

General Council Minutes
12th Sept 2022 The Old Fire Station.

Present: Simon Gleisner (SG); Chair; Guy Jones (GJ); Chris Stooke (CS) via Zoom; Gareth Milton (GM); Cal Beckett (CB); Lisa Thomas (LT); Barry Heselden (BH); Lorna Felix (LF) Minutes.

	Item	Action
1.	Apologies: Jo Boniface (JBo)	
2.	Minutes of GC 11th July 2022 : Approved.	
3.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>a. Finance Report for 2021/22- approved. CS reported that the final profit was a little higher than predicted, partly because final costs for the new website were being carried over.</p>	
4.	<p>Structure of SLT/BPT</p> <p>This issue relates to VAT and what is the most appropriate and financially advantageous structure going forward, without compromising either the VAT implications of the building works or our charitable status.</p> <p>The current situation is that BPT is a subsidiary of SLT and all employed staff are paid through BPT. SLT reimburses BPT for the Youth Leader salary. However Auditors have advised that SLT should be invoiced for VAT on top of the Youth Leader salary repayment. Alternatively the Youth Leader could become an employee of SLT.</p> <p>The Auditors have also raised a question as to whether there should be a paid primary decision taker within the SLT/BPT structure. Previously that role was fulfilled by an SLT Deputy Chair who was also a paid youth worker. The implications of this need further exploration.</p> <p>CS has discussed the situation with Charlotte Benstead, Chair of BPT, who has suggested obtaining a second opinion from someone with expertise in the charity sector would be helpful. The meeting agreed with that suggestion.</p> <p>Action: CS to seek a second opinion on SLT/BPT structure viz a viz VAT and Charitable status. And to liaise with Marianne, Lisa and Charlotte.</p>	CS
5.	<p>Charity Commission News: GC members are also directors of SLT and therefore subject to Charity Commission rules. CS advised everyone to read the email to be aware of changes.</p>	

	<p>LT mentioned that she was needing to fill in safeguarding forms for the bank account. It was thought that a selection rather than all the Directors should be signatories. LT also mentioned the need to raise the daily limit on payments.</p>	
6.	<p>Expenditure Request -Metrodeck handrails</p> <p>Cost estimates weren't on hand. Item adjourned to Oct meeting, if not addressed through email beforehand.</p>	
7.	<p>Youth Theatre: Voluntary additional contribution for productions</p> <p>TD had proposed the potential to ask parents of children selected to be in productions to pay a voluntary contribution towards the additional costs,(including chaperone costs) but GC are reluctant to consider that option at present, believing parents should feel that such costs are included within their child's membership fees.</p> <p>Agreed: A chaperone budget needs to be an additional cost line.</p> <p>Chaperones : Teresa Donogue (TD) Youth and Adult Learning Officer has oversight on chaperone arrangements. She and several others applied and completed chaperone training but unfortunately Lambeth appears to have lost the paperwork. TD is following this up but at this point in time we're not aware of anyone who could fulfil the required paid chaperone role. In the meantime, TD is encouraging that auditions and rehearsals involving young people are, where possible, carried out during youth theatre time. Where chaperones are needed drama staff and parents can fulfil this role. Clearly this current situation is frustrating all round.</p> <p>Action : SG to arrange a meeting with LF, TD and Gerry McAndrew, Safeguarding Lead.</p>	SG
8.	<p>EDI Planning Day - Sat 24th September 10.00 - 16.00</p> <p>SG asked everyone to view/ re - review the EDI Zoom session in preparation for the planning day. Venue tbc. Most likely Fiona's house.</p> <p>Action: SG to resend link to EDI zoom session</p>	SG
9.	<p>BPT Update</p> <p>Rusty Beam : Work is progressing. No definite completion date yet. Current impact in the bar is that there's no ice machine and no dishwasher. So recyclable glasses are being used. Draught beer is now available again but access to change the barrel is tricky so can't be changed mid shift. Because the watch room is out of action making it tricky to store stuff, it's been agreed that until the work is complete the auditorium format will remain unchanged.</p>	

10.	<p>Bar Committee Update</p> <p>GJ reported BC are wanting to re-establish the bar as a social hub within SLT. To that end a quiz night is planned for 24th Sept, and they're looking at other events such as a karaoke night. Also all the bar spots are back on sign up. To improve the feel of the bar GJ has been installing sound deadening foam.</p> <p>It's been tricky filling bar slots. GM reported that at the moment FOH, Box Office and generally Raffle slots do get filled. However finding volunteers to cover the Feast, and Open House is proving challenging. And a number of committee roles weren't filled this year.</p> <p>Adam Crook (AC) is keen to develop a shared approach towards encouraging more volunteering. GJ outlined potential ways forward, including publicity about volunteering, producing training videos for new volunteers, group open evenings for training etc.</p>	
11.	<p>General updates not already covered</p> <p>a. Finance - none</p> <p>b. Youth and Volunteering - CB reported that auditions are taking place for the next Youth Theatre production, which will be our first show in 2023.</p> <p>c. Theatre Committee - CB reported TC is still working through submissions and hopes to make an announcement at the end of Oct.</p> <p>LB asked about the status of co-opted members and whether their role had been explained to potential directors. CB confirmed they're there to assist CB and JB, and don't have a right of veto. It was suggested that their role be explained when announcing the season.</p> <p>We have two external hires in Jan 2023.</p> <p>TC are looking to put on training for lighting and sound operators. Also potentially training in lighting design.</p> <p>SG asked about a late timing change for a particular show - unfortunately the season's brochure and show publicity had already gone to print when the change was announced. GM has highlighted the change to FOH volunteers and has changed Ticket Source.</p> <p>d. GTM/Wardrobe - BH reported that they are seeking estimates to improve sound options.</p>	

	<p>The publicity screen is currently being repaired. It melted in the heat! There's a supply shortage at the moment so no option to purchase a new one. The repair is estimated at +£1000. But as part of the building work, ventilation will be put into the area to help avoid this reoccurring.</p> <p>e. Membership - GJ reported there are currently 367 subscribers, so we're back to 2019 levels of membership. The summer shorts helped, with Directors ensuring all actors were signed up before rehearsals began. A great example for all directors to follow. It is time consuming and frustrating when this isn't done timely.</p> <p>LoveAdmin /Mailchimp : GJ explained the frustrations with the current system(s) in use across SLT (including youth theatre) On one hand they are very time consuming for users but on the other they are comparably cheap. GJ has started preliminary research into alternatives and was given encouragement to develop a proposal.</p> <p>Action : GJ prepare proposal for alternative admin systems</p> <p>Membership survey- GJ will arrange for this to be issued.</p> <p>f. House - GM New pricing structure in place from this week, which includes option for flexible pricing on Wednesdays with a £5 minimum ticket.</p> <p>There was a problem with the raffle i zettle, which is now resolved. Someone had changed the password.</p> <p>At the FOH meeting yesterday, the need for emergency procedure training was raised. In case it becomes necessary to evacuate the theatre in the event of, say, an audience member becoming ill and needing treatment in situ. GM will contact Bex to find out who attended the second first aid course.</p> <p>g. Publicity - SG SG requested that casting announcements are sent to publicity asap. CB to continue to do Directors Previews this season. The Publicity team is planning to pick this up from 2023. SG flagged the need to hold a Gala show in 2023.</p>	
12.	Private Business	
13.	AOB.	

	Publicity Roadmap. GJ raised an issue with some posts appearing purporting to be from SLT that have not been approved by SLT publicity team. He would like an agreed process for everyone to follow.	
14.	Next Meeting : Monday 10th October 2022	