

Macclesfield Male Voice Choir

An online meeting of the Macclesfield Male Voice Choir (MaccMVC) General Committee was held on Thursday 11th March 2021.

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:33pm.

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), Bryan Peak-(T2 Rep), Keith Jones, Neil McArthur.

2 - Apologies for Absence: D. Collins-(T1 Rep).

The Chairman asked the Secretary to record the Choir's sadness at the death of John Burgess. John was a much loved and respected member of the Choir for many years and will be missed by all. The Chairman also thanked those who were able to attend John's funeral.

3 - Minutes of Previous Meeting: Acceptance was proposed by R. Jenner, seconded by J. Robinson and approved by all present.

4 - Matters Arising from 3 above:

- a) As part of the on-going work to 'future-proof' everything we do, the Choir's I/T media outlets, including Website, Facebook, Twitter and others, are being brought under the control of the General Committee. There are always changes to personnel, planned and unplanned, and it is believed that this move will ensure that future transfer of authority and control will be as seamless as possible.
- b) Choir Staging – Thanks go to Neil McArthur who has agreed to house the staging for 6 months. The Chairman will contact Stuart Mills' family to arrange a suitable time for us collect them.

5 - Financial update: R. Jenner

On the basis of the finance report at the last meeting it was agreed to continue payments to the Music Team, on the current basis, through May. Unless anything fundamental changed this would mean giving notice to the Music team on or about 20th March in order to maintain our ongoing balance of c£5000 which is deemed necessary to restart.

After meeting our commitments to date and receiving several generous donations our current balance is £8156 excluding ring-fenced items of Cornwall, Uniform etc.

There is no additional committed income in the foreseeable future. Therefore, I anticipate a balance at end of May of c£6370 and at end of June of c£5100.

Unless there is a change of income or a relaxation of our "final balance" the last payment to the Music Team is scheduled for June 1st. Therefore, on or about 20th April, we should notify them that June will be the last payment, until we restart.

The Meeting asked the Treasurer for an opinion on when subscriptions should be required. He advised that we need to see what our expenditure will be if and when we restart rehearsals and that for the time being no action is needed. This was accepted.

There have been delays getting Neil McArthur registered with the CAF bank. These will hopefully be sorted out within the next few days.

6-Strategy Group report – K. Jones.

Future Strategy

The group has started on a more proactive approach to the future. In last 6 months all we have been able to do was react to the given circumstance of the epidemic. However, we now believe that a tentative plan for the future can be drawn up. Given this, choristers have already been informed of our intention to re start rehearsals on the 17th of May. We have also produced a proposal for our first public performance, an outline for this concert has been circulated to all Committee members. Essentially, we think this should be a free one-hour concert to achieve the following: -

- a) show we have not gone away and are back singing,
- b) bring the joy of public performance back to choristers as soon as possible.
- c) start a recruitment process.

We believe that it's time to draw up plans and dates for our 2021 concert programme.

Because the possibility of us being able to resume in late May is now looking more certain it was agreed that we were now in a position to firmly book venues for the Events scheduled for this year and early 2022.

The Chairman agreed to take this on and report progress.

Communication Process - We have agreed that we will start a publicity/communications process on the 12th April (this is a government Covid milestone review date). Via Dai Jones and Laurie Kennard, we aim, if possible, to release information about: -

- a) Resumption of rehearsals.
- b) Our first concert.
- c) To kick off our recruitment drive.

Recruitment - John Robinson and Mike Batson have plans in place for recruitment. These include recruitment events, press releases and appeals on local radio. Work is underway to produce a contact card. This will be left on seats at all our concerts to enable all prospective new chorister to contact us, it will include contact email and telephone details as well as details of our new website. It is also hope that we can include a QR code for this purpose. We also aim to spread the word via the communications process.

As soon as possible after the first concert we aim to follow this up with a “come and sing” with us event at which prospective choristers can try us out.

IT/Website - At the present time work continues on the new website. Bryan Peak will be in charge of maintaining and updating the site when it is operational. Currently it is planned to have the site connected to our Facebook page.

An initial test of the Website has been carried out and proved successful, but some adjustments still have to be made. It is hoped the website will be ready for full testing in the next few weeks.

Uncertainties – The group now has 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.

The Committee 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 – D. Collins sent the following report - All the Tenor 1's have been contacted re the resumption of rehearsals and whilst everyone is keen to get back singing, the general consensus is that they would like to wait until they've had their 2nd jab. So, unless that happens, you can only count on 2 turning up in May.

Another reason for staying away, is people feel that singing behind masks/face shields, isn't something they particularly enjoyed the last time and would prefer to come back to sing as normal.

T2 -Nothing to Report.

B1 -Nothing to Report.

B2- Nothing to Report.

8- AOB

- a) The Secretary reported that all Choir Letterheads and emails, both external and internal, now carry the National Lottery logo. He thanked D. Hyde for ensuring this was done and Bryan Peak for his work in adding the logos to the documents.
- b) In recognition of their generous grant and our *Mayoral Civic Award*, the Secretary has been in contact with Macclesfield Town Council for permission to add their logo to our correspondence.
- c) Nottingham Trent University have invited the Choir to participate in a survey of the effects of Covid-19 on our operations. J. Powell agreed to complete the survey on our behalf.
- d) R. Owens gave the Meeting a brief report on **Website** progress.
 - i-a Members Only section to be added.
 - ii-Passwords and account details have been given to the Secretary and the individuals involved with each area.
 - iii-New Member enquiries generated from the Website will initially go to the Secretary and then on to the MD for evaluation. If approved, relevant documentation will be sent to the applicant.
 - iv- He recommends that, as soon as feasible, a set of professional videos of the Choir singing are made for inclusion on the website. This was approved.
 - v- the new Choir mobile-phone number has been added. The phone is currently manned by J. Wilkin.
- e) The Treasurer will discuss the way we handle Gift Aid details with Don Riseley.

9- Date of next meeting:

Thursday 15th April. Unless circumstances dictate a change.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 20:55.