce new items thereafter.

Secondly, ways to increase revenue were considered:

- Increase concert income – this is one of, if not the major challenge. We must push ticket sales but also increase our attractiveness to audiences. Possibilities could be expanding our area of performance, thereby enabling repeat of similar programmes, or more joint concerts but with differing partners e.g. ladies, male voice, brass band – though this does of course dilute potential income.
- We also need to reconsider the potential for smaller peripheral events such as weddings and retirement homes which don't need a lot of preparation but generate reasonable income.
- Donations/sponsorship – an area that has significant potential but really needs one person to take ownership and drive forward.
- Build a list of “customers” i.e. people who attend concerts who we can then include in mailing and advertising campaigns.
- Recruitment – another very important aspect. We obviously need new members just to cover normal turnover but we must look to expand. Not only does a new member mean an extra subscription but it also critically means another person who will have friends and contacts as potential audience members. Agreed we again need a designated person – preferably a younger member – who could lead a small group specifically targeting this question.
- Subscriptions – obviously never a welcome answer but subs have not increased for four years. Whilst it is not realistic to suggest an increase sufficient to cover the deficit, this is an element that needs to form part of an overall solution. It was agreed to propose an amount of £175 for 2023. Other options could include the introduction of a monthly subscription e.g. £15. This generates extra work for the treasurer and also impacts cashflow.

Ultimately, if the choir is to survive, some combination of most of the above is necessary.

NM put forward an example of a combined approach as follows:

- £25 increase in subs = £1,200*
- 4 wk equivalent reduction in rehearsals (48 to 44 weeks, assume say increase to three weeks xmas and summer breaks, and take bank holiday Mondays off) = £1,250
- Sponsorship, patrons, supporters income (£40 x 20 heads) = £1,000*

* Includes Gift Aid

Total income improvement = £3,450

Assuming a net £7,620 income from concerts (£8,620 from income generating concerts less Llangollen cost of £1,000) this would increase 2023 year-end cash to circa £5,300.

Actions need to be agreed at the next full meeting to progress the proposals needed as a result of these discussions.

Tuesday 8th November at 7:30pm.

Signed

John Powell.....8th November 2022

Accompanist

JP has received a note from Tatyana saying she wishes to resume duties after the Remembrance concert. It would appear though from the note that she is still seeing doctors and the committee felt it would not be right for her or the choir for her to return. Doing so may well introduce unnecessary strain into what is clearly a very difficult situation.

The committee resolved to advise Tatyana accordingly and, in the meantime, Anna would be invited to continue the rôle until the year end. Anna would also then be considered as first choice for 2023.