



St Edmundsbury Male Voice Choir

Virtual Annual General Meeting

**Thursday 16th September 2021 7:00 pm
St Mary's Church Bury St Edmunds**

- 1.0 **Apologies** – Ken Sawyer, Ian Williams, David Mathews, Ian Snelling, Simon Loughe, Tony Farr, Paul Davis & John Telford-Taylor.
- 2.0 **Acceptance of the Minutes of the Last Meeting** – Minutes of the meeting held on 20th August 2020 were accepted as a true and correct record. Proposed by Tim Freathy and seconded by Ian Robertson the minutes were signed by the departing Chairman, Rob Bream.
- 3.0 **Matters Arising** – There were no matters arising from the Minutes

4.0 **Chairman's Report - Rob Bream**

Report From The Chair

The last year of my three year term in the Chair of SEMVC has probably been the most unusual of any previous holders of the position. Now we hopefully begin to leave many of the restrictions behind and move forward with a new Chairman and regain the friendships and status that the choir enjoyed.

Despite the Coronavirus limitations I feel that the time has passed very quickly, but this might be an age thing! Everyone knows that as you get older time passes more quickly. We now face the challenge of preparing for the APEX concert on Sunday 24th October, Sing for your Supper at Horringer Village Hall on Saturday 30th October and Carols and Chips on 23rd December at Bury Rugby Club.

We will remember with sadness the huge part that Ed Wilson played in Sing for your Supper and his support and involvement together with Sylvia in all choir events. Also the passing of Dave Peck a fantastic person and Choir Librarian and Paul Deane our President and founder member of the choir who together with his son Alex have made generous gifts to the choir.

Thank you to the music team for keeping in contact and all the members who have organised the Zoom Quiz Nights, helped on committees and the choir committee for continuing to meet monthly on Zoom throughout the Covid restrictions. Thank you to Ash for the refurbishment of the stage rails and the work in securing the purchase of the new choir trailer. Thank you to Nigel Farthing and St Mary's Church Pakenham for the opportunity to sing in the grounds of the church. We only had to call off one rehearsal due to the weather. Also thanks to Tim Freathy for hosting the summer barbecue and Ivor for organising the choir walk, both excellent events. A big thank you to Ian Cooper who deals with choir health and safety, quite a task under the present restrictions. Thanks to Judy Robertson for producing the choir newsletters.

Looking ahead we welcome Ian Morgan as the new Choir President, Ian has huge connections with the music industry and is a retired director of Music Sales. We look forward to his long and happy involvement with the choir.

The cancellation of the Vienna tour due to the virus still causes problems in obtaining the refunds. Melody Music have said that they will make refunds, Andrew will speak about this later. As you know solicitors Pretty's in Ipswich have been engaged to aid the recovery of the refunds.

We have the music recorded at the APEX but it still needs to be completed and then the Performing Rights paid before we can release it in any form.

Fornham Three Kings has re-opened but it is now considered to do high class dining so they will not want the choir committee meetings to return there. The committee meetings may continue on Zoom. Also it seems that Howard School do not want us to return after thirty years, having let the hall to a dancing school. We are currently looking for a suitable venue and hopefully a base for the future.

This is a very short report which I'm sure you won't mind, regrettably our rehearsals have been limited and the total absence of concerts means that many normal items are missing.

Thank you all for your support throughout the year, perhaps we can all head towards singing again.

4.1 **New President - Ian Morgan**

RB introduced Ian Morgan to the meeting by saying how pleased he was that he had accepted the invitation from the committee to become the choir's president. **IM** said he was surprised and honoured and would try and help the choir as much as he could. He explained that he had been involved with music publication houses in his working life and now that he was retired, he would have more time to support the choir.

5.0 **Treasurer's Report - Andrew Conquest**

AC read out his report to the meeting. His report and the choir accounts had been circulated to the members before the meeting as per the constitution.

The accounts this year show an overall excess of income over expenditure of £5,149 (2020 deficit of £2,286), summarised as follows

	2020	2019
	£	£
Subscriptions and donations, less running costs	3,864	(260)
Concerts after donations made	0	737
Tours and social events	0	885
Apex Recording	0	(4,433)
Other receipts, including President's Fund income	1,285	785
	5,149	(2,286)

Commentary

1. Subscriptions and donations less running costs

Subscriptions and donations were equivalent to last year but 2021 saw a substantial donation of £1000. Subscriptions and tax recovered was down £704, reflecting a continued reduction in membership. However due to the substantial donation being gift aided, tax recoverable in 2022 will be ahead of this year.

Music team costs represent the annual payments to Mark and Calvin. No other costs were incurred this year.

Other costs mainly relate to quiz evenings put on in the pandemic.

2. Concerts

There were of course no concerts this year. Deposits paid in 2020 in relation to the hire of The Apex concert and St Johns have been carried forward to set against the future hire of those venues.

3 Tours and social events

The Austria tour net costs at 31 March 2020 of £3844 had been carried forward to this financial year when the tour was due to take place. Due to COVID 19 it was initially postponed to May 2021 and then cancelled.

The tour operator Melody Music Limited (Melody), which is still operating, secured a refund of air fares and coach travel which was refunded to us.

It has been unable to secure a refund in relation to hotel costs - only vouchers have been provided to Melody by the hotels, who are not currently operating. We are, with legal advice from Prettys of Ipswich, pursuing options of recovery of the balance due from Melody, including triggering our ATOL cover which may prove costly and take time. So far Melody has offered to refund the balance by monthly instalments of £4000 over the next year as funds from their operations allow (and as the hotel vouchers they have received can be utilised on other tours.)

The income represents the refund received from Melody. The expenditure represents the refunds paid to members, including refunds of the additional funds paid, over and above the basic tour fee charged by Melody, for ancillary costs (e.g. a final night meal)

4 Our Funds

The total of our reserves has increased to £44,887, with our General Fund increasing to £16,784.

Our one restricted fund is the President's Fund (since renamed the Paul Deane Memorial Fund) used to support choir members on tour. It has increased to £2,392 due to a substantial donation made in his memory by his family. Since the year end we have also received a £1,000 legacy from Paul Deane.

5 Subscriptions

Given the size of our General fund and the surplus generated in the pandemic I do not propose to recommend any change in the level of subscriptions.

AC asked if there were any questions.

Justin Ballam asked why the money owed from the cancelled Austrian Tour couldn't be paid back to the members. **AC** explained that most of the money is designated for specific spending.

Jonathan Davies asked if the designated areas could be changed. James Black suggested paying some of the money back from the general fund. **AC** asked the meeting if they could be patient a little longer as he believed the money would be forthcoming. After some further discussion Ian Robertson proposed that the accounts be accepted and Tim Freathy seconded the proposal. This was passed by the meeting.

6.0 Election of Committee

Just as the election of the committee was going to start Barry Cole stood up and addressed the meeting without prior warning . He said he had been voted onto the committee as vice chairman

In May 2018 and proceeded to verbally attack members of the committee saying he couldn't get ideas of his backed at committee level. There were committee members who blocked his ideas and he found it became frustrating and that is why he stood down after one year on the committee. The current secretary, Malcolm Lodge responded by saying it was a slur on the hard work that committee members put in. **RB** stepped in and said the meeting needed to continue with the election of the committee.

- 6.1 There were two nominations for the position of Chairman as **RB's** 3 year tenure had come to an end. The two nominees were Ivor Thulborn and Ross Van de Zande. The committee had asked both candidates to address the meeting prior to a secret ballot. This was done by both candidates as requested and then the votes were cast. The votes were counted by the new President, Ian Morgan. The vote resulted in Ross Van de Zande named as the new chairman. **RVdZ** thanked the meeting for voting for him as chairman.

The electable positions of Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Concert Manager and Membership Secretary all had only one nomination for each position. Ian Robertson proposed that the voting be done en bloc, this was seconded by John Levantis and the meeting voted the following people on the committee.

Vice Chairman – Ian Cooper, Secretary – Malcolm Lodge, Treasurer – Andrew Conquest, Concert Manager – Ashley Seaborne & Membership Secretary – Nick Gane.

This left a vacancy for Concert Secretary, **RVdZ** asked **IT** if he would come back on the committee as Concert Secretary, the role he had been doing prior to the vote for Chairman. **IT accepted.**

- 6.2 Phil Kemp proposed a vote of thanks to MD **Mark Jefferson** for running the outside rehearsals in Pakenham during the summer prior to the choir being allowed to rehearse indoors in September. A unanimous vote of thanks came from the meeting.

7.0 Appointment of Independent Examiner -

AC proposed that **Richard Chaplin** should continue as the independent examiner for the choir's accounts. This was seconded by Jules Mills and unanimously voted for by the meeting.

8.0 Any Other Business -

As there were no items forwarded for discussion the meeting closed at 8:15 pm.