

AGM Minutes 18 October 2022

This meeting was held at Christ the Cornerstone at 7.30pm before the commencement of the regular rehearsal. All elected Board members except Christine Dickens (Concerts Manager – Resources & Risk Assessment Officer) were present as listed below. Mark Jordan, ex-officio Board member, was also present.

Will Swann – Chair (WS)
Juliet Gilliland – Secretary & Web Administrator (JG)
Cyril Wood – Treasurer (CW)
Glenys Bloomfield – Membership Secretary (GB)
Anne Wood – Concerts Manager – (AW)
Karen Collcott – Health & Safety and Safeguarding Officer (KC)
Sarah Dyer – PR Manager (SD)
Ruth Wilkinson – External Publicity & Box Officer (RW)
Ian Collcott – Internal Communications + Making Music Rep (IC)
Leah Attwood – Trustee (LA)

Preamble

The Chair (WS) began by welcoming everyone and especially recent new members.

The Secretary (JG) then confirmed that no other business for consideration at the AGM had been submitted to her by members.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Amy McCormick, Kate Jefferies, Ruth Legh-Smith, Jacky Holloway, Don Head, Felicity Head, Jo Paton, Sally Wilson, Barbara Middleton, Trish Browne, Ruth Meardon and Hilary O'Donoghue. Members were asked to email any other apologies they knew of to the Secretary on secretary@mkchorale.org.uk straight away after the meeting.

2. Minutes

These were approved unanimously as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

None were received.

4. Musical Director's Report

Mark Jordan stated that his report was freely available via the Member Area of the website if anyone had not seen it. He commented that he had been really pleased with our last season and that it had proved that Covid could not stop us! The Platinum Jubilee Concert had been very special indeed.

He then went on to talk about voice appraisals. He stated these were still going to happen but exactly when was yet to be settled. However, they would take place at

some point in 2023. Every choir member would be invited to sing as part of a quartet alongside Mark and Alex and an invited independent singer to ascertain how well they could hold their part and how confident they were. There would be a choice of two pieces, and these will have been rehearsed in advance. There would also be a few aural tests to assess range. He reassured everyone that these appraisals were absolutely not about whether existing members could continue to remain in the choir.

5. Report of the Board

The Chair (WS) highlighted the fact that there were two reports, one of which was the formal and brief report prepared by the Treasurer for the Charity Commission which would be addressed in the next agenda item, and the second which covered 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 and therefore included events before the last AGM. Attention was drawn under 3.9 Post-Concert Feedback to Table 5 on page 10 regarding the percentage of members who had not sung at a given concert and the reasons for their not being there. Choir members present then approved the extension of the date of the previously defined strategic goals for another year. Questions were invited from the members, but none were forthcoming.

6. Finance

(a) Treasurer's Report & Audited Accounts + Trustees' Annual Report to the Charity Commission

The Treasurer (CW) commented that inevitably due to Covid, no surplus was made in the last financial year. This was exacerbated by the last minute forced cancellation of the Christmas concert which was usually a money maker. There had been a tremendous outturn for the Platinum Jubilee Concert partly due to our having achieved sponsorship and also via generous donations. This meant that in the end only £6,000 had been lost. However, programme sales had not gone well caused by deficiencies at the theatre. Both Pam Furniss and Adrian Morrow backed this observation up, commenting that there had been no signage. This had been fed back to the theatre and as a result they had reduced the amount they charged us. CW stated that reserves have unsurprisingly fallen by £10,000 but that we are still above our minimum target. He highlighted that the importance of members proactively selling as many tickets as possible, as otherwise the annual subscription would have to be increased even further.

Questions were then invited from the floor. Chris Salmon asked why there were no plans to sing at MK Theatre in this season. WS explained that we still needed to proceed carefully with a more financially cautious programme.

The Chair then expressed gratitude to the Treasurer for all his work.

(b) Subscriptions

The proposed membership subscription rates for 2022-2023 were approved: £220 for an annual subscription, £228 for monthly payments of £19 per month and £72 for full time students in higher and further education.

The following questions were raised, and points made:

Susie Chadd asked if termly payments were possible. CW confirmed that was the case. Ellen Zapata-Webborn asked what would happen if someone started mid-way through a season or a term. It was explained that an appropriate fee was then charged, adjusted in line with the date of joining. Chris Salmon asked whether members were still bound to pay for a full year's subscription regardless of whether they left during that time. David Ollerhead echoed this with regard to those electing to pay monthly. CW confirmed that this was the case, but John Burgess observed that it would be very difficult to pursue those who left who were paying monthly or termly if they just stopped their subscription. LA stated that this rule about subscriptions and leaving MK Chorale during any given year should be made very clear. It was then pointed out by both Penny Yates and WS that adult education rates had been increased and were very much more than an MK Chorale subscription and SD stressed the value everyone was enjoying through being excellently coached by both MJ and AA, though whom we are all learning so much. CW added here that anyone who wanted to pay a higher subscription would be welcome to do so. Deborah Ward encouraged everyone who could, to remember to use Gift Aid to pay their subscription and stated that this should be stressed repeatedly.

7. Confirmation of Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2022-23

As at the last AGM, the Treasurer stated that Dr Adrian Prisk who had completed the examination of MK Chorale's accounts in the previous two years and had carried this out in an excellent fashion free of charge, had been approached again. His appointment was once again approved.

8. Procedure Rules Amendment

The proposed amendments to Section 3 were approved.

9. Trustee Appointments

In line with Clause 13 of MK Chorale's Constitution, three trustees were required to retire from office at this AGM. RW, AW and CW had all agreed to retire and were all duly re-appointed. No alternative nominations for their positions had been received.

In addition, there was one nomination for a new Board member: Jacky Holloway to be an Ordinary Trustee. She was elected unopposed and welcomed back onto the Board, of which she had previously been a member.

One member of the Board, Christine Dickens, who had acted as Concert Manager – Resources had stepped down and AW had now taken on the full Concert Manager role to include resources. WS thanked Christine in her absence for all her work.

Prior to the Chair closing the meeting and thanking all members for their continued commitment to MK Chorale, Judy Rose expressed thanks on behalf of all members to the Board for all their diligent work during a prolonged and difficult period. The meeting then closed with the Chair also expressing his thanks to the Board for their committed support.

Juliet Gilliland, Secretary to the Board