

General Council Minutes Meeting
12th February 2024

Present: Gareth Milton (GM) Chair; Guy Jones (GJ); Eddie Coleman(EC); ; Jo Boniface(JB); Hywel Roberts (HR); Lorna Felix (LF)

	Item	Action
1.	Apologies: Simon Gleisner (SG); Chris Stooke(CS); Han Evans (HE); Barry Heselden(BH) .	
2.	Minutes of GC Meeting 8th January 2024: Approved	
3.	Matters Arising/Actions outstanding: a. Directors Handbook still being revised b. Managing Audience Behaviour JB explained there was an opportunity to sign up to a standard theatre expectation of audience behaviour.	
4.	Governance Information session Mon 26th Feb 24 GM reminded the meeting that there is to be a Q and A via Zoom, as a precursor to a face to face meeting for members later in the process. Just before the Zoom meeting, an email will go out to members outlining the proposals and the process for agreeing/ adopting the new structure. The AGM will be asked to agree to the new Governance structure, and there'll be an EGM later in the year (around September) to vote for trustees. With the aim that the new process will be in place from January 2025.	
5.	Risk Register (Standing Item) The Risk register was reviewed, not yet complete. Actions arising from risk register discussion a. Policy Review dates to be available at next GC b. Email link to be circulated to the code of conduct for audience members. c. YT Manager, LF and GM to meet to review risks in relation to YT, Safeguarding and Chaperones.	LF JB LF
6.	Dressing Rooms for larger casts With so much of the building now rented out externally, there's few options available when a large cast, (or one including children) require additional dressing room space. But with external hires in pre 8.00 that now isn't alwaysBut one option might be to block book the library for the relevant five days. It is hired by psychotherapists but on an individual	

	<p>ad hoc basis. Agreed that TC should explore this possibility with CS, the Chair of BPT.</p> <p>Action : Explore with BPT Chair the potential to block book the library when additional dressing room space is required.</p>	JB
7.	<p>2024 AGM Planning : Sat 11th May</p> <p>Notice of AGM needs to be issued on or before 11th March 2024.</p> <p>In view of the proposed change to Governance structure, and the expectation of an EGM to vote for Trustees in the Autumn, GM explained that there won't be the usual voting for GC roles. Those already in post will be encouraged to continue over the transition period.</p> <p>GM explained that the Governance Meeting had set a timetable for May's AGM process, and will take the lead in communication with SLT Members.</p> <p>Action: Issuing Notice of the two AGM's</p> <p><i>NB Bar Comm aren't impacted by the Governance changes so as the Governance group will need to liaise with them re setting dates for nomination.</i></p>	Governance Group
8.	<p>Bar Committee update : No news</p>	
9.	<p>General Updates : Questions/Matters arising</p> <p>a. Wardrobe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. asked re setting up an SLT EBay Account - suggested they ask CS which account would be best, probably the paypal account. JB is happy to offer tech help setting up an ebay account if such help is needed. ii. Re transport to Peta - suggested wardrobe put a shout out on SLT Members Facebook page <p>b. Publicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A suggestion to more formally involve shows in Feast was discussed. GC's view was that to formally allocate slots was fine, but not the expectation that Directors and their casts take responsibility for setting up and taking down the stall. That would require a lot of training. HR will liaise with CB re this. Also felt that it would be helpful to have Feast processes documented. <p>c. Youth Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Congratulations to the YT Team for their hugely successful Jekyll and Hyde. 79% ticket sales is great, although likely impacted by the choice of play which wasn't appropriate for younger family members, but was a popular choice with the young people involved. Two distinct cast groups 	

	<p>more than double the Directors work! All rehearsals outside YT class time are unpaid for YT staff. This needs to be reviewed going forward. In the meantime GC is happy for a pizza supper to be arranged for their next team meeting by way of a thank you.</p>	
10.	<p>AOB:</p> <p>a. Website 2024 page Discussion re alternative formats of page. A likely preferred option also requires considerably more time to maintain. Decision requires input from SG. hence adjourned today.</p> <p>b. 2025 initial show TC has a possible show they'd like to programme in early 2025, which will require more lead in time than usual. Initially concerned about tying the hands of an incoming TC, but reality is that in view of the Governance changes, early 2025 planning will still be the remit of the current committee.</p> <p>c. CANS Concern that CANS hadn't worked at all during the last show. JB to investigate.</p>	
	<p>Next Meeting : Meeting 11th March 2024</p>	

**General Council Meeting
Monday 12th February 2024
Reports**

1. Finance

- a. Various donations received in memory of Lionel Monks following his funeral
- b. £5,000 donation received on dissolution of Hayes Players and sale of building
- c. Similar donation (£1,000) coming from Sydenham Theatre Club
- d. Bookkeeping support organised, initially focused on BPT, handover underway with Marianne Jacobson
- e. ticket sales for Arturo Ui very strong, vindicates choice of play for January and early booking incentives

2. Theatre Committee

- a. We are very close to announcing the second half of 2024. We are mid applying for rights and confirming dates.
- b. We hope to hold another bar event if we can.
- c. Eddie is still waiting for some sentences for the new members booklet so that is slow progress.

- d. We are busy recruiting new reps - some new directors and now taking on rep roles. We are coordinating a meeting with the youth team to support the young directors for Gun Dog. Teresa will be involved in this too.

3. **Wardrobe**

- e. During January we welcomed Huwen Biggart, a local military expert who works for the Army Cadet Training UK, to look at our military collection. He has helped us identify the regiments, ranks and periods for our uniform collection. At the Sewing Bee we started on the labelling and repairs to this collection. He has really enhanced our knowledge of the collection. He also identified a couple of rare and possibly valuable items.
- f. Our team has grown and we have shown a potential new volunteer around. The team is already getting involved in being allocated to production teams. We are working on an audit of our purse collection. We have identified useful ones to keep. Again there are some potentially valuable items.
- g. We are exploring an online sales platform e.g. Etsy or eBay in SLTs name since it seems a shame for items to languish in the collection, not be used on stage and they could earn some money instead.
- h. We have two large laundry bags of furs. These are of poor condition or are duplicates. We contacted a vintage trader but he was not interested in them. We find that actors prefer to wear fake rather than real fur. We are retaining some characterful ones. We can free up space on a rail by finding a new home for the poor ones or duplicates. PETA is happy to take these.

4. **House**

i. Resources

Reasonably stable, we are one Front of House Lead and one Box Office short for the next show, request will go out next week.

j. Box Office

New pricing is having a positive effect on income levels and early bird tickets are giving us more certainty on audience numbers at the start of the run. I do need to document the show set up process on TicketSource as it is a bit more complicated than before.

k. Key Risks and Issues

See risk log. **Programmes**

Cal Beckett taking over control of the programme and poster production seems to already be having a positive impact.

l. Fire Evacuation Plan

We have adopted the new process following feedback from the recent fire risk assessment. A new [Show Night Evacuation Plan](#) has been documented and the House team for the Youth Show have all been briefed. Briefing will continue as more volunteers come forward.

5. Marketing

January highlights

- m. Arturo Ui had a completely sold out run
- n. Website traffic up significantly from December
- o. Good interest particularly in auditions pages and What's On page
- p. Newsletter clickthrough rate on stories up significantly

December challenges

- q. Open rate down on newsletter

6. Publicity : Cal Beckett

Getting started

I've received some limited training from Simon in the use of Canva - Guy has been really great in helping me get to grips with the finer points of the system, but I've a long way to go! My mission is to get further ahead with print publicity. I had a productive meeting with Eddie Royall (the printer) to agree ways of working and deadlines.

Printing and distribution

My immediate aim is to make sure we have at least the next two months' shows posters and flyers in advance - March and April have been delivered.

I also had a meeting with Jeanette concerning poster and flyer distribution. I want to try and tailor quantities (of posters and programmes) to cast sizes. One immediate change is that I've ordered an extra A2 poster (£5 each) for each show so that we have one in the foyer and one placed in the A-frame outside (rather than an A3, £2.50 each) for greater visibility. Jeanette and I have agreed that we'll use two different A2s in the A-frame outside, so that both the current and upcoming shows are advertised.

I want cast members to be given their A4 posters (£1.50 each) as soon as they're ready, rather than waiting until the end of the run. They can then put them up at work or college. I'll be ordering enough for Jeanette to do her usual local distribution. We order 250 double-sided flyers costing £55, will keep this at current quantity for the moment.

Programme artwork will be sent to Eddie at Archiprint on the Monday afternoon of run-up week, so that they're delivered the following Monday at the latest. Again, the cast and crew should be given theirs at the beginning of the show week.

Feast

Hywel and I would like to make participation at Feast part of the directors' rehearsal schedule by asking them to set up and take down the stall the month before their shows (rather than immediately before). So April Feast would be run by May shows cast and crews, and so on.

7. Membership ; Guy Jones

a.Instalment payments across membership and 200 Club

I have worked out a way of invoicing for instalments via Stripe (the card payments system we use to accept payments via MemberMojo). It emails an invoice with a link to an SLT branded payment portal via which payment can be made by card - and I think by bank transfer.

Instalment payment is a key reason why I haven't moved the 200 Club from LoveAdmin, as so many people use them for larger stakes, but as the stripe method is so manual, I don't think it's practical to apply to the 200 Club.

c.Membership stats update

Membership numbers data and trending continue to be published to the members area of the website.

January subscription revenue was **up 39%** on January 2023 (more renewals alongside the new registrations) and since the above snapshot was taken at the end of January, a further 10 members have joined - upcoming shows largely responsible. Membership is therefore making good progress.

8. General Tech : All progressing as planned. A celebration for GT and Wardrobe Volunteers is planned for Fri 16th Feb.

9. Youth Theatre :

YT income 2023 : LF shared a summary of 2023 termtime YT income.

Figures will differ from SLT end of year accounts because income collection for YT Spring term starts in November the preceding year.

The move to MemberMojo means reduced fees going forward.

Predictions for 2024 Budget, is that net fee income will cover staff salary costs and provide a small contribution to overheads (Estimate £4-6k) assuming the fee income remains at the level it has for Spring 2024.