



Minutes from South London Theatre Executive Committee meeting

23 February 2026

Attendees:

Stephen Hayward (SH), Theatre Director, Chair
Chris Bennett (ChB) House Team
Lorna Felix (LF), Youth Team
Bex Law (BL), Building Manager
Alistair Simpson (AS), Backstage & Technical Team
John Winter (JW), Building Team
Sarah Farage (SF), Minutes

1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies were received from
Caroline Beckett (CaB) Publicity Team
Jenny Bennett (JB) Wardrobe Team
Guy Jones (GJ), Membership and Brand Team
Gareth Milton (GM) Commercial Director
Jess Osorio (JO) Wardrobe Team

2. Approval of Minutes - 26 January 2026

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

Cast/crew post show questionnaire - the cast and crew questionnaire will be circulated to members of the Executive Committee for comments before being finalised.

Action

- [SH to circulate post show questionnaire to Executive Committee](#)

Emergency Drill - BL confirmed that a minimum of one drill must be carried out each year, but ideally two should be aimed for. The Youth Theatre does undertake an annual drill, and the AGM may be a good time to schedule a second drill. ChB reported that the House team have planned evacuation training, along with front of house refresher training and a social for the House teams on 29 March. BL noted that training, including emergency drills, needs to be documented.

Ticket & membership prices - price increases had been agreed and announced in line with the discussion at the last meeting.

Cans - AS is circulating a questionnaire to house, backstage and technical teams to establish requirements for new cans. Widening their use to other teams, such as box office and bar would also be considered.

Lead technical role - the job description had been drafted.

Action

- SH to discuss recruitment with AS/JW

Wardrobe - Discussion on the pantomime costumes had taken place and plans agreed. The Sewing Bee WhatsApp group had not yet been migrated to the SLT Community. ChB noted that the Front of House group was also not part of the SLT WhatsApp community.

Action

- ChB to move Front of House group into WhatsApp community

Actions carried forward

- GM to prepare budget reports for the teams
- SH/BL to discuss naming protocol for incident forms in upcoming meeting
- GM to pursue ownership of DNS so that it can be changed to SLT
- Theatre Committee to confirm details for preview performances and obtain performance rights
- JB to move Sewing Bee group into WhatsApp community

4. Risk Review

New risks or those with significant changes were discussed.

Building - BL reported that the issue with the yard soil bank was deteriorating. A long term solution would need agreement from multiple parties, including St Luke's PCC and the diocese, as it will involve grade 1 and 2 listed buildings and tree preservation orders. In the short term there is a need to reduce the immediate risk of collapse by beginning to debulk the soil. This needs to be done by hand as it is not possible to get equipment on site.

Actions

- JW to update the risk log
- BL to contact labourers to start debulking work

Youth Theatre - the risk of handover to a new Youth Theatre Manager was reduced following Greg Williams' appointment.

Replica guns - JW reported a change in law enforcement for specific replica guns. The Props team did not think that this would affect the replicas we have, but this will be double checked as part of the upcoming props audit. It was noted that the amnesty for handing in these replica guns is currently scheduled to finish at the end of February.

Backstage - AS reported that there were plans to replace flats that were reaching the end of their useful life. This will be budgeted for.

House - the emergency procedures risk will be updated after the planned evacuation training on 29 March.

5. Gala Performance

Gala performances, where supporters (such as local businesses) and local officials (such as the Mayor of Lambeth) are invited, need significant organisation and lead time. As no gala had been organised since COVID, it had been suggested that SLT run a gala in 2026 as a rehearsal for the 60th anniversary celebrations in 2027. Ideas for a gala in 2026 were discussed but given the likely timescales it was felt a full scale gala was not viable,

However, it was felt that something on a smaller scale might be run, potentially as a soft launch for 2027. The preview performance of *Come From Away* might be a suitable show. Alternatively *Shorts* (possibly a matinee) might be a good option as it is unique to SLT, and showcases a range of content.

Action

- SH to discuss the possibility of a small scale gala event with the 2027 committee.

6. Commercial & Theatre Reports

The reports from the Commercial and Theatre teams were noted.

ChB reported that a trial of calling the audience from the bar before opening the theatre doors would take place in March. This would avoid leaving the foyer without Front of House staff whilst the audience were entering the theatre.

There had been concerns about the fire doors being propped open, including the one between the foyer and the stairs. BL stated that fire doors being propped open are not an issue when there are Front of House Volunteers in the vicinity as they will close the doors should there be any emergency. BL also reported that the trial of the auto closing device had not been successful, and the device would be returned.

ChB confirmed that the trial of the volunteer reception role would take place in mid March.

BL reported that there were ongoing bids for funding, and that SLT had responded to the current TfL bus consultation.

It was noted that there had been a successful sewing bee, and also a workshop to take up the black out curtains.

Submissions for September - December 2026 had now closed.

SH reported that he and Mark Bacon (Trustee Board) would be meeting with Charlotte Benstead to discuss plans for the 60th anniversary in 2027.

The Youth Theatre production of *Animal Farm* had been a great success, and Greg Williams had been appointed to the vacant Youth Theatre manager role.

7. AOB

Sign up - ChB noted that there were a large number of people registered on SignUp who were no longer members. This was potentially a risk in terms of GDPR, as well as the

potential risk of non-members undertaking a volunteer shift. There were a number of issues raised, including

- What was the SLT data retention policy for ex-members?
- Should SLT be deleting these accounts, and if so would that delete the historical record of who had taken which shifts ?
- Whether the data controller was SLT or SignUp?
- At present we rely on Team Leaders to ensure that all those volunteering for a shift on SignUp are appropriately trained current members.
- Ideally SLT needs a system for recording training, and a volunteer management solution that can integrate these training records, to ensure only those trained can sign up for shifts.
- There may be volunteer management solutions better suited to SLT than SignUp but these are likely to incur cost.

Actions

- SH/BL to discuss SignUp and alternatives
- ChB to check data retention policy with GJ
- LF to check who is the named data controller for SLT

9. Next meeting

Monday 23 March, 20.00, Bar, SLT