



Minutes from South London Theatre Executive Committee meeting

24 August 2026

Attendees:

Stephen Hayward (SH), Theatre Director, Chair
Caroline Beckett (CaB), Publicity Team
Chris Bennett (ChB), House Team
Jenny Bennett (JeB), Wardrobe Team
Jo Boniface (JoB), Theatre Committee
Anne Crane (AC), Building Team
Lorna Felix (LF), Youth Team
Guy Jones (GJ), Membership and Brand Team
Bex Law (BL), Building Manager
Gareth Milton (GM), Commercial Director
Jess Osorio (JO), Theatre Committee/Wardrobe Team

1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies were received from Sarah Farage

2. Approval of Minutes - 6 July 2026

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

3. Matters Arising

- Gift Aid registration is progressing with HMRC; the organisation may claim up to four years of historic donations.
- BL will progress theatre etiquette poster now that new noticeboard is in place.
- JustGiving payments are difficult to reconcile by campaign. Alternative integrated fundraising platforms are being explored.
- DNS has not been progressed due to lack of time - still with GM and GJ, though may be picked up by Carole Coyne.
- The leaking pipe on St Luke's property seems to have been replaced so currently no further problems.
- GJ deleted the redundant Shorts WhatsApp groups from the community.
- GM has finalised smoking policy, and with LF written guidelines on exceptional childcare needs, and these papers have been shared.
- JoB still needs to add invite to improve on the post-show Survey (a number of these have been sent out recently.)

- Wi-Fi improvement funding has been secured by Ed Smith, with implementation and IT integration still to be completed.

4. Risk Review

- GM met with BarComm to consult on Risk assessment and this is now complete on the register.
- LF has added laptop access to the Risk Register.
- GM encouraged all Exec members to check their Risk register on a regular basis.

5. Expense Forms

- We discussed moving from the current PDF expense forms to a Google form in the light of the trial GM put in place for Bar expenses.

Action

- GM will design a new form, which will include VAT guidance and enable automated confirmations for the claimant.

6. Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

- Recruitment is improving in publicity and other teams, but volunteer retention and engagement remain concerns.
- Some new members feel the organisation can be cliquey; ideas included new-member social events, clearer follow-up, buddying and better communication.
- Volunteer enquiries should be acknowledged promptly, with standard templates and “reply all” used to maintain visibility.
- A volunteer management platform is being considered to track opportunities, training, skills and participation.
- A volunteer manager/coordinator role remains under discussion, subject to funding, and will be put to the Board.
- A standard “house rig” and improved technical training are being considered to reduce pressure during get-ins and get-outs.
- Refresher training for 18 bar and front-of-house volunteers was well received, covering fire evacuation, audience illness response and front-of-house procedures.
- Further quarterly training sessions are planned during half terms, with attendance required at least once a year to be eligible for front-of-house allocation.
- More structured toolbox talks and evacuation briefings are needed, particularly for bar teams taking responsibility for the building.
- Fob and lock-up training for new directors remains challenging

Action

- Develop a standard volunteer enquiry/recruitment response template and improve follow-up with new volunteers.
- Continue investigating a volunteer management platform and the funding required for a volunteer coordinator.(SH, GM)
- Schedule further refresher training sessions and ensure outstanding front-of-house and bar volunteers attend. (GM, ChB)

7. 60th Anniversary Initial Planning Update

- Planning is underway for the 60th anniversary season, with show and event submissions being organised across the first six months of the year.
- The anniversary season is expected to be announced on 13 September, subject to approval.
- Potential activities include new writing or South London voices projects, a reading of an early production, member profiles and historical exhibitions.
- Former-member interviews are being developed as audio recordings or podcasts, supported by archive photography.
- The interview project will seek contributions from former members in different roles and periods, while also considering how current membership diversity is represented.
- Archive material may eventually be deposited with Lambeth Archives for safer long-term storage.
- Minutes from approximately 1967–1974 are currently missing and need to be located.
- A 60th-anniversary branding variation and additional photography are being considered.

Action

- Progress the 60th-anniversary announcement, branding, former-member interviews and anniversary event planning (Theatre Committee, CaB, Charlotte Benstead)
- Search for the missing 1967–1974 minutes and clarify archive requirements before depositing material with Lambeth Archives. (ChB)

8. 2027 Budget Planning kick-off

- GM and SH will be budget planning for 2027 in October, using Xero records as a baseline.. CaB queried whether money was available for additional screens for publicity content once improved WiFi was installed; if there are leftover funds from this year then these will not need to be budgeted for next year

Action

- Teams should begin preparing their 2027 budget requirements, separating essential spending from desirable improvements.

9. Commercial, Theatre and Members' Club Reports

The reports from the Commercial, Theatre and Members' Club teams were noted.

- Membership has increased by approximately 11.8% year-to-date; Supporter Circle membership is up approximately 28%.
- Theatre Committee has now interviewed all would-be directors for the first half of 2027 and aims to put together the draft programme for announcement on 13 September (TBC)

Action

- GM to check how many parent + child tickets were sold for Treasure Island

Post Meeting Note: Results below:

Price Category	Ticket Price	No. Tickets	Amount (pre-discount)
<i>Adult and one child ticket.</i>	32.5	22	357.5
<i>Adult and two children</i>	45	18	270
<i>Adult and one child (SLT member/Supporter)</i>	24	2	24
<i>Adult and two children (SLT member/Supporter)</i>	34	6	68

10. AOB

- Open House participation is confirmed for 20 September, with five tours planned, merchandise sales and wardrobe access.
- The foyer must be cleared of chairs by 2pm for the first Open House tour.
- Wardrobe sewing training workshops are supported in principle; weekday evening use of the Kit Room will be explored and classes would be chargeable.
- The garden project is progressing, with rubble removal underway and planting plans being developed for the shaded, clay-soil area.
- Seating and staging arrangements for upcoming productions require clearer communication and smarter planning.

11. Next meeting

Monday 28 September, 20.00, Kit Room, SLT