



## **Constitution for the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations (2017 Version)**

### **1 Purpose**

The Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations (FCOCA) exists for the benefit of those Associations to which old (former) choristers of any of the following Foundations can belong: Cathedrals, Chapels Royal, Collegiate Churches, College Chapels of Oxford and Cambridge, and such other Choral Foundations as may from time to time be recommended by the Executive Committee for affiliation to the Federation

### **2 Objectives**

- 2.1 To further the love of Cathedral Choral services and Christian worship
- 2.2 To bring Affiliated Associations into closer touch with one another, and to promote their interests and welfare
- 2.3 To encourage the formation of ex-chorister Associations where such do not exist
- 2.4 To hold an Annual General Meeting in the home town or city of an Affiliated Association
- 2.5 To hold an Annual Festival in the home town or city of an Affiliated Association
- 2.6 To issue, at least once a year, an official publication, and to maintain a website

### **3 Administration**

- 3.1 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held once a year. At least six weeks' prior notice of the date, place and time of the meeting, together with the agenda, shall be given to the Affiliated Associations. All decisions of the AGM shall be binding on the Committee. A quorum of five non executive members representing member associations in addition to members of the Executive Committee shall be required
- 3.2 At the AGM delegates will:
  - Approve the minutes of the last AGM
  - Receive the officers' annual reports
  - Approve the accounts for the previous financial year which will be presented by the Honorary Treasurer

Appoint the Independent Financial Examiners for the current year's accounts  
Elect the officers of the Committee  
Approve any applications for membership  
Consider and vote on any general matters or motions proposed to the meeting  
Confirm the venue, dates and arrangements for the ensuing year's Festival and AGM

- 3.3 The Committee or any six Affiliated Associations may call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). Notice must be given in writing to the Honorary Secretary who will then give six weeks' notice to all delegates of the date, time and place and the nature of the meeting. A quorum of five non executive members representing member associations in addition to members of the Executive Committee shall be required
- 3.4 Minutes of all committee meetings, AGMs, EGMs and sub-committee meetings shall be recorded and a summary made available to the Affiliated Associations, usually by means of a newssheet
- 3.5 The Officers of the Committee, including the Chairman, shall be elected at each AGM
- 3.5.1 If the Chairman is elected annually for five consecutive years, he or she must stand down and shall not be eligible for re-election until a further year has elapsed
- 3.5.2 All other officers (excluding the Chairman) shall not normally hold their posts for longer than five consecutive years, unless elected by the Affiliated Associations at the AGM
- 3.5.3 At the point of all elections, the Chair will be taken by a Vice President who will have a casting vote in the event of a tie
- 3.6 Nominations for committee members should be made by Affiliated Associations to the Honorary Secretary in writing at least eight weeks prior to the AGM, when elections will take place. A Proposer Association and a Seconder Association (one of which must not be the candidate's Association) are required for every candidate and the election shall be by simple majority. The names of the officers standing for election or re-election shall be advised to all Affiliated Associations early in the year reminding delegates of the closing date for any further nominations
- 3.7 Voting shall be either by a simple show of hands or a secret ballot, whichever is deemed most suitable
- 3.7.1 When voting by a show of hands only one delegate from each Affiliated Association may cast a vote. Delegates may be required to use a voting card, which, if necessary, will be issued at the meeting
- 3.7.2 When voting by Ballot, one Ballot Paper shall be issued per

Affiliated Association

3.7.3 The Office shall be filled by the nominee receiving the majority of votes

3.7.4 Any Association not present at the meeting may elect someone from another Association to cast a proxy vote. The person casting a proxy vote must have a written nomination from the Association he or she is representing

3.8 The Executive Committee can co-opt advisors if deemed necessary

## 4 Committee

4.1 The Executive Committee shall comprise the Chairman, who must have served as a Child Chorister in the choir of one of the Federation's Affiliated Associations, the Vice Chairman, the Honorary Secretary, the Honorary Treasurer, the Development Officer, the Website Officer, a delegate nominated by each Association hosting the next two Annual Festivals and up to four Association Representatives

4.2 At Committee meetings a quorum shall be five members which must include the Chairman, or failing him or her, the Vice Chairman and at least one other Officer

4.3 Committee meetings shall:

Approve the minutes of the last meeting

Review future events, discuss Federation policies, and strategies for development of the Federation

Approve financial decisions and review expenditure

Approve applications for membership

Approve and decide upon any other relevant matters brought to the attention of the meeting and deal with general administrative matters

4.4 Any delegate of an Affiliated Association may stand for election to a committee role as long as he or she can demonstrate suitable relevant skills and experience to fulfil the requirements of that role at the AGM

4.5 The Chairman is responsible for:

Chairing meetings

Casting the deciding vote in the event of an evenly-divided Committee

Representing the Federation to outside bodies

Reporting back to the Committee from any external liaison

Delivering an end of year report to the AGM

4.6 The Vice Chairman is responsible for deputising for the Chairman in his or her absence

4.7 The Honorary Secretary is responsible for:

Organising all communication within the Federation

Arranging date, time and place of committee meetings in consultation with the Chairman

Preparing the agendas for meetings and co-ordinating attendance at meetings  
Providing printed information for members at meetings  
Keeping minutes of all meetings, and supplying a copy of the minutes to all Affiliated Associations  
Maintaining and developing the website, possibly with assistance from an the Website Officer  
Compiling and distributing bulletins/communications to the membership  
Delivering an end of year report to the AGM  
Performing such other duties as may devolve upon him or her from time to time

- 4.8 The Honorary Treasurer is responsible for:  
Organising the preparation and examination of annual accounts  
Arranging for the financial year's accounts to be certified by an Independent Financial Examiner  
Presenting the accounts to committee meetings  
Ensuring expenditure is approved for relevant purposes  
Co-ordinating the collection of subscriptions from Affiliated Associations
- Collecting revenue from events, Publicity and Marketing
  - Co-ordinating the insurance cover either for the Federation and/or Affiliated Associations upon request from them
  - Delivering an end of year report to the AGM, including the presentation of accounts
- Performing such other duties as may devolve upon him or her from time to time
- 4.9 The Development Officer shall be responsible for the generation of ideas for the future of the FCOCA, seeking ways to grow the membership of affiliated associations and encouraging associations to engage with FCOCA and attend AGMs and Festivals. This may be done by encouraging the use of social media and other electronic communication methods to increase interaction between associations; maintaining regular contact with associations to understand their needs and wishes; communication regularly with affiliated members through newsletters and the annual magazine.
- 4.10 The Website Officer shall be responsible for maintaining the FCOCA website, including email services and any other IT requirements as appropriate.
- 4.11 The Association Representatives will liaise between the Affiliated Associations in their allotted regions and the Executive Committee. This will include  
Contacting the secretaries/chairmen of all member associations in the region and gauge their strengths and weaknesses  
Giving encouragement and help to those that are finding it difficult to

- maintain their associations
- Keeping abreast of events, including reunions, with member associations
- Encouraging member associations to hold regional OCA events
- To seek out associations who are not members and bring them in touch with the Federation Secretary
- Reporting back to the Executive Committee as appropriate
- 4.12 If a committee member wishes to resign during the course of the year, he or she shall give written notice to the Chairman. The Executive Committee can co-opt any delegate of an Affiliated Association to fill a vacancy until the next AGM

## **5 Membership**

- 5.1 All Associations will pay subscriptions to become affiliated to the Federation. This shall be at an annual rate fixed at an AGM or EGM, such rate to apply from the beginning of the next financial year
- 5.2 Associations' delegates may vote at meetings once their Association subscriptions are paid
- 5.3 Affiliated Associations and Individual Members shall be informed of any proposed change in the annual subscription rate in the Agenda for the appropriate AGM or EGM
- 5.4 The following classes of membership shall be available:
  - 5.4.1 PATRONS: By invitation of the Executive Committee, subject to the approval of an AGM or EGM. The Archbishops of Canterbury, York, Wales, Armagh and Dublin, the Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster shall be invited as a matter of course
  - 5.4.2 PRESIDENT: The Ordinary of the Foundation (as defined in Section 1), related to the Affiliated Association sponsoring an Annual Festival shall, on the nomination of the sponsoring Affiliated Association, be invited to hold this office during the ensuing Festival Year
  - 5.4.3 VICE-PRESIDENTS: Any nomination must be made in writing to the Honorary Secretary of the Federation, not made publicly at any meeting and must be discussed by the Executive Committee before the nomination is put to the AGM. Vice Presidents will be invited to attend meetings of the Executive Committee but will not have a vote at the meetings
  - 5.4.4 AFFILIATED ASSOCIATIONS: The Federation shall be open to any Association of ex-choristers or other associations to which old choristers

can belong of any of the Foundations noted in Section 1 upon receipt of a completed Application Form, subject to approval by the Executive Committee

5.4.5 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP: The Federation shall be open to any individual who is not a member of an Affiliated Association but would like to support the work of the Federation and attend Federation events. Individual Members will not have a vote at any meeting and can only be co-opted onto the committee as advisors if deemed necessary (See Sections 3.8 and 4.4). Individual Members will pay an annual subscription representing half of the rate fixed for Affiliated Associations (see Section 5.1)

## **6 Finances**

- 6.1 The financial year shall run from 1st January until the 31st December
- 6.2 Any member may request sight of any financial document at any time
- 6.3 Any member with a financial interest in a proposal must declare it and shall not vote on that issue
- 6.4 No member shall benefit personally from any of the FCOCA income or assets and all income and assets shall be applied to the promotion of the FCOCA objectives, as stated in Section 2
- 6.5 In the event of dissolution and ceasing to exist, after payment of all its debts, the remaining property and assets shall be donated to such charities as any representative from an Affiliated Association may resolve
- 6.6 The Federation shall maintain one or more bank accounts in its name, and cheques drawn on such accounts must be signed by two duly authorised officers for amounts in excess of £100, and by one duly authorised officer if the amount is £100 or less

## **7 Motions**

- 7.1 Any Affiliated Association desirous of having a motion or matter considered at an AGM or EGM shall give notice thereof in writing to the Honorary Secretary of at least eight weeks in advance of that meeting
- 7.2 Any motion submitted at an AGM or EGM shall be declared to be carried by simple majority
- 7.3 Voting shall be either by a simple show of hands or a secret ballot, whichever is deemed most suitable (as detailed in Section 3.7)
  - 7.3.1 When voting by a show of hands only one delegate from each Affiliated Association may cast a vote. Delegates may be required to use a voting card, which, if necessary, will be issued at the meeting

7.3.2 When voting by Ballot, one Ballot Paper shall be issued per Affiliated Association

7.3.3 Any Association not present at the meeting may elect someone from another Association to cast a proxy vote. The person casting a proxy vote must have a written nomination from the Association they are representing

## **8 Change of Details**

Any change of any officer, or the details of any existing officer, of Affiliated Associations (name, address, telephone number, e-mail) shall be advised to the Federation Honorary Secretary by completing the Data Update Form available to download from the Federation's website. Changes of details of members of the Executive Committee can be submitted by e-mail

## **9 Expenses**

The ordinary expenses incurred in the management and organisation of the Federation shall be borne out of Federation funds

## **10 Matters Not Covered By This Constitution**

The Executive Committee shall have power to deal with any matter not covered by the Constitution, subject to confirmation at the next AGM