

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Semitones.

5th January 2020, All Saints Church, Gosforth.

Present: Ewa (Chair), Carol, Diana, Annette, Jen, Katharine, Neil, Chris, Caroline, Emma and Cecilia (minutes).

Apologies: Peter, Jennifer, Sylvia, Sue and Laura

1. Summary of the past year:

Diana presented a very positive and comprehensive annual report outlining Semitones' main activities in 2019 and concluding that "Semitones depends on every one of its members, and we can be proud and grateful that so much talent and commitment come together in our group". The report was distributed and discussed. Diana will forward it to Michael for the website.

Appreciation was expressed from all members present for this very effective summary.

2. Finances:

Annette reported that in January 2019 funds in the bank amounted to £3,101.19.

Over the last year, with no increase in the Conductor's fees; no additional sheet music being purchased; an increase in the contribution from the homes; and £197 raised from busking in Gosforth Shopping Centre we have ended the year with £2,908.75 in the bank. Thanks were expressed to Annette for her prudent management of the accounts.

3. Suggestions for Sheet Music and Workshops:

A discussion was held around additional sheet music and workshops. It was agreed that as we already have a very wide repertoire of sheet music, that we would not purchase any additional music at this time. It was agreed that members would continue to keep an eye out for relevant workshops that would reflect the wider requirements of the orchestra and bring ideas to the group as the occasion arises.

4. Sheet Music:

Discussion took place regarding the current and future. It was agreed that each member would email Katharine with three pieces that they would like to be removed, and three pieces that they would like to see included, in the programme. Katharine agreed to distribute an up to date list of the full repertoire with a note of the pieces where parts are missing.

It was agreed that until we can finalise the new programme we would continue with the current programme until the end of January, replacing the Christmas music with Amazing Grace and The Pink Panther. Katharine agreed to email the members to ask

them to bring the two new pieces to the next rehearsal and Ewa agreed that she would discuss the plans with David.

Thanks were expressed to Jennifer for continuing to provide us with sheet music as required.

5. Conductor for 2019:

It was agreed that we would like David to continue as our Conductor until at least February half term 2021. We are very grateful to have David as our conductor, benefiting from his fine musicianship, commitment and rapport with our audiences.

It was agreed that Ewa would contact David.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Chair - Ewa expressed a strong preference to stand down from the role of Chair, due to work and study commitments. Cecilia agreed to become Chair for the coming year and Ewa confirmed that she will be available to support and advise where necessary.

We are all immensely grateful to Ewa for her vision in founding Semitones and her hard work and continuing commitment to its success.

Treasurer - Annette agreed to continue as Treasurer.

Concert Organiser - Jen is prepared to continue organising the concerts.

Posters Distributor - Carol will continue sending the posters to the care homes.

E-mail Distributor - Katharine agreed to continue sending the emails re concerts and rehearsals. See AOB 7) g) – workload.

Music Organiser - Jennifer agreed to still be the main contact for sheet music and to supply music to any current members who require replacement music, or to new members joining the orchestra.

Keyboard - Neil has agreed to continue to look after the keyboard.

Percussion – although most members would like to keep the percussion section, there is no-one that feels able to look after the instruments on a full-time basis. It was therefore agreed that we would have a rota with members offering to look after them for a month at a time. Members were asked to provide information on which month they could offer.

Key Holder - Peter will continue looking after the keys (contacting Ewa on the occasions that he is unable to attend).

Webmaster - TBC.

Social Media and Graphic Designer – Carol and Philip have agreed to continue to produce posters and publicity materials and manage the Facebook page.

Additional Activities - Ewa will be looking for a member to organise additional concerts like Gibside Chapel; Seaton Delaval Hall and Gosforth Shopping Centre.

Monitoring Semitones Email Address – Ewa and Cecilia.

7) AOB

- a) Insurance – Insurance through High Note was agreed to be the most convenient and cost effective. The importance was also discussed at always having a care home staff member present at all times during a concert and that it is our shared responsibility to ensure that this happens. Care homes are reminded of this requirement when they book.
- b) Safeguarding – It was agreed that the Safeguarding policy would be reviewed. Members were also advised never to be alone with a resident at any time, for their own safety.
- c) Children – Audience engagement seems consistently high when young children are playing. Members are encouraged to bring along their own children, grandchildren or close contacts, even for a one off occasion. This could be especially beneficial to children wishing to perform a piece before an exam to help with performance anxiety.
- d) Charity Status – It was agreed that for our very small turnover, the benefits of becoming a registered charity would be by far outweighed by the administrative burden.
- e) Jesmond Festival – Jen requested the names of additional home that we could play in during the Jesmond Festival in May. Carol agreed to include something in the poster to encourage residents to welcome friends and family. Annette has booked for us to play in Jesmond Library and we are hoping to invite people to come and play with us. This may even encourage them to join us.
- f) Venues – Jen asked for suggestions of any other Care Homes that may like us to play for them. It was agreed that we would play in the Cancer Ward of North Tyneside General Hospital (organised via David)
- g) Workload of Email Distributor – Katharine has very kindly agreed to continue to send out the e-mails notifying members of rehearsals and concerts, however it was agreed that we would establish some ground rules to try to cut down on emails which are making the job increasingly time consuming. It was agreed that Cecilia would email the members clarifying which emails to direct to Katharine.

We are extremely grateful to All Saints for letting us use their room for rehearsals and as a way of expressing our gratitude we are keen to continue to offer musical support whenever requested. Members signed a thank you card.

CO 07/01/2020