

General Council Minutes Meeting
11th December 2023

Present: Simon Gleisner (SG) Chair; Chris Stooke(CS); Guy Jones (GJ)
Gareth Milton (GM): Eddie Coleman(EC); Barry Heselden(BH); Lorna Felix (LF) Minutes.

	Item	Action
1.	Apologies: Jo Boniface(JB); Hywel Roberts (HR); Han Evans (HE);	
2.	Minutes of GC Meeting 13th November 2023: Approved	
3.	<p>Matters Arising/Actions outstanding:</p> <p>Membership Fees review : GJ calculated that reducing the membership concession rate to 25% discount could raise an additional £1600 income approx. However the meeting agreed to take no further action in the light of ticket pricing changes due to be introduced in January.</p> <p>Membership survey - to be carried forward.</p>	
4	<p>Financial Report from Chris Stooke: Statutory accounts of SLT and BPT were finalised in October and early November.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Charity Commission filings were completed within the deadline. -Current SLT cash position £92,000 but BPT (total £17,000) not yet paid. Net = £75,000 marginally better than July forecast. <p>Most recent ticket sales, excluding VAT: Tilly £2,329 : Deep Water £2,722 ; Apologia £2,628. The forecast for each was £2,718.</p> <p>In summary CS concluded that in 2023 we will be around breakeven- possibly with a small loss as predicted. Ticket Sales and Room Hire is holding up, however there are indications that Youth Theatre is not looking as good as hoped- which needs further exploration.</p>	
5.	<p>Risks (Standing Item) GM explained that the Governance discussion had raised the need for an active risk register to enable us to understand what risks the organisation faces and to be able to prioritise our time to focus on the most critical. GM has created a template for a risk log which he will be sharing with us.</p> <p>Action: To start the risk log preparation, all GC members will bring one or two key risks from their area of responsibility to the January meeting for discussion.</p>	ALL

6.	<p>BPT Update</p> <p>a. BPT CS is now chair of BPT. Other BPT Board members are Chris B, Noah, Lottie, Lisa, Bryon, and Gerry. Marianne and Carol have stood down as Directors. CS shared key points from a recent Board Meeting i.e. Loan repayment options and the structural state/use of the yard are currently key areas of focus. BPT is looking to make contact with Thomas Ford re the necessary 5 year assessment for building compliance. Noah is now Bex' line manager.</p> <p>b. Governance project SG updated the meeting on the progress of discussions. There are two strands, finance and governance. The aim is to identify a new sustainable structure that enables us to continue with core objectives as a Theatre company that is also a member and volunteer led organisation. (rather than the two SLT and BPT) A new model would bring the governance of SLT/BPT closer to the structure of other charitable, member led organisations. It would most likely comprise a Board of Trustees/Directors that deal with high level planning and an Executive Group of volunteers to carry out the day to day work. The intention is that the Governance working party report to GC and communicate with the membership ahead of the AGM in 2024.</p>	
7.	<p>Bar Comm update Dehumidifiers are still being used to dry out the bar wall. Plans are in hand for increasing seating in the bar area. Late Licences have been applied for Christmas Eve and New Years Eve.</p>	
8.	<p>General updates: see below for separate collation of reports. Issues/decisions</p> <p>a. Theatre Committee New Members Leaflet - deadline extended. Expense Claims - agreed a 2 month period from get out for members to submit show related expense claims. Also that TC should be responsible for signing off claims to ensure they are within the relevant show budget. Action : Show expense claim to be amended</p> <p>b. GTM/Wardrobe The account with the local hardware store is still to be set up.</p> <p>c. Publicity : SG reported that Cal Beckett has agreed to take on the Publicity Manager role but has declined to rejoin GC.</p>	TC

9.	<p>AOB</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wardrobe - it was agreed that our Wardrobe team will be included directly in the request for monthly updates. 2. Training for members: GJ said he's often asked at new member evenings if there are training events available. This was something that we once had specific funding for and were able to employ someone to take on the organisation. EC volunteered TC to take on looking for a potential volunteer coordinator but whilst it was felt to be a good idea it may not be possible at the moment. 3. Fire safety : GM reported on his meeting with the Fire Safety officer, who will be preparing a full report in due course. In short we have enough fire exits for the numbers in the building and we can ignore the ' sticky door' because it exits to the same space as other fire exits and is not an advertised fire exit route. However we must cover the fire exit sign. Bex has that in hand. 4. Lift Alarm : GM said the Fire safety person explained the lift warning alarm that regularly goes off is because the sensor in the lift is getting damp. The only way to stop it is to coordinate lift and alarm people so the current sensor can be replaced with a waterproof one. 5. BH asked if GM could ask if there's a way of turning off the Green Fire exit lights when a show is running - but then automatically being reconnected should there be an actual alarm. 	
	<p>Next Meeting : 11th December 2023. 8.00pm Kit Room</p>	

South London Theatre
General Council Meeting December 11th 2023
General updates

1.Theatre Committee

- Our current xmas show Beauty and the Beast is getting ready for opening night - so Jo is busy with tech week and Han is supporting her too. It's going to be an amazing Christmas show and ticket sales are going well.
- Our current play submission window closed at the end of November (for August to Dec 2024). We have had 20 applications for 7 slots (including the xmas show 2024). We also have one application due for a Xmas show from an existing and experienced SLT member to consider when it comes in. We will be reading play submissions throughout December and early Jan with a view to interviews in

Mid-Jan and an announcement of the successful plays by the end of Jan.

- SLT Leaflet for new members - Eddie emailed a draft round to GC/TC after last month's GC meeting - only one person has responded so far (Thank you, Gareth). Please can you provide Eddie with a couple of lines on your particular SLT areas by the end of December please.
- Late claims from Directors - Lisa contacted TC recently to say that she has had a claim from a Director for show expenses over six months after their show has ended. She is concerned that these are late payments and previously there had been a time limit, set by the previous person making payments, on when claims could be submitted. We are considering reinstating this three month deadline i.e. Any claims submitted after three months by SLT directors will not be paid. We will inform directors of this decision but realise this may possibly need a discussion at GC first?
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2. House Resources

We are fully resourced for the Christmas Show. Work has started on filling the January and February shows. The next three shows all start at 19:30, so this will be a test for the early start.

Box Office

As a reminder, full details of the Box Office takings are available on this spreadsheet: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1esM5XTdb7avHkCYrJQWKDws-qOV_f4R6qyqTRW-ZJ8/edit#gid=293943378

Family Tickets

Following discussions with Simon we will re-introduce family tickets for family shows. The next one will be the youth show in February.

A family ticket for a non member was £44.00 and for members/supporters it was £32.00.

It is therefore proposed that for non-members the family ticket is £50.00 (a discount of £6.00 on 4 early bird tickets).

The member's/supporter's price will be £36.00 (i.e. a discount of £4.00 on 4 early bird tickets).

We won't have an early booking discount for family tickets as it will become too complicated (most family tickets are booked early anyway). Usually only 3 shows a year have family tickets (youth, summer and christmas).

New pricing

Has caused some confusion with some of the older members, as they seem unclear on what they need to do in order to get the best price. Follow up Q&A is planned to help them book in advance.

Key Risks / Issues

Those people on the first aid list are feeling out of touch with the training.

Informal revision session agreed with Bex, but worth noting that all First Aid accreditation will expire next year, and we will need to trigger full accreditation again from June onwards (with the associated cost).

Update:

Refresher sessions are planned for the evenings of 15 & 16 January and will focus on the scenarios that people are most likely to come across.

Latecomer policy

Update:

Agreed in the House meeting that latecomers would not be allowed for shows that are sold out, due to difficulty in squeezing additional people in once the show has started.

For information:

Sole Luna:

A follow up meeting has been held with Sole Luna, we are still looking to offer the bookings from January onwards, but we are awaiting a PDF from them before promoting the deal.

3. Youth Theatre

- Class numbers.

We have increased the classes but also had a small amount of drop outs for various reasons. I will be aiming to maximise class sizes in January.

We still have waiting lists for all of our classes. I will be looking at moving youngsters into the next age group and filling any spaces after the Youth production is out of the way.

The new class for 6 to 7 year olds is going really well. Although we have had parents of 5 year olds trying to get their children enrolled!

- Staffing

We have a really great team at the moment and even though some staff have had planned absences, I have been able to find cover. We also have a couple of young volunteers from our Youth and Young Adults classes. One of them is doing her Duke of Edinburgh. It's great to have these youngsters as part of our team.

- End of term showcases

We had end of term showcases for both the Junior and Intermediate classes. They were very well attended by parents and every seat was filled. The feedback from parents was really good, they love how the youngsters get to perform on a proper stage in front of an audience. They recognise how much work the staff put into making it happen. They were impressed with the quality of the drama.

- Holiday workshops

We had planned two all day workshops on December 9th (Musical Theatre and Victorian Ghost Stories). Unfortunately the Musical Theatre workshop didn't recruit enough youngsters. We are going ahead with the Ghost Stories one and expect to make £120 profit. We will be meeting to plan ahead for the holidays in 2024 so we can let parents know in plenty of time what is planned, and allow for the production of publicity materials.

It would be useful to know when new flyers are planned so we can coincide our publicity.

- Chaperones for Beauty and The Beast

I have had some difficulty in recruiting chaperones for Beauty and the Beast, possibly because this is a busy time of year for the Drama staff. I am keeping Jo updated on what cover we have. I will cover a couple of sessions and fortunately the AD is one of our staff and there is a qualified teacher in the play. So the youngsters are safeguarded. I attended a rehearsal and the youngsters are absolutely loving being part of the show.

- Youth production

The team have been working hard on rehearsals for Jekyll and Hyde. Youngsters are rehearsing in their usual Friday and Saturday classes. And there are additional rehearsals on Wednesdays and Sundays. Despite asking all parents and youngsters to put the rehearsal dates in their diaries, some have missed them. Causing problems for teachers travelling in to run a rehearsal and no one turning up. I will be contacting parents to remind them of their commitment.

- Work over the Christmas break

I am delighted that we will be moving to a new system for registrations and collecting fees. I will be getting to understand the new system and supporting parents to set up new registrations for their youngsters ready for our return in January. Hopefully this will be a smooth process. I will be meeting with Lorna to discuss plans for 2024. And the Drama staff to plan for the next term.

4. Marketing

November highlights

- Website traffic up by 9.5% - driven in part by large interest in 'profoundly affectionate...' with
- 1.2k page views alone
- New users to the site up 10%
- Ticket sales from website up 2%
- Audition pages also performing strongly
- Open rates and clickthrough rates up for the newsletter

October challenges

- I've hit a snag with the Google Ads and may need to start again, I'll pick this up with Gareth –grant is still in place just means it will take me longer to get any ads live
- Lack of volunteer resource means I've not been able to commit as much time to long-term projects as I'd like as I've been doing a lot of the transactional work on the site and newsletters myself

5. Membership

Included:

1. **New Membership System update**
2. **Supporter Circle update**
3. **Stats update**

1. **New membership system update**

Following the successful pilot and discussion at the last GC meeting, the aim is to move all contacts off LoveAdmin and onto MemberMojo and to pay for two accounts on that system. One for Members and one for Supporters.

All contacts with membership and supporter subscriptions have now been migrated to MemberMojo and removed from the respective Membership Category on LoveAdmin to ensure no further charges for membership or supporter subscriptions are processed via that system.

Those with pre-authorisations to pay for membership via bank account and the London & Zurich system on LoveAdmin have had their pre-authorisations cancelled and have been informed that they will need to make an active online payment at their next renewal.

Those with 200 Club subscriptions are the only contacts remaining on LoveAdmin for the moment, and only for the payment of that 200 Club subscription and nothing else.

I am still to decide whether to take up a further £75p.a. MemberMojo account to administer the 200 Club.

2. Supporter Circle update

I have moved the promotional banner from the bar stairway to the foyer where it might be seen by more ticket holders on show nights.

3. Membership Stats update:

Membership numbers data and trending is now published to the [Members' Area](#) of the website, but for convenience:

As @ 30 November, we have the following number of subscriptions changes since last month indicated in brackets:

- Total Full Members: 387 (↑ 13)
- Paying standard £50 rate: 254 (↑ 10)
- Paying concession £25 rate: 133 (↑ 3)
- Supporters: 50, (↓ 1)
- Total active subscriptions: 437 (↑ 12)

Subscription Revenue still seems to be carrying an upward overall trend:

