



Reading Male Voice Choir.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 3 July 2026 at 7.30pm.

Present: John Kay (JK), Chairman; John Carr (JC) Deputy Chairman, Steve Richardson (SR), Secretary; Mike Jearey (MJ), Treasurer; Martin Butler (MB), Concert Secretary; Clive Waterman (CW), Musical Director; Hayley Tull (HT), Deputy Musical Director; and 39 members who are listed in Appendix A.

1, Welcome: The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence were received from: David Brownhill, Ryland Lee, Stuart Mitchell, Frank Neale, John Oversby, David Pomeroy, Tim Small, Simon Walker, Peter Woodward.

3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 4 July 2025 were approved as a correct record.

4. Chairman's Report on the Management of the Choir.

JK reported on the strength, resilience and musical ambition of the choir, with a commitment to musical excellence and varied and engaging public performances of a high standard. The report reflected on a busy and successful season, musical development and artistic growth, membership and commitment, musical leadership, the Gwyn arch Young Singers' Competition, community engagement and audience development, financial stability, and extra-curricular activities. He looked ahead to 2026-26 with confidence.

JK noted that the choir retained a core of 60+ members, committed to good singing. He celebrated the community of the choir built around music, friendship, confidence, belonging and shared purpose, which were evident in nine concert performances which had raised over £12k for charity. The repertoire had grown in variety and range, which reflected the professionalism and patience of the MD team in a year of health challenges. The third Young Singers' competition had attracted 37 applicants, its highest number so far, and its success was a tribute to all concerned with founding and running it. Work was in hand to support charities to target new concert audiences. The choir remained in a financially stable position. Whilst singing was the choir's primary purpose, it generated a number of social extracurricular activities which contributed to its close and supportive community.

JK thanked the Trustees, Section Leaders, Committee and other Choir Officers for their work and support over the year, in particular JC for providing cover for JK's own periods of ill-health. He thanked the Supporters' Group, the tea and raffle boys, Mary Mantel for her photography, and Ryland Lee for his concert comparing, and promotion of the Young Singers' competition. He thanked CW and Hayley Tull for their professional musical excellence. He thanked all choir members for their ongoing friendship, support and enthusiasm.

5. Musical Director's Report.

CW reflected a successful musical year, his own health issues during the year, and the musical cover provided by Hayley and others for which he was grateful. He appreciated the caring choir community and the background organisation that made both rehearsals and concerts run smoothly. This had been shown most recently in the Young Singers' gala concert, where last minute changes had not detracted from the quality of the event and the singing of the young winners. The choir had a good and strong reputation, it had maintained its high standards of performance and had added variety to its repertoire. He thanked in particular Hayley Tull as a quality accompanist, the committee, Kevin Boyle the retiring Librarian, and all choir members who set up and dismantled his equipment at rehearsals.

6. Secretary's Report.

On behalf of the committee, SR put a motion to the AGM proposing that the position of Concert Secretary become a Trustee position. This followed the decision in 2024 to split the Secretary role into two positions of Secretary and Concert Secretary, with the former remaining a Trustee. The committee considered that the important role played by the Concert Secretary in organising the choir's forward programme of concerts and providing the link to audiences should also have Trustee status. This would require an amendment to Para. 4.2 of the Constitution, to increase the number of Trustees from 8 to 9.

It was proposed by D Paine, seconded by R Little, and AGREED unanimously that Para. 4.2 of the Constitution be amended to make the position of Concert Secretary a Trustee of the Choir.

7. Concert Secretary's Report

MB submitted a report reviewing the choir's concert and singing programme for 2025/26, in which 9 concerts had been given, raising £12,500 for charity (including the Young Singers' gala concert which had raised £900); and setting out the programme for 2026-26, with six concerts booked to date, and three more under discussion. The Committee was reviewing concerts to focus on the right events at the right times for the right charities, and to give support to charities to stage concerts where needed. Whilst the pattern of demand from charities was evolving, MB was still finding interested charities and support acts.

MB explained the new support role of Assistant Concert Secretary, which would develop over the new year.

8. Treasurer's Report.

MJ submitted a report summarising the choir's finances for the period 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026 and proposing a budget for the financial year 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2027. He appended:

- Statement of financial activities for 2025-26 and recommended budget for 2026-27
- Report CC16a to Charity Commission – Receipts and Payment Accounts
- Trustees' Annual Report to Charity Commission for 2025-26
- Independent Auditor's report of the accounts (for Charity Commission)

At 31 May 2026 the choir had a balance on its current Metro Bank account of £8,119, compared with £6,613 at 31 May 2025; and a balance on its Reserve Account of £18,080, compared with £17,927 at 31 May 2025. Including assets and cash / cheques, the choir had total balances at 31 May of £26,286, compared with £24,576 at 31 May 2025. MJ projected an outturn of £25,160 at 31 May 2027, which was above both the long-term target of £17,500 but below the final balance at 31 May 2026 of £26,286. These figures included the £2,500 'protected funds' for the Young Singers' Competition, as agreed by the Committee.

With regard to income and expenditure on the 2025/26 budget:

- Income over the year was £22,077, including £3,279 raised from concerts

- Over £12,000 had been raised from concerts for charities
- There were 62 paying members and 1 honorary member at year end, raising £9,069
- The choir had received additional one-off grant income of £4,390, in respect of the Young Singers' Competition, without this there would have been a negative cashflow of £2,681 which was £2,008 more than budgeted
- Expenditure over the year was £22,995, which exceeded income by £918; core expenditure had exceeded core income by £2,708.
- The MD costs were £1,721 above budget due to an additional allowance of £1,200 paid to the Deputy Musical Director (DMD), which was ongoing; and the £521 costs of stand-in conductors and accompanists during the year
- With the grant funding there was a surplus of £1,709 of income over expenditure which would be carried forward to 2026-27 to help support the 2028 Young Singers' Competition

The proposed 2026-27 budget was based on the following assumptions:

- Reduce reserves by £1,195 at 31 May 2027
- Maintain similar programme of concerts and keep concert fee at £400
- Membership to remain steady at c. 62 men
- Young Singers' Competition 2026 to have no income from sale of tickets and the costs of the gala concert to be covered by the £1,709 grant funding c/f from 2025-26
- Continue to receive Reading Community Lottery funding at same rate
- DMD base honorarium to be increased by £1,200 pa, and increase both the MD and DMD honoraria by 4%
- Balance costs of social events and tours by contributions from participating members

The AGM discussed the budget, in particular the funding of the Musical Direction team. JK and MJ explained the decision to pay the additional allowance to the DMD in 2025-26, and to consolidate the payment into the honorarium going forward; and the implications of this for the balance of honoraria between the MD and DMD. A view was expressed that this took advantage of the MD: JK recognised that whilst CW was happy with the situation, it appeared against natural order and the committee would look at ways of addressing it where feasible. JK and MJ also explained that the choir's arrangements for funding the MD team were below recognised market rates, had been so for many years, and this was reflected in the choir's very competitive subscription rate which was low compared with other local choirs. The debate concluded with a vote on this matter being held.
[CW and HT were absent for this discussion]

The decisions which the AGM was required to make, and which were all detailed in the Treasurer's written report, were as follows:

1. Adoption of the Trustees' Annual Report and Receipts and Payments Account (CC16a) for year ending 31st May 2026 – **Proposed J Adams, seconded D Paine and AGREED**
2. The budget recommended by the Committee and Trustees for year ending 31st May 2027- **Proposed D Paine, seconded J Jones and AGREED**
3. The honoraria for the Musical Direction team the year up to 31st May 2027 be increased to £5,595pa for the MD and £6,033pa for the DMD – **Proposed C Bintcliffe, seconded N Shaw and AGREED**
4. The members' annual Subscription for the year ending 31 May 2027 to be increased by 4% to £159 (including £20 tuition fee) – **Proposed D Paine, seconded J Jones and AGREED**

5. The Treasurer's annual report to be adopted – **Proposed J Jones, seconded A Evans and AGREED.**

9. Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts Under Rule 7d of the constitution, the Treasurer recommended that Ms Sukey Joshi to be appointed as the choir's independent examiner of accounts for the year 2026-27 – **Proposed T Dunne, seconded D Aaby and AGREED**

10. Health & Safety Officer's Report

C Peck (CP) submitted the annual health and safety report for the year to June 2026, covering the following matters:

- Annual maintenance – PAT testing and inspection of staging equipment completed September 2025
- Fire safety – annual briefing for school rehearsals given September 2025
- Health & safety documentation – updated September 2025 and on choir website: important to follow good practice advice re. heavy equipment
- First aid – concert rota reviewed and updated, and refresher training taking place – 9 trained first aiders
- choir accidents and first aid incidents – none reported; some near misses and stumbles due to infirmity
- Risk management – step to MD's rehearsal podium provided – men to walk to end of staging and use handrail at concerts - need to be alert to new hazards and report them to CP.

11. Section Leaders' Reports

All four SLs submitted and spoke to written reports.

12. Motions – None submitted.

13. Election of Committee Members and Officers:

The Concert Secretary to become a Trustee (see Minute 6 above). Kevin Boyle retired as Librarian and Tim Small retired as Equipment Moves Coordinator. A new post of Assistant Concert Secretary was created.

Having been proposed and seconded, the following were elected unanimously and unopposed.

Trustees:

Chairman	John Kay
Deputy Chairman	John Carr
Secretary	Steve Richardson
Concert Secretary	Martin Butler
Treasurer	Mike Jearey

Section Leaders:

Top Tenors	Bob Hill
Second Tenors	Steven Andrewes
Baritones	Andrew Evans
Basses	Paul Moir

Choir officers:

Assistant Concert Secretary	Ozzie Ravelo
-----------------------------	--------------

Concert Coordinator	Nigel Shaw
Librarian	Arnie Howell
Social Secretary	Jon Saverton
Equipment Moves Coordinator	(Vacant)
Transport Coordinator	Martin Deaves
Health and Safety Officer	Christopher Peck
Minutes Secretary	John Painter
Publicity Officers	Andrew Evans
Wardrobe Master	Robin John
Web Master	Steve Richardson

The meeting started at 7.30pm and closed at 8:52 pm.

Appendix A.**Members attending:**

Tenor 1	Tenor 2	Baritones	Basses
John Adams	Stephen Andrewes	Dennis Bryant	Dave Adby
Dave Allen	Chris Carr	Allan Crisp	Chris Bintcliffe
Kevin Boyle	Alan Gates	Andrew Evans	Alan Broodbank
Martin Butler	James Grufferty	George French	John Carr
Paul Champion	Arnie Howell	Robin John	Bob Castelijm
Tony Dunne	Ray Little	John Kay	Jeremy Jones
Bob Hill	Roy Mantel	Paul Lyden	Mike Newman
Colin Hinks	Geoffrey Million	Andrew Mickleburgh	John Painter
Mike Jearey	Christopher Peck	Derek Reigate	Tony Rawlins
Ken Lunnon	Ozzy Ravelo	Brian Verran	Andy Sherwood
David Paine	Steve Richardson	Neville Waites	
	Jon Savereton		
	Nigel Shaw		
11	13	11	10