



## **MINUTES OF RMT MEETING**

**DATE:** 5-6 October 2024

**LOCATION:** Cambridge (in person)

### **ATTENDEES:**

Julie Earl - Chair  
Shelley Phillips – Marketing  
Leanne Wheeler - Education  
Mary Cave-Palmer - Finance  
Carolyn Currington - Directors  
Nikola Worrall - Membership  
Shelley Bascand - Events  
Katie Mathison – Communications; minute taker

### **INTRODUCTION**

Julie Earl opened the meeting and welcomed new Communications Coordinator Katie Mathison.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mary Cave-Palmer presented the financial report and noted that the year-to-date position is tracking well against budget. Regional levy take increased slightly due to a lift in membership which currently stands at 510. Registration fees are coming in for the November Anne Downton workshop, but costs have not been paid out.

### **BUDGET**

Mary Cave-Palmer noted that the budget for next financial year projects a loss of \$24,000 attributable to administration and convention. SAI requires that regions manage budgets sustainably and maintain reserves. SANZ cannot achieve this with the current budget as it would have to draw on reserves to cover the loss, a situation that would be repeated in future years based on current revenue and costs.

### **MEMBERSHIP FEES**

It was noted that:

- to relieve financial and membership pressures created by COVID-19, SANZ reduced membership fees in 2020 from \$180 to \$100, fixed for four years, Youth membership fees were also held at a reduced level
- Over the Covid period, SANZ has provided a free virtual conference, free workshops, a free arrangers' series, and education scholarships and marketing and coaching grants

- most choruses are now well into the post-pandemic rebuild phase, working on retaining and recruiting members, and competing nationally and internationally
- membership fees would now be approximately \$216, had they kept pace with the Consumers Price Index (CPI), as determined by the Reserve Bank CPI calculator. Detailed discussion about setting of member levies, taking into consideration a wide range of factors

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Member levies to be set at \$198 annually, with the rationale clearly communicated to members</b>
Moved by	Julie Earl
Seconded by	Carolyn Currington
Agreed	Yes

## YSIH

As part of SANZ support for Young Women in Harmony (YWIH) / Upper Voices, RMT suggested that we could prompt members to voluntarily donate to the Prue Blythe Memorial Trust. The pros and cons of doing the reminder at the same time convention registration is collected was discussed. The idea of a Prue Blythe marketing month was discussed, to raise awareness among members. Young Singers in Harmony scholarships also need to be promoted.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Provide members with a mechanism to voluntarily donate to the Prue Blythe Memorial Trust, in support of YWIH, at the time of convention registration, and hand round 'plate' at convention</b>
Moved by	Julie Earl
Seconded by	Mary Cave-Palmer
Agreed	Yes

## HE TANGATA SHOW CHORUS RESIDUAL FUNDS

Options for use of the small residual amount will be discussed at the next meeting. Under the constitution, these funds remain with SANZ.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>The finance report be accepted, the draft convention budget be approved, and the draft overall budget be amended to reflect the \$198 membership fee and \$140 youth fee</b>
Moved by	Mary Cave-Palmer
Seconded by	Shelley Bascand
Agreed	Yes

## OUTREACH

RMT intends to have a representative visit as many choruses as possible in 2025 to support choruses.

There was a discussion on whether RMT members should have travel and entry fees covered for attending educational events where they are working as part of their RMT role. There are currently no guidelines. It was noted that events vary widely in how much support, and what type of support is needed on the day.

RMT will decide on a case-by-case basis whether an RMT member should have costs covered to support an education event. Factors to be taken into account will include:

- whether the RMT member is undertaking necessary work and/or networking and support for members' benefit for the majority of the event
- whether a local representative could easily provide similar support instead
- whether more than one RMT members are required

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Agree guidelines for RMT members to have costs reimbursed for attending educational events where it is part of their role, and that this will be decided by RMT on a case-by-case basis (consensus decision making)</b>
Moved by	Julie Earl
Seconded by	Katie Mathison
Agreed	Yes

## COACHING PROPOSAL

The SANZ committee considered a proposal for a SANZ coaching programme. It was noted that the proposal was well structured and well received, and that:

- SANZ member survey shows that members value coaching and education highly
- faculty members available for coaching are not being fully utilised by choruses, nor are the grants (IFVs): RMT will continue to promote faculty and IFVs
- in general, upskilling of chorus music team members and talent within choruses is a need that has been identified so that they can support directors by doing e.g. PVIs, warm ups and basic conducting, with some potentially developing into assistant directors
- The title of the Directors' Certification Programme may be deterring members from signing up, as some don't see themselves as becoming a Director, but do want to develop their musical skills or focus on specialised areas of coaching

The proposal was carefully considered, however it was acknowledged that the immediate priority was to further build musical capability. TC to approach the proposer to determine if she was keen to shift and lead an approach to building musical leadership in conjunction with faculty.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>TC to approach proposer to determine whether keen to shift and lead an approach to building musical leadership in conjunction with faculty</b>
Moved by	Julie Earl
Seconded by	Carolyn Currington
Agreed	Yes

## CONTESTS

The 2027 location has yet to be determined: consultation is needed.

### *2026 Palmerston North*

RMT will ensure that the 2026 convention team is well supported. An invitation to attend 2025 steering committee meetings has been extended.

### *2025 Christchurch*

This is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SANZ. A 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary team is working on the celebration arrangements, led by Jo Maxwell.

Vocal Zone is donating product to sell. Other sponsorship options are being pursued if feasible.

David Brooks has been invited to arrange or write a song to celebrate SANZ 40<sup>th</sup>. General discussion regarding what might be suitable. Shelley P to follow up with David. Our preference is a celebratory uptune: this will be needed by early 2025.

Options for the naming of the 2025 contest were discussed, taking into account suggestions from members, the need to differentiate from other contests, and the need for a name format that can be repeated year on year in different locations.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Name this and subsequent contests 'Harmony [place name]', eg Harmony Ōtautahi</b>  <b>2025 contest to be named Harmony Ōtautahi – Forty and Fabulous</b>
Moved by	Julie Earl
Seconded by	Leanne Wheeler
Agreed	Yes

## 2024 EDUCATION PROGRAMME

### *Unlimited Quartet workshop*

Evaluations of the Unlimited quartet workshops in Christchurch and Hamilton were good. It attracted both existing and aspiring quartetters. The quartet ably responded to feedback from the first workshop to increase the amount of hands-on teaching in the second workshop. It was noted that costs were higher, given that travel and accommodation for four people in two locations had to be covered.

Shelley noted a need for an offering for higher level quartets, i.e. an international coach. RMT to follow up.

### *Anne Downton workshop, Wellington, November 2024*

- Aiming for 100 participants
- there is a need for greater clarity and more communication about the content
- Early Bird registration should be changed to end one month out from the event
- Judges' observations have been useful to feed into the expression teaching

Proposal	Extend early bird for AD workshop to one month out; clarify content; do marketing;
Moved by	Julie Earl
Seconded by	Leanne Wheeler
Agreed	Yes

Proposal	Provide opportunity for international coach(es) for higher scoring quartets in educational programme
Moved by	Shelley Phillips
Seconded by	Leanne Wheeler
Agreed	Yes

## EDUCATION EVENTS PROCESS

An education events process was scoped out to clarify roles and responsibilities:

- Education coordinator decides to hold event topic with input from RMT and based on the annual plan
- Education coordinator clarifies what the offering is from the beginning
- Education coordinator selects dates, liaising with the faculty for availability
- RMT decides location based on member interests
- Shelley B sorts the venue, budget, registration, travel bookings, onsite arrangements, transport faculty, coordinate personnel
- Send out save the date first – registration comes later

<b>Proposal</b>	Agree the education events process
Proposed by	Leanne Wheeler
Seconded by	Shelley Bascand
Agreed	Yes

## 2025 / 2026 EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The 2025 calendar was drafted as follows, noting the dates of Denver BHS, Harmony University, and IES

March 2025	Theory of barbershop arrangement and music theory as it applies to barbershop; how to select contestable music; theory of fifths etc
May 2025	Contest education Sunday
June 2025	Chorus Management 101
Jul / Aug 2025	Biannual Coach-in-Residence: a month's stay in New Zealand to include a workshop for higher scoring quartets, coaching for choruses and quartets, a national weekend of coaching
Sept 2025	Biannual Directors' Retreat with an international director (TBC)
Oct 2025	Musical Leadership Development – mixed method delivery. Weekend (TBC)
Nov 2025	North-South mass song workshop in person with faculty members. Introduce new songs – <i>A Thousand Years</i> and <i>Believe</i> (TBC)

## INDICATIVE 2026 PROGRAMME

Note that the biannual Coach-in-Residence and Directors' Retreat do not fall in this year

Q1 2026	Quartet weekends North and South
Q2 2026	Musical Leadership
Q3 2026	Chorus Management 101
Q4 2026	Whole region education event – performance and vocal, with international coach

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Agree the draft 2025 Education Programme -and agree the indicative 2026 Education Programme</b>
Proposed by	Julie Earl
Seconded by	Leanne Wheeler
Agreed	Yes

## STRATEGIC PLAN

RMT developed the draft SANZ strategic plan with reference to member survey feedback.

### Draft vision:

**To be the leading organization for women's a capella and barbershop singing in Aotearoa New Zealand**

### Draft mission: (still needs refining)

**To create an environment where musical education, performance and competition thrive, in a welcoming and vibrant community of women**

### Four strategic pillars (with short descriptors): Learn, Connect, Compete, Perform

The next step is to consult with Directors and then members, to ensure it is on the right track.

The four strategic pillars will be presented to members as a graphic.

RMT discussed wording for gender inclusivity. Julie Earl has discussed this issue with SAI (which uses 'women' in its strategic plan), YWIH (who use 'upper voices'), and as SANZ member with a special interest in DEI. Agreed it is an ongoing conversation, and that communications can embrace gender inclusivity, for example in the Addaline and on the website.

Proposal	Agree draft SANZ strategic plan; agree to consult with Directors and then SANZ members
Moved by	Nikola
Seconded by	Leanne Wheeler
Agreed	Yes

RMT discussed the need for a whakatauki (proverb) to capture our essence and our biculturalism. It needs to be authentic to SANZ. Shelley B to follow up further

Proposal	RMT should have a whakatauki (proverb); investigate a route to achieve this
Moved by	Julie Earl
Seconded by	Shelley Phillips
Agreed	Yes

## **GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

General operational matters were discussed

- Email protocols, addresses, headers
- Refresh of Team Talk (RMT communications to members) to Tuned In
- Website updates
- Position description updates
- Admin procedures for correspondence

## **RESOURCE TEAM UPDATES**

- The historian / archivist position needs filling as Fy Dunford has resigned and TC has thanked her for her contribution. Documents need digitalizing
- Chapter liaison role has been reviewed with the holder and a mutual decision was made to disestablish this role
- Culture and Diversity adviser role – need someone to test ideas on
- Finance Coordinator (Convention Finance) – needs to be filled as it is an important back-up role for Mary, and succession management
- Policy bylaws documentation needs to be reviewed going forward. Sharon Connor has the master document on the website. Check the correct version, dated 2024
- Incorporated Society updates – Julie to send out guidance to TCs
- Membership trends – need to keep track of quarterly shifts
- Badges – Nikola has a box of badges in case anyone needs a replacement
- Song purchase – A Thousand Years. Waikato and Faultline have already purchased it. Next year purchase Believe (TBC)

## **MEETING WITH VICKIE MAYBURY**

RMT had an online meeting with Vickie Maybury (SAI). Vickie supported RMT having face to face meetings as it creates more energy

Items discussed with Vickie were:

- Julie reported on setting up the new RMT: making internal connections, redeveloping strategic plans, annual plan and education programme
- The region received a positive evaluation from SAI, is active and responding to members' needs
- RMT noted that 2025 contest marks the region's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary
- Vickie noted that Australia has 4 people entering the judging programme. SAI is keen to see NZ enter 2-3 people. Vickie offered to hold a Zoom session for applicants and individual sessions to support people underway. There are also in-person and on-line 'bootcamps' for applicants



- Julie inquired about whether an International Education Symposium would be held: Vickie said this would be decided at the next Board meeting. [Post-script: no IES in 2025]
- Vickie advised that, with Bec Hewitt's visit to New Zealand as in-region allocated coach, RMT should be specific about what needs choruses have
- Discussion about how to support revitalization of choruses through coaching and accessing IFVs.
- Julie noted that no New Zealand choruses will be represented at International next year in Ohio, mostly due to issues with balance of parts, but also costs
- Vickie shared the possibility of video evaluation at international should the qualifying chorus not be able to travel.

