

## **Minutes of AGM of The Philharmonic Choir of Manchester held on 2nd November 2021.**

There were 25 members present plus the Musical Director, Clara Rundell.

### **1. Apologies**

None received.

### **2. Minutes of AGM held on 3rd November 2020**

The chair apologised for the fact that these were not produced last year. It was a short meeting at a time of lockdowns and restrictions. We were doing online Zoom rehearsals.

The committee was elected unopposed.

Subscriptions were reduced to £20 per term.

It was agreed to take these as read.

### **3. Chair's Report**

The online Zoom rehearsals had been a way of keeping the choir together but were frustrating for members and especially for Clara who was unable to hear us and therefore in the dark about our ability to benefit from her guidance. The resumption of live rehearsals in the church from 14th September had been a very positive experience, mainly for those members present but also for those on Zoom who could hear other members' voices.

Attendance had varied between 12 and 20 at church plus those on Zoom.

We were grateful for Clara's choice of music, having concentrated so far on The Snow by Elgar, O Radiant Dawn by MacMillan, The Deer's Cry by Part and Ching-A-Ring Chaw by Copland in live rehearsals and the Poulenc Gloria and other short pieces in the Zoom only rehearsals before September.

It was hoped that more people would gradually attend the church although much will depend on the virus and some members are unlikely to come before the Spring. It was unrealistic to consider doing a concert before then but it was hoped to be able to do one around Easter. The choir had a tradition of doing 3 concerts a year and aiming for a concert gave members an incentive to concentrate and improve.

Clara was thanked for her direction, having taken the position at a particularly difficult time.

### **4. Treasurer's Report and decision on Subscriptions**

Eva had produced summaries of the accounts for the year ending 31st August 2021 and, for comparison, the year ending 31/8/2020. She had also made detailed spreadsheets of the last year. Because of the low level of subscriptions last year there had been a significant loss of over £2000. Fortunately, the choir had had a healthy reserve but it was recognised that with the need this year to pay rental to the church as well as the fees of our MD and accompanist and Zoom upgrade fees, we would need to raise about £5,500 to break even. There was a general discussion about the level of subscription and it was agreed that members should pay **£50** per term or **£140** for the year whether being present in person or only on Zoom. Those dependent on Universal Credit or full time students should only pay £20 per term. It was pointed out that even this increase meant that each rehearsal cost a member less than £4.50, as there were 12 rehearsals each term. (Please see below for Bank details)

We had always allowed people to try out the choir without payment and that would continue. It was recognised that we needed to increase membership and it was hoped that the new people who had come this term would continue.

### **5. Election of Committee**

No new nominations had been received and all existing members were willing to continue and the existing committee was re-elected unopposed. Deirdrie Lewis agreed to fill the vacancy for an Alto rep.

### **Committee 2021-2022**

Chair: Paul Bradbury

Secretary: Teresa Ankers

Treasurer: Eva Schultze-Berndt

Membership Secretary: Margaret Eastwood

Librarian: Angela Roberts

Concert Secretary: Richard Carr

Publicity officer: Jane Jefferson

Web site coordinator: Alan Tomlinson

Soprano Rep: Annalisa Faenza

Alto Rep: Deirdrie Lewis

Tenor/Bass Rep: vacant

## 6. Musical Director's comments and general discussion

Clara agreed that the zoom rehearsals had been frustrating but had kept the choir going. She welcomed live rehearsals and said she had been pleasantly surprised at how good the choir sounded, although it was concerning that those present varied from week to week meaning more need for repetition. She would welcome doing a concert next year, hopefully including the Poulenc Gloria and perhaps the Vivaldi Gloria. It was suggested that a member could prepare an "educational" rehearsal by preparing some information about a composer or a piece. There are various sources for information and it was agreed that this often helped to interpret the music in a fuller way.

There was discussion about attracting new members through an open rehearsal or singing day. It was pointed out that either of those would need good preparation and publicity and would be more likely to succeed in the Spring or Summer. It was recognised that it was important to make new members welcome and to improve our publicity in places such as Forsyth's in Manchester.

For our last rehearsal this term on 14th December, it was suggested that we could do some items from Carols For Choirs, which could be circulated as PDFs. Clara said she welcomed other ideas from members.

The meeting ended with members thanking the committee for their work during the year, with the chair giving special thanks to our treasurer, Eva, for her diligence in producing detailed accounts and helpful summaries.

Paul.

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