

MALVERN FESTIVAL CHORUS

Minutes of Annual General Meeting Held on the 10th September 2019 in St Edmunds Hall, Malvern College

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

1. **Apologies** had been received from 3 members; there were approximately 80 members present. James Oxley, President, had hoped to attend but in his absence, Kevin Ilsley chaired the meeting.
2. **The Minutes of the AGM** held on the 11th September 2018 were unanimously agreed and signed, proposed by Heather Williamson and seconded by Joy Black. The Minutes of the Special General Meeting held on 26th March 2019 were unanimously agreed and signed, proposed by Val Tweedie and seconded by Ruth Ferris.
3. **Matters Arising**. There were no matters arising from either meeting.
4. **Committee Reports/Newsletter** had been circulated prior to the AGM.

Music Director's Report. Jonathan Brown referred to a season of five concerts, covering a wide range of repertoire. He expressed his appreciation for the love of the music and the commitment shown by members. He hoped they were fulfilled by the musical range.

He also said that he was grateful that members had endorsed him as permanent Music Director.

Chairman's report. Kevin Ilsley wished to echo the thanks in his report and particularly to Jonathan for everything he did throughout the year. Kevin stated that the standard of performance had improved enormously with more singing at rehearsals.

Kevin expressed his thanks to everyone who had made the season such a success and who make the choir function. Chief amongst them being Barbara for her organisation and communications, Mike for keeping a tight rein on the finances, Bridget for sourcing and obtaining music, often from many miles away and for organising events in an unassuming way. Members expressed their appreciation with applause.

Kevin thanked Penny Vere for her expert accompaniment at rehearsal.

He informed members that the new Head of Malvern College had formally agreed to be one of our Vice Presidents, a tradition that had sometimes been unacknowledged in the past. Kevin expressed thanks to the College for their support.

Further thanks were given to David Angus for taking part in concerts, Heather Williamson for managing ticket sales and Jackie Tolliday for her work to maintain the website and taking on the production of concert programmes.

He thanked members for coming to rehearsals and taking part in concerts.

At this point, Jonathan added his thanks to Kevin, for bringing his experience, a firm hand on the tiller and being a source of advice. Members endorsed these thanks with applause.

Secretary's Report. Barbara Moss stated that there were further thanks expressed in her report, which she hoped members had had the opportunity to read. The only additional point she wished to make was to add Eric Readman to the names of former members who had passed away during the year.

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

Mike Tweedie presented the accounts, highlighting that income had been £32.3K and expenditure £34.0K. There were 125 members at the end of the season. The cost of concerts exceeds the income generated and income from ticket sales is variable. This makes member numbers and their subscriptions a vital source of guaranteed income.

Mike referred to the higher costs anticipated for the forthcoming special season with the concert in Worcester Cathedral and Gala concert in Malvern theatre. The Committee will be looking for sponsorship to help cover these costs.

He also made members aware of generous donations made by two members in memory of deceased relatives. He expressed grateful thanks to them and stated that any other donations would be appreciated.

Mike reported that the accounts had been approved by Stuart Wollaston as Independent Examiner. Stuart now wishes to relinquish this task and Mike asked if any member, or someone they know, could take this on. This was covered under agenda item 5.

The accounts were proposed for adoption by Peter Brook, seconded John Roberts-Powell and approved by members.

Peter Brook asked what the revenues related to in tickets sales. Mike indicated 400+ (November), around 200 (Priory) and 300 + (June).

Kevin thanked Mike for his management of the finances and for preparing the accounts.

5. **Appointment of Independent Examiner.** Mike expressed his gratitude to Stuart Wollaston for the work he has done. Kevin restated the importance of finding someone to take on this vital but voluntary role. John Connell put himself forward and confirmed that as a banker he should be qualified to take it on. He was formally proposed by Kevin Ilsley, seconded Mike Tweedie and the meeting voted in favour of his appointment. Kevin thanked John for being willing take this on.

6. **Election of Officers.** All officers are currently serving their 2nd or 3rd year of 3 years in office. They were listed as:

Kevin Ilsley	Chairman
Barbara Moss	Secretary
Mike Tweedie	Treasurer
Bridget Corlett	Librarian
Joy Black	Membership Secretary
Louise Rosoman	Safeguarding Officer
John Price	Concert Manager

Thanks were expressed to Liz Gait for her work to increase our presence in social media. Liz had felt the need to stand down from the Committee due to the commitments of her business. However, she will continue to be active on social media on MFC's behalf and will encourage/help others also.

7. **Election of Committee.**

Alice Osmond was proposed by Barbara Moss and seconded by Mike Tweedie, to take on the administration of a Friends of MFC and of the Community sponsorship effort for the Centenary. Marion Couston commented that it is a good thing that we're re-instigating a Friends. Alice was voted onto the Committee and Kevin thanked her for agreeing to take on this work.

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

Edwina Ward	Soprano Voice Rep
Judith Keene	Alto 1 Voice Rep
Kate Cross	Alto 2 Voice Rep
Chris Little	Bass Voice Rep
Penny Vere	

There is still a vacancy for Tenor Voice Rep. and Kevin asked tenor members to consider whether they would be willing to take this on.

Kevin restated his thanks to members outside the committee who contribute greatly. He thanked Heather Williamson for selling concert tickets and she confirmed that she is willing to continue with this.

8. **Subscriptions** Mike Tweedie proposed that the members' subscriptions should be increased from £100 to £110 from this season. He stated that the last increase was in September 2016 and that in the three years since then the API rise had been 9.5%. Membership gives the choir assured income. It allows us to engage first class musicians for concerts, who represent value for money given the standard of concert we wish to maintain. He restated that he would also be looking for donations from Charitable Trusts to help cover the costs for the Centenary year. He proposed that concessions should be: age 11 – 21 Free, age 22- 30 £30. He highlighted that there are funds available to help anyone in genuine difficulty and that he and Kevin could be approached in confidence. Margaret Stocks seconded the proposal and the membership voted approval.

9. **Any other business.**

Martin Purser raised the issue of men's concert dress. He highlighted that styles have been changing and open-necked black shirts would be more contemporary and would also show greater uniformity with the ladies, who are already in black. Peter Brook stated that he would be in favour of this change. There was some debate about whether DJ's should continue to be worn and it was suggested that they should be in cold venues (eg Worcester Cathedral). Chris Gillies and Dan Marsh would wish to continue to wear DJ's. Heather Williamson commented that pocket handkerchiefs could be worn to match the ladies' scarves and Marion Couston stated that it would relieve the impression of all black. This also raised a question about the ladies' scarves. John Roberts-Powell recommended that the detail be left with the Committee. Kevin agreed and asked for a vote in principle for black open-necked shirts as proposed by Martin Purser and seconded by John Price. The show of hands was in favour with just two against. Andrew Jamieson then commented that there could have been an opportunity to discuss alternative suggestions. Kevin noted the majority feeling and asked members to express any strong contrary views through the Voice Reps before the next Committee meeting.

Heather Williamson stated that the new large black folders are heavy and adding them to the heavy scores for St Matthew Passion would cause a problem. Marna Gowan agreed and Debbie Austin asked whether members could use other lighter folders. Bridget highlighted the fact that there are 3 different versions of hire scores (plus members' own) and expressed the view that using uniform folders looks smarter. The folders had been weighed when the decision was made to go with them and all alternatives were a similar weight. She would be able to order the next set with hand straps if that would make things easier but they would have a higher cost. Jonathan stated that there are no lengthy periods standing in the Bach so this should help any perceived problem. Kevin suggested that in the interests of time this should also be discussed in Committee.

Kevin thanked everybody for their contributions to the AGM.

The meeting was closed at 8.00 pm by Kevin Ilsley.