



THE CHICHESTER SINGERS

Minutes of Virtual Committee Meeting held on Zoom on Monday 9th November 2020 at 6pm

Present: Carolyn Shaw (Chairman)
David Swayne (Hon. Treasurer)
Izabela Mayne (Hon. Secretary)
Annie Barnes
Wendy Bray
David Curran
Maggie Pugh
Jill Selwood
Jonathan Willcocks

		ACTION
1.0	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
1.1	No apologies were received.	
2.0	MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD 25TH AUGUST (SCHEDULED), 7TH SEPTEMBER AND 5TH OCTOBER 2020 (EXTRAORDINARY) VIA ZOOM	
2.1	All minutes were agreed as accurate records of the meetings and will be signed in due course by the Chairman when possible.	
3.0	MATTERS ARISING	
3.1	There were no matters arising.	
4.0	HON. TREASURER'S REPORT	
4.1	DS reported that the onset of the pandemic had played havoc with our 2020/21 budget, but that we were fortunate that the loss of our income for 4 out of 5 cancelled concerts had been largely offset by savings in expenditure. We currently have £58k in the bank, £4.6k more than we had at the start of the financial year.	
4.2	30% of our members have to date paid their subscriptions of £100 and contributed generous donations of nearly £1k in addition. Subscriptions are payable by 31 st January and DS will be sending out reminders at the beginning of the New Year.	DS
4.3	DS summarised that given the circumstances, we were holding our own, forecasting a slightly smaller surplus than budgeted.	

4.4	Mary Isgar will not be chasing Patrons and Sponsors for their contributions this year, but will be maintaining communication with them.	
4.5	Our bank, the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), have advised us of some very big increases in their charges for handling cheques and cash. This is designed to persuade us all to use Bank Transfers (BACS) to make payments instead. We shall therefore be encouraging our members to consider using this method. IM queried if changing banks might be an option, but this presents too many logistical issues to be considered viable.	
4.6	DS mentioned a query with a recent venue hire invoice, which he will address directly with St. Paul's Church.	DS
5.0	CHAIRMAN'S REPORT	
5.1	The Committee discussed and agreed our 'Plan for handling a Covid case' guidelines. Once approved, this will be shared with members and made available on our website with other relevant documents.	
5.2	It was agreed that the postponed AGM will be held on Wednesday, 17 th February 2021.	
5.3	The Committee debated the best way for the management of the Annual General Meeting. Assuming it will be held on Zoom, the arrangements and timeline will be as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 27th January IM will remind members of the date of the AGM and send nomination forms for Hon. Treasurer (DS has already agreed to stay on for another 3-years' term but needs to be proposed and seconded) and one new Committee member. On 3rd February IM will e-mail agenda and reports (Financial Report, Annual Report and Musical Director's Report) to all members. At the same time she will request that those unable to attend the Zoom meeting either send apologies to herself or appoint a proxy voter and inform her about it. 	IM
5.4	Each nominee must confirm their willingness to stand and be proposed and seconded (as per the nomination form). This can be done by either sending a message with the relevant information to IM (who will complete the nomination form on this member's behalf), or by completing the electronic nomination form and returning it to her. All nominations should be received by 10 th February.	
5.5	Members will be required to vote on various items, including minor changes to the Choir's Constitution and a change of the Independent Examiner. This will be managed by DS (supported by JS) who will host the Zoom meeting. 'Yes/No' options will appear on the screen for members for voting.	DS JS
6.0	FUTURE CONCERT PROGRAMME	
6.1	JW said that it was clear that Covid-19 restrictions, social-distancing etc. were going to be with us for many months to come, and accordingly we would need to maintain our current pattern of Zoom and St. Paul's/Zoom rehearsals (after 2 nd December) well into 2021. Until we can have full (non-socially distanced) rehearsals, it won't be realistic to prepare the choir for Cathedral concerts. It is also important to maintain	

	as positive a singing experience for the choir, having clear ‘end-points’ and a sense of fulfilment with the repertoire that we are rehearsing.	
6.2	Given the current circumstances it is inevitable that we must cancel provisional plans for concerts in December 2020 and March 2021.	
6.3	<p>JW proposed the following plan for the period from November 2020 till June 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 11th and 18th November’s Zoom rehearsals to continue with Bruckner/ESM items • On 25th November and 2nd, 9th and 16th December to rehearse Christmas music from ‘100 Carols for Choirs’, culminating in informal ‘performances’ as part of 9th (group B) and 16th December’s (group A) rehearsals (subject to us being able to return to St. Paul’s Church after lockdown). Hopefully the final rehearsal on 16th December can take a form of ‘public’ carol celebration, to which we can invite family and friends to join us via Zoom live-stream • From January 2021 to rehearse Rossini – ‘Petite Messe Solennelle’ (last performed by The Chichester Singers in 2012), which has lots of attractive choruses and goes well with just piano accompaniment. We would again bring this series of rehearsals to an ‘end point’ in March 2021, with whatever form of informal ‘performance’ is by then realistic • Hopefully our existing plan for Will Todd – ‘Mass in Blue’/L’Estrange – ‘Songs of a Rainbow Nation’ concert (Cathedral – 19th June 2021) will be able to go ahead. Will Todd and his jazz quartet are due to be joining us to provide the accompaniment for this concert. A final decision on us proceeding with this performance will need to be taken c. March 2021 	
6.4	JW suggested that should our 16 th December’s rehearsal be held on Zoom, we might opt to have it as our Christmas Social. This will be confirmed nearer the time.	
6.5	<p>Looking further ahead - while lots of decisions in these fluid times can (and should) only be made at the stage when we can minimise guesswork, we do also need to look ahead in outline to 2021-22. JW’s plan for the 2021-2022 season, when hopefully the pandemic will have passed, is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13th November 2021 - Elgar – ‘The Dream of Gerontius’ • 15th January 2022 – Handel – ‘Messiah’ • 26th March 2022 - Lauridsen – ‘Lux aeterna’/Rutter – ‘Magnificat’ • 18th June 2022 - Bob Chilcott – ‘Dances of Time’/Stanford – ‘Songs of the Fleet’/ Ian Assersohn – ‘A Drop of Nelson’s Blood’ <p>These concert dates are provisionally booked with the Cathedral, but contracts with all parties involved will not be signed till we are certain that the performances will be going ahead.</p>	
6.6	JW asked DS to allow access to our Zoom rehearsal on 11 th November to three of his fellow conductors, to assist them with gaining an insight into how virtual rehearsals work and to enable them to restart rehearsing with their own choirs. This was agreed.	DS
6.7	JW mentioned his plans to hold the delayed re-auditions of tenors and basses in June 2021.	WB JW

6.8	CS thanked JW for his creative thinking and flexibility with planning our rehearsal and future programme, for which the Committee and choir members are truly grateful.	
7.0	CATHEDRAL MATTERS	
7.1	WB is to contact the Cathedral to cancel bookings for all concerts which will now not be happening and reiterate the ones provisionally booked for the future.	
8.0	CHOIR TOUR	
8.1	The Choir Tour Organisers have submitted a status report, which the Committee read and discussed. Following the discussion, CS is to contact them to consider the various options. Once the Organisers have more complete information, they will present their suggestions to the Committee and details will be circulated to tour members.	CS
9.0	MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS	
9.1	There were no matters raised by members.	
10.0	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
10.1	There have been enquiries made by members about the choir doing another lockdown recording, but JW and the rest of the Committee felt that there would be no great advantage to doing this, since we were now singing again.	
10.2	WB mentioned that she had been contacted by three ex-members interested in re-joining the choir. It had been agreed that they could do this by attending our Zoom rehearsals, starting when we commence rehearsing the Christmas Carols. These members will be re-auditioned as and when it will be possible.	
11.0	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
11.1	A meeting to discuss new term arrangements has been provisionally arranged for Monday, 11 th January at 6pm on Zoom (to be decided nearer the time).	
11.2	Our scheduled quarterly Committee Meeting will take place on Monday, 15 th March at 6pm on Zoom.	
	CS thanked the Committee and the meeting ended at 7.10pm	