

Out Aloud! Sheffield LGBT Choir Constitution

1. Name

The name of the group shall be the Sheffield LGBT Choir ("the Choir") known as Out Aloud!

2. Objects

The objects of the Choir are:

- a) to enjoy learning and singing songs from a variety of traditions which reflect the struggle for freedom, human rights and justice for all lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgendered people (LGBT people) across the world, and which celebrate LGBT identities, relationships and expressions of sexuality;
- b) to be a Choir open to all LGBT people, willing and able to work within the ground rules, with no requirement for an audition or previous musical experience, and to improve the musical skills and confidence both of individuals and the Choir as an ensemble; and
- c) to give performances to the best of the Choir's ability; to keep alive the tradition of using song to promote human liberation, to present positive images of LGBT people, and to express solidarity and pride. This will include live and recorded performances for the purpose of raising funds in support of political and charitable campaigns.

3. Powers

To further the above objects (and for no other purpose), the Choir may:

- a) Employ and pay a musical director and any person or persons to teach, organise and carry out the work of the Choir.
- b) Arrange and provide for, or join in arranging and providing for, the holding of meetings, classes, workshops, training courses, residentials and performances.
- c) Rent premises, acquire or dispose of any property, and take out insurance as necessary.
- d) Arrange for material to be printed or otherwise reproduced and circulated, free of charge or for payment, such as papers, pamphlets or other documents or films or recorded media as shall further the objects.
- e) Raise funds by any means (including primary purpose and ancillary training) and invite and receive grants, contributions or interest-free loans agreed by the Choir from any person, persons or bodies to further the objects.
- f) Donate funds raised by performances and sales of recordings and other primary purpose trading activities to campaigns and causes as decided by the Choir.
- g) Co-operate with other choirs having similar objects and exchange information and advice with them.

- h) Do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.

4. Membership

- a) Membership of the Choir shall be open to any lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (LGBT) person with an interest in furthering the objects of the Choir and who pays the current subscription fee at the appropriate rate.
- b) The Organising Committee may establish a sliding scale of subscription fees based on income.
- c) Choir members are asked to adhere to the Choir Groundrules (see Appendix). If a member does not abide by the Groundrules, this will be raised with them by the Co-ordinator(s). If the member does not change their behaviour within a reasonable time, the Choir may for good reason terminate their membership provided that the member concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Organising Committee, accompanied by another Choir member of his or her choice, before a final decision is made.

5. Honorary Officers and Organising Committee

- a) The Choir and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with this constitution and the policy of the choir by the members of the Organising Committee, constituted by this clause ("the Organising Committee").
- b) At each AGM the Choir shall elect an Organising Committee consisting of the Honorary Officers (being two Co-ordinators and a Treasurer) and shall elect such other Organising Committee members as the Choir decides, up to a maximum of 10.
- c) At other times the Organising Committee has the power to co-opt members, including honorary officers, on to the Organising Committee by a simple majority vote, either to fill a vacancy or as an additional member, provided that the total number of co-opted members shall not exceed one-half of the elected members.
- d) The Honorary Officers and Organising Committee members shall normally hold office until the conclusion of the next AGM after their election, but may be re-elected.
- e) The Organising Committee shall meet at least three times a year and as required to manage the Choir's affairs. The quorum for an Organising Committee meeting is 50% of the members. The Musical Director and other employees shall attend meetings as required.
- f) The AGM shall appoint a suitably qualified independent person to examine its accounts and determine their remuneration (if any).

6. General Meetings

- a) An AGM shall be held at such time (not more than 15 months after the previous AGM) and place as the Organising Committee shall determine. The business of each AGM will include consideration of an annual report on the work of the Choir, approval of independently examined accounts, and

election of two Co-ordinators, a Treasurer and other members of the Organising Committee.

- b) The Co-ordinators may at any time call a special general meeting of the Choir, within 21 days of receiving a written request to do so signed by not less than six members and giving reasons for the request.
- c) Notice of all meetings shall be give at least 14 days in advance to current members.
- d) Any member of the Choir may submit a motion to be discussed at meetings.

7. Nominations to the Organising Committee

Any member of the Choir shall be eligible to serve as an Organising Committee member. Nominations must be made by members of the Choir, with the prior consent of the nominee, either at the AGM or in writing to the Co-ordinators at any time up to the date of the AGM. All nominees must be proposed and seconded. Should nominees exceed vacancies, election shall be by secret ballot.

8. Removal of honorary officers and Organising Committee members

A member of the Organising Committee (including an Honorary Officer) shall cease to hold office if he or she:

- a) becomes disqualified from acting as a charity trustee by virtue of Section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision;
- b) becomes incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering his or her own affairs;
- c) is absent without the permission of the Organising Committee from all their meetings held within a period of six months and the Organising Committee resolve that his or her office be vacated;
- d) is removed by a vote of no confidence following a meeting of which at least 14 days' notice has been given to that officer and all other Organising Committee members, providing that the Organising Committee member shall have the right to be heard (accompanied by a friend) before any decision is made; or
- e) notifies to the Organising Committee a wish to resign (but only if at least three members of the Organising Committee will remain in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect).

9. Remuneration of Organising Committee members

- a) Subject to the provision of sub-clause (b) of this clause, no member of the Organising Committee shall acquire any interest in property belonging to the Choir (otherwise than as a trustee for the Choir) or receive remuneration or be interested (otherwise than as a member of the Organising Committee) in any contract entered into by the Organising Committee.
- b) Any member of the Organising Committee for the time being who is a solicitor, accountant or other person engaged in a profession may charge and

be paid all the usual professional charges for business done by her or him/ her or his firm when instructed by the other members of the Organising Committee to act in a professional capacity on behalf of the Choir: provided that at no time shall a majority of the members of the Organising Committee benefit under this provision and that a member of the Organising Committee shall withdraw from any meeting at which his or her own instruction or remuneration, or that of his or her firm, is under discussion.

10. Rules of Procedure at General Meetings

- a) The quorum for meetings of the Choir shall be 20% of current members or 10 members (whichever is greater).
- b) Decisions shall be made wherever possible by consensus, but if this is not reached each members shall have one vote and the decision made by simple majority of the recorded votes of those present.
- c) The Choir shall ensure that minutes are kept of all meetings, containing in each case a note of those present, any apologies, a record of all proceedings, resolutions and decisions.

11. Finance

- a) All funds raised by or on behalf of the Choir shall be applied to further the objects of the Choir and for no other purpose. This provision shall not, however, prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable remuneration to any employee of the Choir and fees to professional and technical advisers appointed by the Choir, or repayment to any member or Honorary Officer of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.
- b) The Treasurer shall keep proper accounting records and shall prepare proper accounts of the finances of the Choir.
- c) The accounts shall be examined at least once a year by a suitably qualified independent person.
- d) An independently examined statement of the accounts for the last financial year shall be submitted by the Treasurer to the AGM.
- e) A bank account in the name of the Choir shall be opened with such bank or building society as the general meeting may from time to time decide. The Organising Committee shall authorise in writing three members to sign cheques on behalf of the Choir. All cheques must be signed by not less than two of the three authorised signatories.

12. Alterations to the Constitution

- a) Any alterations to this Constitution must receive the assent of a simple majority or members present and voting either at an annual general meeting, or at a general meeting specially called for that purpose.
- b) Notice of any such alteration must have been received by the Co-ordinators in writing not less than 21 clear days before the meeting at which the alteration is proposed.

- c) At least 14 clear days' notice in writing of such a meeting, setting out the terms of the alteration, shall be sent by the Co-ordinators to each member of the Choir.

13. Dissolution

- a) if the Organising Committee decides or the Co-ordinators receive a written proposal signed by no fewer than six members that it would be advisable to dissolve the Choir, the Co-ordinators shall call a meeting of all members of the Choir.
- b) Not less than 21 days' written notice of the meeting (stating the terms of the proposed resolution for dissolution) shall be given to all members of the Choir.
- c) If this decision is confirmed by a simple majority of those present and voting, any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts or liabilities shall be given to such other not for profit organisation or organisations having objects similar to the objects of the Choir that the Choir may determine.

14. Adoption of the Constitution.

This Constitution was adopted by the Choir on 21/03/07

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