

SCOTS MUSIC GROUP AGM 1st March 2020 (1.30pm for 2pm)

Draft minutes

Present:

Paul McIntosh (Treasurer)	Joanna Cameron
Christine McIntosh	Christine Craig
Jamie Taylor (Board)	Peter Fraser
Isobel Sheppard	Gill McDonald
Mike Appleby	Chris Mahoney
Elaine Appleby	Jill McPherson
Joan Corbett	John Lamont
Marie-Elaine Maguire	Allan Sturrock
Fiona Harrison (Board)	Stuart Wilson
Edna Wilson (Chair)	Linda Campbell
Madeleine Brand	Magnus Turpie
Alastair Hughes	Fiona Tinelli
Kenneth Dickson	Jenny Wilson
Shauna Dickson	Gill Simpson
Colin Graham (Board and tutor)	Frank Downie
Iain Murray	
Frank Cowie	

In attendance:

Helen Reid (SMG Administrator)
Sarah Northcott (SMG Interim Development Worker)

Apologies:

Alastair Cameron	Margaret Ferguson Burns
Nicola McNeill	Helen Quigley
Dave Francis	Harvey Sheppard
Alison Carlyle	Eoin McIntyre
Trish Santer	

Welcome

The meeting was opened by the Chair, Edna Wilson (EW), who welcomed SMG members to the meeting. Refreshments had been served. Ceilidh Caleerie were thanked for the lovely music provided from 1.30pm. The meeting began at 2pm.

32 members had signed in on arrival and the meeting was declared quorate. The Chair reminded the meeting that in order to vote on any motions or stand as a director, current membership of SMG was a requirement.

MINUTES OF LAST AGM

The minutes of the last AGM were accepted as an accurate record by the meeting (proposed: Colin Graham, seconded: Paul McIntosh) with the following correction:

Linda Campbell (LC) stated that Gica Loening hadn't in fact supported ASN students in the past, and that this had been misremembered by Mary McCann.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Edna Wilson (EW) gave the report from the chair. EW had taken over from Alison Carlyle in August 2019 (note that the report incorrectly stated 2020). The Board had set up a new position of Vice Chair, currently held by Colin Graham. Steve Byrne had left his post as Development Worker in January 2020.

EW noted that SMG is well respected in Edinburgh and beyond, having good community links. SMG will be celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2020, and celebrations will take place during the 2020-21 season. EW asked for help and suggestions for these celebrations.

SMG's class bookings and memberships continued to increase this year, with several new classes and short courses. A group of volunteers had organised popular song workshops, and Easter workshops were held in fiddle and guitar.

EW paid tribute to the skill and dedication of SMG's tutors, welcoming those who had joined SMG this year and thanking tutors who had moved on.

EW also paid tribute to office staff Helen Reid and Steve Byrne in keeping the office working well. Steve left at the end of January 2020 to pursue new challenges, and EW wished him well. Sarah Northcott has taken on the role as Interim Development Worker. EW thanked Helen for keeping the office running during the transition.

EW noted the essential role of volunteers, including Liz Blair (bookkeeping), Robin Dempsey (admin), ceilidh volunteers, volunteers at events (including Cafe Ceilidh) and on the Board. EW encouraged people to contact Helen if they wished to volunteer. SMG always needs new Board members, and is particularly looking for people with legal and HR experience, but anyone with enthusiasm will be welcomed.

The SMG ceilidhs continue to be popular and help to support SMG financially. They coordinated by Helen Reid.

EW noted the range of groups who play in the community, sharing their music and representing SMG, including Ceilidh Caleerie, Caleerie Buskers, Balerno Buskers, Nigel's Allstars, Colin's Ukelele Class, The DDs and groups from Sarah's Mixed Instrument classes. Several groups associated with SMG performed on Make Music Day. She thanked many of these groups for raising funds for SMG at events.

EW noted that Inspire has now become a separate organisation, Inspire Community Music, and that current and former Directors of SMG have been supporting the transition.

EW finished by saying that SMG had sadly lost several members in the past year: Geoffrey Sim, Brian Stephen, Derek McMuldloch, Don Wright, Donald MacKinnon, Dave Mackay and Angus Creech. They will always be a part of SMG and our community of traditional music.

Discussion relating to the Chair's report

Chris Mahoney (CM) noted that there were several groups from SMG who had performed at St Giles recently, and not all had been highlighted in newsletters etc. Sarah Northcott (SN) said that often groups don't let the office know what they're doing, and encouraged everyone to send in information and photos.

FINANCE REPORT

Treasurer Paul McIntosh (PM) gave the finance report. As SMG's financial year runs from 1st July to 30th June, the latest audited figures were for 2018-19.

PM noted that SMG was stable financially and generated a small surplus last year, mainly due to an increase in student numbers, a higher number of students per class and extra classes and workshops. This surplus served to top up the reserves in Unrestricted Funds, which means that SMG now has reserves covering approximately 6 months of operating costs, in line with its planned reserve level. Reserves in restricted funds are held for Inspire, which also made up most of the specific grants received.

SMG's main income has continued to be raised from membership fees; class fees; donations, grants and fundraising; and ceilidh and other event income. Main expenditure has been on tutor fees and venue hire; staff costs; office costs; event costs; and Inspire project operations. PM noted that operations for the reported financial year had given the Board and auditors no cause for concern.

Discussion relating to the finance report

Mike Appleby (MA) asked about the scrutiny of the accounts. PM explained that the accounts were externally audited, and these audited accounts were also subject to scrutiny from the charity regular and Companies House because SMG is a limited company as well as a charity.

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

The current directors willing to stand again were: Edna Wilson, Colin Graham, Paul McIntosh, Fiona Harrison, Eoin McIntyre, Jamie Taylor and Helen Quigley.

The re-election of the current directors was proposed by Allan Sturrock and seconded by Shauna Dickson. MA welcomed and thanked the new Board.

There were no further motions from the Board or from the membership.

OTHER QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Risk - Coronavirus

Director Colin Graham (CG) explained that his background and main role on the Board was in the area of risk. He noted the worrying possibilities of a global coronavirus pandemic, with the closure of schools and other venues being a significant risk to SMG's income. The Board would be discussing how it could support tutors, potentially offering them some kind of retainer fee, but that this would need to be balanced against SMG's long-term needs. CG undertook to keep a close eye on the situation.

Membership demographic

Linda Campbell (LC) asked about the membership demographic, and suggested that there would be value in going out to schools to promote young people's involvement, perhaps through a mixed instrument class. Fiona Harrison supported the idea of encouraging more people under 65 to join. Gill Simpson suggested approaching Feis Rois and other organisations. CG noted that opening classes up to under 18s would add to administrative costs such as PVG checks.

Isobel Sheppard (IS) stated that SMG is an adult organisation. MA suggested that a Young Adult concession might help to encourage take-up. Helen Reid informed members that SMG had discussed the recruitment of young people at a Staff/Board Awayday, and it had been decided not to pursue this as previous attempts over many years had failed. David Leslie asked if the age range was the same as 20 years ago – there were no figures available to answer this. Jill McPherson suggested that there were people aged 20-30 in classes, but that they often left to have families and then potentially returned. Iain Murray asked how many free spaces SMG has

in classes. PM reported that the overall figure was 73% take-up, though this varied in different terms. The Board agreed to add this issue to their agenda and work out a breakdown of ages.

Additional Support Needs

LC also said that the Board had told her there was no staff time available to set up an ASN policy and encourage volunteers to help people in classes. CG said that the Board had acted on this and had met with other organisation who might have been able to work in partnership with SMG to achieve this, but these meetings hadn't resulted in any further action. CG said that he would be writing the policy. LC said that Creative Scotland has inclusion staff who will give advice. She also asked that the membership be canvassed for ASN volunteers.

James Gillespie's High School

John Lamont suggested that JGHS was potentially discouraging for students who don't have a car, especially in winter, as it's a long way from bus stops. Shauna Dickson noted that Sangstream has a member who has problems accessing the dining room as there's no parking immediately beside it. PM explained that SMG had looked to move with Boroughmuir, but this hadn't been possible, and that there were few schools which offered the facilities needed. Gill Simpson noted that car parking is also important for students.

McLennan Collection

Gill Simpson told the meeting that Dave Francis had indicated that The Storytelling Centre were considering taking the collection. Steve Byrne was going to get back to SMG about possibly sorting it out and archiving it. Helen Reid said that originally SMG has space at The Eric Liddell Centre to house the collection but office space had been reduced. EW agreed to contact Steve Byrne. The meeting felt that it was better for the collection to go to The Storytelling Centre.

Thanks

EW thanked everyone for attending, including the staff, members of Ceilidh Caleerie for their music, and everyone who volunteered.

The meeting ended with a short session led by members of Ceilidh Caleerie.

SN 15 April 2020