Perth Symphony Orchestra

Minutes of AGM Wednesday 10th September 2025
North Inch Community Campus 8.00 pm

1. **Apologies**

   Apologies were received from Andy Turnbull, Sheena Law, Rachel Steele, Peter Martin, Seona Ross, Esther Strickland, Helen Band.

   Committee Members Present:

   Eileen Waterston (Chair), Elizabeth Fraser (Hon Secretary), Gillian Roxburgh (Hon Treasurer), Mungo Carstairs (Hon Librarian), Julia Banks (Friends' Secretary).

   In Attendance:

   Sam McLellan (Conductor), Lorna McGovern (Leader).

   The meeting was chaired by Eileen Waterston.

2. **Approval of Minutes of AGM Tuesday 24th September 2024**

   Proposed: Shelagh Winship
   Seconded: Polly Spencer-Vellacott

3. **Matters Arising**

   None.

4. **Report by Chair**

   Eileen gave a summary of the activities and achievements over the year.
   Report available in the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for Year Ended 30 April 2025.

5. **Conductor's Report 2024 – 2025**

   See Appendix 1.

6. **Treasurer's Report for AGM 10.09.25**

   See Appendix 2.

Presentation of Annual Accounts for Year Ended 30 April 2025:

Acceptance of the accounts:

Proposed – Kirsteen Ross
Seconded – Shelagh Winship

7. Subscriptions 2025 - 2026

Full rate - £85 (payable in full, or two payments of £45 and £40), or £45 for one concert
Students - £10 per concert
Friends - £60

Acceptance of subscription rates:

Proposed – Shelagh Winship
Seconded – Elizabeth Fraser

8. Appointment of Conductor and Leader for 2025 - 2026

Sam McLellan confirmed acceptance of the appointment as Conductor.
Lorna McGovern confirmed acceptance of the appointment as Leader.

9. Election of Office Bearers and Committee

Henry Neil MBE continues as Honorary President.

All office bearers and committee stood down and were re-elected en bloc.

Proposed – Sam Chakraverty
Seconded – Sasha Roberts

Office Bearers Elected:

Chair - Eileen Waterston
Vice-Chair (and Publicity Officer) - Rachel Steele
Honorary Secretary - Elizabeth Fraser
Treasurer - Gillian Roxburgh
Librarian/Making Music Rep - Mungo Carstairs
Friends' Secretary - Julia Banks

Ordinary Members Elected:

Sheena Law

10. AOCB

Provision of Website:

Shelagh Winship confirmed that the cost of running the PSO website from a web-hosting site is doubling, and if an alternative can be found to using the host site, this would be preferable.
The members were agreed that the orchestra should continue running a website.

Shelagh will continue to run the website in the meantime, using the web host.

Quiz Night:

The PSO Quiz Night arranged for 29th August was postponed. The committee will look at finding an alternative date, perhaps after the Concert in March 2026.

APPENDIX 1
Perth Symphony Orchestra Conductor's Report 2024 - 2025

Autumn Concert: 9th November 2024, 7.30pm Perth Concert Hall
Concert Programme (Players' Choice):
Wasps Overture, Vaughan - Williams
Simple Symphony, Britten
Melody for Orchestra, Skoryk
Nimrod, Elgar
Symphony no 7, Dvorak

Rehearsals started in early September with a very good turnout, creating an excellent sized ensemble with a nice mixture of our regular players and some new members. As usual the first weeks were spent playing through all the repertoire, allowing this year's ensemble to get used to playing together and discovering which pieces would require most rehearsal time. It was clear even at the early stages that the big challenge, and the piece requiring the most rehearsal time, would be the Dvorak Symphony.

November Concert Performance
The concert opened with a fine stirring performance of the Wasps Overture. This was followed by an excellent account of Britten's Simple (not so simple!) Symphony from the string section of PSO.
The orchestra then gave a beautiful performance of the not so well-known Melody for Orchestra with some fine playing particularly from the woodwind section.
With Remembrance Sunday the following day, the orchestra marked its respect with a moving performance of Elgar's Nimrod played with a true *ppp* dynamic when required.
As mentioned, the big challenge, both musically and technically, was the Dvorak Symphony. Often in rehearsals, without the full instrumentation present, it is a challenge to piece sections of the symphony movements together and it took right up to the afternoon rehearsal for this to all come together and make musical sense. The performance of the symphony was amazing with all the correct emotions portrayed at the appropriate times. A very moving performance which the orchestra should be proud of. Special mention and thanks to Julia Banks who stepped up to play 1st flute in the symphony to cover the illness of a fellow member.

Spring Concert 2nd March 2025, 7.30pm in Perth Concert Hall
Concert Programme (Conductor's Choice):
Carnival, Dvorak
Symphonic Dances from West Side Story, Bernstein
Rhapsody in Blue, Gershwin - Soloist: Gordon Murch
Jazz Suite no 2, Shostakovich

The theme of the season was to present two concerts, one with repertoire suggested by the orchestra's players and the second concert with repertoire requested by the conductor. This was particularly appropriate as it would be my final concert with the orchestra.
Rehearsals commenced, following our November Concert, by playing through the new pieces. All pieces held their own challenges with the Symphonic Dances being a particular challenge for all. I knew, from quite early on, that there was the potential to present and perform a concert of high calibre.
We were fortunate to have our soloist, Gordon Murch, available to join us for some extra run-throughs which helped the orchestra feel a lot more comfortable with the many tempo changes in the Gershwin. We were also fortunate to have the percussion section in for a few extra rehearsals of the Bernstein which helped us all.

March Concert Performance

An unforgettable Evening! The overture was performed in a rousing and celebratory fashion, announcing that this was going to be a special evening. The performance of the Symphonic Dances was amazing, with the orchestra negotiating the many changes of tempo, style and dance with ease. The Percussion section really helped to keep the whole performance tight.

The second half opened with the Rhapsody in Blue and what a great iconic opening with Andy Turnbull's clarinet glissando. Gordon Murch was as usual, a master of technique and musicianship and performed the Gershwin with real style and panache. So easy to follow, which allowed the orchestra to provide a strong and sympathetic accompaniment.

The Finale of the concert was Shostakovich's Jazz Suite no 2, deliberately picked as a fun and happy final piece allowing all sections of the orchestra to shine through. This was performed with great assurance from beginning to end to provide a spectacular end to a great evening. Except it wasn't the end! I was generously presented with some gifts by Andy Turnbull on behalf of the orchestra. The large frame, with miniature copies of all the concerts I had the privilege of conducting (all 53!), proudly sits in my study in the new house in the Borders.

To finish this unforgeable evening, the orchestra performed "Mambo" from the Symphonic Dances, one more time.

I could not have asked or dreamt of a more fitting and rewarding end to my time with this very special orchestra. Thank you to all for that.

Laura and I were very kindly invited to a farewell dinner at Craigie Hill Golf Club a few weeks later and again I would like to thank everyone for all the work that went into making the evening so special. The room looked amazing with all the decorations.

This journey of 27 years, with this magnificent orchestra has been life changing and one I feel so privileged to have been given the opportunity to do. I would not have been able to do this without the amazing assistance, support and expertise of PSO leader, Lorna McGovern. For all her years of guidance, support and friendship, I thank her sincerely.

Thank you also to Eileen Waterston, the new chairperson, for handling and organising all the usual things as well as all the extra challenges this year has brought.

I am delighted to hear that Sam McLellan has been appointed as the new PSO conductor. I know he will do a great job and that you will all offer him the same dedication and support given to me over the years. I look forward to hearing and seeing future concert performances.

As always, sincere thanks to leader Lorna, all the members of PSO committee chaired by Eileen, Secretary Elizabeth, Treasurer Gillian, Librarian Mungo for all their hard work and dedication in supporting and promoting the orchestra and of course to all the members of the orchestra who make PSO what it is, musically and socially!

Kind regards and best wishes,
Allan
Allan R Young MBE

APPENDIX 2

Perth Symphony Orchestra- Treasurer's Report for AGM 10.09.25

The 2024-25 season was very successful financially: an opening bank balance of £10,076 grew to £15,009 by the end of April '25.
Income from grants was less than expected: we applied for a grant of £6000 from the Gannochy Trust but were only awarded £3000. We also received £1700 from the Forteviot Trust. Grant applications for this year will be prepared once the projected figures for the March concert have been calculated.
Subscriptions remain relatively stable at approx. £4500 per year, with a little over £1000 to be claimed each year in Gift Aid. Friends' subscriptions contributed £900 in 2024-25.
Fundraising income for the year was mostly from the quiz night, with a few small sums raised by individuals. There were also more donations than usual: a total of £1148 for the year, compared to £680 the previous year.
OTR was received late, due to technical problems which delayed the submission of the accounts. A total of £6546 was received.
Concert ticket sales were extremely healthy this year. The total shown in the accounts includes £2419 for March '24, but the remaining total of £10,822 indicates the success of Allan's final concert.
Expenditure on concert costs was higher than projected: an estimated £10,000 for each concert was increased to actual expenditure of £27,750. This was mainly due to the number of additional musicians engaged for the March concert. This does however increase the amount of OTR to be claimed.
OTR to be claimed for 2024-25 is estimated at £6500.
The Financial Policy was approved by the Committee in June: there will be a few small amendments to be made before it is circulated to members because we have since bought a SumUp card reader, so this method of payment will need to be included in the relevant section of the Policy.
With the additional income provided by Orchestra Tax Relief, we are moving closer to being able to operate each year without making a loss. This may make applying for grant funding more difficult in future years: if grant funding should become unavailable, the orchestra may need to fund its activities by organising more fundraising events each year.