

NKC Committee Meeting 20 July 2014

Present: Sonja Steed (Chair), Vanessa Hartley, Monica Chapman, Jessica Bate, Tristan Bate

Apologies: Hannah Deveson, Darlene Ahmed

1. Welcome

SS welcomed all to the meeting and thanked MC for kindly hosting the meeting at her house.

2. Apologies

Noted from HD and DA

3. Autumn Term planning

JB informed the committee that she would be returning to work full-time from September 2014 and therefore may not be available to lead all rehearsals. JB stated she would not be available on Mon 8 September or Mon 3 November.

The committee had a detailed discussion about the options for cover on Mon 3 November including the possibility of external visitors to deliver a vocal technique workshop, existing choir members leading or a guest choir director. We felt workshops may alienate some choir members and the opinions of the choir should be sought on this before arranging one. MC stated that the term fees would need to go up considerably if we had to pay for a guest director or a vocal workshop as they would expect around £100 per rehearsal.

It was decided that paying for a regular pianist may not be necessary for the majority of rehearsals but would be better for the run-up to the concert.

VH asked how the rehearsals might be made easier for JB to lead. JB suggested that having a rota of different people to lead the warm-up would certainly help and also add some variety to the rehearsals.

The committee decided that the rehearsals during the Autumn Term should be from Mon 15 September until Mon 8 December inclusive (12 weeks). We also decided that individual members should take responsibility for printing and buying their own music. MC suggested that this information could be put on the website so people would be able to download directly or click on the link to buy the music. This would avoid the need to send emails with details of all the music. It was decided that the existing sheet music (Bohemian Rhapsody, Fix You, and Your Love Keeps Lifting Me) that had been bought last term would be given out later in the new term.

Plan:

- a. Committee decided to restart rehearsals on Mon 15 September instead of Mon 8 September as originally planned.
- b. To approach existing choir members to lead rehearsal Mon 3 November – perhaps with focus on carols
- c. To include question in choir survey about workshops
- d. To establish a rota for leading warm-ups from Mon 6 October onwards
- e. To ensure dates for rehearsals are on website
- f. To put music for Autumn Term (links to buy and free music) on website

4. Christmas Concert 2014

The committee discussed the ideal timing of the concert and potential venues. It was decided that we would not sell tickets but nominate a charity from the choir and raise money as per Summer Concert format. TB reported that there were a number of family and friends who had offered to help with refreshments and front of house at our next concert. SS reported that some of the audience from the summer concert had requested whether wine could be made available next time. JB added that the drummer and pianist from the summer concert were very willing to return to accompany the choir. JB also stated that she had made contact with a bass guitarist on Streetlife who is keen to accompany the choir and would not expect payment.

Plan:

- a. To book concert for either Sat 6 December and Sun 7 December late afternoon
- b. To book Tiffin Girls School hall for the concert but to provide feedback on our experience with access at the summer concert to ensure this does not happen again
- c. To request whether we are able to serve wine on school premises for the concert
- d. To organise the nomination of a charity by choir members
- e. To enlist the help of NKC supporters with refreshments and front of house once date and venue finalised
- f. To make contact with pianist, drummer and bassist once date and venue finalised

5. Finances

MC circulated the finance report for the end of year and stated that all members had paid fees in a timely fashion this term. MC explained that the school will be increasing the hire charges by 5% from September.

Plan:

- a. To keep membership fees at £30 for Autumn Term 2014.

6. Choir ethos and membership

DA had suggested a description of the choir ethos which the committee felt was perfectly matched to us: fun, positive, contemporary, friendly, "me" time, energising, challenging but inspiring. TB suggested we should also include "no musical experience necessary".

The committee discussed whether we should have a limit on the number of people in the choir. It was decided that 35 regular members could be a limit but that this could be discussed again if and when it arose.

Plan:

- a. To put together a choir ethos for the website with input from other choir members and free text comments from survey

7. Social events

The committee discussed the success of the karaoke night in June and suggested this should be repeated in the Autumn Term as a Christmas party.

Plan:

- a. To decide on a date for Christmas party and book karaoke

8. Other performances

The committee were conscious that the performance at Ham House on 26 July was an unexpected extra performance after the summer concert on the 13 July. This has meant a total of 12 rehearsals this term. MC explained that the school do not charge VAT for bookings of 10 weeks and more but because we added 2 extra rehearsals on Mon 14 and Mon 21 July, we had to pay VAT for these 2 weeks.

The committee felt that we should not do too many extra performances aside from the Christmas and Summer Concert. SS reported that the Rose Theatre host a collaborative Christmas choir performance.

Plan:

- a. To aim for John Lewis Christmas performance for Autumn Term 2014
- b. To look into performing at a local hospital/hospice for Spring Term 2015
- c. To ensure we decide on rehearsal schedule for each term in advance to avoid the extra VAT charges
- d. To look into Rose Theatre Christmas performance for 2015

9. Committee

SS stated that having an evening meeting was preferable as we were able to discuss matters freely. MC suggested that we should try to avoid having a committee meeting with the other choir members present in the pub as this was not very inclusive. SS suggested we could rotate meeting in different people's houses. We also discussed that it would be appropriate to ask for another committee member to join us from September.

Plan:

- a. To schedule committee meetings for the term – Sun evenings once every half term?
- b. To ask if any of the existing choir members would be interested in joining the committee

10. Survey

The committee decided it would be a good idea to conduct an anonymous online survey of choir members to obtain feedback and to shape the future of the choir. We discussed the reasons that some members had left and decided it would not be necessary to send them a survey to find out why.

The questions we have decided to include in the survey:

- Are you happy with the current rehearsal venue at Tiffin Girls School?

Yes / No

If no – could you please explain why? (free text)

- What do think about the length of rehearsals – currently 8-930pm?

Too long

Too short

Just right

Free text comments

- Do you find the pace of learning new songs

Too fast
Too slow
Just right

Free text comments

- Do you prefer to learn songs, please state on a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is most preferable and 1 least preferable)?

With sheet music
With words only
By ear (without words or music)
A combination of all of the above

Free text comments

- If we had to find alternative cover for certain rehearsals, please state on a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is most keen and 1 least keen) which of the following you would prefer:

Guest choir director leading on songs we know
Guest workshop on improving vocal technique
Existing choir members leading
Other (please specify)

Free text comments

- Song choices – please rate the songs below (5 most keen, 1 least keen)

- a. ABBA
- b. Bob Marley / other reggae
- c. Classical eg. Mozart
- d. Religious eg. Amazing Grace
- e. Jazz / Swing eg. Ella Fitzgerald
- f. Musical theatre
- g. Country eg. Dolly Patron
- h. Sixties eg Buddy Holly / Elvis
- i. Modern Christmas songs eg. All I want for Christmas is You

- Any other feedback about the choir

Free text comments

11. Next committee meeting

To be decided, preferably Oct 2014