



Minutes of Accolade Annual General meeting – Tuesday 7th July 2015
at 7.00pm at Sean Hollywood Arts Centre, Newry

Persons present:

45 as per attached attendance list including :-

Frank Dolaghan	Independent facilitator
Vessie & Nikolay Ivanov	Accolade Musical Directors
Andrew Kernaghan	Accolade Member
Pat Cunningham	Accolade Member
Cliff Cartwright	Treasurer
John Doyle	Accolade Member
Anne Martin	Accolade Committee Member
Brea McEvoy	as above
Louis O'Donnell	as above
Sandra Parker	Accolade Acting Secretary
Trevor Simpson	Accolade Committee Member
James Stewart	Accolade Committee Member
Ann Ward	Accolade Member

Apologies : 12 as per attached list

Absentees: None

1. Welcome and appointment of Independent Facilitator
Trevor Simpson welcomed all present including Independent facilitator, Frank Dolaghan who had been invited to chair tonight's Annual General Meeting (AGM).
2. Quorum for AGM established
Frank assumed the chair and established that a more than sufficient quorum (45) was present in order for the AGM to take place.
3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2014
Minutes of AGM – 17TH July 2014 read by the Acting Secretary

- 3.1 **Proposal** : Frank asked that the AGM Minutes 17.07.15 be adopted as an accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed by Clifford Cartwright ; seconded by Vessie Ivanov ;

Minutes were unanimously adopted by all present.

4. Minutes of the Special General meeting (SGM) 09.06.15

Frank explained that the Minutes of SGM meeting on 9th June 2015 had been compiled by the Secretary in detail (7 pages) and that they had already been circulated to all members upon request. He verified that he had approved the minutes and they required no changes.

Proposal : Frank asked that the SGM Minutes 09.06.15 be adopted as an accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed by Ann Ward ; seconded by Brea McAvoy ;

Minutes were unanimously agreed and approved.

5. Accolade Committee report by Acting secretary – July 2014 – July 2015

- 5.1 The Acting Secretary outlined Accolade's development in the last year and key highlights of the 2 choirs' , orchestra and dance group's performances and other activities. The work of the Committee, members and above all, the outstanding professionalism, inspiration and fantastic people that are our Musical Directors (Full report attached.)

- 5.2 **Proposal** the Adoption of the annual Committee report
proposed by: John Doyle seconded by: Helen McDowell

Agreed by all present and Andrew Kernaghan stated it was a very good report.

6. Treasurer's report

- 6.1 Cliff distributed copies of the Accolade annual financial report to those present and outlined the key elements of the organisation's income and outgoings.

- 6.2 Cliff explained that the account books had been taken to the Accountant one month previously but had not yet been returned. Nevertheless the accounts would be made available to all relevant persons once returned.

- 6.3 **Proposal**: Frank proposed the adoption of the Financial record and asked that everyone treat all financial information in a confidential manner.

Proposed by: John Doyle
Adopted by all present.

Seconded by: Derek Martin

7. Election of Officers to the Accolade Committee

7.1 Frank confirmed that all posts on the Accolade Interim Committee were now vacant.

7.2 The Acting Secretary read out the list of the 9 Nominations and confirmed that all Nominations had been received prior to 30th June (1 week before the AGM in compliance with the Constitution). Nominations as follows:-

Pat Cunningham, John Doyle, Andrew Kernaghan, Anne Martin, Brea McEvoy, Louis O'Donnell. Sandra Parker, Trevor Simpson James Stewart

7.3 **Proposal:** Frank proposes the election of the 9 persons nominated to the Accolade Committee en masse to fill the 9 vacant posts.

Proposed by: Pauline Cahill

Seconded by: Rosaline Moore

Unanimously agreed by all present.

7.4 Frank congratulated all new appointees to the new Accolade Committee.

8. Appointment of Auditors

8.1 **Proposal :** Frank called for proposal for account auditors for Accolade for the next financial year. - Malone and Co

Proposed by: Cliff Cartwright

seconded by : Trevor Simpson

Unanimously agreed by all present.

9. Musical Directors' report

9.1 Background to Accolade

Nikolay outlined the history of Accolade beginning in 2010 when Vessie and Nikolai outlined their dream in Altnaveigh House, Newry of wanting to work with people here in N. Ireland in the community arts. He explained that Ireland is all about its people and how he and Vessie had made family and friends from they first came here. They spoke to numerous organisations about their interest in starting a choir and /or orchestra however nobody appeared interested.

Nevertheless, Accolade was established in 2013 by 6 people including V and N with the aim of working with people in the realms of music, song and dance. V and N gave their ideas and are the heart behind setting up the Accolade Community choir in Newry, supported by Volunteer Now. They ran summer workshop and then in Sept. secured funding from the Arts Council for the "Lets Sing Together" project. Funding ran from Jan – Nov 2014 with a final concert performed in 7 different languages.

9.2 Accolade projects

Nikolay gave an overview of Accolade projects from the Newry Choir – Sing Together programme in 2013 through to their present work with 2 other choirs in the Sing a Song, Reach a Hand, Find a Friend project this year.

The orchestra began with a training programme in the Limavady Community Development through to the Community Relations Council funded "Diverse Music in the Community 2 in 2015.

the Banbridge choir was founded in Nov. 2014 with the same passion, spirit of Accolade and for meeting together.

9.3 Accolade achievements

the Newry choir had completed Christmas @ the world in 2013 , competed at the Newry Feis 2014/5, won a Cup, gained really good experience and had received a very good professional adjudication in terms of advice and criticism.

The Singing Together project with such high level instruction from David Brovny was a unique opportunity for the Newry choir to stretch their abilities and improve under demanding professional direction in a concentrated period of time.

On a personal level, visiting people in the care homes and performing to those with disabilities and varying needs has been very rewarding. For the Newry Choir working with the Parkinsons group was unforgettable with the man writing the poem expressing what singing and sharing with the choir had done for him, meant so much to everyone. It shows the great health and social benefits Accolade brings to us all.

Nikolay congratulated Brigid on her excellent first performance and congratulated both Choir Members on their first professional engagement at the wedding at Narrow Water castle in June 2015.

Major milestone for Newry choir was attending their 1st international festival in Prague where they achieved 9/10 points and were able to see other choirs and socialise together.

the Banbridge Choir

Nikolai congratulated the Banbridge choir members on their get up and go attitude towards learning and performance. They had only been set up in November 2014 and began performing in December. They had gained invaluable experience at Tesco's, Scarva Tea Rooms, St Patrick's Day in Banbridge and Newbridge. We had all learnt how to conquer difficulties of poor technical set up and deal with various audiences in a positive way.

He thanked Anna Sosa for her invaluable support conducting the choir in Loughbrickland and in practices which also broadened everyone's experiences and abilities.

He also acknowledged the Accolade spirit, work ethic and friendship shared by everyone in the 1st fundraising coffee morning and ongoing opportunities to perform at Spelga Mews,

Seapatrick and future care homes thanks to ABC Council funding.

Nikolay also recognised the significant contributions the orchestra had made at all their concerts and highlighted the QUB event at the Whitla Hall, Belfast part of Chinese celebrations, Christmas @the world in Newry, Banbridge and Warrenpoint.

Last but not least he gave examples of the significant work of the Bulgarian dance troupe recognising the young age ranges of its members. And spoke of the fantastic evening of multicultural engagement which all the Members had enjoyed in Banbridge, evidence of the great spirit of Accolade and everyone involved.

He finally thanked everyone for all the work and support that had been shown to them and all the great friendships made as we work in the local community.

10. Any other Business

Vote of thanks – extended by Pat to Frank for his knowledge and experience in handling the SGM and tonight's AGM. Frank stated that he was happy to do the work and would appreciate the choir performing at an event supporting the work of the Brain Injury Foundation (which Frank is founder/ chair of)

Meeting concluded at 8.20pm

A short meeting of the newly formed Committee followed privately after the AGM. Minutes recorded separately.

