

LEEDS PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

Minutes of the Trustees' Meeting

WEDNESDAY 28th October 2020,

held at 7.00pm using ZOOM

Present

Ruth Shann, (RS) CHAIR	Philip Ratcliffe, (PR) Secretary	
Jill Foalks, (JF) Membership Manager	David Lunn, (DL) Concert Manager	Penny Dean, (PD) Marketing Manager
Rosemary O'Dea, (ROD) Tour Manager	Rowena Herbert, (RH) Trustee without Portfolio	Charlotte Mulliner (CM) Trustee without Portfolio
Joseph Judge (JJ) Chorus Master		

(Due to a technical glitch the Chair was delayed in joining the Trustees for the meeting). At 7.10pm Trustees agreed that PR should Chair the meeting until RS joined. RS joined the meeting at about 7.15pm and took over the Chairmanship of the meeting).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded from Andrew Straton, Roger Shirley, Lewis Hemingway and Cllr Jane Dowson.

2 Minutes for meetings 26th August and 23rd September 2020

The Minutes for the two previous meetings were agreed.

3 Matters Arising

None that are not covered elsewhere within the Minutes or Action Points.

4 ACTION POINTS

The Action points were updated. (See the Action Points Annex).

5 WRANGTHORN - FEEDBACK

Two choirs had sung at Wrangthorn (Choirs B and C). There was an overall positive response to in-person rehearsals, and some of the difficulties (such as parking) had not manifested themselves.

The light and heating within the church were considered satisfactory, but the need to keep the door open to ensure adequate ventilation did mean that a chill entered the building later in the rehearsals.

There was an overall agreement that it would be appropriate to make use of Wrangthorn for rehearsals for the remainder of the Season and that this would be put to Members. Given the space available and the numbers of Members willing to return, it was thought that 2 choirs of about 40 could be accommodated meeting the social distancing guidelines. As a result, Trustees decided that from Thursday 5th November rehearsals would be held at Wrangthorn. Choir B Members will be redistributed to join those of Choirs A and C, and formal invitations notifications and invitations will be circulated as appropriate. Rehearsals would be from 7.00pm to 8.20pm and the church would be needed from 6.30pm to 8.30pm. This will cost £120.00 per session with additional hours being charged at £20.00 per hour, if necessary, for auditions etc. This decision would be informed to Members at the Zoom rehearsals on Thursday 29th October.

ACTIONS: put into effect appropriate contractual arrangements for use of Wrangthorn Church as a rehearsal venue.

6 ZOOM REHEARSALS OR IN PERSON?

Given that decisions regarding the use of Wrangthorn as a base for in person rehearsals over the coming months, the need to ensure appropriate media/streaming sharing of the rehearsals was considered to be very important to ensure all Members of the Society have the opportunity to join in or share the experiences and learning that would be provided. Efforts would be made to ensure the in-person rehearsals were effectively shared with non-attending members.

ACTIONS: Trial alternative ways of streaming/recording the rehearsals.

7 RETURNING TO PERFORMING

A written report was provided by the Concert manager (attached as Appendix 4). He indicated that LICS were interested in attempting to produce a Lord Mayor's Carols during December.

Trustees agreed that the Society would be supportive of such a move and would like to be involved. It was noted by DL that it would not be possible to have an audience at the event, but that LICS would stream the event and make it available on their social media platforms.

Discussion explored the possibility of using Leeds TH as a venue for recording a short film of Christmas music, if the Leeds Lord Mayor's Carols did not take place. DL would approach Katie Pearce at LICS to discuss the opportunities.

ACTIONS: Liaise with LICS over the potential for Lord Mayor's Carols or alternative self-promoted use of Leeds TH during December.

8 NEW WEB-SITE DESIGN

PD has circulated a Link to the new website for comments regarding its functionality and overall appearance.

There was agreement that the revised website worked well, but that revisions of some of the content would be useful.

Trustees agreed that the revised website should be brought into use at the earliest convenience.

ACTIONS: Bring the new website into use as soon as possible. Update content as appropriate as soon as practicable or appropriate.

9 BUSINESS PLAN FOR NEXT 3 YEARS

The Chair proposed that this item should be delayed, given the current Covid circumstances and it would be rescheduled for consideration at the meeting on 3rd March 2021. This was agreed by Trustees.

10 PRESIDENT – WAY FORWARD

The Chair proposed that this item should be delayed, given the current Covid circumstances and it would be rescheduled for consideration at the meeting on 6th January 2021. This was agreed by Trustees.

11 RESIGNATION OF INCOME GENERATION MANAGER

The sudden resignation of the Income Generation Manager from the Trustees and membership of the Society come as a great shock to the Trustees. It was noted that the Membership of the Society had not been informed. Whilst the details of the resignation should be considered as confidential and a personal matter, the opportunity for a Members of the Society to become more involved in running the Society by taking on the mantle of Income Generation Manager now presented itself and this would be put to Members at the rehearsal on 29th October. Interested persons could inform the Chair or Secretary.

The formal thanks of the Board were recorded to Dr Tom Chilton for the work he had undertaken in progressing funding applications.

ACTION: Inform Members of the opportunity to step into the role of Income Generation Manager and request expressions of interest.

12 SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR REMAINDER OF 2020/21

It was noted that a number of members still had not reached agreement over their Subscriptions for 2020/21, despite the request that this be made by the beginning of October. It was also noted that two Members had attended in-person rehearsals but had not paid any subscription.

There had been some outstanding Subscriptions from 2019/20, arising from members stopping payments when the Lock down commenced. Whilst these had generally been resolved there was still some outstanding membership fees. Members(s) involved would be approached and informed that in accordance with the Constitution, unless there are mitigating circumstances or other agreements can be made, formal notification of termination of membership would be commenced. If payment has not been made within 6 months of the request (for this purpose being taken as 1st September 2020), a resolution of the Trustees will be made to terminate membership and expel them from the Society.

Given that decisions to continue with “in-person” rehearsals using Wrangthorn Church and now knowing the costs involved, the Treasurer would be asked to put forward new proposals for Subscriptions for the remainder of the Season. These will be discussed at the next meeting which will be on Wednesday 25th November 2020.

ACTION: Determine proposals for Subscriptions for the remainder of the Season.

13 REPORTS

a Chair

No additional report was given;

b Chorus Master

No additional report was given;

c Secretary

No additional report was given;

d Treasurer

AS did not provide a detailed report as he was absent from the meeting however he indicate in an email that I can confirm that I have applied for a new savings account but not heard anything back as yet.

Membership monies have been coming in steadily and the value of the current account is increasing.

e Membership Manager

JF circulated a short written report attached as Appendix 3.

f Music Programme Manager

No additional report was given;

g Concert Manager

DL provided a short written report attached as Appendix 4.

h Marketing Manager

PD provided a written report attached as Appendix 5.

i Income Generation Manager

No additional report was given;

k Friends Group

ROD indicated that work was continuing on the celebratory booklet.

A short discussion also revolved around the Anniversary Dinner, scheduled for May 2021, and whether this should be postponed/cancelled to ensure cancellation fees were not incurred. It was agreed that this matter would be addressed further in January 2021.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

JJ sought resolution of 3 specific matters:

1. **Timing of rehearsal for 29th October.** The Zoom sessions would commence at 6.30pm. RS would address those assembled at 6.45pm with the expectation that the musical elements would commence at 7.00pm and last 1hr.
2. **Issues relating to “lock downs”.** It was agreed that the continuation of “in-person” rehearsals do not breach the guidelines of the COVID Tier system. However, this would be kept under review and the Trustees would follow the regulatory frame-work.

3. **Next Meeting.** It was agreed that due to the COVID crisis the next meeting would be on Wednesday 25th November 202 using Zoom at 7.00pm

15 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

All Wednesdays at 7.00pm using ZOOM unless otherwise agreed.

25th November 2020;

6th January 2021;

3rd March 2021

21st April 2021;

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 20th May 2021.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: ACTION POINTS

ANNEX TO MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 28th October 2020

Minutes item	Action	Current Status	Owner
5	Put into effect appropriate contractual arrangements for the use of Wrangthorn Church as a rehearsal venue.		JF/PR
6	Trial alternative methods of recording/streaming the in-person rehearsals		PD
7	Liaise with LICS over the potential for Lord Mayor's Carols or alternative self-promoted use of Leeds TH during December.		DL
8 (i)	Bring the new website into use as soon as possible		PD
8 (ii)	Update the content of the website as appropriate.		ALL
11	Inform Members of the opportunity to step into the role of Income Generation Manager		RS/PR
12	Determine possible Subscriptions for the remainder of the Season.		AS

ANNEX TO MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 23rd September 2020

Minutes item	Action	Current Status	Owner
2A	Write to St George's expressing concern and disappointment but understanding the circumstances and continuing to work with them over ensuring a return from September 2021. (RS/PR/JF)	Done	RS/PR/JF
2B	Liaise with Wrangthorn regarding rehearsals to be held in October and offering rehearsals to these Members of Choirs B and C.	Done	JF

ANNEX TO MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 26th August 2020

Minutes item	Action	Current Status	Owner
5b(i)	Update the survey responses with the additional returns.	Done	PR
5b(ii)	Ensure Survey Spreadsheet is available to view on the Members area of the website;	Done	PD
5c(i)	Survey Members about their intention to come to a rehearsal – if offered;	Done	JF
5c(ii)	Randomly allocate Singers to the rehearsal sessions;	Done	JF
5c(iii)	Plan to Stream the "in person" rehearsals through Zoom to allow other members to participate	Done	PD
5ci	Amend the dates on the Safeguarding Policy Document to August 26 th 2020.	Done	PD
5cii	Undertake COVID Risk Assessment using the Making Music Template.	Done	RS
5civ	Confirm the Singing Day with Matthew Hamilton and start preparation for the event including streaming.	Done	JJ
7	initiate the systems for collecting subscriptions.	Done	AS
8j	Inform Members that the concert in Dortmund had been cancelled.	Done	ROD
8k	Thank the Friends Group for their work and confirm the Board's agreement to their ongoing plans.	Done	ROD

ANNEX TO MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 22nd July 2020

Minutes item	Action	Current Status	Owner
9	Consider the way forward for the appointment of a new President. First discussions to be held at the meeting in October 2020.	Ongoing	PR

ANNEX TO MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 18th March 2020

Minutes item	Action	Current Status	Owner
10i	Seek quotations for the printing of the anniversary booklet.	Underway	PD

ANNEX TO MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 23rd October 2019

Minutes item	Action	Current Status	Owner
10	Seek out joint ventures and concert venues for the period of the Leeds TH Closure.	Ongoing	DL
13a	Develop approach for applications for funding of singing lessons	Ongoing	PR/AS

ANNEX TO MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 28th August 2019

Minutes item	Action	Current Status	Owner
5.3	Consider changes needed to the Constitution – by end April 2020	Ongoing	PR
8.1	Take forward redesign of web-site.	In progress	PD

ANNEX TO MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 24th April 2019

Minutes item	Action	Current Status	Owner
6a	Seek to appoint a Press Officer	Under consideration	PD

ANNEX TO MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING 9th January 2019

Minutes item	Action	Current Status	Owner
6.1	Prepare a 5-year Budget	Ongoing	AS/??

APPENDIX 2: Treasurer's Report

As did not provide his usual detailed written report for this meeting. Some points were made in an email which are recorded in para 13d of the Minutes.

APPENDIX 3: Membership Manager's Report

Membership numbers

When we went into lockdown we had 129 members. Over the past few months we have inevitably lost quite a few members:

- 9 people resigned from the Chorus for a variety of reasons.
- 106 existing members have paid a subscription for this term:
- 36 sopranos, 40 altos, 12 tenors and 18 basses.
- 4 members seem to have opted out completely, but I hope two of them may still return in future.
- 4 people have decided not to pay subs for this season and have been temporarily removed from our mailing list. I hope they will return in 2021.
- 3 people have attended a 'live' rehearsal but haven't offered any subs to date.
- 2 students have only recently returned to Leeds and are expected to pay their subs this week.
- 2 previous members have returned to the Chorus and Joe will hear them as soon as possible – although one has already paid her subs in anticipation!

We have three or four new ladies to audition when we can arrange that but, due to all the uncertainty, it hasn't been feasible to actively recruit new members this season.

Live rehearsals

93 members originally opted in to attending live rehearsals. A few have changed their minds but we still have around 85 people wanting to attend, although we cannot expect full attendance this season due to Covid regulations. If we stay at Wrangthorn we can split into two groups and each will therefore rehearse fortnightly.

Arrangements seem to be working well and the feedback from members is overwhelmingly positive.

APPENDIX 4: Concert Manager's Report

Allocation of music for the live rehearsal was accomplished fairly easily, and it was only necessary to provide printed-off copies of the Beamish/Rutter/Palestrina pieces for about a dozen members. Although we have not been requested by Leeds Libraries to return the copies of the Beethoven Mass in C, I decided I should collect them in as soon as possible, so that none go astray during the restrictions.

I had a long chat with Katie Pierce of LICS last week re the recent concerts in Leeds Town Hall, and the possibility of our being involved at some point, possibly in December. Initially, the reduced -scale concerts only used the ground floor of the Town hall for audience, but latterly, both the Gallery and the Orchestra Risers have been used. This enabled around 280 audience members to be present, or 230 if the Risers were not available – eg. when Opera North Chorus was involved. Katie said she is hoping to be able to mount a reduced form of the Lord Mayor's Carols with brass band, and asked if we would like to be involved if this was able to go ahead, to which I told her we would. She called back the following day to say that if an event did take place, it would have to be minus audience, and that the result would be streamed. This would

probably mean that the band would be placed on the floor, and the choir could be spread around the Risers and Stage. She will get back to me in due course. The original date for the LMCC was December 17th.

APPENDIX 5: Marketing Manager Report

In progress and completed are:

Facebook/Twitter

Posts re our new live rehearsals done. Posts re the future of choirs shared to FB.

Web site

The re design work formally commissioned with Design-It is now well underway after a delay due to COVID furlough. Draft site link supplied to trustees with a view to formal approval and potential go live in November. Site updated with links to all the practise resources required for the term. Site updated with the Choir survey response summary.

Ticketing

No update currently.

Season Brochure 2020/21

No progress until we know what will be able to run. It is likely that nothing will be achievable until next year unless restrictions rapidly change.

Zoom

Normal online rehearsals run well and most folks that are able can join in and are getting the hang of it even if they don't like it. We have been running at attendee of around 50-60 with another 30ish views of the recording later. So around 90 of the membership join in. The attempt to run a webinar of the 1st live rehearsal at St Georges was not too successful – the video was fine, but the zoom app completely mangled the audio stream. Only having 1 microphone for the whole venue also limited the experience. Feedback on attendee numbers and names are being supplied to membership for each session.

Wrangthorn – Live recordings

With no internet access, the two trial rehearsals at Wrangthorne were just recorded via my webcam and then posted the following day. Again, just the one microphone for the whole space which is not ideal. The first session achieved a download audience of over 80. It is not perfect, and the sound is not always too good but is the best we can do with the limited equipment we have. A better webcam is on order which has a better microphone. Note: This is my personal kit. Ideally, If the decision is taken to continue on this route than the Phil needs to consider some expenditure in this area. A decent video camera (that can run for 1.5 hours plus) would cost in the region of £950plus.

AOB

Commercial licence undertaken with Zoom (monthly basis) was extended to cover Webinars, but we have since rescinded this element due to the current rehearsal venue issues.

Commercial licence undertaken with MediaFire (annual basis) to improve the file sharing experience of members – it hosts the large rehearsal videos and previously members were getting confused with the adds on the free version.

Mail relay for "outreach" for Lewis created.

Singing Day on Sat 10th October hosted on zoom went well but with a disappointing turnout of around 25 for Matthew.

Choir video – our video turned out quite well despite only 26 or so singers. Was loaded to our FB page and got a lot of good feedback. LTH has expressed an interest in sharing it more widely. Dortmund choir also expressed an interest in joining in with us if we do another one.

APPENDIX 6: Fund Raising Report

Following the Resignation of the Income Generation Manager, no written report was provided.

APPENDIX 7: FRIENDS of the PHIL

No written report was provided. Any discussions are recorded under the Minutes at Item 13k.