

Minutes of Manchester Community Choir Committee Meeting

Thursday 19th December 2019, 5pm to 7pm

at Bay Tree House 2 Anerley Road, Manchester M20

Present: Margaret Seaby (Chairing), Lesley Hoyes, Lynne Elliot, Jenny Sewart, Maria Yagudina, Lizzie Gent, Steve Campbell, Jo Melzack, Annie O'Malley, Tudor Owen (minutes) and (from item 4 onwards) Rose Hodgson.

Apologies: Cath McBain, Carolyn Pugh.

- 1. A warm welcome** to new committee members was given by Margaret. A briefing pack was given to all members of the new committee who attended and the documents in it were outlined by Margaret, Tudor and Steve. Each new or newish member of the committee has an experienced 'buddy' on the committee:
Annie & Lizzie, Cath & Carolyn, Jenny & Steve, Lesley & Tudor, Lynne & Margaret, Maria & Jo.

It was agreed that:

- the panel to decide Choir Assistance Fund applications would consist of Lizzie, Jo and Jenny.
- all new committee members should complete Charity Commission forms (provided by Steve) to become trustees and any violent or fraudulent offences should be declared
- any new committee members who haven't yet provided Steve with text and photo for the "Meet The Committee" page of the website should do so asap
- all existing committee members should update their entry on Meet the Committee asap.
- the next committee meeting should be preceded by a 15 minute optional introduction to Dropbox, starting at 7pm

- 2. Draft minutes** of Nov 21st meeting were agreed as correct.

One matter arising not on this agenda; regarding the plan to hold a meeting for volunteers about technology at DBC.

It was agreed that Jo would send out an email to all members asking for volunteers to attend a meeting starting at 2.45pm in DBC on Sunday 5th January (just before the rehearsal).

- 3. Finance report** Steve's report had been sent to all members before the meeting. He further reported that an accountant had now produced the accounts for the Manchester Streetchoirs Festival and that these (combined with the figures for MCC for 2018-19) would be submitted to the Charity Commission by the accountant. The fees had been budgeted for - and will be paid out of - the SCF funds.

This was Steve's final report as Hon Treasurer because he had completed the three year term that is the maximum allowed under our rules. He will hand over responsibility to Jenny in January 2020 but will support her as long as required. The Co-Op Bank will need a form stating who the new trustees are, including the new treasurer. Steve will deal with that. Margaret and the committee thanked him for all his excellent work.

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4. **MD report** Rose outlined the new songs she is considering introducing next term and it was agreed by the committee that there will be a clear run with no gigs in January and February, so as to give Rose and the choir a really good opportunity to rehearse the new repertoire. Lizzie read out some of the suggestions made by members for new songs and Rose undertook to consider them carefully, starting with Bread and Roses. The committee expressed their approval of Rose's work in the first term and Rose said how much she is enjoying the job.

Songs that Rose is actively considering for next term

Let The River Run (Carly Simon)

Ho Taru Kari (Japanese song)

Saltwater

Sing John Ball

Dock of the Bay

I Stand Tall

Mountains O' Things (Tracy Chapman)

She's Like The Swallows (Newfoundland folk song)

Suggestions from members

Bread and Roses

Because All Men Are Brothers

Stepping Out (Joe Jackson)

Shout (Tears for Fears)

5. **Past events – feedback**

- a) AGM – everybody happy with how it had gone and agreed that the draft minutes can go up on the website. **Steve to action**
- b) Stockport Fair Trade Fair – bigger audiences this year, partly because of the pop up café being in the same hall. Performance space is not ideal because we have to stand in such a wide formation. Discussion about merits of horseshoe shape.
- c) Busking for Shelter Walk – nice atmosphere, good cause and good feedback from Shelter organiser made it worthwhile, despite little evidence of people listening to us. **It was agreed that** Maria would become our Shelter liaison person.
- d) Manchester Craft and Design Centre - good singing location, nice welcome from centre manager and all in all one to repeat if invited. **It was agreed** that Steve would send the manager an invoice for £100, the sum which had been agreed in advance.
- e) Winter Extravaganza Central Library – chairs being laid out would have helped to get the audience nearer to us, but acoustics were brilliant (apparently we were heard best of all on third floor). Our banner got in the way of attendees and is a trip hazard indoors. **It was agreed** to consider purchasing a top (or tops) for Rose, with the words *Manchester Community Choir* on the back, to help people identify who we are. Margaret to discuss with Rose.

6. **Future events – already agreed**

- a. Llangollen Sat July 11th July – we have been accepted by the Eisteddfod. Tudor will prepare sign-up sheet and bring to rehearsal on Jan 5th. **It was agreed** to accept the quote from Swan's Coaches of £595 for a 53 seater coach with tail lift to help mobility impaired people. **Tudor to action.**

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- b. Pocklington Street Choirs 17-19 July – Margaret confirmed that she would be the lead person for this.
- c. Gorton Monastery 11th October – the organisers of 2020 Music at the Monastery have confirmed our participation. Await further details.

7. Invitations, ideas and proposals for other future events

- a. Victoria Baths – Jo had been researching. Best date for us would be their Springfest on the weekend of 25th/26th April 2020. **Jo will investigate** further with Victoria Baths people.
- b. Alzheimer's Soc Walk 14th March – details had been circulated to committee before the meeting and after much discussion **it was agreed** that regrettably we would have to turn down this invitation because they only want 30 singers and we can't limit numbers in that way because it would have a disruptive effect on rehearsals of the whole choir. **Jo will tell** the Alzheimer's Society and recommend that they contact Ordsall Acappella Singers. She will also say that we would be willing at some stage to perform in a fundraising concert
- c. Manchester Histories Festival – Celebration day June 7th in Central Library. Await further details and discuss further.
- d. Sing For Water North Saturday 13th June 2020 in Preston. **It was agreed** that Margaret would encourage our choir members to sign up and go as individuals, by email and by Sunday announcements.
- e. Workshop with Music Action International – proposal from Caroline Glendinning (tenors) had been sent to all committee members before the meeting. **It was agreed** that Maria would email Caroline and ask her to complete a proposal form – Tudor to send Maria an electronic copy of the form.

8. Rehearsals

- a. Rehearsal on Jan 5th - Lizzie can't attend so Annie will be responsible for looking after all three potential "tastees" and rehearsal registers.
- b. Social after the rehearsal on Jan 5th. Margaret and Lynne reported that 47 people have signed up and all is looking good.
- c. Pattern and time of rehearsals per month – Tudor reported that since Sept average attendance at Sunday afternoon rehearsals was 67 and average on Monday evenings is 53. This will continue to be monitored.

- 9. Members' suggestions** – a member has suggested that Monday evening rehearsals would be less tiring if they started at 7pm. Committee discussed this but felt that it would make it very difficult for working members and carers to get there on time. **It was agreed that** Lizzie will write explaining that we don't feel able to proceed with this idea for that reason, and to emphasise that anyone feeling tired before the end of the rehearsal is quite at liberty to leave early.

- 10. Communication working group** Annie and Lizzie to report back.

- 11. Committee meeting refreshments** –Lizzie and Lynne volunteered

- 12. Any other business** – Tudor raised the need to increase awareness of the excellent blogs written and illustrated by various members of the choir. He will email the committee first with a proposal for doing so.

Next meeting – 16th January Chorlton Library 7.15 for 7.30pm start

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