

Trustees of Sinodun Players CIO

(Charity Number: 1210415)

Minutes of the 16th meeting held on 14 April 2026 at 7:45 pm.

- 1. Apologies:** Apologies from Martin Parr for the second half of the meeting.
- 2. Attendees:** Will Lidbetter, Martin Parr, Anna Garland, Minaz Beddall, Nick Morley, Martina Platts, Mike Baker, Emma Trotman, Andy Pearson (CXWL Board), Caroline Malnick (SPC).
- 3. Minutes:** Agreed and signed.

4. Matters arising

CX external lighting and advertising project: Martina gave a brief update. Planning permission will shortly be submitted for lighting, brackets and banners for the front elevation of the theatre. Planning permission for digital screens has been postponed pending further consultation with SP membership/volunteers and council planning officers. ITTs and costing for the front elevation are progressing. Councillor Heritage and Councillor Glover have been approached for support; Councillor Heritage expressed reservations regarding digital screens.

Stonework façade: Andy reported that repairs were undertaken approximately 8–9 years ago. A survey done on 10 April will inform current repair costs. Works required include stone cutting and replacement, mortar repairs, and repairs to water-damaged areas. In particular, the column next to 4 Market Place requires water repairs and an investigation into whether this is an ongoing issue.

Data Protection and IT: A paper was shared with the CX Board and the Trustees. Phase 1 and Phase 2 costings were outlined. Phase 1 will address cybersecurity and data protection issues. Costs will be shared between the Board and the CIO through the rent agreement process. Mike asked which computers were covered. **Action:** Martin will confirm with Chris. Minaz asked whether Phase 2 is essential. Martin noted that the Phase 2 security assessment is essential and may identify additional work.

AI use in shows: It was discussed whether an AI policy is required for the CX. Martin suggested that guidelines could be developed as part of a Producer's Manual. Copyright risks rest with the user of AI tools. Informed consent is required when personal images are used, including consideration of whether they are used to train AI models. The use of generative AI in funding applications to local and national government must be declared.

Action: Martin to draft AI principles for discussion and to confirm whether Microsoft Copilot will be included in the implementation of Microsoft 365 (Phase 1 of the IT project).

Trustee Roles: Minaz shared a draft advertisement for trustee recruitment in CX Times and the RVA/Oxfordshire Volunteer publications. Feedback was provided on the wording. It was agreed to keep the roles broad, including safeguarding, finance and general trustee roles.

Action: Minaz will place the adverts.

Emma advised that she intends to stand down at the AGM due to time commitments to other SP activities. It was agreed that a dedicated safeguarding trustee is required, and this role will need to be replaced.

Working with SOHA: It was agreed to arrange a visit to the theatre for SOHA attendees. Caroline will coordinate via SPC, and Anna will inform Jackie Logan at SOHA to put Jackie in direct contact with Caroline.

5. Items to and from the CX Board: Andy reported that

- CCTV is now fully operational; the policy will be updated and published on the website. Oversight is managed by Thames Valley Police (Abingdon). Andy Pearson has taken over responsibility for CCTV on the CXWL Board.
- Plans are being developed to upgrade the ladies' dressing room toilet facilities.
- Bar prices are being increased.
- A request from Wallingford U3A for a film society will not be pursued due to space constraints.
- Additional wheelchair access and a carer seat are being reconsidered.
- A new rate of 2026/27 for use of foyer space by Lloyds Bank has been agreed; there is no fixed contract period.

6. Items to and from SPC: Caroline reported that

- Annual Membership Mojo Subscription has been paid.
- The SP Production of The Unfriend went well. About 71% ticket sales. First glance profit around £6500, but still some expenses to come through.
- The Sewing Club, early Autumn production, is holding auditions this week.
- Sam Rhodes is trying to get hold of contacts for the Agatha Christie (AC) weekend to further promote SP's Murder, Margaret and Me.
- The Marketing Team is now on board to help market incoming shows.
- Caroline has been speaking with a local influencer who runs a small-business appreciation Instagram page with around 1,600 followers. She will attend SP production dress rehearsals and do shout-outs on her Instagram page. SPC have agreed to trial 2 free tickets she can use as a 'give away.'
- Sarah Enticknap (SE) raised the issue that the free Microsoft Publisher app, used for SP programmes, is being discontinued in October. SPC approved SE to investigate cloud-based publishing packages with the knowledge that there will most likely be a cost going forward.
- Stage combat workshop being planned for 30th May. Organised by Abi Thornton (AT). We hope to use the remaining grant received for training. Len Pannett (LP) is investigating whether we can still do this, considering we are past the deadline. The workshop will go on regardless.

- Julie Utley (JU) is organising an art exhibition for local artists, together with a cheese-and-wine tasting social event. Date to be fixed in June.
- A SP Subscription reminder letter is going out to all Encore parents. Payment of Encore subs has been a bit lax in the past, so we are endeavouring to keep on top of it.
- An extra incoming show tribute band, Alter Eagles, has been added to the schedule. 19th June 2026.
- Upcoming Posting Letters to the Moon are concerned about ticket sales. They requested we consider a discounted ticket scheme, which I told them was not our policy. Mike Baker (MB) agreed. We have done our best to do a final push on social media, postmaster etc. Current ticket sales 92. **Decision:** Trustees agreed that late ticket discounting when shows are undersold would not be pursued due to fairness concerns for customers who had already purchased tickets.
- The archive cupboard in DW Studio, in the main, is cleared. SPC decided to go for external shredding rather than in-house, as there is so much paperwork. Cost £80 for 12 shredder bags or £55 for 6 shredder bags.
- Chris Bertram has expressed an interest in reading children's stories over the summer. Probably up in the JW room.
- Met up with Mike Thomas (MT) from Bunkfest fringe committee. We have agreed on the usual Friday and Saturday auditorium and Saturday afternoon foyer gigs. Saturday 'anything goes' session in the Curtis Room and Sunday 'anything goes' session in the foyer. We are not keen on anything for Sunday in the auditorium. Venue contribution is £540.00. **Decision:** A £540 venue fee was approved. A proposal for an additional donation was considered and declined following a vote, based on the fact that we have to treat each of many requests in a standard manner.
- External fundraising event (for CRUK) using CX theatre: A reduced hire fee of £400 (instead of £900) was approved. CX will handle ticket sales. Profits will be sent directly to CRUK via SPC to ensure accountability.

7. Finance update

Minaz circulated a finance update. SP are forecasting a c.£20k loss at year-end May 2026. Last year (May 2025), we made a £50k surplus.

This year we have had 3 new large spends: a £18k grant to CX for lighting design and planning, a £22k spend on new technology (audio mixing desk), and a £25k rent to CX (total £65k). This reflects the agreed use of reserves.

Last year we received a 3yr accumulated dividend from CX (£19k) but this was largely negated by the £20k of lawyers' fees spent on CIO transition.

Except for these anomalies, income and expenditure have been steady.

Minaz will include a brief commentary from the trustees in the annual financial report.

Anne is progressing well with QuickBooks.

Action: Minaz will prepare a 2026–27 budget for the May meeting.

Cash management: The CAF Bank account is open; currently, a large amount of charity money is sitting in a non-interest-bearing account. To ensure our funds work actively for the charity, a Flagstone account has been opened to invest reserves across interest-bearing accounts. Ethical and financial risks were noted but manageable through CAF oversight of the Flagstone accounts. **Action:** Minaz had circulated a proposed investment strategy; some minor amendments were agreed upon. The strategy was approved by consensus for Minaz to implement.

8. Membership

A paper from Anna and Will was discussed. The aims are to improve governance, engagement of volunteers and SP members, and increase donation income.

Discussion covered inclusion, voting rights, and possible membership benefits or tiers. Current membership income is approximately £6,000 per annum.

It was agreed to consult members and volunteers at an open meeting. A meeting is targeted for 25 July at the CX. A subcommittee (Will, Anna and Minaz) will develop proposals for discussion at that meeting, with Caroline inviting two SPC representatives to be involved.

9. Records Management

Will presented a paper on the secure and confidential management of trustee records and correspondence, which is agreed as necessary. Discussion centred on whether to wait for Microsoft 365 or to use Synology immediately. Hard copy storage options were also discussed, including off-site storage or storage with our solicitors or accountants.

Actions:

- Soft-copy: Mike to create Synology accounts and a secure trustee space.
- Hard-copy: Minaz/Anna to explore storage options with our solicitors or accountants.

To be revisited at the May meeting.

10. Safeguarding

Emma had no updates to report this month.

11. Any Other Business

- Mike noted that volunteers (e.g. house managers) are sometimes 'at a loose end' during performances. He will explore providing terrestrial TV via foyer monitors and prepare a proposal. Will will discuss with the house managers.
- Nick reported that a recent Little Theatre Guild event on 'New Writing' was successfully hosted with positive feedback.

- Will requested that the Trustee Board papers clearly state whether they are for information, approval, or discussion. Martina will include this status in future agendas.

12. Next Meeting:

SP Trustees: Tuesday 12 May, 7.45 pm in the Curtis Room

SPC: Wednesday 6 May – Minaz attending

CXWL Board: Tuesday 5 May – Will attending

Emma gave apologies for the next trustees' meeting.

Will

12 May 2026