



Minutes from Extraordinary General Meeting of 19th November 2020

Purposes of the EGM:

- 1) Present the 2019/20 accounts summary
- 2) Discuss and vote upon the proposal that the chorus terminate our membership of BABS

Apologies: Simon Clarke, John Pyke, John Edmiston, Colin McLennan

Accounts: David Andrew provided a brief summary of the accounts overview which he had prepared following the AGM. A small calculation error was detected and it was agreed that David would correct the error and re-circulate the accounts.

Membership of BABS:

David Andrew spoke on the subject of leaving BABS and made the following points:

- Membership costs £50 per chorus member, a current annual total of £1,800
- The main focus of BABS is promoting competitions
- Wayfarers have never been visited by representatives from BABS, even when the convention was held in Southport. The belief is that is because we are not a competition chorus and not really taken seriously by BABS
- We will never be a competition chorus and therefore are unlikely to receive full support from BABS
- We are currently searching for a new venue, the cost of which will almost certainly be more than our current home. Leaving BABS would release income to cover additional venue expenses

Colin Wayte then spoke in support of remaining members of BABS, making the following points from his letter which had been circulated prior to the EGM:

- Barbershop as we know it in the UK probably would not exist without the efforts of BABS. They introduced Barbershop to the UK in the 70s and have been instrumental in supporting and promoting it since then
- BABS provide a lot of encouragement and support to encourage youth to join in
- A number of the members have taken part in the Harmony College and also in the MD/Assistant MD colleges
- Although Wayfarers Chorus make little use of BABS it is an organisation worth supporting for the good of the whole



The subject was then opened to the attending members for discussion. The following points were raised and questions answered:

- BABS is an organisation of individual singers, not choruses. As such, individuals are entitled to be members even if the chorus decides to terminate our membership
- BABS events, including courses, are open to non-members, albeit at a slightly higher cost
- Several members expressed and agreed with the view that, as we are not and will not be a competition chorus, there are few if any benefits in us being affiliated with BABS
- It was pointed out that there is no longer a hard copy newsletter
- The membership fee is not £1,800 for the chorus but £50 per member. If we are able to recruit additional members the overall cost for the chorus will increase accordingly
- When Wayfarers ran the first Learn To Sing course, from which a number of new members were recruited, BABS supported the chorus to the tune of £600 plus various leaflets. However, when we ran our last Learn To Sing course, the contribution from BABS was significantly less
- The question of liability insurance was raised, which the chorus will have to source independently should we leave BABS. Some initial research has been performed in this area and a provisional quote received of £150p.a., including legal cover. This needs to be followed up with more detail of the chorus in order to receive a final quote
- There is no concept of 'Associate Membership' of BABS, only individual
- It was suggested that, if the chorus is no longer affiliated with BABS, any members who wish to remain members of BABS should pay the BABS fee direct, not through the chorus.
- There is a view that not being affiliated to BABS may in fact benefit the chorus. This is because Barbershop is often seen as very old fashioned and could, amongst other things, put younger people off joining the chorus
- Clarification was requested as to the impact on chorus sub's in the event that we leave BABS. This cannot be fully answered until we know how much our venue and insurance is going to cost us. The committee are working on that and will report back as soon as the costs are known, however the Covid restrictions are delaying our efforts at finding a venue
- The view was expressed that BABS is a little like an insurance policy which never gets used, or doesn't actually cover the things that the policyholder requires
- With regard to the search for a venue, it is believed that the Con Club are not welcoming us back is due to the fact we pay very little for the room. Whilst we are searching for a venue with more suitable facilities, if we are unable to find one we will approach the Con Club to negotiate a new deal



Following this open discussion, a vote was taken by show of hands. The proposal voted upon was 'Wayfarers Chorus should amend our constitution to remove affiliation with BABS'. The result of the vote is as follows:

Proposer: David Andrew

Votes in favour of proposal: 19 online, plus 6 verbal votes from members unable to attend the EGM

Votes rejecting the proposal: 3

Members abstaining: 1

The proposal was therefore accepted by a total of 25 votes to 3

Next steps

A committee meeting has been set for Thursday 26th November, to agree the actions arising from this decision. One of those actions will be to document for the members, how they can remain individual members of BABS should they wish to do so.