

## General Council Minutes

13th February 2023 .

Present: Simon Gleisner (SG) Chair; Guy Jones (GJ); Cal Beckett (CB); Barry Heselden; Chris Stooke; Jo Boniface (JBo); Gareth Milton (GM) ; Lorna Felix (LF) Minutes.

Guests: Adam Crook (AC); Charlotte Benstead LB)

Observers: Martin Copland Gray; Jeanette Hoile; Bex Law (part)

	Item	Action
1.	<b>Apologies:</b> LT	
2.	<b>Minutes of GC 9th January 2023 :</b> Approved	
3.	<p><b>Matters Arising/Actions outstanding:</b></p> <p>a. Wardrobe: Installation of additional rails. BH reported that Mark Ireson is taking a lead on this. BH asked to let LF know (for minutes) how this is progressing.</p> <p>b. EDI : Member update. Time defeated, Action carried forward.</p> <p>c. Flexible pricing question in member's survey. Action carried forward.</p> <p>d. Website maintenance costs - initial quote is for £750. GM is still exploring options. A website maintenance budget needs to be included in overall SLT budget planning.</p>	<p>BH</p> <p>SG</p> <p>GJ/SG</p> <p>CS/GM</p>
4.	<p><b>BPT Financial overview:</b></p> <p>LB, Chair of Building Preservation Trust updated GC on the financial situation.</p> <p>In short, dating from refurbishment, BPT has a £250K loan from Lambeth Council and a £50k loan from Architectural Heritage Fund. The latter loan has an 8% interest rate attached. BPT manages the building and holds the lease. It has responsibility for the space and loans associated with it. BPT also has responsibility to implement a new business model post refurbishment- a mix of theatre and external users. Overhead costs and a rent based on floor space used are split 60% SLT, 20% Bar Comm and 20% BPT.</p> <p>Years 1 and 2 our salaries ( Building Manager and YT Manager) were subsidised by HLF/Other funders. Then Covid hit and we benefited from furlough and the Cultural Recovery Fund. So 2022 was the first time we have been able to see what the space is costing. However</p>	

	<p>2022 has also seen a dramatic rise in fuel costs and inflation generally, which means all three budgets will be seriously squeezed in 2023.</p> <p>In the short term, and keen not to encroach into reserves, BPT are only undertaking essential Health and Safety repairs in 2023. Only projects where there's ring fenced funding or where work has already been commissioned will go ahead. For instance, emergency lighting will still be fitted as will work to secure the front doors and in the yard space.</p> <p>To maximise external income, BPT have set a hire income target of £48K for 2023. They are doing a room hire audit to help maximise use of rooms for hire.</p> <p>LB and CS are negotiating with Lambeth Council re loan repayment. An energy audit has been undertaken by the Mayor's office; and negotiations are also taking place with Lambeth for a rate reduction, which we're entitled to if 80% of users are from Lambeth.</p> <p>In essence to go ahead an activity needs to cover costs, or at least not block one that does from using the space.</p> <p>Agreed early Autumn for a financial forecast for 2024. Once we have a bookkeeper in post, regular management reports will assist keeping the situation under review.</p>	
5	<p><b>Members Club financial overview</b></p> <p>AC (Chair of Bar Comm) reported that Bar Comm has been on a similar journey to BPT. Year end Jan 2023 the turnover was £60k. However when the increased cost of buying stock and paying rent &amp; overheads is factored in, projections are that Bar Comm is likely to move from being a profit making arm to making a small loss in 2023.</p> <p>Bar Comm has healthy reserves, which enabled them to contribute to the rusty beam repairs. But like BPT, they are keen not to have to tap into reserves for general day to day activity. Their options are to increase prices and/or increase turnover by 10%. They would prefer to do the latter and are working on ideas to increase footfall to the bar which AC will share with SLT and BPT.</p> <p>In the meantime Bar Comm is also putting some refurbishment and development ideas on pause. Although they will complete work planned to replace shelves in the cellar and to make the club room more appealing to hang out in.</p>	
6.	<p><b>SLT Financial update</b></p> <p>CS had circulated SLT financial reports in advance of the meeting and spoke to the profit analysis 2019- 2023. Like BPT and Bar Comm, SLT</p>	

	<p>has good reserves but using them to subsidise general activity is not appropriate.</p> <p>The biggest income is from Ticket prices (recently reviewed) and Youth Theatre. However whilst there's a good revenue flow, all Youth Theatre staff are paid and there is an urgent need to review the fee structure to ensure costs are at least covered and ideally profits maximised. Directors have been keeping production costs low which is much appreciated.</p> <p>CS met with a new member recently who has a banker/economist background and may be helpful working with us to identify where we can maximise profits. CS will speak with him tomorrow.</p>	CS
7.	<p><b>SLT Action Plan</b></p> <p>SG said that whilst there's work to be done to ensure SLT financial position going forward remains secure, the situation is solvable.</p> <p>Actions include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Youth Theatre financial review - most urgent - (LF, SG and TD)</li> <li>b) Membership -review of fees.</li> <li>c) Ways to maximise income from shows including the potential to put on more performances eg 4.00 pm matinees</li> <li>d) Review the marketing structure/fees for wardrobe</li> </ul>	LF GJ TC/ GC
8.	<p><b>New Membership System</b></p> <p>After all the work undertaken to research and cost alternative options the reality is that any system that offers improvements over the current system also comes with an increased cost. In the current economic climate GJ is provisionally inclined to move toward Love Admin v2 which is now available.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Gala Night</b></p> <p>It was agreed that Gala Night should be reinstated this year. An invite only event. Details and guest list to be confirmed. Date set for Wed 2nd August,during the second week run of the Railway Children.</p> <p>We need someone/small team to lead on preparations. SG has someone in mind, he'll approach them this week.</p>	<b>SG</b>
10.	<p><b>Bar Comm update</b></p> <p>There is still a need to increase the number of bar volunteers to ensure all shifts are covered. AC will share some ideas of how to flag the bar is still open after performances end.</p>	

11.	<p><b>General updates not already covered</b></p> <p><b>1. Finance:</b> CS is hoping to appoint a Bookkeeper shortly.</p> <p><b>2. Theatre Committee:</b> Member mix is about to start, hoping ticket sales will increase. There is now just one show where rights are outstanding. Peter, Guy and Mark are curating the Summer Shorts. A sporting theme. So far there's been 7-8 shows of interest from authors.</p> <p><b>3. GTM/Wardrobe:</b> BH expressed disappointment that few Member Mix providers turned out to help with Chaos Get Out. A communication issue for next time.</p> <p><b>4. Youth Theatre:</b> Teresa's job title is now Youth Theatre Manager - a better reflection of her actual job. The aim is to TUPE her employment to SLT by the beginning of April. But first SLT has to set up a NEST pension CS to speak to Begbies.</p> <p>The Safeguarding policy has been reviewed. The policy is being amended by Teresa and will be circulated once ready.</p> <p><b>5. Publicity:</b> SG plans to review the publicity budget.</p> <p><b>6. Membership:</b> Membership is still going in the right direction. New people engaged in shows increases membership</p> <p><b>7. House</b> Rotas are filled for the next couple of shows. But they're dependent on a small number of volunteers which raises problems when anyone goes on leave.</p> <p>It was suggested that social events for front of house and other teams such as marketing and wardrobe may help.</p> <p>Zoom renewal is due. It was confirmed that enough groups are using this to make renewal appropriate.</p>	CS
12	<p><b>AOB</b> LB confirmed BPT have received a £5k grant specifically to make hiring out rooms more successful, e.g to improve wi-fi.</p>	
13	<p><b>Private Business</b> : minuted separately</p>	
	<p><b>Next Meeting : Meeting Monday 13th March 2023</b></p>	

