

**Lichfield Cathedral Chamber Choir Committee Meeting by Zoom,
Monday 8th November 2021 7.30pm**

Present: Jenny Arthur (JA), Martyn Rawles (MR), Jenny Mason (JM), Geoff Mason (GM), Wendy Shepperson (WS), Andrew Woodburn-Drayton (AWD), Vicki Shirliff (VS), Megan Barr (MB), Tina Shakeshaft (KS)

1. JA welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies.
2. **Minutes of 6th September 2021** were agreed.
Matters arising: Collection of emergency contact information from choir is almost complete. It was clarified that the signatories on the bank account would now be GM, VS, and MB. The planned vocal training session with Paul Spicer has taken place and was very successful.
3. **Treasurer's Report:**
this was delayed due to technical problems with the Zoom connection, but VS was able to ask and answer questions via messaging. The invoice for the NMA will be sent by the treasurer as previously MR will consult with Helen Robertson regarding the system for invoicing St Michael's, as it was thought this may have changed.
VS queried whether we should have public liability insurance for when we were in venues away from the Cathedral, such as St Michael's. JA will ask Nick Waller (Lichfield Cathedral Chorus) and Helen Robertson for further info on this.
4. **Website.**
WS has been investigating ways to produce a more flexible website, and suggests using WIX, which gives us the ability to input and change information easily. She demonstrated a sample homepage which she built herself and which looks more user-friendly and also more akin to the Cathedral website. Log-in will be simple, and the current domain which we have paid for till 2025 can be transferred to it. There will be a cost of about £194 inc. VAT for a 3-year session (it can be free but we would have the name WIX and adverts to contend with) and will give us about 3GB (we currently use 1.5GB). Some of the current information such as old service videos could be stored elsewhere eg YouTube, to save space. It was agreed that this was a good move, and WS will keep adding up-coming events to the current website to tide us over whilst the new site is developed.
5. **Publicity:** This currently mainly happens via the Cathedral outlets in notices.
6. **Social Media:**
KS asks that material should be sent to her if we want it publicised. Photos are welcome, either formal or casual. We need everyone's permission to have their photo published on social media...this most easily done by asking at the time, rather than having a formal document. An opt-out system was also considered. It was noted that some of our potential new members found their way to us via social media and KS suggested that we could launch new initiatives such as the website on Twitter etc.

7. **Roles and responsibilities:**

JM produced a Shared 'Secretarial' Roles discussion document, based on AD's original job description, indicating ways of dividing the enormous number of tasks formerly undertaken by Andy between several Committee members.

Discussion centred mainly on clarifying communication methods between choir and committee.

In summary:

- It was agreed that the Doodlepoll system, sent out by MR and answers received by MR, should apply to all events whether in the Cathedral or elsewhere. He will then inform GM of names and numbers expected, and for outside events the committee member responsible, eg GM for the NMA, MB for weddings and funerals.
- Any message to be sent to the whole choir will come from JM, who will then ask members to reply to the relevant person eg GM for rehearsal attendance.
- Communication between committee members can be direct, as well as between committee members and outside agencies eg GM and Chapter (though MR would like to be made aware if this happens).
- All data information which has been shared must be deleted after each event.

8. **Recruitment:**

MR reported that four potential new members have been auditioned and accepted. Jemima Richardson-Jones, Leslie Plimbley and Paul Allen have joined us.

The fourth chose not to do so. Further auditions are planned for a soprano and two basses, and MR is awaiting a response from Sophie Norrington. Another bass and soprano have also expressed an interest and they will be invited to attend a couple of rehearsals as usual.

There is an upper limit of 35 for the choir numbers, though this number is never present at any performance, therefore MR proposes to accept any new member who is considered suitable.

9. **Attendance:**

Efforts have been made by JA to contact Ann O'Brien but without success. MR will now try to find out her intentions through a mutual contact.

All replies to messages from JM about attendance at rehearsals must go to GM. Choir members need to be encouraged to do this rather than contacting Martyn

10. **Events:** The events list is now published on the website.

- MR announced that he has arranged another vocal/choral workshop with Christine Cairns on January 31st, following on from the successful Paul Spicer workshop. A fee similar to that for Paul has been agreed. MR is confident that this will be a valuable experience for the choir.
- 40th Anniversary recognition: Several ideas have been suggested:
- Making a new CD. KS and MR thought that an MP3 recording would be more user-friendly, as it could go on the new website and/or on YouTube and would avoid

much music would be needed as for a CD. MR will consider some pieces which would give promotional and personal satisfaction.

- A concert away from the Cathedral, which has a crowded calendar. Various venues were suggested including other churches or The Hub.. MR and JA will explore The Hub further.
- We could have a dinner.
- A work could be commissioned for us, ideally from a young composer. We also already have a Jubilate, written for us by Stephen Carlston many years ago, which could be made legible and sung again.
- The committee was asked to consider all these ideas for further discussion at a later date.

11. Welcome Document.

This has now been updated and will be put onto the website. MB reported that she sends a welcome email to new members with the document attached, once she has their email address.

12. Folders

JA reported that there are no spare folders and new ones were needed for new members. The current folders were supplied by Choraline, who have our artwork for the logo and name. They have a minimum order of 25 for printed folders, at £7.50 each, which is much less than most other makes. The initial outlay would be considerable, but some members might need to replace their current folder. JA will ask the choir to consider the condition of their folder and report back. VS suggested asking members to make a contribution towards the cost of their new folders, perhaps 50%.

13. AOB.

- Lyneth Lockwood asked us to consider having our own Lichfield Psalters to avoid all the paper sheets and to retain our own markings. MR pointed out that we are only singing about 5 psalms a year, and that new organists/choirmasters tend to change the psalm settings used. MR would also feel less able to choose the occasional alternative setting. The current psalters are available to buy in the Cathedral Shop at about £25 each if individuals wish to buy their own.
- The Deputy for MR when he is on paternity leave (probably end November – early December) will be Ben. His fee will be covered by the Cathedral.
- Covid and rehearsal length. AWD reported that Covid was still causing high numbers in hospitals, but that spacing was the most critical factor in avoiding it and adding a further 15 minutes to rehearsal times was acceptable. It was proposed that we should extend our rehearsals to 9.15 as from November 29th, giving us 1.5 hours of rehearsal time. MR confirmed that we would rehearse in St Michael's school on December 6th and 20th.

Date of next meeting TBA. The meeting closed at 9.51.