

Whitehall Choir

Summary minutes of Committee meeting, 15 March 2019, 6.30pm, at St Peter's Eaton Sq

Present: Philip Pratley (Chair), Joanna Tomlinson (Music Director), Ruth Eastman (Secretary), Kate Goulden (Soprano Rep), Sarah Rollinson (Alto Rep), Simon Hunter (Tenor Rep), Ian Williamson (Bass Rep), Alison Williams (Librarian), Martin Humphreys (Publicity Manager), Richard Grafen (Webmaster), Laura Lowenthal (Business Manager)

Apologies: Patrick Haighton (Treasurer)

1. Treasurer's report

- a. PH circulated documents – a thorough and accurate report.
- b. Noted that Santander cannot change the signatories and their advice is that we may need to close this account and open a new one in order to effect this change. Committee **agreed** that it was still appropriate for existing signatories to continue
- c. Constitution being redrafted to confirm the trustees of the charity, the Jubilee Fund signatories and the respective governance roles.
- d. Pricing for Messiah at SJSS in November will be considered after we have the audience numbers for the Creation concert. **Agreed**

2. Further developing and using our on-line presence

- a. Discussion concentrated on content developments including range of pictures and video clips, some of which may be taken for us.
- b. Members' page now has much wider range of resources, so now the task is to make sure they are used.
- c. Need to develop a team to manage content on our website and social media; guidelines would need to be clear, e.g. reliable, accurate, correct spelling, consistent with spirit of choir, not political.
- d. Improving natural search will include regular updates; site needs to change often to attract traffic

3. Our 75th season and beyond – strengthening the Jubilee Fund

- a. We want the Jubilee Fund to be in as resilient a position as possible as it enables the choir to meet our ambitions. The choir loans have been paid back, thanks to PH.
- b. Initiatives underway to strengthen the Jubilee Fund include obtaining a License to Gamble has enabled the draw, five so far. We've made £400 as a result. Target £5,000.
- c. IW will offer proposal to organise a sponsored day, perhaps a sponsored sing, e.g. at each check point on a walk. (Afternote: outline approach on circulation.)

4. Exploring the options for next choir tour

- a. **Timing:** 2021: before Easter (cheapest) or late May bank holiday week might have advantage.
- b. **Repertoire:** reprising music from most recent concert. Needs to be *a capella*. Our 2021 concert planning already takes account of this .

- c. **Location and organisation:** Discussion revealed a wide range of favourable options. Choice would be linked to organisation, deciding whether to go via a reliable tour company or under own arrangements. **Agreed** that would bring a tour sub-committee together, PP and JT probably plus 2, to put plan to Committee. **Action: JT, PP**
5. **Confirming the sequence for Creation concert day on 28 March**
Details were confirmed and subsequently implemented.
6. **Arrangements for re-auditions.** Jo will re-audition the choir on Sunday 7 July (alternative arrangements for anyone who can't make that). Ian will lead, enabling Jo to jot down comments and providing a second set of ears. Will have five minutes with everyone; there will be no sight reading but each can bring a prepared piece. **Afternote:** RE has confirmed The Music Studios, Marylebone Lane, booked, 10am-5pm; KG arranging individual timings.
7. **Headlines from meetings: Vicar of St Peter's (RE); our President (PP)**
- a. Meeting with Vicar, arranged by PH; attended by PP, JT and RE. It was an opportunity to catch up with him and say how much we enjoy St Peter's as a venue and appreciate our working relationship with the new verger and St Peter's team. PH confirmed we would be sharing £1,200, half our proceeds as agreed from the Christmas concert, with the church. The venue hire hasn't changed since we first went there in 2015. PH has since recommended that our rental will be in line with the RPI annually.
 - b. We also mentioned the rehearsal piano, which Ian has found challenging and the vicar is happy for us to replace. Committee **agreed** that we should action this. Afternote: the details are now in hand with Jubilee Fund proposal to be put to SGM on 28 May
 - c. Vicar mentioned a charity they support: Saakshar School Appeal in SW Delhi (possibly we could think about future concert proceeds going towards it).
 - d. PP introduced the Choir in more detail to our President, Antonia Romeo, Permanent Secretary at the Department for International Trade, who subsequently attended our Creation concert, meeting most of the Committee and several other members. Antonia will attend the next Committee meeting, date now scheduled for Wednesday 29 May.
8. **AOB**
- a. Soloists for Messiah concert being confirmed and details with concert blurb passed to SJSS publicity Action complete: JT, PH, MH
 - b. News of our Messiah Come & Sing, in Clapham on 7 September will appear in the April Clapham Society Newsletter. **Agreed** that we won't need a separate Open Rehearsal in the autumn; the Come & Sing will be treated as a rehearsal. Flyer in hand. Action: RE, MH
9. **Next meetings:** 29 May as Committee in Leonardo MW Ltd Great George St, and Tuesday 2 July (AGM), at St Peter's.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm.