



Minutes of the Committee meeting held at 36 Station Road, Woburn Sands, Bucks on 9 November 2021

Present: Tessa Cox (in the Chair); Ian Smith; Siân Rees; Jeremy Hopkinson; David Roberts; Julia Dickens; Vanessa Skelton (Minutes Secretary); Peter Snelling (attending by Zoom); Imogen Allen (attending by Zoom).

1 Apologies and welcome Action

Carol Yirrell had sent her apologies. Tessa welcomed all members to our first live meeting since the Covid-19 lockdown– especially Imogen, who was attending her first Danesborough committee meeting.

2 Minutes of 21 September 2021 meeting

These were approved subject to an amendment concerning the post of Website Manager. Jenny Harris was happy to carry on in this post for the time being. This news was welcomed.

The post of wedding coordinator still remained on **Tessa's** to do list. Tessa

3 13 November 2021

- Covid safety

Siân was thanked for her excellent job with the risk assessment. She had also obtained a QR code for the venue, together with some spare face coverings.

Peter would send out the covid protocol email on Wednesday. **Tessa** would remind members about taking Lateral Flow Tests at Wednesday's rehearsal Peter
Tessa

Siân had prepared a plan for the seating of the choir.

The Orchestra would be implementing their own protocol regarding their safety, and had been asked to wear masks when moving around the church.

We would not be charging for programmes, although a donation box would be left next to the programme pile. Peter

The protocol for the audience had been distributed with the tickets.

- Dress code

It was agreed that poppies would be optional. Black jackets or cardigans were acceptable. **Ian** would talk to Tim about their dress code. Ian

- Other

There was no requirement to clean the church or equipment after the concert.

Barbara Titchmarsh was still willing to arrange refreshments for the orchestra.

Setting up would take longer than normal due to several of our usual volunteers not being available. It was clear that the lack of volunteers would be a growing problem as the choir grew older. Peter had obtained a quote of £170 for two men's help for two hours on a Saturday morning – however the men were not available for this Saturday.

Concert set-up to be added to the January Committee Meeting agenda.

Tessa

Reports had shown that the on-line booking system had worked well.

4 Music hire for the next concert

This was a matter for **Peter** to deal with taking relevant circumstances into consideration.

Peter

5 Wedding music

Kate Atalay had three or four boxes in her loft. Vanessa was happy to store these on a temporary basis. **Ian and Tessa** volunteered to collect the boxes.

Ian, Tessa

6 The store

For the benefit of newer members of the committee, David explained that some years ago a great deal of work had been put into the design of new staging. However, it had not proved possible to come up with a solution that was agreed to be workable – the weight of the staging meant both that two vans would be needed for its transport and that the dollies necessary for moving it would either be too wide or worryingly tall. David had recently realised a potential further problem with moving the dollies over the carpet in the church – he felt there was a reasonable possibility that the church would not be happy with our pushing very heavy dollies over the carpet, and we might find that the expenditure of £16-18k on the project was wasted when we were banned from being able to use the staging. It was agreed that the present staging should be retained for the while.

Peter was asked to go back to the owners of the site and accept the Tenancy-at-will as offered.

Peter

7 Annual or biennial Carol Concerts

The history of annual and then alternate-year concerts was explained – whilst Carol Concerts had been profitable when we were able to use the OU premises for free under the auspices of the OU Club, once that arrangement came to an end the decision had been taken to run them every alternate year. The concerts were scheduled for the years in which we did not host the annual joint concert, thereby spreading the administrative load. The arrangement also worked well, as the Bedford Choral Society also put on Carol concerts alternating with ours, thereby lessening the chance of rehearsals etc conflicting for Ian. Due to the lockdown, we were now 'out of sync', with both choirs putting on Carol Concerts this year. The arrangement for future joint concerts were unsure, but it was unlikely they would revert to being possible every year in November.

It was agreed that we should revert to alternate years, but that we should in fact arrange one for 2022, as Ian felt it likely that BCS would also revert to alternate years with immediate effect – especially if he told them of our plans. A

Ian

provisional date of 17 December 2022 was agreed – Siân would check the church's availability.

Siân

8 Dress code for this year's Christmas concert

This was agreed as 'black with a touch of red', consideration having been given to including a 'touch of green'.

9 Future events

- 27 November – Carols on the Cobbles

The start time had been altered to 6pm.

Julia kindly volunteered to create some word sheets for members of the public. **Ian** would liaise with her as to the carols and the verses to be used.

Julia

Ian

- 3 or 4 December

West Bletchley Council had approached to enquire if we might sing at the Frank Moran Centre. It was decided that we could not provide an official Danesborough choir, though maybe some volunteers might help the singing event there.

Tessa

- ? December – Carol singing at the Weathercock

It was assumed this was not happening. No response had been received to Tessa's emails, and the pub appeared to be under new management.

- 17 December – wedding at Woburn

More singers were needed – the balance so far was sadly not good, with too few basses and sopranos. Ian kindly volunteered, should no more basses sign up.

- 18 December – Carol Concert at Woburn

It was agreed, sadly, that refreshments should not be provided, in view the current Covid situation. Cutting the programme down to one hour was considered, again as a safety measure. It was decided to wait and see how things went on Saturday, and make the decision before the following Wednesday's rehearsal.

Audience capacity should remain limited to 75%.

- 21 December – Beds Fire and Rescue Christingle at Woburn

Again, we were short of basses. **Ian** would ask for volunteers from Bedford Choral Society.

Ian

Ian had discussed the programme with the organiser. All carols would be from Carols for Choirs 1, apart from Silent Night – he already had been supplied with the version of this to be used. Words from Carols for Choirs 1 would be used in the programme. Bedford Brass would be playing.

- 2 April 2022 Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*, Lauridsen *Lux Aeterna*, Rheinberger *Requiem*

The scores have been secured, as had the soloist Alexander Olleson, at a fee of £50, and both the harpist and the timpanist. **Ian** will email David with the details for the publicity. It was agreed to limit the number of tickets again – if things are looking better on the Covid front, this decision could possibly be reversed nearer the time.

Ian

- 2 July 2022 M Haydn and FJ Haydn

Ian was hopeful that Carolyn Sampson might be able to sing.

- Dates for next season

Concert dates 19 November 2022, 18 March 2023 and 24 June 2023 were agreed.

Plans for another concert at The Grove in Dunstable had not been taken forward during the pandemic.

10 Treasurer's report

After consideration of the bank's requirements, it was resolved that:

a banking relationship will be maintained with National Westminster Bank plc (the Bank) in accordance with this mandate and that:

* the individuals identified as authorised signatories may, in accordance with the signing rules: sign cheques and give instructions for Standing Orders, Direct Debits, electronic payments, banker's drafts and other payments on the Accounts even if it causes an Account to be overdrawn or exceed any limit sign, accept or endorse bills of exchange request and give counter-indemnities for the issue of guarantees (including bonds, indemnities and undertakings)

* Authorised signatories identified in the signing rules for unlimited amounts may, in accordance with the signing rules: sign facility agreements for overdrafts or the issue of guarantees sign agreements for BACS, Autopay, Bankline and other payment methods including electronic and internet-based systems

* any authorised signatory may give other instructions or requests for information to the Bank in relation to the Accounts; opening accounts with the same signing rules and authorised signatories; closing accounts; or other banking services or products

* the Bank may accept instructions that do not have an original written signature provided the Bank is satisfied that the instruction is genuine and subject to any other agreement the Bank may require for those instructions

* this mandate will continue until the CIO gives the Bank a replacement mandate or the CIO passes a resolution changing the signing rules and/or adding or removing an authorised signatory by completing and returning the Change of Signing Authority form in which case this mandate will continue as amended

The use of a Debit Card was also considered, and it was agreed that we should obtain one, but that it would not be used for expenditure of over £50 unless at least two trustees had approved its use for the specific item or service to be purchased, and that it should never be used to obtain cash. Authorisation was therefore given as follows:

- the Cardholders (who are also Authorised Signatories to the bank account which cards are being requested for) are authorised to request and be issued with Debit Card(s) and/or Debit Card details (including replacement cards, card details and security details) for use in relation to the operation and the giving instructions in relation to the bank account

- the Signing Rules contained in the mandate provided to operate the bank account which cards are being requested for be supplemented (but not replaced) by the additional Card Transaction Authorisation Rules which will apply to the operation of the bank account using a Debit Card or Debit Card details. The

current mandate to operate the bank account shall accordingly continue as supplemented and amended

- we agree to be bound by the Debit Card terms contained in the 'Business account terms' and any amendments made to them from time to time.
- we agree that all transactions authorised by a duly authorised Debit Card should be debited to the bank account which cards are being requested for and that the Customer accepts liability for any unarranged overdraft resulting from any such transactions that Cardholders may use their Debit Card to order cheque books and statements and to obtain details of the balance on an account.
- the Bank may continue to rely upon this Resolution until it is revoked in writing by a suitably authorised notice to the Bank.

It was noted that the loss agreed in the budget Peter had prepared would now be higher, due to the agreement to pay rent for the storage. Peter also reported that there were still several membership fees outstanding – he had sent reminders to some members.

Imogen had kindly agreed to take over the handling of Gift Aid from Eric Benton, he and Helen having regrettably left the choir. **She, Peter** and Eric would be getting together shortly to start on the handover. Imogen, Peter

Some Friends had not renewed since lockdown. All Friends would need to be approached to change the bank instructions in view of the new bank account – **Peter** was hopeful we may pick up some who have failed to renew in this operation – though of course we may lose some, as well! Peter

David reported that he had contacted Nevilles with regard to the programme preparation, and had been told that the lady who dealt with this had left. **Tessa** would get in touch with her contact and let David know who he should deal with. Tessa

11 Publicity Officer

Ian agreed to approach a member in the sopranos who he believed might take on this role. Ian

12 Membership recruitment

Although some new members had arrived this term, we had lost more in numerical terms during lockdown. We were particularly short of basses.

David had a set of recruitment posters, which he would bring to the rehearsal this week. A suggestion was made that recruitment flyers might be handed out at the Carols on the Cobbles event. **David** would consider what might be appropriate. David

Siân would post on Twitter about how to join, and **Tessa** would ask Sarah to put something on Facebook – and also on Instagram if she used this medium. Siân, Tessa

13 Policies Sub-Committee

Siân and Jeremy were thanked for the draft updated policy on Equality and Diversity that they had prepared. [NB 19.01.22. [The Minutes of the Policies Sub-Committee held on 30 September 2021 recording appreciation for the work of Sheila Edwards regarding this policy are appended to these minutes](#)]. Imogen asked for an amendment to the second line at the top of page 3 – the words

'that had been upheld' should be omitted. Subject to this amendment, the policy was agreed.

14 Programming sub-committee

There would be a report following their meeting in February.

15 Future meeting dates

These were agreed for 2022 as follows:

11 January

10 May

6 September

5 October (AGM)

8 November

16 AOB

Ian asked if St Andrews Church in Bedford might borrow our lighting system between this week's concert and our carol concert. This was agreed.

Ian reported that he had attended a meeting of a group in Bedford to discuss a project called *Bedford Sings* – the aim of which was to promote singing in Bedford. The idea was to hold events of various sorts over the period 10 – 19 February 2023. The project was not limited to classical music. A discussion followed, mainly centring on the possibility of holding an open singing day on a Saturday during the period.



Minutes of the Policies Sub-Committee held by Zoom on Thursday 30th September 2021

Attending: Jeremy Hopkinson; Siân Rees.

The Policies Sub-Committee met to consider Sheila Edwards' recommendations for improvements to Danesborough Chorus' Equality and Diversity Policy. After doing considerable personal research, Sheila had made substantial changes to the policy's sections on *Inclusion and Respect* and *Dealing with complaints*.

After due consideration, the Policies Sub-Committee decided to take on board all of Sheila's recommendations and wished to thank her for her hard work and initiative which in the opinion of the Sub-Committee had produced a much improved and more robust Equality and Diversity policy.

One of Sheila's recommendations which could not be resolved at the meeting concerned a situation which might arise should a complainant be dissatisfied with the response from the Danesborough committee to their complaint. Ideally the matter would be referred to a person independent of the charity to adjudicate and help resolve the situation. As we were unable to decide who we might approach to fulfil that role, Siân said she would consult with Making Music and seek advice from Vanessa Skelton who has a legal background.

Siân would make the necessary changes to the Equality and Diversity policy and this document would be put to the full committee at the next committee meeting on 9th November 2021 for their comments, consideration and approval.