

## Trustees of the Sinodun Players

The 86th meeting of the Trustees was held on Wednesday 4 April 2018 at the Corn Exchange, Wallingford at 7.30pm.

### Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Decisions/Discussions since last meeting not covered elsewhere
3. Minutes of 85th meeting on 31 January 2018
4. Matters arising from 85th meeting not covered elsewhere
5. Items to and from the Board
6. Items to and from DC
7. Financial Matters including SP productions budgets
8. Fundraising including SO lottery
9. Little Theatre Guild
10. GDPR Training - Trustees Attending
11. Society Rules - Potential changes
12. Any other business
13. Date of next meeting

### Attendees:

Nick Morley, John Wright, Debi Lisburne-Diacon, Caroline Wilkes, John Evans, Julie Utley, John Jeskins, Roger Dewell.

(Nick Morley chaired the meeting)

---

#### 1 **Apologies for absence**

Kate Spence

#### 2 **Decisions/Discussions since last meeting not covered elsewhere**

John Wright mentioned agreeing to apply to the SO lottery as a decision made since the last meeting. This will be covered during a later agenda item.

#### 3 **Minutes of 85th meeting on 31 January 2018**

Minutes of 85<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed, and no comments made. These need to be signed by the Chairman.

#### 4 **Matters arising from 85th meeting not covered elsewhere**

Corn Exchange Times being sent to non-members. Some discussion of what members get for their membership in view of some comments.

Debi said that Paddy C could tell us what extra membership could provide.

No other items were mentioned.

## 5 Items to and from the Board

John Evans mentioned that the major issues include contractor's snagging list and its financing. Other issues are safety and GDPR. Will be discussed at the next Board meeting, next week. He said that the last payment from SODC has not been made as the completion certificate has not been supplied.

The Leader fund – Debi mentioned that the fundraising committee had discussed the fact that the money for LEADER should be spent by 20<sup>th</sup> April. If not, this would be lost. John Evans stated that this would not happen, and that the situation would be discussed with the Board shortly.

The County Councillors say that we should apply again for Councillor funding in June and they will see what they can do. We could get more of the money requested and Nick said we have another year to spend the money. All under review.

Planning application: document sent round from the Theatres' Trust. Julie Utley said that she has contacted noise consultants and they have been approached by the developers. They have supplied a further contact name who could help. John Evans said that we would also have other names from the Theatres' Trust. There is also the question of a Covenant and that this is not straightforward.

John E has talked to SODC, and they would want to see the specification for the noise survey so that they can validate the existing survey. It was suggested that we have a third-party survey done, so that they can adopt our objectives, rather than that of the applicants. This will be discussed on Monday (next DC meeting).

We understand that the forthcoming survey would be done over a period of three days and that preparation for this would be needed. We need to know when the survey would be done.

We talked about Oliver's views about contacting supporters and canvassing support. John Wright said that the majority of the existing objections were 'copy and paste'. There was little in the way of valid planning objections.

John E suggested that:

1. We need to be involved in the noise survey
2. We need to get involved in any planning meeting(s)

Debi said that she has a well-qualified friend who could help with any planning process, if further support needed. This is a "seriously knowledgeable" planning expert.

John Evens mentioned that there is legislation going through now which would maintain 'existing use' provision, if the planning review process lasts long enough for the change in legislation to come into being.

John Wright said that the noise impact can work both ways in that if the Corn Exchange is running a quiet event, noise from adjacent properties could impact in the other sense.

## 6 Items to and from DC

Nick mentioned that the lights taken for the new house lights had now been replaced through the Roof Project. The cost had been around £5k.

John Evans said that there is remaining work to be done, as the existing lighting control

system is not without problems. The issue of Oliver having to chase the further work, once he returns, needs to be addressed. Julie believes that the work needs to be farmed out more, and there was general agreement to this.

John Evans said that there are several lighting designers being trained and that they will be taking on this work in the future. Some discussion about the burden on individuals of doing certain things, including lighting. It is felt that certain individuals should be encouraged to learn how to do specialist tasks, but discussion indicated that there is a lack of people stepping forward.

Julie said that more people should be trained. John Wright suggested that DC should take responsibility to solve the resourcing problem. There are a number of individuals who have been approached but have turned the situation down. Mentoring could be a solution, but someone don't want to lead on the position.

It was felt that there needs to be a process where the challenge faced by newcomers are reduced. It was proposed that the DC be asked how more individuals could be found to take on these roles.

Nick indicated that the general feeling was that Showtime was very successful, and that this might be reprised. The Board profit this time was of the order of £2,300. Julie feels that any reprise could impact SP Shows so the DC needs to take a view on timings. This will be discussed further at the Board.

Nick formally thanked the opening night teams on their work to make it such a successful event. It was suggested that Edward Hall and Jeremy Irons be added to letterheads as patrons and that standardised formats should be available for use. Debi said that Graham has produced a revised template for the Sinodun Players.

Profits from various productions were covered, plus transfer of monies between accounts (such as for Cinderella). Gift Aid application will be sent off shortly.

Debi has suggested that the trend in memberships should be considered – including what we might be talking to Paddy Chatterton about, including increasing membership.

There will be an informal discussion meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> April. All three major committees have been invited. Debi will be buying a bottle of wine to give Paddy as a thank you gift.

Caroline mentioned that there are still three costume containers and further storage is needed. The issue of storage is being addressed by Jean Simmons and Jan Castle.

The drama festivals and those that could be supported were discussed.

The issue of chasing parents for Encore membership fees was discussed and methods of chasing/enforcing were considered, including generating invoices for all taking part at the start of term and giving to parents directly.

There were, apparently, two Encore volunteers for the Car Rally. More volunteers were needed for the event, or a share of the takings on the day will be lost. Debi is working to get further names.

The catering for the Vision meeting had been outsourced to the Dolphin. This could be arranged again for the LTG Conference in October.

Profits from Panto were down, at £13,000. The limited company is hanging on to takings to help with cash flow. Expenses for the Panto have been paid.

## 7 **Financial Matters including SP productions budgets**

John Wright stated that Jeremy Irons sales are in the Corn Exchange account. Debi

suggested that this was fundraising income, and John indicated that there are reasons for the placement of funds. We are keeping two sets of accounts, one for the charity and one for the limited company.

Debi mentioned that the fundraising meeting (held earlier in the afternoon) had requested regular updates on fundraising results. Since this is complicated by the fact that funds need to be kept in different places, John Wright feels that a list should be maintained at the fundraising level.

John Wright said that the seat sales were still at around 30. It was agreed that more businesses in the area should be approached.

John Wright believes that the offer of £1,000 from Councillors for cans could easily result in a loss, due to the overheads involved in the donation, including covenants, VAT, etc.

New bank account is up-and-running, and John Wright has initiated on-line banking. Nick and John Jeskins need to see John Wright after the meeting, as this is not a straightforward process.

John Wright stated that the Virgin Money page will be kept going, together with the old bank account in order to accommodate further contributions.

Julie said there is a need for a marquee for the garden party. John Herring can get support to put the marquee up, we were told, it was just a matter of finding one. Debi has one and she will supply measurements. Everything else for the Garden Party is in place.

#### **SP Performance Budgets:**

Nick stated that budgets have been done for Lettuce and Lovage. Costs still being chased for Odyssey

### **8 Fundraising including SO lottery**

Coverage of fundraising meeting and discussion of strategic and mainstream committees. Discussed responsibility of the Board for fundraising and the permitted involvement of the Trustees in the fundraising activities.

The reporting lines into the Board were discussed (another matter arising from the earlier fundraising meeting) and the complexity of the situation.

The differences in approach techniques for smaller and larger funds were again covered, together with the status of the preparation and review of a business plan. This, it was stated, was in John Evans's hands and he agreed that the plan would be sent out to the committee for review ahead of the next strategic fundraising meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April. It was also agreed that asking Paddy C. for comments may become appropriate after his visit and discussion on the 17<sup>th</sup> April.

Debi communicated the various letters she has written recently (including Tom Stoppard and the Master of St Catherine's in Oxford). The need for further support for the vehicle rally in May. Debi has suggested that there be, if possible, a high-profile 'evening with' every month, if enough names could be found and approached.

The situation on the lottery licence was briefly covered. Rose has asked whether she could do it and has been told that this would need to be done centrally, and that this should be formalised. There was some discussion of whether this would be necessary in view of the SO Lottery and other fundraising activities in place.

Debi mentioned the benefits of leaflets for the open day and other marketing material.

Nick M. has been asked whether Trustees could do shifts on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June as meeting and

greeting. Displays may be needed including what people can do to get involved.

Roger reported on the existence of the Lottery page. Discussion centred on the web page and the possibility of including a hot link to the Lottery page. Agreed that publicity material should be sent to Jean Simmons for the newsletter and (later) to Oliver for the web site. Other channels such as Twitter and Facebook need to be investigated. Roger agreed to send images to Jean and others for publicity purposes.

9 **Little Theatre Guild**

Conference is on 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> April, and Nick will be going, with others.

Nick mentioned that French's will give a 10% discount if we say we are members of Little Theatre Guild and that this should be borne in mind for future productions.

There is a conference to be held in October at the Corn Exchange. Nick will be putting out a request for support for the conference in the newsletter.

10 **GDPR Training - Trustees Attending**

Nick said that we have more than 10 attendees now (morning of 5<sup>th</sup> May), so the minimum number has been reached. The cost per head is £32, which will be covered by the Corn Exchange for all attendees.

Full details of attendees are not needed until the morning of the meeting.

11 **Society Rules - Potential changes**

The Society rules currently talk about the Drama Committee, which they would like to amend to Sinodun Players Committee. As the chair of that committee is the public face of the Sinodun Players, they should be known as the Chairman of the Sinodun Players.

There were no dissents to this proposal for change of the Society rules, and John Wright will be dealing with this.

12 **Any other business**

There was no further business

13 **Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting is 29<sup>th</sup> May

*N Morley*  
*29/05/18*