



## Minutes from South London Theatre Executive Committee meeting

26 January 2026

### Attendees:

Gareth Milton (GM) Commercial Director, Chair  
Caroline Beckett (CaB) Publicity Team  
Chris Bennett (ChB) House Team  
Jenny Bennett (JB) Wardrobe Team  
Lorna Felix (LF), Youth Team  
Simon Gleisner (SG), Outgoing Theatre Director  
Stephen Hayward (SH), Incoming Theatre Director  
Guy Jones (GJ), Membership and Brand Team  
Jess Osorio (JO) Wardrobe Team  
Alistair Simpson (AS), Backstage & Technical Team  
Sarah Farage (SF), Minutes

### 1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies were received from:  
John Winter (JW), Building Team

### 2. Approval of Minutes - 24 November 2025

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

### 3. Matters Arising

*Member Survey* - the member survey discussed with the Trustee Board at the last meeting was currently live, with a deadline for completion of 1st February.

*Cast/crew post show questionnaire* - the cast and crew questionnaire had been drafted, but method of distribution needs to be decided.

#### Action

- SH/GJ to discuss distribution of post show questionnaire

*Budget* - the high level budget for 2026 had been finalised. Next steps are to add in the detail. Each team will be presented with the agreed budget, and it is expected that the final detailed budget will be in place at the end of the first quarter.

#### Action

- GM to prepare budget reports for the teams

*Programming of theatre space* - the meeting to discuss programming had taken place, and plans were being made.

*Youth Theatre Showcase* - LF and SH had attended the showcase in December.

*Theatres Trust Funding* - Ed Smith had submitted a bid for funding to move the props room door. The outcome is awaited.

Action carried forward

- SH/BL to discuss naming protocol for incident forms

#### 4. Risk Review

GM led the discussion of red risks.

- *Trustee Board* - key person risk and potential for abuse of power remain under review
- *Theatre Committee* - member behaviour risk will be mitigated by the new incident form developed by SH. GM noted that new directors were asking for lock up training. It was emphasised that rehearsals should not start until there was at least one person trained to lock up (usually the director) and all cast were paid up members. As cast not taking up membership remains a regular issue, it had been agreed that publicity for a show should be held until all were paid up members. It was also agreed that the Theatre Committee representative should have a role in ensuring all cast join, including collecting membership numbers from everyone, and emphasising that membership fees pay for the production.
- *Brand & Membership* - control of DNS settings (website domain) still resides with one of the members. This has meant that it has not been possible to update the details recently, which is causing some email providers to direct SLT emails to junk folders. It was agreed that the domain ownership should be with the company.

Action

- GM to pursue ownership of DNS so that it can be changed to SLT
- *Publicity* - ideally it would be possible to provide additional publicity for smaller cast shows, but the size of the publicity team does not allow for this at present. It was hoped that a volunteer drive would result in additional recruitment to the publicity team. Additionally, directors and cast can help, for instance by creating videos, or using the show budget if underspent.
- *Building* - a new doorstop was being trialled for fire doors. Audience/House lighting needs to be brighter to mitigate a trip hazard. It may be possible to create a standard lighting state, but this would need to vary for different seating layouts.
- *Backstage & Technical* - new power tool storage has been put in place, but the risk of dangerous use of power tools remains. It is planned to address this at a future backstage workshop.
- *House Team* - the House team will be organising an event which will include a practice emergency evacuation, evac chair training and front of house refresher training. It was noted that volunteers in other roles who are in the building on non show nights (for example the Wardrobe team), also need to know what to do in case of emergency, and that fire/emergency evacuation training could be added to lock up training. As there is no designated lead fire marshall on non show nights it was

suggested that the Director of the show rehearsing in the Fly Loft (or other designated locker up) acts as lead fire marshal as well as locker up.

#### Action

- GM to check legal requirements for emergency drill training with BL
- *Youth Team* - risks associated with the transition to a new Youth Theatre manager will need to be managed following Teresa Donoghue's departure. Greg Williams has agreed to cover the role in the interim.

### 5. Ticket Prices

GM had circulated the proposal for ticket price increases ahead of the meeting. Discussion included:

- The need to take proposals for increased income from ticket prices and membership fees to the Board meeting at the beginning of February.
- Aim for increases to be introduced as of 1 April 2026.
- General agreement that the Early Bird scheme had achieved its aim of encouraging audience members to book earlier, but was no longer necessary.
- In agreeing that flexible pricing on Wednesdays should remain, it was recognised that some audience members may have commitments that prevent them from taking advantage of this.
- Agreement that it was legitimate to have higher prices for musicals (which cost more to put on) and bigger shows. This would include the family shows in the summer and at Christmas.
- Non member prices should be increased by more than member prices.
- SLT membership and ticket prices were still lower than many other similar theatre clubs.
- It was possible to offer discount codes where felt appropriate. This could include disadvantaged families, or for smaller cast shows that were not selling well.

It was agreed to propose that ticket prices were increased as follows

	Member	Non Member	Member Family	Non member Family
Standard	£11	£18	n/a	n/a
Musical/Big show	£14	£20	£45	£60

It was agreed that the Youth Show should be classed as a standard show, but with the addition of a family ticket option (price to be confirmed).

#### Action

- GM to amend proposal for ticket price increases in line with the above for Board meeting
- GJ to draft proposal for increase in membership prices for Board meeting

### 6. Come From Away Gala Performance

The director of Come From Away had suggested that members of the Emergency Services be invited to a dress rehearsal. The Executive Committee felt that it would be more appropriate to obtain performance rights for this and present it as a preview performance. Invitees would need to register their intention to attend. The show is expected to sell out, so any unallocated preview seats could be put on sale a few days before the show on Tuesday 30 June.

It was noted that SLT had not hosted a gala performance (where local supporters and dignitaries were invited to attend, refreshments were provided etc.) since COVID, and that it would be good to do this in 2026, ahead of the anniversary celebrations in 2027.

#### Actions

- Theatre Committee to confirm details for preview performances and obtain performance rights
- SF to add discussion on Gala show to the agenda for the next meeting

### 7. Commercial & Theatre Reports

The reports from the Commercial and Theatre teams were noted.

GM reported that he had attended a seminar on changes to employment law in 2026. It was unclear how these would affect volunteers, and Fiona Daffern is looking into this.

GM also noted that the reports from ticket source did not include any tickets sold by box office. The total of ticket sales for Cinderella were around £11k. The box office spreadsheet shows total sales.

Submissions for the next season are open until 22 February 2026.

It was noted that the executive report's purpose was to update other teams, rather than raise issues or concerns with other teams or individuals. Issues and concerns should be raised with teams or individuals concerned and only if the teams concerned are unable to resolve them, should they be raised to the Executive via the relevant Director.

There had been issues with the cans again, but not all had been reported to AS, and there remains insufficient specific information to diagnose the root cause. At present there seem to be two sets working fully, and it was agreed that these will be used by the tech operator and stage manager. It was noted that even when they are working, the cans are not good enough for Front of House volunteers to hear above the noise in the Foyer. AS will speak to JW about options.

The introduction of the proposed new lead technical role was ongoing. It was noted that recruitment to this needs to be an open process.

#### Actions

- AS/JW to discuss options for replacement of cans
- AS/JW to finalise lead technical role description and advertise this

### 8. AOB

*WhatsApp Group Communications* - The WhatsApp community is busy, and is useful for asking for help, but tends to attract lots of responses from people sending apologies that

they can't help on this occasion. It was suggested that members be encouraged to use polls, or phrase requests to discourage replies from those who are unable to help.

It was agreed that the Wardrobe Sewing Bee group be migrated into the SLT community.

#### Action

- JB to move Sewing Bee group into WhatsApp community

*Panto costumes* - JB had reported that the panto costumes take up significant space, but there seem to be less demand for them at present, especially some costumes that may be problematic for casts to wear with current cultural sensitivities. Options included mothballing and disposal to free up space.

#### Action

- Wardrobe Team and Theatre Committee to discuss panto costumes

*Dog Policy* - following a recent incident, a policy on bringing dogs to the theatre has been drafted, and will shortly be introduced. This will include reference to assistance dogs.

*Tristan White* - The Executive Committee had been saddened to hear of Tristan's sudden death. CaB reported that it had been agreed that a picture of Tristan by the late Jenny Gammon be offered to Tristan's partner, and that this offer has been accepted.

GM formally recorded thanks to SG for his leadership of SLT over the last seven years. SG thanked all those he had worked with at SLT.

### **9. Next meeting**

Monday 23 February 2026, 20.00, Bar, SLT