



# St Edmundsbury Male Voice Choir

## Minutes Of Committee Meeting

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022 7:30 pm  
The Deaf Centre  
28 Northgate St. Bury St Edmunds

- 1.0 **Apologies for Absence:** Ross Van de Zande & Jules Mills
- 1.1 **Present:** Ian Cooper(Vice Chair), Ivor Thulborn, Nick Gane, Glenn Warriner, Andrew Conquest, Ashley Seaborne, Mark Jefferson, Andrew MacKenzie, Simon Loughe & Malcolm Lodge (Sec.)
- 1.2 **IC** on behalf of the committee welcomed Andrew MacKenzie and Simon Loughe, Section Leaders for the Bass and Second Tenor's respectively.
- 1.3 **IC** asked if **AM** and **SL** could leave the meeting before item **15** (AOB), as there were some sensitive issues to be discussed. **MJ** had indicated before the meeting that he would also leave at this point.
- 2.0 **Acceptance of minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January :** Minutes of the meeting held on 10/01/22 were accepted by the committee and signed by the Vice Chairman as a true and correct record.
- 3.0 **Matters Arising:**
- 3.1 **(4.1) IT** said he hadn't made contact with the Granary but would do so before the next meeting. **IT**
- 4.0 **Section Leader's: AM & SL**
- 4.1 **AM** circulated a list of comments and suggestions to the committee that had been drawn from the basses. He commented that there were several that contradicted each other which proves you can't please everyone at the same time. Most comments were minor criticisms although there was one who felt the choir needed to take a different musical direction. **IC** thanked **AM** for his contribution.
- 4.2 **SL** said he had received one comment from his section requesting the need for practice tracks for Windmills of Your Mind. **MJ** said he had created files that he hoped could go on the website for choir use.  
**SL** thanked **NG** for supplying him with contact numbers and email addresses of his section. He said he had set up an email group within the section so that comments could be forwarded. **MJ**
- 5.0 **Music Team: MJ**
- 5.1 Work tracks have been created for Windmills of your Mind and True Colors. Unfortunately he has been told that the file is too big for the website. They could be trialled to an Apple device but he added not everyone has one of these. He said he would like to trial this with some of the members. **MJ**

6.0 **Concert Secretary: IT**

- 6.1 **IT** said he would like to organise a social event at Bury Rugby Club to make up for the cancelled Carols and Chips just before Christmas. The event would be "Old Songs and Chips". It would run the same way as Carols and Chips with a singalong theme. Ideally it would be on a Thursday night when there are no rehearsals. Dates put forward were 14<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> April. This was agreed by the committee, **IT** said he would contact the rugby club. **IT**
- 6.2 Elmswell preparations going well Sylvia Wilson has over 100 people who want to come to the concert. Tickets will be available to the choir by Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February and will cost £10 and will include a glass of wine or a soft drink at the interval. The afterglow will be held at the centre. **IT**
- 6.3 Mansfield MVC will be joining SEMVC at St John's Church on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June.

7.0 **Concert Manager: AS**

- 7.1 **AS** agreed with **IT** regarding the Elmswell Concert he added there would be no problems with the staging as there is ample room in the hall.
- 7.2 The Choir as in recent years before the pandemic, have been asked to do two slots at the Suffolk Show on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June. The show is on Tuesday and Wednesday this year because of the Queen's celebrations at the end of the same week. **AS** said he would like names forwarded to him asap as he needs to know what size coach to book. The coach cost will be £5 per head and partners/wives are welcome to come and is on a first come first served basis. Each choir member will get free entry to the show but partners/wives will have to pay for their entry. Probably 2 pick ups by the coach, one in Bury and the other near Stowmarket. **AS**

8.0 **Chairman: RVdZ** - Sent by email to **ML**

- 8.1 Thanks to the committee for starting to arrange a dinner for the members in recognition of their loyalty through the lockdown.
- 8.2 Please ensure the members area is kept up to date, the last minutes were from September. Weekly notices should go up after each rehearsal. Role descriptions for Section Leaders and Committee Members needed to be added to the website. **IC/ML**
- 8.3 Discussed the summer BBQ with **AC** with perhaps a possibility of holding at James Black's farm with Glenn's band as it might not be possible to hold it at Tim Freathy's this year. **GW** said that the barn wouldn't be suitable for the BBQ with his band as the acoustics weren't very good. There is also the added problem that in late summer the barn will be full of bales so therefore not useable for the choir. **GW** said that a marquee on a large lawn might solve the problem and this would have to be in August or September.
- 8.4 Viv has forwarded her job description to **AC** and **JM**

9.0 **Vice Chairman: IC**

- 9.1 **IC** said that a Marketing and Recruitment Strategy is required to try and get to a balanced choir. This needs to be ongoing to continually have a good level of members. Define what is needed and how to achieve it must be the aim. We need to review the way in which we market the choir and our concerts. **NG** said it's a fact that tenors are low in numbers in England. Suggestions for recruitment events included having a display at fetes and shows, a singing day as well as cards and flyers. **IC** said he wanted to get a small working group together which should include 2 or 3 members. **IC** said he would explain this at notices at the next rehearsal. **IC**

- 10.0 **Treasure: AC** Nothing to report until **AOB**
- 11.0 **Secretary: ML**
- 11.1 Hopeful of getting back to Howard School after the Easter Holidays(end of April). Update at next meeting. Booked into All Saints until 7<sup>th</sup> April with first refusal on extending it. Keyboard now being stored in a locked cupboard under the stage. **ML**
- 12.0 **Membership Secretary: NG**
- 12.1 **NG** produced an accurate report of the membership going back to 2016 and showing how many have joined and left the choir(identifying the various reasons) in the last 6 years. **IC** thanked **NG** for his work on this. This was discussed by all of the committee. It would seem that between 2016 and 2019 the choir had 29 new members and 32 who left. A small reduction of 3 whereas in 2020 the choir lost a net 7.
- 12.2 Ideas were proposed by **NG** for choir publicity, village fetes, South Suffolk Show, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022, Ickworth Wood and Craft Fair, Farmers Markets and Rugby 7's.
- 13.0 **Librarian: GW**
- 13.1 **GW** has produced copies of Myfanwy for all parts putting the phonetic spelling under the notes. All of the committee were impressed and grateful for this work. **GW** said he would send the copies to **NG** for distribution. **GW/NG**
- 14.0 **Website: JM** (Absent no report)
- 15.0 **Any Other Business:** At this point Andrew Mackenzie, Simon Loughe and Mark Jefferson left the meeting as agreed at the start.
- 15.1 **Music Team Remuneration: AC**
- AC** supplied a report giving a comprehensive breakdown of the impact various pay increases to the Music Team would have on the choir finances. In October 2021 an increase was agreed by the committee to be implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022. This was before the committee were made aware of the rates recommended by the Musicians Union and information sourced by **MJ** from Making Music.
- AC's** report highlighted that at the current rates of pay to the music team and assuming a paying membership of 75, who all qualified for gift aid a loss of £335 per annum would arise. His report also highlighted that the current subscription level of £96 per annum or £8 per month had been unchanged since before 2016 when he joined the choir. Accordingly, any increases to the music team remuneration package would require subs to be increased unless we continued to eat into our general reserves. During discussion it was agreed that the rates are below the guidance but also there is an insufficient differential of rates of pay for rehearsals, between the Music Director and Accompanist. It was agreed to defer a decision on this until the next meeting when **AC** would provide a recommendation which could be put to the AGM in May. **ALL**
- 15.2 **Website: IC**
- The previous Friday, Viv Brar of Vividesigns who administers the choir website advised **IC** and **AC** that she would be doubling her monthly fee from £25 to £50 per month. With Polar's hosting fees(£30), the minimum cost of running the website would rise to £80 per month amounting to £960.0 per year. **IC** said he thought that the choir could obtain the same or a better website services for considerably less money. Since receiving Viv's email he had contacted several local website companies. Having done the research **IC** said he had found a company in Bury St Edmunds, Jabudesigns who would take on the work Viv has been doing plus taking over Polar's role. This would put everything into one company at a cost of £29.99 (plus VAT) per month. **ALL**

This is a considerable annual saving at a time when the committee is trying to agree to a fair remuneration to the Music Team. After discussion it was unanimously agreed to go ahead with transferring the website to Jabudesigns. IC said he would organise this the following day.

The committee thanked Viv for her significant and appreciable support of the choir's website provision over the years.

**15.3 Concert Secretary Replacement:**

**AS** suggested that the choir ask for a volunteer now so that person could spend some time with **IT** before he stepped down in May, The committee agreed with this and asked **NG** to circulate an email to the members asking for a volunteer for the role of Concert Secretary.

**16.0 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 7:30 pm**

**Deaf & Hard of Hearing Centre 28 Northgate Street Bury St Edmunds IP33 1HY**



