



Minutes of the Committee meeting held by Zoom on 13 April 2021

Attending: Tessa Cox (in the Chair); Julia Dickens; Ian Smith; Peter Snelling; Siân Rees; Jeremy Hopkinson; Carol Yirrell; Vanessa Skelton (Minutes Secretary)

Action

1 Apologies and welcome

Tessa Cox welcomed the Committee. There were no apologies.

2 Minutes of 12 January 2021 and matters arising

The draft minutes were approved.

Peter reported that he had looked at various online booking systems and believed that one called WeGotTickets would suit our needs. There were ways to overcome the problem of our system of sales in individual rows. The purchasers of tickets using the system would be named, so the tickets could then be available for pick up at the door. **Peter** had not been able to contact Elly to discuss, but he would try again. He did not think she would have problems with the adoption of the system, as it would save her time. We would, however, lose 10% of the revenue from purchasers using the system.

Peter

Peter had also looked at systems for contactless sales. His preferred option so far was iZettle. However, this relied on a mobile phone, and the reception in Woburn is known to be very limited, so he thought the Choir might have to purchase a phone together with an O2 contract. Ian suggested another system SumUp, which relies on its own Readers rather than on mobile phones. **Peter** would look into this.

Peter

3 Summer 2021 rehearsals

It was agreed that the regulations regarding return to rehearsals were as yet unclear. However, some guidance talked of gatherings of members of organisations being permitted as of 17 May, and several other Choirs were known to be making plans for a return to F2F rehearsals after this date. It was agreed to plan for a partial return to F2F rehearsals, with these being streamed simultaneously; half the Choir would attend in person, half would attend online on an alternating weekly basis. It would be necessary to keep an eye on guidance concerning the Government's timetable for restrictions being lifted.

Tessa would announce the plan at the rehearsal on 14 April. **Ian** would also find out whether Tim would be comfortable returning – he confirmed he would be himself. **Peter** would email the Choir, to ask who would wish to return to F2F rehearsals on this basis.

Tessa

Ian

Peter

Vanessa confirmed that she had been told that the Hall's wifi should be good enough to cope with the streaming. Siân confirmed that there was both a lapel mic and a handheld mic at the Hall. Ian would use the lapel mic, leaving the handheld one for the piano. **Siân** would contact Gill Cockle to confirm our intention, and would ask to meet up with the Hall Committee member who looked after the IT, to discuss the detail, and to check whether there were audio feeds to connect the mics to a laptop.

Siân

Peter said that from replies to his email asking for volunteers to sing at Sarah and

Jonny's wedding it was clear that some rehearsals would be needed for the two pieces. **Ian** confirmed he would make sure the pieces were covered over the summer. The wedding was scheduled for 16 July. It was agreed that rehearsals should continue until then, with F2F rehearsals for all wedding singers on 7 and 14 July. **Siân** would inform Gill that we needed the Hall until 14 July.

Ian
Siân

A discussion took place about whether the facility for people to join the rehearsals via Zoom should continue indefinitely. It was agreed that, unless, circumstances regarding lifting restrictions changed, all attendance should be F2F as of September

It was confirmed that the concert in November should be the Vivaldi and McDowall programme that had had to be abandoned in 2020, as for our first concert after such a break from singing together we would need to a piece that was well known by the Choir.

With regard to the music to be rehearsed for the summer term, Ian said he was planning to cover the Michael Haydn at the first rehearsal on 14 April. However, the piece had proved fairly straightforward, and this session would be a revision of the whole piece - something new would be needed for the rest of the term. He had been approached by Ashley Holland, a former pupil of his who had had a career in Opera until this was interrupted by ill health. Ashley was now studying for a Masters degree, and wanted, as part of this, to set up an online concert. He would like us to perform in this. Any piece could be chosen, and it would be recorded in the same way as our previous two recordings at the beginning of lockdown, although the recordings would need to be both audio and video. The Committee agreed this proposal, and discussed what pieces might work. It was agreed that The Antiphon, Vaughan Williams' final piece from his Five Mystical Songs was likely to prove suitable. **Julia** could supply a click track for the work, which Ian said should not prove too problematic for those who had reservations about printing large quantities of music – it was five sides long. Tessa raised the matter of helping those who were nervous of the technology needed for the project. **Julia** kindly agreed to write instructions.

Julia
Julia

Julia suggested that **Ian** talk to Sam about what had worked well in the earlier recordings. She also said that there were instructions on the Making Music website about the best settings for a Zoom host to use for rehearsals. Peter mentioned that Quorum were going to be trying Microsoft Teams for a future rehearsal, as it was believed that its technology might work better for choirs.

Ian

4 Future scheduled events

- 16th July 2021 - Sarah and Jonny's wedding

The rehearsals needed had been discussed above. Peter said that from the responses he had received so far the wedding choir looked as if it would be reasonably balanced, and not overly large. **He** would let Ian have the list of singers once it was finalised. Ian confirmed that, if circumstances changed, the recording the Choir had made of the Chilcott piece would be available for Sarah and Jonny, although he understood that Sarah might choose something different should the wedding be unable to go ahead without Covid restrictions.

Peter

- 13 November 2021

Vivaldi and McDowall had been confirmed. **Julia** would re-order the scores. Ian had lined up the soloists. Rehearsals would start on 8 September

Julia

- December 2021 Beds Fire & Rescue Christingle

Nothing was known regarding this as yet.

- December 2021 – Woburn lights switch on

Nothing was known regarding this as yet.

- December 2021 - Weathercock carol singing

Nothing was known regarding this as yet.

- 18 December 2021 – Christmas Concert

Woburn Church had been booked. The programme planned for 2020 could be used.

- March 2022

A meeting of the Programming Committee would be needed to discuss this.

Ian

5 Learning tracks

Julia said she had found that learning tracks for the Michael Haydn were available on the web, but she repeated her kind offer to provide other tracks if needed.

6 Recordings

Ian said that Sam had not finished the second of these – she would now do so. He felt that if a ‘thank you’ gift was to be given, this should be after she had completed the work. He advised that a token would be very well received.

7 Treasurer’s update

Peter reported that he expected that the Choir’s finances would more or less break even this year. Not all Friends had made their usual donations, and as the subs were down, Gift Aid receipts would be down as well.

He was disappointed that we had had no further wedding bookings on top of the December one reported at the last meeting.

He would be starting his attempts to open the NatWest account for the new charity again shortly – he was wished luck with this! Requests from the Charity Commission had been received for both charities – he had sent Tessa the accounts for the old charity. **Tessa** said she was intending contacting them to say there had been no financial transactions concerning the new charity, because of the bank’s incompetence in opening the new account, and to ask what the Commission would require in the light of this.

Tessa

As Vanessa said that the Hall was now open again, Peter would pay AGVH as of this week, in order to reserve our slot. [NB Since the meeting, Vanessa had found out that the Hall was only open for certain specified groups – the Choir was not one of these. Peter would therefore delay resuming payment until 17 May, when it was hoped we would be able to start using it again.]

8 Membership

Carol confirmed that she had contacted most people who had not attended any Zoom rehearsals. Some had not attended because they didn’t have suitable technology and some because they found that they were unable to sing without support from their F2F neighbours. She had not heard from a couple of members – **she** would try contacting them by telephone.

Carol

She had not kept the register of attendees up to date, but would work on this. Tessa said she felt it would be beneficial to have such a register, and **Carol** confirmed she would ensure it was kept up to date in future.

Carol

Peter said that we needed to work on recruitment, as we had lost some members over the year. **Tessa** would talk to Sheila Edwards about getting recruitment material out.

Tessa

Peter would talk to Jenny Harris about getting the website updated with our current plans.

Peter

9 Future meeting dates

These were agreed as:

20 May 2021

7 September 2021

6 October 2021 (AGM)

9 November 2021

11 January 2022

10 AOB

It was agreed that, if the Hall was available, members of the committee would arrive early on 19 May (the first rehearsal, to deal with setting up the streaming, socially distanced chairs etc. If the Hall was not available, a trial would be needed – **Siân** would find out from Gill.

All

Siân