

# Reading Male Voice Choir Constitution



Charity No 294105

## **0.0 Charity Status**

0.1 The Reading Male Voice Choir is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission sets requirements for charities and the Reading Male Voice Choir adheres to these requirements.

## **1.0 Title**

1.1 The name of the Choir shall be 'Reading Male Voice Choir' and the address of the Choir shall be that of the Secretary.

## **2.0 Objects**

2.1 The objects of the Choir shall be to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of male choral singing by the presentation of concerts mainly in aid of charities.

## **3.0 Members**

3.1 Membership is open to male singers, subject to audition by the Musical Director if required.

3.2 Members are either Subscription Members or Life Members. A Member can only be designated a Life Member by an Annual General Meeting.

3.3 Members must pay an annual subscription the cost of which is proposed by the Treasurer and Committee and approved by Members at the Annual General Meeting.

3.4 Any Member whose subscription payment is three months or more in arrears will have their membership suspended and be informed of this by the Chairman.

3.5 Participation in concerts is at the discretion of the Musical Director in consultation with the relevant Section Leader. Members require the Musical Director's specific authority to appear in a concert if they have not attended two of the three rehearsals immediately preceding a concert.

3.6 Members must adhere to the Choir Constitution and Member Handbook requirements and maintain regular and sufficient attendance at rehearsals and concerts together with adequate knowledge of the current repertoire. Not doing so may result in membership being discontinued and they will be informed of this by the Chairman.

## **4.0 Trustees**

4.1 The administration of the Choir is through a Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting by the members.

4.2 The Committee members are the Trustees of the Charity. The Committee consists of:

- Chairman
- Deputy Chairman
- Secretary

- Treasurer
- Four Section Leaders, one for each voice type, First Tenor, Second Tenor, Baritone and Bass

4.3 Committee members are elected at the Annual General Meeting for a period of one year.

## **5.0 Committee**

5.1 The Committee exercises executive powers consistent with this Constitution and other rules and policies as determined from time to time by the Members at a General Meeting.

5.2 The Committee shall have powers to fill such vacancies as arise during the course of the season.

5.3 At the Annual General Meeting the members shall elect Choir Officers who may by invitation or at their request attend and speak at Committee meetings but who shall not vote and shall not be Trustees of the Choir as a charity.

5.4 The Musical Director or in their absence the Deputy Musical Director will be invited to all Committee meetings to which Choir officers are invited to advise, but they cannot vote.

5.5 The Committee will meet not less than every three months.

5.6 Committee meetings may only make decisions if a quorum of three Trustees is present, two of which must be the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer. At least 14 days notice shall be given of a Committee meeting, save that, if at least four Trustees agree this period may be reduced to five days. Committee decisions are determined by a simple majority of those present and voting. In the event of a tied vote the person chairing the meeting has a second, casting vote.

## **6.0 General Meetings**

6.1 The Annual General Meeting is held on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> day of July of each year. At least fourteen days notice of an Annual General Meeting shall be given to all Members.

6.2 An Extraordinary General Meeting must take place if at least one third of the total membership requests it in writing, or by resolution of the Committee. At least seven days notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be given to all Members.

6.3 An Annual or Extraordinary General meeting may only make decisions if a quorum of 25% of the Membership is present.

6.4 The Annual General Meeting, or an Extraordinary General Meeting, is chaired by the Honorary President or in their absence, by the Chairman of the Committee. The President does not, in normal circumstances, have the right to vote, however in the event of a tied vote the person chairing the meeting has a casting vote.

6.5 All decisions agreed at General Meetings are binding on every Member.

6.6 Members, sections of the Choir or the Committee may submit motions for consideration by a General Meeting.

6.7 Decisions on matters other than elections are made by a simple majority of those present. Each Member attending has one vote. In the event of a tied vote the Chairman has a casting vote.

6.8 Elections are similarly made by a simple majority. This would normally be by a show of hands, but if more than 10% of the total membership make request to the Secretary more than seven days before the meeting the election may be by secret ballot. The person chairing the meeting will

announce the total votes cast for each candidate and this will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

6.9 Candidates for election must complete a written nomination form including a Proposer and Second, which must be submitted to the Secretary at least fourteen days before the date of the AGM.

6.10 If an individual Member applies in writing more than seven days before an election they can cast their election ballot by post (including email) or by handing in their written ballot to the Secretary.

6.11 The Annual General Meeting has the power to:

- Elect Committee Members to make up the Choir Committee for the year following the Annual General Meeting
- Appoint an Honorary President
- Appoint a Musical Director and Deputy Musical Director
- Appoint an independent person to examine the Choir's accounts and prepare a report on the same for consideration by the Annual General Meeting; this person to be a person who has experience and ability in accountancy matters and who is independent of the Trustees
- Elect officers in addition to the Trustees, to assist the Committee in its functions; officers are elected for a period of one year
- Set general policy guidance for action by the Committee
- Receive the Annual Accounts and reports from Committee members
- Set the annual subscription rate for Members
- Set the honoraria levels for the Musical Director and Deputy Musical Director
- Authorise the Committee to spend funds as are necessary to:
  - Secure the objects of the Choir
  - Meet general policy guidance as determined at an Annual General Meeting
  - Meet the day to day running costs of the Choir
- Expenditure on any individual item costing over £1,250 must have the specific approval of the full membership, except when the expenditure is for the purchase of travel arrangements for the choir as a whole
- The Constitution may be altered by a General Meeting provided that no alteration shall be made to Clause 2 (Objects), to Clause 9 (Dissolution) or to this clause, and no alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing the Choir to cease to be a charity in law

## **7.0 Trustee Roles**

7.1 The Chairman, or in his absence the Deputy Chairman, will chair all meetings except General Meetings when the President is invited to chair the meeting. The Chairman coordinates all Choir activities.

7.2 The Deputy Chairman will assume the responsibilities of the Chairman in his absence.

7.3 The Secretary will be the Choir's primary point of contact for those outside the Membership of the Choir and will:

- Receive correspondence addressed to the Choir
- Generate correspondence on behalf of the Choir
- Disseminate information to Choir Members
- Be responsible for the organisation of votes and elections at General Meetings
- Arrange the concert programme for the Choir and liaise with potential host organisations

7.4 The Treasurer will deal with the accounts of the Choir, including:

- Receive subscriptions and other payments due to the Choir by Members
- The Choir's bank accounts, the payment of bills and the raising of orders
- Reimbursement to Members of expenses approved by the Committee
- Payment of honoraria to the Musical Director and Deputy Musical Director
- Liaison with HMRC over matters concerning Gift Aid
- Preparing accounts and financial statements as required for the Charity Commission and for presentation to the Committee and Annual General Meeting; the Choir's financial year being for the year ending 31 May
- Preparing financial projections and budgets for consideration at the Annual General Meeting
- Arranging for the Choir accounts to be examined by the person appointed by the Annual General Meeting
- Recommending to Trustees the minimum reserve to be retained, for agreement by the Membership at the Annual General Meeting
- All cheques will require two signatures. The authorised signatories are the Treasurer, Chairman and Secretary; the Deputy Chairman may sign in the absence of the Chairman
- The Secretary will hold a second cheque book for the Choir bank account, for use in the absence of the Treasurer

7.5 Section Leaders will represent the views of their section Members, feedback to their sections and contribute to the decision making of the Committee.

### **8.0 Open Management**

8.1 The Choir's Constitution and minutes of all Committee meetings are available on the Choir's website in addition to being available to all Members on request.

### **9.0 Dissolution**

9.1 The Choir shall not be dissolved except by a vote of three quarters of the whole of the Members.

9.2 Such resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of the Choir, provided that if any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities such property shall not be paid to or distributed among the Members of the Choir but shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to some or all of the objects of the Choir as the Choir may determine and if and in so far as effect cannot be given to this provision then to some other charitable purpose.

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