

Burgess Hill Symphony Orchestra

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

10th October 2018 20:00 United Reformed Church, Burgess Hill

Present:

Richard Light, Robyn Morgan, Gill Yates, Ali Biggs, Chris Siddall, Hilary Mortimer, Penny Atkins, Angela Kirsten and 21 other members of the orchestra.

1 Apologies

Mike Wood, Mia Clift, Lynne Haslam, Margaret Somers, Suzanne Harding, Wendy Moss

2 Minutes of last AGM meeting (18th October 2017):

Proposed as an accurate record by Angela Kirsten. Seconded by Penny Atkins

3 Matters Arising:

Chris Spink asked re Patrons and should they cover the cost of the Patrons tea. Had this been considered by the Committee?

RL replied that yes this had been considered. The number of Patrons is increasing. The Patrons often generously add a donation, which is gift aid-able. This, in part, offsets the cost of the tea.

TL added that since Patrons have pre-bought tickets regardless of weather, it is a guaranteed income!

4 Chairman's report: (Richard Light):

Planning for the November concert well under control but is taking up all the Committee's energy. Steve Penny is no longer available to be concert planner and it has become clear how much work he did!

Richard would be delighted to get suggestions and volunteers to help in concert planning both pre-concert and on concert day.

Richard is concerned about poor audience and we need to increase our efforts to increase audience numbers.

Two key members are looking to step down, or at least have their load lightened.

1. Ali needs help with the marketing/publicity.

2. Ange happy to keep sourcing music but can't do all the copying and distribution.

The first rehearsal of the new programme is particularly difficult to get everyone to have a copy in time for the prompt start. Ange says this is very stressful, especially as she cannot get to the start of rehearsals due to work commitments. To ask Mike to delay 'baton down' until 8.20pm for the first rehearsal.

From the floor: Discussion re possibility of section leaders responsible for copying for all.

Jane asked if the photocopying costs be recouped. RL reassured her that this cost will be covered by BHSO.

Meghan has offered to take home the bag of music and bring it to rehearsals each week

Agreed to change the system for January – get section leaders to take responsibility for their section.

Richard thanked Mike and the Committee, and all of the 'others' who help with the running of the orchestra.

5 Treasurer's report (Robyn Morgan):

Robyn circulated the 2018/19 annual accounts and his statutory report (that is filed with the Charities Commission) to all members via the BHSO website. He explained these in detail at the meeting.

Deficit at the end of this financial year is £270 cf £873 last year

From the floor:

Penny asked if we are confident that the HRTT grant will continue'?

Robyn said it is a risk. Without the HRTT grant, subscriptions would need to go up by £80.

Elements of the grant application include evidence that we examine our own expenditure, that we a soundly run, and how we reach out to others reaching out to promote music making.

We don't know what we will get until part way through the financial year.

Should we guard against the day when we don't get the grant? Should we keep subs at the same level? Robyn had recommended that ticket price and subs stayed the same in light of the gift aid income. This is reviewed annually by the Committee.

Monica raised the point that the tent concert is still losing money. Should we put the ticket price up to £8? Concern that some people iat outside and didn't pay.

Jane: Should we get people outside to pay. Should we get people to go around with a bucket? Alice at all concerts? No – raffle makes lots of money

RL believes it is a good community thing to do.

Jane: Were the refreshments ok? Richard said that we made a lot of money on the refreshments.

Chris asked Richard if we should approach the Martlets as a sponsor. Richard not optimistic that the developers will be able to sponsor. Richard would like to try and get a local company to sponsor the June tent gig.

Louise said she was on a committee arranging a charitable concert at Glyndebourne. For local homeless charities. November 2019. Sunday afternoon 4pm. Duke and Duchess Sussex. Katie Derham. Probably the Sunday after our concert. Is the orchestra interested? Several people are interested!

Steve Armitage: Thinks should not pay for lots of extras for tent concert.

Chris Siddall asked if we should we itemise the cost of extras?

Sue Lucas said subs of £120 is low!! cf other choirs etc

Robyn said he will recommend an increase at next review.

Other income: Hiring our music. Could help

Richard said we are forward planning with Mike. Agreed in principle that would meet to discuss each concert including the financial implications.

Terry Leese: re Audit of the accounts

Very good, very transparent, well thought out. Very clear picture of where we are. Can't fault it.

Reserve: Down to a slightly smaller reserve than a few years ago. Only comment is to work on building up the reserve.

Richard thanked Terry for auditing the accounts.

6 Musical Directors report read by Richard in Mikes absence:

This year has been a very good year for the orchestra, and I feel we have continued to thrive.

The earlier start, whilst problematic for one or two members, has had a significant impact on the playing quality and overall efficiency and productivity of the evenings. Having two solid hours of playing has made it possible to play through the pieces more and concentrate on details of phrasing, style, dynamics and articulation to a much higher degree than previously.

I am particularly delighted to welcome Jeremy and Charlie, our 'bone section, who augment the fantastically strong brass section we have had for many years. Also, it is super to have Sam giving us the rich sonority in the lower reaches of the string section.

The concerts this year have continued the high standards of playing which are our hallmark.

November was a feast of favourites with Dvorak New World, Peer Gynt, Meistersingers Overture and the fabulous Mozart Violin and Viola concertante with the husband and wife team the Tusons.

May saw an ambition of mine realised: to tackle the mighty Symphonie Fantastique. I had harboured a desire to do this for over a decade but felt that it was too much of a challenge. Now, however I thought we could do it justice, and we did much more than that!

A couple of small things which will help us to move forward. I am delighted at how many people arrive for the start of rehearsals but would ask if you could be seated and ready to tune at 8:00. It is slightly irritating to many players when others arrive on time but are then having a chat which holds us up.

Similarly, the start of the second half. Many people, for some obscure reason, remain in their seats for half of the break, then go and get a cup of tea and are therefore late getting back.

Finally, PLEASE fill in the rehearsal register at the start of the season. It is frustrating for me and you when I plan the rehearsal schedule only to find that key members are missing for works which need their important solos, wind, by the nature of the writing, are more susceptible for this I'm afraid. If you can let me know before I do the schedule it will assist me to avoid that where possible. Similarly, if you know you will be away for some time ill, please let me know. I have had instances in the past where people have been missing from rehearsals assumed ill, only for me to find out (sometimes anecdotally) that they have left. This then causes major problems if I have to fill their place at the last minute.

This coming season sees us tackling a raft of pieces which are new to most of us, with the varied and eclectic mix of pieces to celebrate the end of WW1. The May concert will feature Pavlos playing the Dvorak cello concerto (oiled and stripped to the waist if I can arrange a suitable fee!) also Brahms symphony no2 and The Overture to Barber of Seville.

November, which marks the 40th anniversary of our formation, will be a Last Night of the Proms, featuring:

1st half: Superman March, Adagio from Spartacus, West Side Story Symphonic Dances,

Finale from 1812 (Steve Evans conducting?)

2nd half: O Mio Babbino Caro, Nimrod, Fantasia on Sea Songs, Jerusalem, Pomp and Circumstance 1

These concerts along with the ever popular 'tent gig' will be another excellent year for us all.

I would like to especially thank Christian, who stands in for me when I am not able to be here and produces arrangements and parts as well as making some excellent program suggestions.

Special mention must go to Richard, whose vision for the orchestra and selfless commitment have been central to its growing success.

From beside a swimming pool in a remote walled ryad on the outskirts of sun-drenched Marrakech I raise an ice-cold beer and wish you well, looking forward to another exciting and enjoyable year working with a lovely group of musicians.

7 Election of committee.

No nominations at all

Need a vice chair – Richard asked for nominations from floor. None forthcoming.

Re-election of the committee: Proposed by Monica Todd; Jane Blythe seconded. Unanimous vote from the floor.

Any other business:

Chris Siddall Pity to see Helen go. Jayne Blythe said she will come back.

Alice said she knows someone who may be interested in joining cello section

Terry Leese said he also plays in Mid Sussex orchestra, and in comparison, we should recognise that we are thriving

Sue Lucas said there was a gap in pushing social media. Should we consider employing someone just to do social media pushing? Is there anyone who can do that for 30 mins a week

Meeting closed at 9.25 pm