

WCCC Committee Meeting 1st October 2025 held via Zoom
Minutes

Present: Sarah Donaldson, Liz Forman, Sam Hudson (items 1-4 inclusive), Carole Oliver, Anne Renshaw, Stephen Shellard.

Item		Action
1	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Apologies: None</p> <p>Sam Hudson still with us <i>pro tem</i> for which we remain grateful.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting (11/06/25) were otherwise confirmed as a correct record.</p> <p>The minutes of the AGM were approved and can now go on the website in draft form for review by the membership.</p>	LF
3	<p>Cathedral Liaison</p> <p>3.1 SS's contract was issued over the summer but initially did not reflect how he works. This has now been sorted out by SS/SH in conjunction with the Cathedral HR department. SD has not been allowed to see any of the contract which is appropriate in terms of personal details, but given that the choir pay him (albeit indirectly) is not ideal. It was agreed that should we feel we wanted to see specific clauses this would be possible through application to SH, but that hopefully SS would let us know if there were any problems!</p> <p>3.2 All safeguarding/access fob issues have now been resolved. JA has returned her fob (although this hasn't worked for a while now).</p> <p>3.3 SH gave us an update on various changes/situations at the Cathedral. Dean Stephen is two weeks through a month's sick leave. An interim Dean has been appointed – Olivia Graham who is the retired Suffragan Bishop of Reading. The advert for a new Precentor has gone live today, interviews are expected to take place in early November, but it is likely to be Easter before anyone is in post. Matthew Hall the Chief Operating Manager is also leaving towards the end of this month.</p> <p>4 Soprano Associate Lay Clerks have just been appointed, and will be singing at roughly 1 service a week. For the next year at least the boys and girls will be singing together. Looking to advertise for a vocal coach for the choristers. A male Alto Choral Scholar has just been appointed and a Tenor Choral Scholar is in post, and the Music department are looking to work with a VIth former at King's as a part-time Bass Choral Scholar.</p>	
4	<p>Recording</p> <p>4.1 LF confirmed that we should get a final cost from Priory in November, and agreed that she will e-mail to chase if she's not heard anything by early November, and will send a copy of the Cathedral's New Suppliers form to them to smooth the</p>	LF (CO to

	<p>process.</p> <p>SH confirmed that there should be no charge for use of the Cathedral as we are part of the Cathedral Music Department.</p> <p>The cost of someone to lock up was discussed, particularly as it is half term so SH is likely to be away. After some discussion we recalled that Nick is playing for us so he should be able to lock up. SS will discuss this with him, and LF will confirm formally.</p> <p>Organ tuning should cost £397.20 incl VAT (based on the cost of the tuning that's just been done). SH will book this for us.</p> <p>SS will confirm the accompanist fee with Nick.</p> <p>The need for deps was discussed, we may well need at least 1 tenor. SS will have a think about who he feels we need and who he may be able to ask and what costs will be involved.</p> <p>New copies of the Venables carol will be needed as the copies in the Cathedral library are the original version to which significant changes have been made. A quick look on musicroom.com suggested this would cost £190.87 for 45 copies.</p>	<p>provide form)</p> <p>SS/LF</p> <p>SH SS SS</p>
4.2	<p>9 of the carols have been adopted, with a further 2 likely. We need to consider whether the donations for adoption can be Gift Aided which will increase the total. It was confirmed that all the adopters are from the choir or linked with the choir/composers rather than the Cathedral so hopefully the fundraising department won't have any concerns.</p> <p>CO will look at the budget with the updates as above, and will provide us with totals based on no Gift Aid/100% Gift Aid/75% Gift Aid.</p> <p>The next step is to get a formal form issued with appropriate Gift Aid wording – SH will run this past the appropriate people at the Cathedral.</p> <p>We discussed when we want the money, it was agreed mid-January would be appropriate, but it was agreed we should issue the form asap, and then the donors can decide when they want to pay the money.</p>	<p>CO</p> <p>SH</p> <p>AR</p>
4.3	Music is now all sorted.	
5	<p>Financial report</p> <p>CO's report is as distributed beforehand. Since the last meeting the Finance Assistant has left, so communication and response times have not been as good as they had been. SH reported (before leaving the meeting) that the replacement Finance Assistant has started today, so hopefully things will improve again soon.</p>	
6	<p>2025-26 Schedule</p>	
6.1	The 9 Lessons and Carols is not on the website, SD asked if it was on our schedule which it is. Timings are yet to be confirmed by the Cathedral, LF will e-mail SH to confirm these, and e-mail MW to ask him to add it to the website.	LF
6.2	The wedding is confirmed in April, but not yet on the schedule. LF will amend and re-issue this. The bride has been in touch to confirm payment arrangements and Eileen has responded.	LF
7	<p>Strategy Update</p>	
7.1	SD has been in communication with her counterparts in the other two Cathedral	

	<p>Chamber Choirs and we now have a date pencilled in the diary for an Evensong in Gloucester Cathedral – Saturday 31/10/2026. The hope is that this will become an annual event hosted by whichever Cathedral is hosting the Three Choirs Festival that year.</p> <p>SD will inform the choir of this tomorrow night as it is the last weekend of half term so may have implications for holiday etc.</p> <p>CO asked about cost implications – this is likely to only be costs for Stephen.</p>	SD
7.2	<p>Andrew contacted SD over the summer to suggest a repeat tour to Norfolk. The idea would be that we would be there for a weekend, singing a concert on the Saturday evening, and the Sunday morning Eucharist. He had suggested late October 2026 which would clash with the Three Chamber Choirs Evensong.</p> <p>The choir have been there before several years ago, and called in at Ely Cathedral too. The various members of the committee who were there recall that it was quite a small group.</p> <p>It was felt that the appetite for further tours mentioned at some of the re-evaluations was for visiting other Cathedrals rather than smaller parish venues.</p> <p>SD will feed this back to Andrew.</p>	SD
7.3	<p>Future plans were discussed more broadly, with the possibility of returning to Westminster Abbey for our 30th Anniversary year in 2028, and possibly a bigger concert in 2027. The idea of another smaller concert of the type we gave in Hibleton was also discussed. All these ideas will be taken back to the Strategy group.</p>	Strat. group
8	<p>Membership Update</p> <p>The numbers and make-up of the choir are as documented in KO's briefing paper.</p>	
8.1	<p>Thanks is due to KO for his work on the re-evaluations. He has provided an overview of the process and his thoughts on how it has gone. In general the feeling is that it has been a positive experience. Feedback was discussed, and it was felt that some more specific feedback – both good and bad – would be appreciated on the prepared piece in particular. Moving forward it should be made clear that singers should ask for feedback if they would like it, or would like more than has been given. The two-way process is very important.</p> <p>This should now be a rolling three year process, and those due this term are already lined up. Thought needs to be given to 3 years' time however as a large number will be due again then. LF suggested it would be sensible to spread out these out, with perhaps some could be done up to 6 months early and some up to 6 months late. LF will communicate this to KO to be handed on to his successor when one is found.</p>	LF
8.2	<p>The need for a basic structure to managing situations in which members are asked to leave has been highlighted by the events of the last few months although it was acknowledged that this was unusual.</p> <p>3 possible scenarios have been identified – poor attendance (not previously discussed and agreed, eg in cases of ill health), poor conduct, and vocal/health deterioration.</p> <p>All situations will be individual and should be approached as such, but if there is a basic structure clearly outlined in the ToR it will help both the committee and</p>	

	members when concerns arise. LF agreed to draft something for the next meeting.	LF
9	Succession Planning SD is planning on talking to the choir about the urgent need for replacements for CO and KO after half-term. There are various people who could be approached individually, but we should all think about who might be appropriate. Ideally we need the succession sorted by January so a period of shadowing can take place. AR commented that recently the WFCS have canvassed their members with a voluntary questionnaire regarding what skills they have and have been slightly overwhelmed with the positive response. LF also pointed out that SD was planning a 3 year term, and LF a 4 year term as per the ToR. As things stand at the moment this would mean that SD and LF would both leave the committee at the same time which wouldn't be ideal. LF would be happy to extend for a year, but doesn't want to continue indefinitely. Thought therefore needs to be given to smooth and planned handovers.	SD All
10	AOB 10.1 The Christmas tree and decorations have been retrieved from JA and are now with LF. The Cathedral has been informed that LF is the new contact for the Christmas Tree Festival (although LF hasn't heard anything yet). SS to decide which of the carols for the CD will make the best theme for the tree and then we can ask all members to help with making decorations. 10.2 We are still looking for a new home for the choir's wine glasses and some CDs. 10.3 KO has informed us that we're nearly out of bags and folders for new members. It was agreed that the bags were not essential – these have just been given out recently to use up stock (they'd previously been produced for members to buy). Folders are needed however, as they do get tatty with use. AR suggested that a smaller logo would look better – and they'd need the new logo. CO will look at costings for the next financial year.	LF SS CO
11	Date of next meetings: 1930 on 19/11/25	