

BROCKHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

Minutes of Annual General Meeting 4 September 2018

Chairman: Reuben Suckling

Present: 43 members.

1. Apologies for Absence Christine Bass, Helen Campbell-Hart, Michael Doughty, Maureen Edwards, Leonie Holgate, Sally Hulbert, Alison Jesson, David and Jan John, Jenni Knights, Jenni Lee-Potter, Sandy Luff, Fred Prego, Bridget Riley, Alison Robins, Angela Sharwood, Eiluned Slot, Mary Suckling, Sue Tanton, Mary and Ray White, Neil and Sylvia Williams.

2. Minutes of the Previous AGM (5 September 2017).

These were agreed as correct and signed.

3. Chairman's Report This had been previously circulated and was noted without comment. Reuben drew attention to the need for someone to co-ordinate the sales drive for programme advertising, and urged members to encourage friends and family to become Friends of the choir, drawing attention to the extensive range of benefits. In addition, the choir needed more basses! In commending all those who work hard for the choir, he drew special attention to Anne Tennent who was standing down after many years of doing a fantastic job as Librarian – the meeting expressed its thanks and appreciation to Anne. Finally, Reuben drew attention to Sue Tanton's work as Grants Administrator, which regularly brought the choir a much needed resource of £2,000 from the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Trust.

4. Annual Financial Report and Accounts The Treasurer, John Dimmer, introduced the Annual Report and Accounts (which had been previously circulated) remarking that this was his first year as Treasurer and expressing his thanks to Nick Hands-Clarke for his help and support during the handover. The Accounts had been independently reviewed by David Sinden and signed off by him – John expressed his appreciation to David for this service. Assuming approval of the Report and Accounts, these would be submitted to the Charity Commission in the normal way. Looking at the Concert finances, there was a loss of £5,000 compared with a loss of £2,400 the previous year, due mainly to the large orchestra for the Sea Symphony. A larger loss of £6,500 had been forecast but the outstanding ticket sales had resulted in a reduced loss, with an audience of nearly 300. He thanked Pauline Whitehead for her hard work in dealing with the tickets and keeping him updated on sales. Fundraising raised about £2,000 compared with £6,000 the previous year which included the auction; although such an event can't be run every year it has provided a good foundation for subsequent years to enable the choir to hold ambitious concerts whilst keeping ticket prices low. The Annual Dinner and Quiz Evening both did well thanks to the hard work of the social sub-committee, as did Teas on the Green (though unfortunately not supported this summer). The 100 Club provides a steady income, thanks to Tony and the Club's members. John had also prepared a summary sheet which set out the results in a clearer way than in the formal Accounts which had to follow the Charity Commission format. This showed that the Concert results were £2,500 worse than the previous year, though general choir activities excluding concerts showed a net improvement of £650. The choir continues to benefit from a grant of £2,000 from the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Trust, and there was some income from hiring out the staging. Overall there was a surplus of £1,663 which leaves the choir with over £17,000 in funds. This is in line with our reserves policy which enables us to meet the uninsured costs of cancellation of a concert at short notice; in addition, we are in a good position to put on really good concerts in future years.

Anne Mitchell asked if we are insured against cancellations. Nick said there was only limited cover and in addition it was important to have funds to cover expensive concerts like the Sea Symphony. Robin Luff asked if our surplus funds needed to be so high; John responded that they didn't need to be as high as at present; the choir was a victim of its own success and it would take two or three years to return our reserves to a more normal level. Jane pointed out that two expensive concerts were planned for the coming year, and John confirmed that the anticipated loss on these was £8,000. Robin asked why the fund-raising costs were so high; Nick suggested there had been a change in accounting policy by the Charity Commission which meant we had to show income and expenditure separately whereas previously we had showed netted off income from fundraising activities. John undertook to respond separately to Robin on this. The adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts was proposed by Robin, seconded by Victoria Harding-Rolls and carried *nem con*. Reuben thanked John for his hard work as Treasurer and for his very clear presentation of the accounts. David Sinden was nominated as Examiner by Nick, proposed by Pauline Whitehead and seconded by Romey Criswick; this was carried *nem con*.

5. Subscription Reuben said that the committee had decided that it wasn't necessary to propose an increase in the annual subscription which remained at £130. He pointed out that it could be paid in stages by agreement with the Treasurer and Membership Secretaries.

6. Music Director's Report This is attached. Robin suggested the whole choir supported Patrick's remarks in praise of our accompanist Marion, and proposed a vote of thanks to her; this was agreed *nem con*. Reuben thanked Patrick for all he had done for us and for making our singing so enjoyable.

7. Election of Chairman Ed Criswick took the chair. Reuben Suckling had given his agreement to standing again as Chairman; there being no other nominations Reuben was proposed by Annie Hind, seconded by Diana Unwin and elected *nem con*.

8. Election of Committee Reuben said 8 existing committee members were willing to stand again: Ed Criswick, John Dimmer, Estelle Earnshaw, Nick Hands-Clarke, Anne Mitchell, Alison Robins, Phil Slack and Jane Stride. There being no other nominations, their election *en bloc* was proposed by Victoria, seconded by Bridget Doughty and approved *nem con*. Pauline was standing down from the committee and Reuben thanked her for her excellent work as Ticket Secretary and for her liaison with St John's School.

9. Changes to the Constitution Ed explained that the choir's Constitution had become a little out of date and no longer fully reflected the reality of how the choir operated. A series of minor amendments were therefore proposed to remedy this – these had already been circulated and Ed explained the effect of each of them. Jackie Rance noted that the Summer Concert had moved from just before half term to June; Ed pointed out that this gave us more rehearsal time. He proposed the adoption of the changes, this was seconded by Jane and approved *nem con*. Ed added that the committee had very recently identified other changes in the light of recommendations from Making Music and would look at these over the coming year.

10. Date of Next AGM 3 September 2019.