

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WATFORD PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

HELD ON MONDAY 7th OCTOBER 2019 AT 7.30PM AT WATFORD GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman, David Pollak, welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Roger Prangnell and Geoffrey Williams.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM HELD ON 1st OCTOBER 2018

The minutes of the previous AGM were accepted as an accurate record after a small grammatical error was corrected.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

David Pollak read his Report, which outlined the Society's strategic plan for the next five years. This was mapped out at a recent Committee away day and informed by a questionnaire completed by the membership during the summer. A major consideration was the scheduled closure of the Colosseum for eight months in 2021, which would clearly influence the Society's choice of repertoire for that season. A marketeer was required to seek out sponsors and advertisers and oversee social media. Turning to the choir, it was agreed that a professional voice coach should be appointed, initially for a year, to support Michael Cayton. Finally, it was suggested that the choir should aspire to be more disciplined in their approach, more welcoming to new members and more supportive to colleagues. This would result in an improved culture. There were no questions.

4. SECRETARY'S REPORT

A report written by Audrey Adams and detailing the activities of the Society during the previous year was approved by the meeting.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

Paul Buckley presented a very comprehensive financial report which had been circulated before the meeting. There were questions about the amount of money raised by the raffle (answer - £6,000 per annum) and alternative venues when the Colosseum was closed (answer – various options were being considered, but most were not as large as the Colosseum, which would have an impact on the repertoire to be performed and might lead to savings). Molly Jackson suggested the new Croxley Danes School in Croxley Green as a possible venue.

6. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Paul Buckley invited the meeting to appoint Mr Ronnie Jacob as the Society's new Independent Examiner. The motion was proposed by Pam Allanson, seconded by David Santamaria and passed unanimously.

7. APPROVAL OF REVISED CONSTITUTION

David Pollak explained that the Society's Constitution had remained unchanged since 2015. Judy Newton-Davies had undertaken a revision, and the new version had been circulated before the

meeting. The most important change was the inclusion of the posts of Rehearsal Manager and IT Manager on the Committee. The motion was proposed by Edgar Anderson, seconded by Denise Wellham and passed unanimously.

8. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Seven nominations were received for the eight vacant committee posts. Judy Newton-Davies was proposed as Vice-Chairman by Margaret Burke and seconded by Malcolm Two. Graham Wheeler was proposed as Concert Programme Planning Manager by Margaret Burke and seconded by Paul Buckley. Pam Allanson was proposed as Publicity Manager by Nikki Hind and seconded by Audrey Adams. Nikki Hind was proposed as Membership Secretary by Judy Newton-Davies and seconded by Denise Wellham. Tim Pettigrew was proposed as IT Manager by Audrey Adams and seconded by Nikki Hind. Frances Pyatt was proposed as Concert Manager by Carolyn Routledge and seconded by Patricia Mitchell, and Margaret Burke was proposed as Rehearsal Manager by Judy Newton-Davies and seconded by Graham Wheeler. All seven were elected by acclamation. No nominations were received for the post of Social Activities Co-ordinator, which remained vacant.

9. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SEASON AND PREVIEW OF COMING SEASON

Michael Cayton gave a brief review of the previous season's performances. Particular highlights were the joint concert with the Chiltern Choir in the autumn, Haydn's *Creation* in the spring, which Michael described as one of the Society's best-ever concerts and the adventurous choice of the Jonathan Dove work in the summer. He was very proud to be the Society's conductor.

Michael went on to outline the education programme he proposed for the coming season. Note-bashing sessions starting on Mondays at 7pm would be implemented immediately. There would be further musical theory lessons. A professional voice coach would be engaged to lead the warm-ups at rehearsals and then work on vocal technique with small groups of the choir in one of the classrooms. A 20-minute session for each group was envisaged, and there would be three sessions involving different voice sections every week.

10. LONG SERVICE AWARDS

David Pollak congratulated three members of the Society on their loyal membership and presented Pauline Harman (20 seasons) and Tim Venner (40 seasons) with certificates. Roger Prangnell (50 seasons) was on holiday, but received his certificate at the next rehearsal.

11. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Rosemary Mackenzie-Corby asked about the sound balance between choir and orchestra, which had been a particular problem at the summer concert. It was noted the number of singers was unusually low for this concert. Michael Cayton explained he was not best placed as Conductor to monitor the sound balance. Keith Champion observed any fault usually lay with the brass players.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Pauline Harman announced that she and her husband were shortly moving to the Isle of Wight and she would be leaving the choir. She wished to place on record how much she had enjoyed her 20 years as a member. There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15pm.