**Minutes of the meeting of the Trustees of Collegium Singers held at 11 Hammet Street Taunton on Monday 17 November 2014**

1. those present were:-

Catherine Bass

Tim Brown

Kate Lewis (Chairman)

Trevor Mansfield (Treasurer)

Paul Brierley (Secretary)

1. The Treasurer introduced the accounts which he had circulated by email and explained the difference between the accounts in their present form and the accounts which he had presented to the AGM; he explained that the present set of accounts amounted to a full statement of 12 months of financial activity the difference being that accruals and prepayments that is all financial activity relating to the current year were included. He confirmed that this meant that the accounts as they were presently constituted were on a like for like basis with the previous year’s accounts prepared by his predecessor as Treasurer, however it made no difference to the financial position which the AGM had voted on: the outcome is the same.
2. There was discussion on how to deal with the amended accounts. It was suggested that the accounts once approved by the Chairman and Committee, should be emailed to the members to invite questions and that there should be an EGM called by notice in the usual way to approve the new accounts at a rehearsal taking 5 minutes of the tea break. The Treasurer agreed that he would use this format for future year’s accounts.
3. The meeting was reminded that as a registered charity with a turnover possibly over £10,000, the fact that we were a registered charity and our charity number needed to be shown on all financial documents for example our cheques our paying in books are invoices and our contracts. It was agreed that the Treasurer would deal with these changes.
4. The discussion then turned to the question of how to keep the Trustees, two of whom were not committee members up-to-date and in touch with developments. It would be necessary to draw a distinction between those developments which were too trivial to trouble the Trustees with and those which were significant. CB gave as an example the decision to hold a concert in Oxford. She said that it was a huge financial risk because it involved paying for a band and then taking the 25 members of Collegium Singers all the way to Oxford when there was a risk as it turned out that the paying audience was fewer in number than the performers. With the advantage of hindsight could be suggested that it might have been better to have the Oxford programme performed at the South Petherton concert and vice versa. Her concern was driven by the fact that ultimately the Trustees could face financial liability for the losses sustained by the charity.
5. PB wondered whether the Trustees might attend the committee meetings but this was felt to be inappropriate.
6. It was suggested that any significant item of expenditure proposed by the committee should be referred to the Trustees. An additional measure would be that the committee meeting minutes would be published in the member’s area of the website together with the minutes of the AGM and a copy of the Constitution.
7. There was discussion about frequency of Trustees meetings. It was suggested that the Trustees might meet twice a year once before the AGM and then a further meeting thereafter. Given that the Constitution required that the members should be summoned to an AGM no later than 15 weeks after the end of the financial year this meant that the AGM notice would need to be published no later than 13 October and the AGM should take place no later than 3rd of November. It was suggested that the Trustees would meet prior to the next AGM and the date was fixed on 28 September 2015, 5 weeks before the AGM. After the AGM was held a further meeting would be needed within 5 weeks afterwards that is no later than 7th of December.
8. It was noted that in this way, should there ever be any investigation of the charity the Trustees would be able to point to a paper trail of commitment to involvement in the affairs of the Charity and would also be able to demonstrate taking an active role.
9. There was discussion as to what other areas of the organisation of Collegium Singers might be ones in which the Trustees would like to take a role. Programme planning was one such area. CB suggested as a Trustee she would like to see more involvement of the membership in programme planning without changing the current arrangements which worked well which was that the musical director set out the plans for programme planning to be discussed in committee. CB suggested that oversight of the Trustees could include involvement in the direction of programming and ensuring that members were able to give feedback if they wished. It was proposed that the committee would be considering the proposal that plans would be published on the members’ area of the website for comment before being adopted by the committee.
10. CB expressed the hope that there could be a more open dialogue on this topic but she did not wish it to become regimented or indeed to democratic. She wanted to see more empowerment of the membership. There was discussion as to whether the committee could be kept in touch with the views of the membership by reintroduction of the concept of representatives of each voice being seconded to committee meetings.
11. The chairman thanked the Trustees for their attendance and made it clear that all the items raised would be discussed by the committee at its forthcoming meeting.