

## **MINUTES OF THE 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WATFORD PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY**

### **HELD ON MONDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER 2022 AT 7.00PM AT WATFORD GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

#### **1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chairman, Pam Allanson, welcomed members to the meeting. About 70 members attended, and there were apologies for absence from Margaret Burke, Sarah Gardner and Tim Venner.

#### **2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2021**

The minutes of the previous AGM were accepted as an accurate record. Proposed by Hilary Chapman and seconded by David Pollak.

#### **3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman, Pam Allanson, described the previous year as a rollercoaster, featuring great concerts and enthusiastic audiences against a backdrop of the Covid pandemic and the move to the Grand Hall in Bushey, following the temporary closure of the Watford Colosseum. Pam thanked the committee for their efforts and also those members who helped in other ways, including the organisation of social events, the raffle, obtaining scores and maintaining the database. She reserved special thanks for Musical Director Michael Cayton and Accompanist Rosemary Venner.

#### **4. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

A report written by Audrey Adams and detailing the activities of the Society during the 2021-2 season was approved by the meeting.

#### **5. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Paul Buckley presented his financial report which had been circulated before the meeting. Ticket sales had been buoyant and the Society had a healthy £50,000 in the bank. As a result, he was budgeting for subscription rates to remain unchanged next season. The choir currently had 100 paid-up members and there were 17 orchestra members. The accounts had been forwarded to the Independent Examiner.

#### **6. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

Paul Buckley invited the meeting to re-appoint the firm of LPS Livingstone as the Society's Independent Examiner. The motion was proposed by Pam Allanson, seconded by Nikki Hind and passed unanimously.

As this was Paul's last appearance as Treasurer, Pam Allanson paid tribute to his hard work and expertise and made a presentation to him on behalf of the Society.

#### **7. MUSICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Michael Cayton gave a brief review of the previous season's concerts. He noted the choir had been "rebooted" following the departure of several members and the sad loss of others, notably Molly Jackson. A personal highlight had been *Messiah*, which he had conducted for the first time. The

Summer concert, performed without the orchestra and drawing on a different repertoire first encountered on Zoom, had been an exciting departure, while the orchestra had enjoyed their own concert. Looking ahead, he was eagerly anticipating the usual four concerts. The programme for the Summer concert had yet to be decided and he invited ideas and suggestions.

## **8. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Three nominations had been received for the five vacant committee posts. Pam Allanson was proposed as Chairman by Audrey Grey and seconded by Audrey Adams. Charlie Hancock was proposed as Treasurer by Paul Buckley and seconded by Margaret Burke. Audrey Adams was proposed as Secretary by Bill Penketh and seconded by David Pollak. All three were duly elected by acclamation. There were no nominations for the post of IT Manager/Webmaster, but Tim Pettigrew, the retiring member, promised to continue providing assistance. The Publicity and Marketing Manager post also remained vacant, but would be covered by Sarah Lockwood and Jenny Levy. Deborah Moon had decided to stand down. As always, further help was requested.

## **9. LONG SERVICE AWARDS**

The customary long service awards were presented by Pam Allanson and Michael Cayton.

20 years: Lindsey St John Smith (orchestra)

25 years: Anne Hall

30 years: Margaret Wellings (Margaret was not present but received her certificate later)

50 years: Ruth Blewitt

## **10. QUESTIONS FROM THE MEMBERS**

Members took the opportunity to ask a number of questions:

Q: Will members be required to help construct the staging for concerts?

A: (Pam Allanson) No – the Society will pay for helpers

Q: Will it be possible to reintroduce the provision of interval drinks at rehearsals?

A: (Pam Allanson) Possibly, if a volunteer or volunteers comes forward. Michael Cayton questioned whether there was time under the new regime.

Q: What about selling drinks at concerts?

A: (Frances Pyatt) This has been investigated, but there are a number of difficulties. Somebody would have to be in charge of serving the drinks. An alcohol licence would be required, and possibly security guards too.

Q: Will the Society return to the Colosseum for future concerts?

A: (Pam Allanson) The Colosseum will not reopen until Autumn 2023 at the earliest. At the moment we don't know how the new management company will operate and what the new scale of charges will be. So we will be staying at Bushey for the time being.

Q: Are there any plans to stage a joint concert with another Society or Societies?

A: (Frances Pyatt) The Bushey venue is too small, but a joint concert might be a possibility at another venue.

#### **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None. There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45pm. There was a vote of thanks to the Committee.