

## **North Kingston Choir Committee minutes**

### **04-07-17**

**Present:** Jem Goddard, Chair (JG), Simon Thomas, Social Secretary (ST), Penny Hamilton, Events (PH), Phil Meir, Event Support (PM), Kyla Furness, Membership (KF), Alan Waterman, Treasurer (AW), Tristan Bate, Communications (TB), Jessica Bate, Musical Director (JB), Ellie Giffard, Secretary (EG)

#### **1 Apologies**

No apologies received

#### **2 MD**

*There was a discussion on the process of appointing an interim Musical Director (MD) for the autumn term whilst current MD JB takes a term out from the choir*

JG updated that the majority of choir members are in favour of a professional MD for the autumn term. Corinne Ingram from the choir had previously shown an interest but has since withdrawn her offer due to the level of commitment required.

3 prospective MDs have confirmed their availability for an audition on 17<sup>th</sup> July. These are:

- Henry Tozer
- Hepz Tagoe
- Helen Astrid

JG and JB confirmed that there is space for 1 more candidate on 17<sup>th</sup> July and there are a couple more prospective MDs who are interested. It was agreed that 4 is the maximum number to audition – therefore, if more than 4 confirm their availability, the committee will short-list from these. The committee agreed the importance of transparency within the choir as to how the shortlist was reached.

The committee agreed that the choir will continue to meet on a Monday going forward and so the new MD must adhere to this schedule.

It was agreed that there will be an online poll after the auditions, with 1 vote for 1 MD per choir member. Members who do not attend the auditions will still be able to vote.

The auditions will be 30 minutes each, to include 20 minutes of improvisation (warm-up etc.) followed by teaching 'Man in the Mirror' for 10 minutes.

The committee discussed the scope of the new MD's role. e.g. will the new MD put music on the website? The committee agreed to generally take the lead from the MD on this but the choir will give an outline of what is required and will make a requirement to sing contemporary music.

The committee also discussed the method that the new MD might use as being an important factor in the decision making process. e.g. will the new MD teach by learning by ear, or by using sheet music? Will they also play the piano?

The committee agreed on some questions to email to the prospective MDs as follows:

- 1) What is your method of teaching a choir a new song?- music/words/repetition?
- 2) What is your preferred music style?
- 3) Are you happy to work with a band?
- 4) Do you play the piano? Would you need accompaniment at a concert/in rehearsals?
- 5) Tell us about your previous experience of teaching singing?
- 6) Tell us more about yourself (short biography)

The prospective MDs have quoted between £100 per rehearsal to £130 per rehearsal. It was agreed that these costs can be met next term and there is no need to share the costings with the choir members at this stage.

Actions are as follows:

**Action a:** Write to prospective MDs who have not yet confirmed to advise that there is 1 more space for the auditions on 17<sup>th</sup> July – JG/JB

**Action b:** Set up an online poll for choir members to vote on their favourite MD once the auditions have taken place – JG/TB

**Action c:** Email confirmed prospective MDs with agreed questions as above and ask them to provide a brief biography of themselves – JG

**Action d:** Circulate an email to choir members a week before auditions, to include a summary of the rationale for the short-list and the biography for each MD - JG.

### 3 Events for 2017 and 2018

The committee agreed to go ahead with a Christmas concert this year and agreed that All Saints Church would be a good choice. The concert could include 3 or 4 carols, 3 or 4 songs from the choir repertoire and 3 or 4 new songs, to be taught to us by the new MD.

**Action:** Follow up with All Saints Church and book a date, preferably a Saturday afternoon in December (JG to send details to PH) – JG/PH

The committee agreed to hold a 5 year anniversary concert for the choir in November 2018. A possible venue is the Hampton Hill Playhouse in Hampton Hill. The only date that they have available is Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November so it is important to hold this date quickly.

**Action:** Follow up on booking 5 year anniversary concert for November. JB to send details from Hampton Hill Playhouse to PH – PH/JB

It was also agreed that there should be a summer concert in 2018. To ease pressure on the choir, it was agreed that this should be a non-ticketed event or should be the choir joining another event.

**Action:** Follow up on possibilities for non-ticketed concert/joining existing concert during the summer of 2018 - PH

#### **4 Gift Aid update**

AW confirmed that he received a letter from the revenue on 16<sup>th</sup> May regarding our application for gift aid status. It was necessary for the entire application to be resubmitted. AW confirmed that this was submitted last Friday.

AW has looked into whether having a paid MD affects the choir's ability to have gift aid status and can confirm that the position stands that, as the choir sings for a charitable cause, it can still claim gift aid.

AW confirmed that if the annual income for the choir exceeds a £5k threshold, it is necessary to register with the charity commissioners. However, if the income is less than £10k, it is not necessary to submit an annual return. The plan is that when the choir is granted gift aid status, AW can then arrange to apply to the commissioners.

AW confirmed that the choir is currently projecting a profit of just over £400 for this year. This is after the £500 set aside for music for the next term.

#### **5 Committee structure and members' involvement**

It was agreed that the MD for next term will not be on the committee.

There was a discussion around how to get other choir members involved in the running of the choir.

The committee agreed to appoint section leaders to speak on behalf of their sections. Their role could include arranging recordings of parts for their section and channelling views of other choir members in their section through the committee.

**Action:** Committee members to appoint section leaders as follows: KF to appoint for alto section, AW to appoint for bass section, TB to appoint for tenor section, Hannah Deveson to appoint for soprano section (KF to confirm with Hannah) – KF, AW, TB

The committee agreed to make committee meetings more flexible going forward e.g. Saturday afternoons or Sunday mornings. Choir members could then be invited on a rotating basis to attend committee meetings and give their input.

**Action:** Work with committee on dates for committee meetings going forward, inviting up to a handful of other choir members to input each time - JG

ST confirmed that he will need to stand down as social secretary with immediate effect due to work pressures. The committee agreed to absorb any work on planning socials between them for the time being. It was also agreed that going forward, it will not be essential for the social secretary to be on the committee, and this role can rotate for each social event. Although his role will be delegated, it was agreed that ST remains a committee member for the rest of the year and is very welcome to come to the next meeting if he is available.

## **6 AOB**

The process for setting the fees for the Autumn term was discussed.

**Action:** Set the fee for the Autumn term on the appointment of the interim MD – JG/AW

It was acknowledged that this was JB's last committee meeting as the MD will not be required on the committee going forward. The committee thanked JB for all of her hard work on the committee and as MD to date, and look forward to welcoming her back as MD in the near future.

*Meeting closed*