

General Council Minutes

10th July 2023 .

Present: Simon Gleisner (SG) Chair; Chris Stooke(CS); Gareth Milton (GM) ; Barry Heselden(BH); Philip Epstein (PE); Eddie Coleman(EC); Han Evans (HE); Jo Boniface(JB); Lorna Felix (LF) Minutes.

	Item	Action
1.	<p>Welcome : to new GC members, Philip, Eddie and Han. Looking forward to Hywel joining us at the next meeting.</p> <p>Apologies:. Lisa Thomas (LT); Hywel Roberts (HR) Guy Jones (GJ)</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of GC Meeting 14th May 2023 : Approved</p>	
3.	<p>Matters Arising/Actions outstanding:</p> <p>a. Whilst Cal completed amendments to the Directors pack, the new TC are planning another edit to take place before the next new season Directors meeting.</p> <p>b. Free Tickets for those in need- agreed up to 6 per show.</p>	
4.	<p>Financial Update :</p> <p>Chris Stooke was reappointed treasurer.</p> <p>CS spoke to the financial forecast and information about production ticket sales he had circulated in advance. Charlotte Benstead Chair of Building Preservation Trust had messaged to say that BPT have done some analysis and discovered that the room hire function is using more than the anticipated 20% of overheads. As a result the SLT contribution from this quarter is to reduce to 43% down from 60%. Although the forecasts haven't included the change in contribution the reality is that overall fuel costs remain much higher than previously. The message is that across BPT, SLT and Bar Comm is that we all need to continue to scrutinise expenditure, look at how we can maximise income and to ensure that activities are cost effective.</p> <p>Suggestions to raise income include: Dynamic ticket pricing - to encourage early booking. Raise membership fees Raise non members ticket prices Increase advertising - without additional costs. To consider the potential for an additional performance on Mondays and a late afternoon matinee on Saturdays.</p> <p>Action: GM to look at a dynamic pricing trial. JB offered assistance from her professional experience of doing that.</p>	GM/JB

5.	<p>Youth Theatre finances: Following a review of Youth Theatre finances, a decision to raise fees from £6 per hour to £7 per hour from September 2023 has already been actioned. However it's been a while since YT staff have received a pay rise and the meeting approved recommendations for a pay increase for all YT staff and approved recommendation for an additional TA member of staff to be employed during Intermediate and Youth Classes.</p>	
6.	<p>Gala Night: SG explained that it has not proved possible to send out invitations as planned. On balance at this late stage it was agreed the best option is to postpone the idea of a Gala Night and open up the evening for ticket sales.</p> <p>GM said at the House meeting yesterday, Jeanette said she had been gathering email addresses when she distributed posters and had told people that they would be invited to a Gala night as a thank you, so we may need to consider how to show our appreciation. Suggestions included a thank you to those businesses in Railway Children programme and the potential to offer two comp tickets to a show of their choice, alongside saying we can't afford to do a Gala Night at the moment. GM to action with Jeanette Hoile .</p>	GM
7.	<p>BPT update : JB read out a message she'd just received from BPT.</p> <p>a. Requesting TC to take over calendar booking for rehearsals. - request accepted by TC.</p> <p>b. requesting the large amount of flammable material stored at Mezzanine level to be removed within the next fortnight - Action BH</p> <p>c. Informing SLT that whilst BPT were prepared to organise one off special disposals of large items e.g. whole kitchens - the invoice needed to be met by SLT. - recommendation accepted.</p> <p>D. BPT recommendation that SLT TC approve external theatre hires - is not accepted by SLT.</p> <p>This topic has been raised after it was discovered that an external company who had booked theatre space did not share the same ethical outlook as SLT and was also using visual images of our building in its advertising. It raised both legal and ethical issues. The aim is to avoid being in this situation again. We understand why the BPT recommendation has come about but there are practical issues concerning this too. It was thought this is a topic that needs further discussion at Chair level.</p> <p>Action : Simon to talk with Charlotte Benstead</p>	<p>TC</p> <p>BH</p> <p>SG</p>

8.	<p>Bar Comm update No update available</p>	
9.	<p>Training TC raised the potential for offering training in Fight direction and an offer of training in Lighting. They will look into this.</p> <p>GC training in managing complaints - Fiona Daffern has offered this. Agreed LF to follow up for a date after the summer.</p>	<p>TC</p> <p>LF</p>
10.	<p>General Updates not already covered</p> <p>Finance: CS informed the meeting that he is exploring the situation of a replacement Auditor given our usual person has left their office. The audit deadline is at the end of October, so we have time.</p> <p>Tech/Wardrobe: BH informed the meeting that he needs someone to lead a team for the Home I'm Darling Get In at the end of August, when both he and John are away, Chas is designing the set, and usually would lead a set build but has his own production pending in July!</p> <p>Publicity: SG said that Hywel Roberts will pick up on digital publicity. He asked for GM and GJ to provide HR with marketing figures.</p> <p>Youth Theatre : Three members of GC attended the Juniors and Intermediates end of term showcase on Saturday. As ever it was a fun morning.</p> <p>Membership: GJ has forwarded plans to take forward AGM decisions but was unable to attend the meeting at this point. Agreed any decisions could be made outside of the meeting.</p> <p>House: GM said his plans to hold a best practice house meeting are pending a convenient date for the house team. It may be appropriate to invite Bar Team members too.</p> <p>Theatre Committee: Have hit the ground running since AGM in June. Invitations for submissions have gone out with a deadline of end of July. They also shared their involvement and concerns in relation to a pending production.</p>	
11.	<p>AOB:</p> <p>a. Speeding traffic, GM said at the House meeting yesterday a member raised the possibility of SLT monitoring traffic speeds outside the theatre with a view to collating evidence to share with council. GM to explore taking this forward.</p>	GM

	b. Gifting tickets/Youth Theatre fees (AGM suggestion) - to be adjourned to subsequent meeting.	Aug Meet
12..	Next Meeting : Monday 14th August BUT August GC meeting - date clashes with shorts rehearsals. LF to canvas availability for alternative dates	LF