



Leicester Music Society

Minutes of the 74th Annual General Meeting

at Christchurch Baptist-Methodist Church, Leicester on 11th June 2024 at 7:30 pm

Chair: David Fisher; Attendance 13

1. Apologies Wendy Brooks, Pat and Peter Carr, Neil Crutchley, Alan Herringshaw, Sibyl Fry, Bryan Lewis, Susan Martin-Butt, Neil Roberts, Donald Salt, Glennys Walker.

The Secretary read out messages from Wendy Brooks and Glennys Walker conveying their thanks to the committee for their hard work in arranging this year's programme, which they had very much enjoyed.

2. Minutes of the previous AGM in 2023 Proposed as a true record by Mary Whittaker, seconded by David Saunders and so agreed.

3. Matters Arising David Saunders raised the topic of our new venue at Christchurch. Members generally liked it, save only for noise from another event in an adjacent room. David Fisher said we were asking the church about how this could be reduced for next season.

4. Hon Treasurer's Report The Treasurer talked through his report, copies of which had been distributed to those present. He had extended this year's accounting period to thirteen months, ending on 31st May, so that it covers the whole of the season's expenses, including rental for the June meeting. In future the accounting period will run from 1st June to 31st May, thus covering the entire season, which is more logical. He noted the substantial sum of donations received from Bryan Lewis, Neil Roberts, Neil Crutchley and David Fisher, which are vital to the Society's finances. He hoped that the five regular visitors whom he had recently upgraded to full membership will wish to become full members next season. Speakers' fees were higher than in recent years, but comparable to the last pre-pandemic season 2019-2020. The new item of £100 for website running costs was to recompense Ron Mitchell, who had been funding this out of his own pocket, but was unable to continue doing so now that he no longer works. Sundry expenses of £100 were a donation to the children's charity promoted at the Victorian Christmas event. The balance carried forward of £1,050 consists of £1,030 in our bank account plus a 'float' of twenty £1 coins in cash.

A member asked for details of the cost of the website. Ron Mitchell said this consisted of a monthly payment of £8.49 to Zen Internet for hosting, and an annual charge of £14.38 for domain registration, which totals somewhat over £100.

Acceptance of the Treasurer's report was proposed by David Fisher, seconded by Pauline Galea and carried by the meeting.

The Treasurer drew attention in the report to how the balance carried forward has shown a steady decline in recent years. If the trend continued, the society would soon become unviable. Membership fees have remained unchanged for at least fifteen years. The committee proposed an increase in fees to £40 for membership and £7 for visitors. There was some discussion. David Fisher pointed out that full membership was an increase of only £1.25 per meeting. Robert Calow cited other comparable societies: the Bardi is £50 annually; Clarendon Park Orchestra £30 *per term*; the Chorale over £100. The Treasurer said that on current membership numbers the increase would fund two speakers' fees and expenses. Pauline Galea asked if there could be a reduced rate for those less able to pay. David Fisher answered that the committee had considered this and recommended against. It could be embarrassing for some people. Instead, he suggested that when the Secretary sends out information about the new season and the new rates he could invite people to contact him in confidence to see if a reduction was possible.

The motion to increase annual and visitors' fees as recommended was then proposed by David Saunders, seconded by David Fisher and unanimously agreed by the members present.

A member asked if charitable status was an option, but in fact the Society is not a charity and becoming one would be onerous. The Society does have a constitution, but the committee believes it is too elaborate for our current needs and work will be done in the coming year to revise it.

5. Chairman's Report Chairman David Fisher did not propose to read his report aloud. Paper copies had been given to those present at the start of the meeting, and it will be posted on the Society website.

The major issue was that at the start of this season the committee had seriously considered the possibility of closing the Society because of decreasing numbers and revenue. After his talk in April 2023 John Florance had commented about the small number who had turned up to hear him. However, this very successful season has seen an encouraging increase in attendance and new members, and so we have decided to carry on. He asked every member to try to bring a friend or an acquaintance to a meeting. If we all did this our membership was sure to increase.

The Chairman repeated his thanks to all the members of the committee for their dedication and hard work. He recollected how he had joined the Society some years ago only to be rapidly drafted into the committee and soon after to become its Chairman. He was proud to lead a society which so entertains and encourages its members to broaden their musical horizons, not least his own.

6. Election of Officers and Committee Members All existing officers and Committee members had expressed their willingness to continue in post. The Secretary invited members to consider whether they would like to join the committee. They could come and sit as an observer on a committee meeting to see if it was right for them, as he had done before joining the committee of the FRMS. Anyone interested should contact him, using his contact details on the website.

Re-election of the Committee and Officers was proposed by Pauline Galea, seconded by Aftab Khan and agreed by the meeting.

7. Any Other Business The Chairman talked through the programme for next season (see below), and asked anyone who would like to do a reading at the Edwardian Christmas to contact Ron Mitchell.

Aftab Khan asked if we knew what had prevented Chris Morley from giving his talk in April. Mr Morley had not given details, saying only that he was no longer able to appear on the talks circuit, but we believed it must be due to ill health.

The meeting closed at 8:20 pm.

Programme 2024–2025

8 Oct	David Calow	Wind Bands, A Personal History
12 Nov	Neil Crutchley	60 Years Of Music In Leicester
10 Dec		An Edwardian Christmas
14 Jan	Chris Ouvry-Johns	TBC
11 Feb	Nigel Simeone	Elgar and Boult
11 Mar	David Fisher	The Many Versions of Handel's Messiah
15 Apr	Michael Lessiter	The Spooky In Opera
13 May	John Florance	The Music Shakespeare Inspired, from the Globe To Dire Straits
10 Jun		AGM and Quiz