

Wrablers 8th AGM 25th February 2020 Minutes

Venue - Good Agency

Chair - CS

Attendees – AM , CS , JB , JL , LS , MJM , MR , MXM , RM , PS , WT

Apologies - None

Agenda Item 1) review and agree previous AGM minutes from 29.1.19 .

Minutes approved , after discussion about the year long gap since first written , and memories fading as to content .

- **Action** CS to e mail out these minutes , for approval by next rehearsal .

Agenda Item 2) Rehearsals – does the current structure work ? Is there anything we should do differently ?

Members asked round table for contributions .

CS – the issue of time being wasted through chatting and talking in our singing sections .

We are doing this for understandable reasons , checking things with fellow singers , but it wastes time . The strategy from last year hasn't worked .

We all need to be more disciplined , but this is something that the chair in particular needs to drive .

Suggestion of having chair standing with Rob , opposite singers , and through being more visible , able to better direct questions , respond to requests , and communicate more closely with Rob on timing etc .

Suggestion also for members to signal to chair if they want to check something quickly with their fellow singers .

Suggestion for chair to repeat at each rehearsal “ please direct queries through me “ – we know what is going to be said , but maybe having it repeated will help .

(Discussion of possibility of singing in separate sections , and how this has been useful previously , points raised about how we need to be aware of those sitting out)

- **Action** try out chair “ co-hosting “ from next rehearsal
- JB to liaise with Rob re separate singing sections
- Members to do their homework and have parts learned before rehearsal

PS – can we set deadlines for being off book ?

(discussion about how we go about this - should we do this by the number of times a song has been sung ? some songs are easier than others , and JL pointed out the strain this could put on the scheduling . Also we need to be aware that some songs can change as we rehearse .

Generally on this we have been tardy in responding to requests to do it , but we should be prepared to be brave and go for it , we can learn from mistakes .)

- **Action** song sponsor , with input from MD , to make decision on when to announce off-book , and to add to agenda beforehand
- each member to be responsible for sponsoring at least one song

LS – can we start doing quartets again ?

(discussion on how this focusses people on learning if they know its coming up , and useful for others to hear)

- **Action** song sponsor to liaise with chair for scheduling this

AM – warmups . could the warm up singing exercises extend to preparing for singing at top of range ?

(discussion on this , some feeling that the current warm ups are not useful , different warm up exercises could be needed for different songs , although was pointed out that some notes are still not hittable whatever we do)

- **Action** WT has some exercises that she will propose to Rob
- Other members who have alternative warm up exercises send to WT

MJM Rob often overruns on time .

The bigger question of how much we are trying to put into rehearsals , which is one of the reasons for him overrunning

- **Action** chair to give Rob time updates on time remaining
- Members to be in room at 6.45 and ready to start at 7
- (also see AOB at end)

RM – in the “ rehearsal elegance “ section in the constitution , states that song leaders are responsible for giving start notes , this needs to be changed to MD .

Also phrase song leader needs amended to “ sponsor “

- **Action** CS to amend

Agenda Item 3) musical director review

Report form JB .

Positives :- we are lucky to have Rob ; he fits in with us as individuals but at same time he isn't " one of us "; he enjoys it ; he has the musical knowledge to alter and amend as he goes .

Negatives :- communication , JB has to really hassle him ; he does stuff at the last minute ; he possibly needs to be more attuned to those of us who have less musical ability , ie when he changes a song and we need time to process .

He himself says that he thinks things are going well

Comments / suggestions from round the table :-

Can he be more specific in giving us the starting point , ie the bar number , or " from the top "

However , also was pointed out that we have a responsibility , eg stopping when he requests us to , which doesn't always happen , and generally a responsibility to be more attentive

Repertoire and preparation - WT frustrated that he has not become more involved in this .

The rep gang have forwarded info to him , and not got a response until we are actually rehearsing , by which time songs that might be unsuitable /too difficult are already in production .

Was pointed out that he does actually watch us to see if we are listening

(discussion as to how we make notes of instructions that he gives us , felt that its too much for the chair to do in detail , and pointed out that in some choirs , bringing pen and paper is mandatory)

- **Action** JB to feedback to MD

Choir to be responsible for their own note taking , and for watching and listening to MD

Ensure that chair is able to participate fully in the singing

Chair to control the talking

Agenda Item 4) repertoire

WT went through the timeline diagram .

- **Action** theme for the Xmas gig needed .

Agenda Item 5) small group songs

LS – benefits of small group songs , and of extending this in the repertoire _:- fun to do ; encourages learning ; the audiences have said that they like the variety ; and it addresses some of the problems of capacity .

Three questions for the choir – do we want to do it , who decides which songs , and how they are performed

(discussion , general agreement with the principle , but concerns re the practicalities, especially for the newer and less experienced members of the choir . It shouldn't just be men v women , but mixing of each .

How do we choose which songs are appropriate for small group , and which suit the bigger sound ?

How do we ensure that those who want to participate are included ?

The proposer of a small group song may not be a suitable person to sing it ?

We need to be aware of scheduling and how this will affect it

We need to be aware that Rob would have to allocate himself across groups – the last gig he was so busy with the mens song that he couldn't give time to the women's songs , it wasn't a problem in this case because they performed them very well , but in the future all the small groups could need input

It seems that in the past about half of them were led by Daniel , and all were led during his time , so there isn't a current process

Was pointed out that this particular gig , summer 20 , is different , in that we were asked to choose a favourite , and a back up , and it's a different format

LS proposed a way of deciding it , could be through rep gang , others felt this to be the wrong way to go , that we should all have the power and responsibility , and really the process already exists , and is a job for the song sponsor .

- **Action**

Song sponsors to link with MD as to suitability of songs for small group

Record to be kept of who is involved , and members to indicate if they want to be included , or not

Agenda Item 6) finances

CS read out report .

(discussion of the separation of the gig hire and the MD subs .

Discussion of the song sheet music situation , WT saying that we are not asking for payment for all the songs that have been bought , and others asking what would be a maximum amount for a purchase . Agreement on having a budget for this as a better solution)

n.B .we don't paying actual royalties (the fees you're supposed to pay to the artist for using their song). This is normal for a small un-famous choir. We are buying the sheet music. We get a lot for free, but some arrangements are sold

- **Action** CS to upload the account summary onto the website

CS and RM to liaise on the dates for gig hire / sub requests

CS to ask for £70 at next request date , 50 as normal , and extra 20 to ringfence a sheet music budget (of £220) .

AOB

There wasn't any AOB , but I need to record some of the discussions that came up when talking about other issues , around the numbers of songs that we take on . There seems to be a lot of confusion around this , and how we are deciding

There are songs that are easy to do which need less time , and harder ones that need more , songs that some members know and others don't , which affects it , and I suppose we need to get a balance between not putting ourselves under undue pressure , and on the other hand not just doing the greatest hits .

This seems to be a show that runs and runs , and we weren't going to get it sorted last night .

Thoughts going forward ?

Further meeting / discussion needed on repertoire and workload , as follow up to all day discussion