

WCCC Virtual Committee Meeting 18th October 2023
Minutes

Present: Peter Brook (PB), Carole Oliver (CO), Kevern Oliver (KO), Liz Forman (LF), Sarah Donaldson (SD), Jenny Kettleton (JK), Jean Paul Hoskins (JPH), Mark Wilson (MW), Helen Randall (HR), Lynne Reekes (LR) and Robin Walker (RW)

Item		Action
1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>All were welcomed, particularly new members of the committee.</p> <p>KO and LR were confirmed as co-opted members with regard to membership and assistant treasurer respectively.</p> <p>RW's presence at committee meetings as a 'non-voting participant observer' was clarified (mostly for the benefit of new members!) and welcomed as his input is often invaluable.</p> <p>Apologies: Anne Renshaw (AR), Stephen Shellard (SS)</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of 06/09/23 were unanimously agreed</p> <p>Matters arising are dealt with in the main agenda.</p>	
3	<p>Financial report</p> <p>Quarterly figures are currently awaited. We have around £14,000 in the bank at present.</p> <p>3.1 It was agreed that the fees we charge for a wedding should stay the same at present – £400 for the choir, £175 for SS, and £100 for accompanist, giving a total of £675. If our services are requested at a location outwith the diocese further negotiation will take place regarding travel expenses.</p>	
4	<p>Committee Membership</p> <p>Discussion was held about the importance of working flexibly over the next few months to make sure all tasks are covered, but that particular 'roles' should be kept under review as they arise/evolve and that a further review of job descriptions/roles should be held in 4-6 months' time to re-define these formally as needed prior to the next AGM.</p> <p>The role of non-committee members in taking on responsibility for various events and tasks was also briefly discussed, particularly Eileen's role in co-ordinating bookings and parking with the Cathedral, and in co-ordinating the upcoming Fladbury wedding. This is to be encouraged moving forward.</p> <p>In the division of KO's former tasks as secretary, it was confirmed that he will continue to take responsibility for the 23/24 schedule for now, but that this will transfer over to LF over time, and particularly as the 24/25 schedule is put together. KO will continue to hold on to the more pastoral role of looking after the membership for now, which may become a substantive role in its own right moving forward.</p>	PB, LF, All
5	<p>AGM Matters</p> <p>5.1 It was suggested and agreed that for various reasons, mainly the time needed to get the accounts ready following the end of the financial year, and avoiding the peak holiday season of June and early September for many choir members, the AGM will be moved to the last Thursday in September moving forward. This will</p>	

	also mean a shift of the time at which the annual subscriptions are due as these generally need to be discussed and ratified at the AGM which will need to be borne in mind when looking at the finances over the next 12-24 months.	
5.2	LR was thanked for her work as AGM secretary this year, and also for her offer of performing the same role next year which was gratefully accepted!	LR
5.3	LF suggested that as the AGM minutes were already written, they should be circulated to the membership. It is to be made clear that these are draft minutes and will need to be formally accepted at the next AGM, however the members are more likely to be able to recollect what was said and agreed if they read them sooner rather than later, so any amendments will be more meaningful. This was agreed, and they will be put on the members' area of the website and an e-mail sent to the membership to inform them of this.	LF, MW
6	23/24 Events	
6.1	Fladbury Wedding Eileen has this in hand, further details to be sent out after half-term.	
6.2	Sedgley Carol Service It was confirmed we have sufficient voices for this to go ahead. CO has this in hand and is liaising with the vicar and SS regarding the order of service etc.	CO
6.3	25th Anniversary Concert Plans for this are moving forward under CO's care, at present we are waiting for confirmation of soloists. We will need to think about publicity for this quite soon, and it was suggested that a small sub-committee may need to be formed for this.	CO ??AR, SD and others
6.4	Westminster Abbey Evensong Nothing particular to report, there are constraints on musical choices of which SS is aware. Again we need to think about publicity for this event, and it may be worth asking the cathedral for help with this.	KO, SS
6.5	25th Anniversary Social in the Undercroft CO explained that she had contacted the cathedral to enquire about the possibility of using the Undercroft for a social event to celebrate our 25 th anniversary. We would be able to use this for free, and bring our own food and drink (corkage may apply), or the café would be able to provide catering for a charge. A date in June seemed to work best, fitting into a slight lull between our other commitments. It was agreed we would ask the membership whether they thought this would be a good idea. A small team would then need to be put together to take this forward.	CO LF
6.6	Possible wedding 17/08/24 - Chaddesley Corbett LF has not had a response to the e-mail she sent to the enquirers as yet, but will send a chasing e-mail at the weekend.	LF

	<p>Sam Hudson has contacted us to explain that, as a new idea, they are putting together a leaflet for all the Cathedral concerts in the next academic year, and offering to include details of our Anniversary Concert. CO has gratefully accepted this suggestion on our behalf and is liaising with Stephen about wording for our entry.</p>	CO, SS
7	<p>24/25 Outline Planning</p>	
7.1	<p>Himbleton Concert The church is happy with a date in Spring 2025 for this, and CO is in discussions with the church warden regarding this. It was pointed out that this concert would cover our outreach remit, and would also be a profit sharing exercise so has very little risk to us financially. CO needs to discuss with SS, but the aim is that we will have a firm date by the next committee meeting.</p>	CO
7.2	<p>Further possibilities: As per the agenda, various possibilities were suggested regarding other events.</p> <p>Elgar Festival – it seems less likely that we will have more involvement in this going forward, certainly not in the 2024 Festival which is already fully planned. The theme of the 2025 Elgar Festival will be ‘Venables at 70’, so the idea of commissioning an anthem or introit from Venables to be performed at the Elgar Festival Evensong was put forward. A commission of this sort would cost us £1000. There was limited enthusiasm voiced for this, but PB asked everyone to think on it further and he will discuss with SS too.</p> <p>Own Concert – there was general agreement that we would like to do our own concert in the cathedral in 2025.</p> <p>Recording – this was discussed briefly, but again the balance of benefit to us vs cost of the enterprise needs to be fully thought out.</p> <p>It was confirmed that LF should be the point of contact for events moving forward.</p>	All
8	<p>Operational matters</p>	
8.1	<p>Cathedral Relations – possible meeting JPH had contacted CO suggesting a meeting between some members of the cathedral staff and some of the WCCC Committee. This was warmly welcomed as a way of working towards ironing out some of the difficulties that still remain in working with the cathedral team, and to look at building a stronger, better relationship moving forward. It was agreed that such a meeting be convened, probably involving JPH, Sam Hudson and the chief operating officer and/or finance officer from the cathedral, and PB, CO and LF and possibly SS from the WCCC. This could become a regular occurrence, with attendees potentially changing depending on what needs to be discussed.</p>	JPH

8.2	Library JK getting to grips with the library with assistance from CO and Judith.	JK
8.3	Social media/Publicity Reminder that members need to be encouraged to like/share etc items on social media for it to work properly.	SD
8.4	Website Our domain name and webhosting have been renewed for 3 and 1 years respectively. The new X-feed (formerly Twitter) is not feeding through to the website anymore, and it is understood that a paid version of X-feed is being trialled in a couple of countries. It may be that if this becomes standard then we would need to pay to be able to post, possibly about £20/year, but this is all speculation at present. The situation remains under review.	MW
8.5	Membership Following on from KO's briefing note, SS's concern about the potential loss of members moving forward was acknowledged, but also the need to ensure the choir doesn't get too big – the general feeling was that we're pushing the definition of a chamber choir at the current membership limit of 38. The feeling from all members present was that membership should be held at 38 singers, but that the existence of a waiting list would be no bad thing. It is important that potential new members are made aware of this when they come for a trial (this is the case currently), and that if they are successfully auditioned they are kept updated and invited to concerts etc so they feel connected to the choir in a small way. The issue of attendance of singers at events was raised, but the use of WhenAvailable has allowed this information to be made available to SS well in advance of services/events to allow for appropriate musical planning. It was agreed that a card would be circulated for John Sands who leaves the choir towards the end of this term.	KO
8.6	Local Fundraising HR has circulated an extensive strategy document regarding fundraising ideas, which has already been commented on by several committee members. The idea is that short-, medium-, and long-term strategies should be developed to bolster the financial resources of the choir for the long-term. We need to remember that not all members are in the same position in terms of financial/time/emotional resources, and that all contributions are equally welcomed, no-one should feel they have to give extra money/run a coffee morning etc. Medium- and long-term strategies in particular will need to be run past the cathedral fundraising department to make sure we don't clash with any of their initiatives. A 'Come and Sing' event has been suggested as a future fundraising project, and HR is going to liaise with her contacts in the Malvern Festival Chorus to make use of their expertise in this area.	HR
		HR

	<p>The key need at present is the £500 projected shortfall for our Anniversary concert next year, so the most pressing focus should be on raising this.</p> <p>HR felt the top 3 ideas which would be easy for members to do would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individually run coffee mornings or similar • Cake and/or book sales at coffee after the Sunday morning Eucharist at the cathedral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ JPH feels there will be no problem with this in principle, once we have some dates in mind we should liaise with him • Voluntary donations made by members either anonymously or with acknowledgment. <p>Agreement was reached that these three ideas would be suggested to the choir as a whole in the next couple of weeks, by a brief announcement at the next rehearsal, and then with a follow-up e-mail.</p> <p>LR reminded us all the Easyfundraising has been set up for the choir, but the membership perhaps needs reminding of this fact! This will be done in the near future, but not so that it gets confused with the most pressing issue of the £500 needed for the concert.</p>	LF,HR
9	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>It was agreed that LF would put together a list of Wednesday evening dates approximately 6-8 weeks apart over the next 12 months and distribute these in the hope that most people will be able to make most of the dates.</p>	LF