



Minutes from South London Theatre Executive Committee meeting

27 April 2026

Attendees:

Gareth Milton (GM), Commercial Director, Chair
Caroline Beckett (CaB), Publicity Team
Chris Bennett (ChB), House Team
Lorna Felix (LF), Youth Team
Stephen Hayward (SH), Theatre Director
Bex Law (BL), Building Manager
Jess Osorio (JO), Theatre Committee/Wardrobe Team
Alistair Simpson (AS), Backstage & Technical Team
Ed Smith (ES), Board Trustee
Sarah Farage (SF), Minutes

1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies were received from
Jenny Bennett (JB), Wardrobe Team
Guy Jones (GJ), Membership and Brand Team

2. Approval of Minutes - 27 March 2026

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

3. Matters Arising

Come From Away preview - the invite list for the preview on 30 June was in progress. It was agreed that Copy Shop, L'Arche and Sole Luna should be added, if not already included.

Actions

- SH to check that Copy Shop, L'Arche and Sole Luna are on the preview invite list.
- GM to check if the raffle will be operated at the preview.

Budget - GM has been working on the budget to share with teams. It was agreed it would be useful for some teams to be given access to view their budget in Xero. Access would be granted to specific individuals, to reduce the risk of sharing sensitive information. It was noted that it was now possible to establish total income and expenditure by show, including programme sales. CaB noted the need to purchase a new frame for street side advertising, which is not in the budget.

Action

- CaB/SH to discuss budget for new frame

Risks - the risk relating to change of Youth Theatre Manager has been reduced. Reduction of the risk relating to the yard soil bank was carried forward.

Publication of Minutes - agreement has been given to publish the Executive Committee minutes, and they will be uploaded to the website shortly.

Action

- SF to upload confirmed Executive Committee minutes

Volunteer Training - CaB had identified a provider of suitable incident training. It was noted that it may be possible to get a discount and/or grant funding to help with the costs. SH noted he had a form of words regarding the theatre being run by volunteers that could be used for a poster.

Action

- GM/BL/ChB/ES to take forward volunteer training and funding
- SH to share form of words for poster with BL

Sewing Bee - the pictures from the millinery workshop had been shared, and the next Sewing Bee will be advertised in the forthcoming newsletter.

Volunteer roles - the advertisements for the new roles had been published, and a few expressions of interest have been received. The adverts will be further shared through the WhatsApp groups, newsletters and on the Backstage Roles page of the website.

Props - A quote had been obtained to re-site the props room door to its original position in the corridor. There was potential to use donations in memory of Kay George towards the cost, and it was agreed that it would be appropriate to publicise this, which may bring in additional donations. Matched funding may also be available through a grant.

Actions

- BL to provide description of the proposed work
- GM to discuss publicising the work in the next member newsletter with GJ

Actions carried forward:

- GM/SH to discuss budget and agree individual access
- BL to update the risk log (re yard soil bank)
- SH to discuss Props Team representation on the Executive Committee with Carole Ironside
- GJ to review Shorts WhatsApp groups and delete as necessary.

4. Risk Review

Smoking on stage - BL reported that she had updated the risk log regarding smoking on stage. It was noted that, in line with legislation, there needed to be a strong artistic reason for smoking to be allowed, and risk assessments needed to be completed in every case.

Guns - It was noted that guns were being used in the upcoming production of Hamlet, and that these should be locked away after each rehearsal and performance.

DNS settings - there had been some progress with resolving the DNS settings issue, but it is proving complicated. If no further progress is made within the next month then an alternative web host may be sought, such as Charle who hosted the Old Fire Station website.

Action

- BL to contact Charle regarding the potential to host the SLT website, if an alternative host is needed.

Small shows - discount codes for small cast/less well known shows have been used, but it is unclear how much impact this has had on audience numbers. Audience Club has been used to bolster attendance at some performances, but this does not contribute to SLT income. It was noted that shows with long standing SLT members are less likely to struggle for audience, and that this should also be considered when deciding whether to offer discounts. It was suggested that audience feedback could be sought, as long as there was sufficient resource to respond to specific issues if required. Generic feedback comments could be used on the website.

Fire Doors - the auto closing mechanism on the foyer door leading to the stairs is not working as envisaged and will be replaced by a kick-down mechanism to keep the door open, The door should be shut at all times except on show nights.

Action

- BL to organise replacement of auto closing mechanism on foyer door

Storage of Power Tools - Power tools are now stored safely, but are not in a locked container. This needs to be resolved before the next youth show.

Action

- AS to organise lockable storage for power tools

5. Props & Costume Sale

SH proposed that a sale of costumes and props that are no longer needed be organised. It was agreed that Sunday 5 July was a suitable date, which coincided with a West Norwood Feast event. Although there is a matinee of *Come From Away* on that day, it should be possible to use the yard for the sale (with the gazebo if the weather was not fine). A suggested minimum donation would be decided for some of the more valuable items. The sale can be publicised to other interested groups, such as costume groups and other theatres. Funds generated could then be used for a specified project.

Actions

- SH to confirm Yard Sale with Props and Wardrobe teams
- GM to set up separate iZettle code for the Yard Sale

6. AI - and how we use it

The need to have an AI policy was discussed. It was noted that:

- There are some benefits to using AI to support some administrative tasks, but it can not be relied on, and its use for more creative tasks was controversial.
- There have recently been a handful of uses of AI for poster design and sound effects.

- Whilst individual Directors dictate the show identity, it would be useful to have guidelines for this, including reference to AI.
- Fees to use AI, including fees for creators of original content used, were likely to be introduced in the near future.

It was agreed that an AI policy would be useful for creative aspects of SLT..

Action

- SH/ES to discuss AI policy
- ChB to share example of AI policy with SH/ES.

7. Funding Opportunity

GM, BL and ES reported that there was an opportunity to bid for funding for a major project to improve the stairs to the bar and access to the yard. The work would not require the building to close, but would entail some disruption and necessitate the use of the other stairs for a period of time. Whilst not an immediate priority, the work would need to be done should SLT wish to make more use of the yard in future. The initial investment to secure planning permission would need to be agreed quickly, and could potentially impact progress on other projects in the short term, but the funding, if granted, would include allowance for additional resource to manage the project.

The Trustee Board are seeking the views of the Executive Committee and Bar Committee on whether SLT should bid for this funding.

Action

- BL/GM to send summary of proposal to Bar Committee

8. Commercial & Theatre Reports

The reports from the Commercial and Theatre teams were noted.

The front doors will be replaced in May. Additional work on tidying up the joints and an additional coat of paint will be addressed once in place. It was agreed that the windows should be cleaned of paint splatters as a priority.

Action

- BL to organise cleaning of front windows.

The new cans had been used during the run of Wanderlust, and mainly worked well, but had not been used for Black Mountain. Dennis Fenton will take the lead on use and maintenance of the cans going forward.

9. AOB

Yard - BL reported that over 12 tonnes of soil and rubbish had been removed from the yard. There was now space for a small shed which could be used to store some items that are currently under the rake. This would help address the fire risk of storing items under the rake, and make seat moves easier and quicker.

Action

- SH to discuss and agree purchase of shed with BL

Artworks - a private donation has been made that will enable the re-siting of the mosaic to a better location, near the tech gallery.

SH informed the Executive that Hayley Thomas had donated a small piece.. BL agreed to find a suitable space to display this.

Action

- BL to arrange display of the donated item

Safeguarding - there had been a potential safeguarding incident when a member of cast had used the Kit Room to change on a Friday evening when the room was booked for the Youth Theatre. It was noted that some cast members may be reluctant to change in the Green Room as it offers limited privacy, but that the second floor toilets can be used as an alternative..

It was planned to reschedule the Front of House training that had been postponed in March.

Action

- GM and ChB to discuss plans for Front of House Training.

10. Next meeting

Monday 25 May 2026, 20.00, Kit Room, SLT