

Whitehall Choir  
**Minutes of the Committee Meeting, 8 March 2018, 7pm,  
Meeting Room, St Peter's Eaton Square, London SW1W 9AL**

**Present:** Jonathan Williams (Chair), Patrick Haighton (Treasurer), Ruth Eastman (Secretary), Martin Humphreys (Publicity Manager), Kate Goulden (Soprano Rep), Jane Mackay (Alto Rep), Philip Pratley (Tenor Rep)

**Apologies:** Joanna Tomlinson (Music Director), Alison Williams (Librarian), Richard Grafen (Webmaster), Daniel Lambauer (Bass Rep)

| Agenda Item   | Discussion  | Action |
|---|---|--------|
| Minutes of last meeting: matters arising, not on Agenda                 | <p><b>1 Brahms programme</b> RE took this on and will create one for the June concert.</p> <p><b>2 New members</b> This term's auditions are complete. Since the 8 new members mentioned in the January minutes, 2 more singers have been accepted to join the choir. The vocal breakdown of new singers is: 2 sopranos, 6 altos and 2 basses. The choir now has 63 members.</p> <p><b>3 Recruitment flyer</b> JW will create a new one in time for Brahms concert to attract more members to our Open Rehearsal on 10 April. (Done.)</p> <p><b>4 Fund-raising and volunteer ideas</b> Bridget Gardiner has sent a document round for the committee to consider, packed with good ideas. Also includes local volunteer involvement for front-of-house duties and catering at post-concert parties, which will be on the agenda for next meeting. Thanks to BG for her work on this.</p>   | RE     |
| Financial update for 2017-18 season, forward financial plan for 2018-19 | <p>PH reported on the current state. Highlights follow:</p> <p><b>Income &amp; Expenditure 2017-18</b> Still struggling to meet £2,500 surplus objective for full season but expect to be in the black.</p> <p><b>Concerts &amp; Events 2017-18</b> <i>Joshua</i> income: £6,459; expenditure: £11,950; deficit (band cost £4,933): £5,491. Ticket receipts from the Christmas concert is annually shared with the church. PW has sent a cheque to St Peter's for £850, gratefully acknowledged by the Revd Ralph Williamson. Ticket sales for March over halfway (target to exceed 200 in audience; query over publicity spending – we're fine without national press). We should be in the black for this concert, ditto summer concert, assuming an audience of 250.</p> <p><b>Cash flow 2017-18</b> The potential call for Jubilee Fund support before March concert has been averted but is still a potential risk before the summer concert.</p> <p><b>Concerts and Events 2018-19</b> <i>The Creation</i> concert is budgeted for a c. £5,000 shortfall; the orchestra will cost about £8,500 (because of its size and ours we'll also need to pay extra for stage extensions) and there are three professional soloists; the alto solo is short and a singer will be drawn from the choir. To help defray costs, ticket prices may need to rise to £35-£40; we may also need to seek sponsorship. The choir will be told about this as a matter of urgency (and was at the following rehearsal) and asked if they can think of potential donors. RE said she would add a para about sponsorship in the 'How you can support us' section in Brahms programme (done). Design of a 'sponsorship package' as part of fundraising will be drafted in conjunction with JW and progress will be discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Membership profile</b> We currently number 63. A quarter to a third of the choir is new. Approximately half the</p> |        |
| Financial update  |   |        |

|  |  |       |
|--|--|-------|
| (cont'd)   | choir is made up of Civil Servants (21 current, 8 past). The average membership tenure is 9 years.   | JW    |
| Brahms Requiem et al/ Schubert concert, St James's Piccadilly, 22 March 2018 | RE has created programme. MH, who won't be singing, has kindly volunteered to run front of house. KG will help, also Jane Lewis's daughter. Interval will be 10 minutes (no refreshments). Need to ensure there are boxes and music stands (done). Layout of choir will be different in first and second halves. Dress rehearsal: 2.30pm in time for 2.45pm start; should finish by 6pm. A live recording of the concert will be made by a student at Surrey University who is studying for a degree in Sound Recording as part of a Tonmeister course. (The church is not charging for this but stipulates that equipment needs to be out of aisle and harm's way to avoid accidents.) PH will agree terms on the use of the material by the choir afterwards and JT will review the results before we distribute any tracks.   | PH/JT |
| American music concert, St Peter's Eaton Square, 28 June 2018                | MH says Nikki (friend of Alice Farrow's who designed the Brahms flyer) is available to design this flyer too, needed for start of next term; she is kindly doing this on a voluntary basis. The design needs to work with banner outside church. Title since confirmed as Notes from America: Bernstein's <i>Chichester Psalms</i> and Music by Lauridsen, Ives and Gjeilo. Church booked. Music organised. Jo has lined up soloists – countertenor (Roderick Morris), harpist (Keziah Thomas) and percussionist (James Godfrey); Ian Tindale will accompany on the organ. There will be a porch party afterwards for which volunteers will be sought!   | JW    |
| Open Rehearsal, St Peter's Eaton Square, 10 April 2018                       | Flyer is designed and will be available at Brahms concert. There will be a publicity and social media push as usual. Name stickers needed for singers as previously. AW has organised music. Volunteers will be sought for drinks reception. The rehearsal will take place in the church, with a bit more rehearsing and the reception in the Parish Hall.   |       |
| Competitive review   | MH reported on this initiative which he and Bridget Gardiner have done jointly. It was an initiative he had been thinking about for ages: taking a look at London choirs that most closely resembled ours in size and profile and seeing how their activities impacted on ours. Bridget, who has extensive marketing experience, kindly offered to help. A long list was produced and submitted to JW, PH, JT and RE last term, then after consideration distilled to a short list of 13. Among the items covered in the review were size, rehearsal times, repertoire, venues, ticket prices, recruitment, subs, Friends and Patrons, USP, tours and recordings. Of the 13 choirs, 5 had patrons – mostly people with musical influence, otherwise, church dignitaries, MPs or people in the media. We need to think why we need Patrons, e.g. if we sing Choral Evensong in a cathedral or want great media coverage. What could MPs offer us?! Of the choirs that had Friends, few had schemes that were money spinners. In terms of sponsorship, two choirs – City of London (£2.5k) and Highgate Choral Society (£3k) – received generous backing. A firm of chartered accountants (Buzzacott LLP) sponsored the first of a 5-year female composer-in-residence scheme at London Oriana. Ticket prices seemed generally in line with ours. Like Whitehall, most choirs rely on subs for their |       |
| Competitive review (cont'd)  |  |       |

|  |  |    |
|--|--|----|
|  | <p>survival rather than concert proceeds. It was a very detailed look and MH is going to write some guidance from the report on what role we would expect a Patron to provide, for discussion by the committee. We will then ask the choir for suggestions of individuals who could be asked to become Patrons. Thanks were extended to MH and Bridget for their hard work on this – an excellent piece of research and valuable food for thought.</p>   | MH |
| Update of committee roles, summary of interest in vacant positions | <p>PH received 8 or 9 responses to his request for email suggesting prospective committee candidates. Some of the same names came up repeatedly for chairman. Various skills sets were also offered.</p>   |    |
| 2018-19 season concert dates (for information)                     | <p>1) Joint concert with Cantus Novus Wien, Saturday 24 November 2018, St Peter's Eaton Square (also joint rehearsal at St Peter's for 23 November).<br/> 2) Christmas concert, Tuesday 18 December 2018, St Peter's Eaton Square (and hopefully the night before, 17 December, for extra rehearsal. St Peter's is unavailable; St Matthew's Westminster will let us know closer to the time if we can rehearse there.)<br/> 3) <i>The Creation</i>, Thursday 28 March 2019, St John's Smith Square.<br/> 4) 'A Very British Summer', Thursday 27 June 2019, St Peter's Eaton Square.<br/> <b>Rehearsal dates</b> 4 September to 18 December (including Friday 23 November with Cantus Novus Wien plus afternoon dress rehearsal on Saturday 24 November and Monday 17 December, venue TBC);<br/> 8 January to 2 April (post concert on 28 March);<br/> 23 April to 27 June.</p> | RE |
| AOB  | <p><b>Attendance policy</b> The policy remains unchanged from what is posted on the members' page, but arising from queries at last meeting here is further clarification. In order to sing in a given concert you must not miss more than 3 rehearsals for the winter and spring terms, 2 for the summer concert (a shorter term) or any for the Christmas concert as there are so few.<br/> <b>Data protection</b> Following on from last meeting, PH will post the latest policy, in line with recent legislation with which we are compliant, on the members' page. He will also summarise the main points. If any member has concerns, they should raise them with PH or their part rep; information is synchronised between him and part reps.</p>   | PH |
| Future committee meetings this season                              | <p>26 April (8-10 Great George Street, SW1P 3AE);<br/> 14 June, Meeting Room, St Peter's Eaton Square (JW away, new June date TBC);<br/> 3 July (AGM) Parish Hall, St Peter's Eaton Square.</p>  | JW |