

MALVERN FESTIVAL CHORUS

Minutes of Annual General Meeting Held on the 11th September 2018 in The Chase School Hall

The meeting was opened by Kevin Ilsley, who welcomed members.

1. **Apologies** had been received from 9 members; there were approximately 75 members present. James Oxley, President, was unable to attend and so Kevin Ilsley chaired the meeting.
2. **The Minutes of the AGM** held on the 5th September 2017 were agreed and signed, proposed by John Price and seconded by Ruth Ferris. The Minutes of the Special General Meeting held on 24th April 2018 were agreed and signed, proposed by John Price and seconded by Marna Gowan.
3. **Matters Arising**. There were no matters arising from either meeting.
4. **Committee Reports/Newsletter** had been circulated prior to the AGM.

Chairman's report. Kevin Ilsley wished to record a number of thanks and started by paying tribute to the tremendous contribution made to the Chorus by Richard Knight during his time as Musical Director. He spoke in particular of the new music Richard had introduced us to, thinking notably about the Argentine Tango Mass and also the opportunity he gave us to perform with him some of his own music. Kevin referred also to the link that Richard forged with the 1885 Singers, which we hope will continue. He wished our appreciation of everything Richard contributed to the choir to go on record.

Kevin also expressed his thanks to the Committee. He stated that they do much more work than he ever imagined. He thanked in particular Barbara for her accurate minute-taking, Mike for preparing budgets and accounts in a professional and efficient way, and Bridget for obtaining music and hosting many of the Committee meetings. He thanked Kate Cross and Jan Inglis for the work they have done over many years to produce publicity leaflets and concert programmes. They are now stepping back from doing this and Jan is also retiring from the committee. Kate will remain on the Committee. Kevin also recognised Viv Austen for her work as Membership Secretary, which she is also stepping down from.

Kevin thanked other members for their contributions: Julia Needham, having resigned from the Committee, continues to develop new publicity initiatives, Jackie Tolliday for obtaining newspaper coverage such as the feature about the Open Rehearsal and Liz Gait, co-opted during the year onto the Committee and working to get Social media coverage with the aim of attracting younger members. He thanked Heather Williamson for selling concert tickets, Viv Austen and Marna Gowan for holding the weekly raffle and Val and Mike Tweedie for rehearsal refreshments. All of these efforts provide valuable income to the choir.

Kevin thanked everyone who contributed food for the tea on concert day and puddings for the hog roast, as well as Julia for hosting the event. He also thanked Martin Purser for organising refreshments for the March concert in the Priory and Dee Brook for organising accommodation for the 1885 Singers with choir members.

Kevin also thanked Penny Vere for accompanying us in rehearsals and for her contribution to discussions in Committee meetings, following her election to the Chorus as lifetime Honorary Member. He also recognised the support given by David Angus and Allan Walker from Malvern College, in stepping in as accompanists when Penny is unavailable.

Kevin thanked James Oxley for his support with the Young Voices project, particularly holding the masterclasses and joining with the Tenors during the Messiah concert. Kevin also expressed appreciation for James' support when we were moving to make a new MD appointment.

Finally, and "most importantly", Kevin thanked Jonathan Brown for coming to the choir at a time of great need and for doing so much for us in such a short time. Kevin stated that it was a real pleasure having him as MD and members expressed their appreciation with applause.

Treasurer's Report / Accounts. A copy of the accounts is filed with these minutes.

Mike Tweedie presented the accounts, highlighting that income had been £29K and expenditure £32K, the shortfall due in large part to falling membership. However on the plus side, there had been an upturn in membership last term. Mike highlighted the ways that members could help to guarantee income and these included selling concert tickets, ensuring they are registered for gift-aid, which contributed c£2.5K last season and supporting the raffles (good prizes please) and sale of rehearsal refreshments.

Mike commented that no support had been sought from sponsorship as we are saving this effort to contribute to the costs of the Centenary year, along with other fund-raising efforts. He asked for help from any member with experience of applying for grants.

Mike expressed thanks to Stuart Wollaston for auditing and signing off the accounts.

Heather Williamson noted that the Membership Support fund had yet to be used and asked how people would know that it is available. Barbara stated that it is referred to on the website and Kevin thanked Heather for mentioning this.

Robin Peers asked whether Mike had considered raising members' subscriptions again as it was now 2 years since the last increase. Mike stated that he preferred to focus on increasing membership to gain the extra income.

Kevin thanked Mike for all the work he had done to manage the finances and prepare the accounts.

Secretary's Report. Barbara reiterated her thanks to Bridget for standing in whilst she was on holiday earlier in the year. Barbara also restated the debt of gratitude owed by the Choir to Kevin for steering us through difficult circumstances. The membership reinforced this sentiment with applause.

Musical Director's Report. Jonathan reiterated the thanks in his report for welcoming him to the Choir. He stated that the Messiah with the Young Voices project was a fantastic event. He expressed his appreciation for the way the choir approached the Brahms Requiem, with drive, desire and communication, and as it was the first time he had conducted the work with orchestra, he had been grateful for the opportunity.

He referred to the contrasts in the programme for the coming year and thanked members again for working so hard and enjoying what they do.

5. **Appointment of Independent Examiner.** Stuart Wollaston had agreed to continue as Independent Examiner, proposed Dorothy Knights and seconded by Eileen Wilson. He was unanimously re-appointed.

6. **Election of Officers.** Having served three years as Treasurer, Mike Tweedie was standing for re-election, proposed Robin Peers and seconded John Payne. Mike was re-elected. Following the resignation as membership Secretary of Viv Austen, Joy Black had been nominated by Viv Austen and seconded by Edwina Ward. Liz Gait had been co-opted during the 17-18 season and was proposed to take on Social Media Marketing by Barbara Moss and seconded by Julia Needham. Joy and Liz were elected.

7. **Election of Committee.** All other Committee members/Officers would be serving the second of three years since election/re-election. Kevin asked the Committee to stand so that members might know who they are:

Kevin Ilsley	Chairman
Barbara Moss	Secretary
Mike Tweedie	Treasurer

Bridget Corlett	Librarian
Joy Black	Membership Secretary
John Price	Concert Manager
Liz Gait	Social Media marketing
Edwina Ward	Soprano Voice Rep
Louise Rosoman	Soprano Voice Rep
Judith Keene	Alto 1 Voice Rep
Kate Cross	Alto 2 Voice Rep
Chris Little	Bass Voice Rep
Penny Vere	

He commented that there are vacancies for Tenor Voice Rep and Safeguarding Officer and asked members to consider whether they might be able to take on one of these roles. He explained that Safeguarding had come up as an issue when we undertook the Young Voices project. Kevin had checked the requirements with Making Music and the Charity Commission, and Judith Keene had put together the Policy in liaison with Kevin. Kevin thanked Judith for her help with this.

Member permission for use of photographs where they may be identified (but with no names included) was given by a show of hands. Barbara stated that she would email members to let those not present know that approval had been given at the AGM for use of choir photos and ask for anyone who was not in agreement to reply to that effect. Chris Gillies and Julia Needham questioned whether this would be sufficient permission. Heather Williamson suggested that new members should give permission when they join. Barbara confirmed that a declaration to that effect had already been added to the membership application form and thanked Heather for this suggestion. Kevin stated that the Committee would decide on the next steps.

8. Centenary Jonathan said that ideas were already being formulated for the Centenary year. Two specific ideas were under consideration:

1. Hold a concert outside Malvern eg in Worcester Cathedral
2. A further concert in Malvern theatre, perhaps inviting former MD's to conduct.

9. Any other business.

Bridget Corlett stated that she had no idea how much Barbara does until she stood in for her and Bridget thanked Kevin for his support whilst she was standing in.

Heather Williamson suggested that a former idea to take the choir on a tour / overseas trip might be considered, for the Centenary or other time.

Dorothy Knights asked what considerations were taken into account when choosing a charity. Barbara stated that the Committee had felt it appropriate that the Carols for All leader be invited to propose the charity (this year Penny Vere) and that it was important that it is a local charity in order to qualify for supermarket carol singing. Dorothy pointed out that the Malvern branch of the Chernobyl Children's charity of which she is Chairman was considered "local" by Morrisons as they allowed a collection on the charity's behalf.

Mary Wetherall asked whether consideration had been given to updating the History of MFC in time for the Centenary. Barbara confirmed that this was in progress.

Mike asked members to see him to pay their subscription or to do so on-line into the MFC bank account.

Kevin thanked everybody for their contributions to the AGM.

The meeting was closed at 8.00 pm by Kevin Ilesley.