

Things have been progressing with the small committee that was formed at this year's AGM. Following is a letter from that team

Dear Fellow Choristers and Music team

This is an update on the planning we are undertaking on our behalf to ensure the choir has a solid and sustainable future.

We are feeling very positive with this opportunity to ensure the choir improves and grows. We believe in the Choir and what we can do when we all work together and thank you for your support and patience with this process.

We would like to clarify what our task is and how we propose to manage it.

From the AGM we were tasked with presenting a new operating model that is financially secure and allows the choir to continue and develop in the future.

To achieve this we see three key objectives which we intend to address in a staged manner which will allow us to focus on key priorities in a managed way.

Stage 1: Secure our financial situation for the next 6-12 months.

This is our priority. If we can't do this we will cease to be viable.

Stage 2: Develop an improvement model to lift the choral musicianship standard of the choir.

In respect to stage 3, develop our choral musicianship improvement journey both from an individual and choir perspective.

Stage 3: Develop a longer-term operating model for the choir that will be financially sustainable

This will focus on how we can operate in an affordable and sustainable manner that enables taking into account our revenue and liabilities and acknowledging our need for choral musicianship improvement and to attract new membership.

For each stage we will ask for assistance from both within and outside the choir and music team. To give this planning the consideration that is needed we will not achieve all the stages by Art Deco weekend. However we expect the following program to be more realistic:

Stage 1: Completed and reported by Art Deco.

Stage 2: Options for feedback provided by Art Deco and decision by 30 April.

Stage 3: New model to be completed by 30 June.

We will keep you updated regularly and seek feedback and input along the way. Please feel welcome to provide your ideas to us as some members have done already, this is a team effort.

In the meantime what can we do individually to help:

- 1. Learn our music. Come to practices well prepared.*
- 2. Listen to the music team. The team are repeating the same things over and over ...let's do our homework, follow the guidance from the team and let's benefit from their skills and experience.*
- 3. Pay your subscriptions and donations on time.*
- 4. Look at fund raising opportunities in your communities.*
- 5. Continue to enjoy the fellowship of choristers and the joy of singing together.*

King regards

The Review Team

Since the date this letter was composed we have finally received our Financial Accounts for the year ended 2024 and you will have received these on an earlier mail from Jen. The belief is that we do have a secure financial position for the next six to twelve months as under 'Stage 1' so we are now moving to the next stage.

The committee has already had two Zoom meetings with another scheduled for this coming weekend, so progress is happening which is very positive. Thanks to all who have contributed.

At our October practice we did resolve the matter of the **Northern Committee**. Happy to report that the committee will be chaired by Brian Whitaker, Martin Cockitt as the Northern representative on the Executive, along with Ross McDonald, Oliver Lane and Dick Mitchell. Thanks to those choristers for putting their names forward. Brian will be sending out the updated schedule for 2025 in the very near future.

It is sad to report that we recently have had a few **resignations from our Choir** – some of whom have been with us for many years. Last weekend's practice was the last for Ken Brown - he and Jenny have given a long contribution to the running of the choir as well as being a valued member of the 2nd Tenors. Norm Collie attended our October practice but has also written us a letter of resignation - wishing us all the best for the future, after being a very valued member over many years. We have also received resignations from Don Battley, Chris Featonby, Cliff Lawrence, Frank Sargent, Bruce McLean, Jim Montgomery, and Doug Higgins.

We also received a letter of resignation from Roger Brown – however there is a little 'rider' to that one. Jenny is continuing as Secretary to the choir and we hope that Roger will rejoin our ranks when he fully recovers from his health challenges. On that front – all appears to be progressing well after the transplant and we wish him well for that to continue.

So, all in all, we are becoming a rather select team which really means that we all will have to religiously work on our memory banks to provide the results that Joe and the Music Team are working towards. **Art Deco Weekend** is shaping up to once again be a great weekend for us. At this stage we will be practicing in the Cathedral from early Saturday morning with the concert in the afternoon at 4.00. Sunday we have again been invited out to Joe and Vonda's for a brunch for a nice relaxing get-together. We trust that as many as possible will be with us for the weekend – both North and South. Please let me know if you are unavailable or if you require assistance with accommodation.

Well enough from me. Keep fit and keep singing
All the best
Ray