

The Original Rules of Village Voices were approved by the Choir on 4th September 2014

Various amendments have been made at subsequent General Meetings.

The below Rules, incorporating all subsequent amendments, were agreed at the AGM 25th July 2024

The “Village Voices” Rules

1 The Choir

The Choir shall be called “Village Voices”. It shall be non-political and non-sectarian.

2 Purpose

The main purpose of the Choir is to provide the opportunity for Members to take part in a broad spectrum of singing, including practice sessions and public and private performances. The Choir is a social choir and provides opportunities for Members to participate in social activities.

3 Membership and Subscriptions

3.1 There is only one class of Member.

3.2 On joining the Choir, the Member agrees that their contact details will be shared with all Members. Member contact details must not be used for non-Choir purposes.

3.3 Subscriptions are payable at the rate agreed at a General Meeting and members should pay their fees promptly at the beginning of each term. Waiving of payment of fees during absence is at the discretion of the committee.

- Payment of fees will normally be waived for absences of more than four weeks due to illness or bereavement

- Payment of fees will not normally be waived for other reasons

3.4 Members whose subscriptions have lapsed for one whole term will be deemed to have left the Choir unless they have agreed a suspension of Membership with the Committee prior to the start of the term for which suspension is requested.

3.5 New Members are accepted subject to vacancies and at the discretion of the Musical Director (MD) following an informal meeting to establish pitch, a three-week trial and on payment of the subscription and music deposit due.

3.6 All sheet music and other property belonging to the Choir must be returned when membership ceases.

3.7 Any income and property of the group shall be applied solely towards promoting the objects and aims of the group. The division of profits or assets among group members is prohibited.

4 The Committee

4.1 All Members are eligible to stand for election to the Committee provided they have

paid their membership fees for the current and previous terms and have no debts to the Choir.

4.2 The Committee shall consist of the Officers (Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer) and up to three other members, all of whom must be elected at a General Meeting and are elected for one year in the first instance and are eligible for election in subsequent years.

4.3 The Committee shall manage the Choir.

4.4 "The Committee may at times co-opt extra people onto the full committee or to form a sub-committee for a particular purpose, or delegate specific tasks to Choir Members". Such members so co-opted would not have the voting rights of a full member of the committee".

5 Posts

5.1 President

A President shall be elected at a General Meeting for one year in the first instance, shall be eligible for election in subsequent years and shall act as chairman at General Meetings.

The President must remain independent and impartial on all Choir matters and must not be a member of the Choir.

5.2 Chairperson

The Chairperson (or in his or her absence another Committee member chosen by the meeting) shall preside over Meetings of the Committee. The Chairperson's vote shall be a casting vote should there be a tie.

5.3 Secretary

The Secretary shall have overall responsibility for preparing and circulating minutes of all Committee and General Meetings. The Secretary shall be a contact point for enquiries and responsible for Membership, maintaining the contact details, circulation lists and Choir correspondence. In carrying out this role the Secretary may seek the assistance of, and delegate specific task(s) to, another member or members, subject to the approval of the committee.

5.4 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for managing the funds of the Choir, including donations, contributions and bequests, paid into an account operated by the Committee on behalf of the Choir. The Treasurer shall ensure that proper accounting records are kept and annual accounts prepared for the end of **May**. The annual

accounts must be audited by a competent independent person before the AGM.

5.5 Musical Director

The Choir shall appoint a Musical Director and reappoint him or her at subsequent General Meetings. If the Musical Director is a paid post-holder he or she must not pay membership subscriptions.

5.6 Accompanist

The Choir shall appoint an Accompanist and reappoint him or her at subsequent General Meetings. If the Accompanist is a paid post-holder he or she must not pay membership subscriptions.

6 Meetings

6.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held before the end of **July** each year with at least two weeks' notice to Members.

6.2 The Committee can call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) with a minimum of two weeks' notice and must do so if requested by at least 25% of the Members.

6.3 The agenda for an AGM or EGM must be issued to Members at least two weeks prior to the Meeting.

6.4 The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 25% of the Members.

6.5 Paid post-holders of the Choir must not attend General Meetings.

7 Voting Rights

7.1 Members have the right to vote at General Meetings provided they have paid their membership fees for the current and previous terms and have no debts to the Choir.

7.2 Members who have agreed a period of suspension with the Committee have the right to vote provided they have paid their membership fees for the term prior to the suspension and have no debts to the Choir.

7.3 Voting shall normally be by secret ballot.

7.4 The outcome of a vote will normally be determined by a simple majority. Specific resolutions which include: Changes to the Rules; Change of MD, Accompanist or Venue; or Dissolution of the Choir; require a two-thirds majority of those voting.

7.5 Proxy voting will be permitted.

8 Behaviour of Members

The Committee shall be responsible for maintaining the standards of behaviour to be expected of Members and impose sanctions upon Members who fail to meet these standards, providing the Member first has an opportunity to address the Committee.

9 Equal Opportunities Statement

The Choir is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in all of its objectives and is opposed to any form of discrimination on the grounds of disability, race, gender, colour, politics or religion.

10 Assets

10.1 All sheet music and other property as listed in the accounts/assets register belong to the Choir.

10.2 Assets must not be sold or loaned without the agreement of the Committee.

10.3 The Committee is responsible for ensuring that all sheet music used by the Choir complies with current copyright legislation and that public performances comply with the requirements of the Performing Rights Society.

10.4 Sheet music must not be copied in breach of copyright or permanently marked.

10.5 The acquisition of sheet music shall be authorised by the Committee.

11 Rules and Guidelines

11.1 These rules can only be modified at a General Meeting and then only if the intention to propose a change is mentioned in the notice for the meeting.

11.2 A copy of the Rules and Guidelines shall be given to new members on joining and made available to all members and paid post-holders.

12 Dissolving the Choir

A resolution to dissolve the Choir can be proposed at a General Meeting. If the resolution is passed the Treasurer shall be responsible for collecting the assets; settling all the debts of the Choir; and distributing any surplus to a nominated charity as agreed at the General Meeting at which the decision to dissolve was made.

In the event of the Village Voices Choir being wound up, any assets remaining after the payment of debts and liabilities will be transferred to a not-for-profit organisation with similar musical objectives. No remaining assets will be distributed to members.