



Minutes from South London Theatre Executive Committee meeting

28 September 2026

Attendees:

Stephen Hayward (SH), Theatre Director, Chair
Chris Bennett (ChB), House Team
Charlotte Benstead (CIB), 60th Anniversary
Jo Boniface (JoB), Theatre Committee
Dennis Fenton (DF), Backstage & Technical Team
Bex Law (BL), Building Manager
Gareth Milton (GM), Commercial Director
John Winter (JW), Building Team
Sarah Farage (SF), Minutes

1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Caroline Beckett (CaB), Publicity Team
Jenny Bennett (JeB), Wardrobe Team
Guy Jones (GJ), Membership and Brand Team
Alistair Simpson (AS), Backstage & Technical Team

2. Approval of Minutes - 24 August 2026

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

3. Matters Arising

Volunteer Management - a volunteer management portal had been demonstrated to SH and GM, but is expensive and would need work to customise for SLT's needs. An alternative option is being sought.

The next evacuation training sessions will be held on 31st October.

Action

- [JoB to design standard volunteer enquiry/recruitment response template](#)

60th Anniversary - CIB reported on the ideas and activities currently being planned.

- Interviews with previous members had been recorded, and a call had been put out for current members to share their stories.
- Exploring potential collaborations with the Cemetery, Brixton Windmill and the Lido.
- Branding for the anniversary is being developed.
- Social events will be discussed with the Members' Club.

- A gala event in October, possibly over a few nights, is being considered

ChB reported that U3A had requested a talk on SLT's history, and that this could be repeated as part of the anniversary activities.

ChB reported that it was planned to deposit the SLT archives with Lambeth in the longer term. The minutes from 1967- 1974 have not yet been located.

Action

- ChB to provide CIB with contacts to Lambeth heritage groups.

2027 Budget - SH and GM will be discussing the budget with each team over the next few weeks.

Parent/child tickets - nearly 50 of the new parent and child/two children tickets had been sold for Treasure Island. It was suggested that these should be offered again for the Christmas Show. It was also agreed that tickets for Flint Street Nativity should be priced at the lower level.

Action

- GM to add Flint Street Nativity tickets to TicketSource as above.

4. Risk Review

Red risks were reviewed.

- Italian blank firing guns - it was thought that we did not have any of these guns that are subject to recent legislation.
- DNS - there is a need to decide exactly what we need to put in place before this can progress.
- Fire doors - the auto closing mechanism trialed on the foyer door did not work well, and has been replaced with a kick door stop. Anecdotally there seem to be fewer incidents of the door being left open. Lock up training should emphasise the need to check that the Foyer door is closed before leaving the building.
- Evacuation on non-show nights - it was agreed that activity leads (eg hirers, rehearsing directors) should be responsible for evacuating their group, and calling the fire brigade (if necessary). This should be emphasised in the directors' meeting, and lock up training.

Action

- Backstage Team Leads to review and update risk log at their next meeting.
- JW to confirm that there are no Italian blank firing guns in props.
- GM/GJ to discuss what needed for the DNS issue.
- GM to include evac chair training in future evacuation training.

5. Budget Update

The 2026 budget is broadly on track. It was noted that

- There is an overspend on maintenance due to the yard wall collapse.
- Lambeth have yet to invoice for the 2026 loan installment.
- Income from hires, ticket sales and youth theatre are all on track.

- It is hoped accounting services costs will be reduced this year due to better systems for processing and coding expenditure.

6. Expense Form Trial Update

GM reported that the new online expense form was working well and it was agreed to adopt it going forward. The form will be available to members involved in shows, but not placed on the website. There are still some issues with getting members to submit valid VAT receipts for purchases. Guidance is given on the new form.

Action

- **Webteam to remove paper expenses forms from the website.**

7. 2027 Spring/Summer Season

There was a large attendance at the 2027 Spring/Summer season launch, and thanks were noted to the Webteam for adding the shows to the website so promptly. It was noted that two separate weeks will be allocated to 60th anniversary events.

8. Nut Free

Whether the building should be nut free, and advertised as such, was discussed. It was noted that:

- The bar no longer carried products with nuts.
- We do not generally stock ice creams which include nuts, and can avoid doing so going forward.
- It would be difficult to ensure no members of the public bring nuts into the building, and we should not be advertising SLT as a nut free building.
- Extra safeguards can be put in place where a cast/crew member has a severe nut allergy.

Action

- **BL to remove nut free sign left over from a previous show.**

9. Commercial, Theatre and Members' Club Reports

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

- A new sign has been put up to identify the smoking area.
- Where one of the standard pre-show announcements is not used, directors should ensure that any recorded or live announcement includes mention of no readmittance, as well as phones off, and no photos/filming. Front of House should also mention these points when welcoming the audience into the theatre.
- A simple no phones/filming sign will be put up.
- Work to address the current backstage electrical problems will be carried out as a matter of priority.
- The Arts Council have been informed of the short delay in Lambeth putting up planning permission signs, and the knock on effect on the funding submission.
- JW will be exploring whether space gains can be made by installing permanent full height rails in Wardrobe.
- The short get-in/tech time for Gaslight was intended as a trial to see what was possible for tech-lite shows.

- The Members Club bar has been struggling for cover for recent shows. It was suggested that shifting to a pattern of earlier rehearsals/shows and correspondingly earlier closing (e.g. 7:30 starts, 10:30 closing) might be worth considering.
- It was agreed that SLT needed to give strong feedback to Lambeth/TfL about proposals to speed up bus journeys through West Norwood. The proposals include a bus lane opposite the theatre, which would result in drop offs and deliveries blocking the road unless a loading bay could be provided..

Action

- GM to draft response to Lambeth/TfL.

10. AOB

Open House - ChB reported on a very successful Open House, with 45 booked visitors and more dropping in. It was noted that being one of the last buildings open has encouraged some visitors to join the final tour of the day. Thanks were offered to the tour team, Wardrobe, Bar, and those rehearsing who welcomed the visitors. It was agreed that SLT should take part again next year.

11. Next meeting

Monday 26 October 2026, 20.00, Kit Room, SLT