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**Minutes of the OPV Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday 7th January 2025, 7pm**

1. **Attendees and apologies for absence**

* **Attendees***:*Ross Baker (Social media), Johanna Barop (Treasurer), Chris Boyle (IT, website and emails)**,** Hannah Chippendale (Membership), Ruari Craig-Wood (Safeguarding), Debbie Garrod (Chair)**,** Ella Janner-Klausner (Social events)**,** Jon Linnell (Treasurer), Philip Read (Musical Director), Simon White (Chair)
* **Apologies***:* Lorna Giezot (Social events)

1. **Review of committee roles and structure: Debbie**

* Reviewed the list of committee roles and sub-groups circulated by Debbie.

One addition noted: Chris Boyle leading on IT (e.g. website and email).

* Debbie asked whether there are any roles missing from the committee structure?
* Possible gap: someone to take the lead on accessibility. Ella might be interested in taking this on as has relevant experience.
* Another possible gap is someone to take the lead on fundraising. This work would be closely linked to the grant applications sub-group.
* Ruari provided an overview of the safeguarding role. Proposed adding a second person working on safeguarding due to the nature of the role.
* Simon: would like the choir to have a clear set of values/mission statement and a grievance process. Suggests setting up a small group to brainstorm. Ella and Debbie are interested in joining this group.
* Hannah: not able to take on the full secretarial role due to membership commitment, but happy to be a back-up for this role e.g. for minute taking if required.
* Committee elections and AGM proposed for September. Possible need for Election Officer: we need to decide on the governance structure first.

**Actions**

* **Add safeguarding policy to the OPV website Action: Chris**
* **Make sure that members of the choir know about the committee role email addresses (e.g.** [**safeguarding@oxfordproudvoices.org**](mailto:safeguarding@oxfordproudvoices.org)**) Action: Chris**
* **Take forward work on choir values/mission statement. Simon to ask if a couple of other choir members would be interested in working on the initial stages of this (in addition to Debbie and Ella).**
* **Ask choir if anyone is interested in joining Ruari to form a small welfare/safeguarding team. Need to be clear about what role involves. Ask for volunteers from the choir for the two vacant positions: Secretary and Publicity. Action: Debbie**
* **Debbie to follow up with Em and Caro (grant applications sub-group) on the Community Impact grant: opens this January.**

1. **Financial matters: Report from Johanna/Jon**

* The choir has approx. £1,000 in the bank account ahead of the start of the second term.
* The committee agreed unanimously that Johanna Barop and Jon Linnell (Treasurers) should be added as signatories to the bank account. The committee gives authority to this mandate request and authorises the Authorised Signatories (Johanna Barop and Jon Linnell) to sign this mandate request.
* Discussion of best way to collect subs. This term we will have an option to pay by card on the door (best way is with a SumUp machine).
* Policy of new members getting the first session free agreed and to take effect from this term.
* We plan to offer option to pay via Direct Debit from the summer term (or earlier if we can arrange this).
* Discussion of subs: for example, standard rate (£10 per session), discounted rate (£5 per session), pay-it-forward rate (£15 per session). Financial accessibility to all is a core value of the choir and there will always be the option to pay what you can afford. The Gaia Collective might have helpful wording for sliding scale payments.
* Possibility of offering monthly Direct Debit payments in future as this is more financially accessible than termly.
* Need clear communication to choir members on benefits of paying by Direct Debit: e.g. straightforward, SumUp isn’t taking a cut of fees.
* Process for claiming expenses agreed. Below £50: email the OPV Treasurer address with the receipt to be reimbursed. Debbie and Simon to authorise expenses above £50.
* Agreed that we will still have a sign-in sheet (record of attendance) for now, even though not everyone is paying subs on the door anymore.
* Simon: as we continue to build our community, we can look into have a non-singing member rate (for supporters who don’t actually sing in the choir).

**Actions**

* **Take forward adding Johanna and Jon as signatories to the bank account: Debbie**
* **Ross is happy to donate SumUp machine to the choir to use on the door. Philip also has a SumUp machine, if this is ever required.**
* **Jon to draft email on the option of paying via BACS.**
* **Hannah, Jon, Johanna: discuss putting together membership form to enable existing members to pay by Direct Debit. Philip has examples to share.**
* **Check Gaia Collective resources/wording on sliding scale payments/pay what you can/pay it forward. Action: Johanna and Jon**

1. **Events: Simon**

* Upcoming concerts:
  + 1st April: Friends and family concert
  + 6th June: concert the evening before Oxford Pride
* Possible involvement in Oxford and Thame Pride:
  + 7th June: Oxford Pride: choir to march in the parade?
  + 21st June: first Thame Pride
* July 2026: Various Voices Festival takes place in Brussels

European Association of Queer Choirs event with 5-6K singers and 120 queer choirs

OPV has registered (festival has already reached max number of choirs!)

**Action**

* **Discuss OPV attendance at Various Voices/payment plans/ways of subsidising over the new few months. Action: Debbie and Simon**

1. **Charitable status application: Simon**

* To be deferred to next meeting.

1. **OPV social events: Ella**

* Discussion of more alcohol-free/daytime socials: for example, dog-walk, picnic, potluck
* Plan two social activities this term
* Possibility for an end of term party in the future
* Future possibilities to tap into the network of queer choirs/other choirs for joint events/socials.

**Action**

* **Ella and Lorna to take to members via WhatsApp**

1. **Any other business**

* Recruitment of new members (particularly ahead of term starting next Tuesday)
* Can the Jolly Farmers/other queer organisations help?
* Send an email to members/prospective members before next Tuesday

**Actions**

* **Chris to draft wording for email to remind people that choir starts next week.**
* **Ella to write a few sentences on ‘what to expect in a rehearsal’ to add to a social media post encouraging people to try out OPV.**
* **Ross to share post via Instagram and Facebook: Ness has Instagram password; Simon to check on Facebook password.**

1. **Date and time of next meeting: TBC**

**Action**

* **Decide on frequency of committee meetings (for example, one at the beginning and end of every term?)**