

Minutes of Committee Meeting - 29 May 2023

Present: Hannah Bradley Croall

Martin Foreman

Claire Morand

James Scott

Alastair Smith

Kate Stephenson

Claire Wood

Robert Wylie

Non-Committee minute taker: Alma Forsyth

1. Apologies: Siobhan McGovern
2. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by Robert and seconded by Alastair.
3. **Copenhagen report:** On behalf of the Committee Hannah congratulated all involved in an excellent production. Co-production manager, Claire W, reported that there had been no complaints from director, Ross Hope, regarding support from the Committee. The final financial results were not yet available but, 126 tickets having been sold, the venue costs had been covered.
4. **StagEHd update:** Hannah reported that preparations were progressing smoothly. The programme was out and tickets were being booked for the event, scheduled over the weekend of 9 June. However, one FoH volunteer was still required for the 15h00 to 20h00 slot. Robert offered to cover this on Sunday.
5. **Fringe 2023 update:** Claire M (Fringe production manager) and Claire W (director of *crackers*) confirmed that rehearsals were already underway and that those for *Shakers* would begin next week. A discussion then ensued regarding how to organise FoH. Claire M suggested that written instructions would be useful. It was agreed not to ask Fringe casts to step in as had been done in previous years. A general call would go out for volunteers. Martin suggested that they could be given free tickets as an inducement but Hannah was against, on the grounds that this had not been taken into account for the projected income. In the meantime, Claire M would contact Michael Mulligan (venue manager) for exact FoH requirements. Hannah reported that the Fringe Box Office, which deals with all our Fringe ticket sales, had refused to allow an EGTG members' discount. Nevertheless, the Committee discussed various possibilities of offering a discount but was unable to find a practical solution. Bringing this discussion to an end, Hannah asked the Committee if it was satisfied that it had explored all avenues regarding a discount on Fringe tickets. The Committee agreed that it had.
6. **Membership update:** Martin reported a total of 37 members, including a member of the *crackers* cast who is under 18 and therefore not required to pay, being regarded as an honorary member. Claire W would talk to her about a possible refund. Kate suggested making our policy on under 18s clearer. With the next members' social event coming up in June, Martin asked that a reminder be sent in the next Newsletter.
7. **Treasurer update:** Hannah, Claire W and Alastair met with a candidate who had applied via Volunteer Edinburgh. Although she had excellent qualifications her English was not of a high

enough standard to cope with the requirements of the role. The search, therefore, continues. Hannah, Claire W and Martin would soon be recognised by the EGTG bank as signatories.

8. **Home Street:** Hannah thanked those who had participated in the clear-out on Sunday 28th. a) Health and Safety Policy: After careful inspection, Kate had serious concerns about the lack of fire safety measures. She submitted a paper to the Committee on all aspects of health and safety and, after a wide-ranging discussion on requirements, it was agreed to spend up to £400 to rectify problems. b) Loans of costumes/props to other companies: they should all go via Kate. c) Other: Martin asked if the washing machine was functioning. Kate replied that, since the installation of a new sink, the washing machine would be ready for action after a new hose was plumbed in. Hannah suggested rigging up a pulley in the corridor to dry/air clothes. Kate announced yet another a moth infestation and stressed the need to buy moth balls. Martin thought it would be better first of all to use moth bombs before moving on to the balls. The next Home Street clear out was scheduled for Saturday 15 July from 10h30 to 12h00 for which volunteers would be sought in the next members' Newsletter.
9. **Constitution: report from sub-committee** (Alastair, Martin, Robert and Siobhan): At the AGM on 22 March, the membership approved changing the validity of annual membership from a calendar year to a twelve-month rolling year. The sub-committee amended the Constitution accordingly and sought the agreement of the full Committee before sending it to OSCR, being legally obliged to do so within three months of the decision's being taken. Regarding the EGTG's charitable status, the sub-committee had discussed taking advantage of a new law in Scotland and moving from an unincorporated (OSCR) to an incorporated (SCIO) charity. This would be favourable in a number of areas: contracts would be signed as EGTG and not individuals, limited liability would be entered into as EGTG and not individual trustees, EGTG could own property i.e. Home Street would belong to EGTG and not via those who were trustees when it was originally purchased. Hannah welcomed the suggestion but wondered what would happen to assets we currently hold. Alastair replied we would be able to donate them to the new charitable body. He added that a new Constitution would have to make clear who would receive such assets in the event of the charity's dissolution. Hannah asked the sub-committee to send proposals by email for the careful consideration of the full Committee. Any change would have to go before the membership at the next AGM. She thanked the sub-committee for its work. At this point Alastair had to leave the meeting.
10. **Co-operation with University of Edinburgh:** With EGTG celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2024, Robert and Martin have been looking into its relationship with the University. In their report Robert outlined several possibilities for strengthening ties to the benefit of both parties, including widening our membership base, finding extra rehearsal (and performance) space, collaboration with Bedlam, Paradox and other University performance groups, consultation with the English and European Studies departments. Claire M asked if EGTG had a contract with the University. Hannah replied we are part of the Graduate Association which is helping her find archive material for the 70th anniversary. Martin added that he is not only a graduate of the University but has also joined the Graduate Association. The Committee agreed that Martin and Robert should proceed to make contact after the summer holidays.
11. **Publicity Budget:** Martin and Robert have been investigating how to publicise EGTG more widely. Their main recommendation is to have an EGTG strap-line which clearly describes what kind of theatre we do. Hannah welcomed this suggestion and proposed introducing it

along with an EGTG mission statement at the next AGM. Martin, however, was in favour of having the strap-line ready for the end of August when we ask for submissions from directors for next season. Robert supported him saying it could act as a 'road test' for the new strap-line. Claire M said that devising it should help us know what kind of director we wish to attract. Hannah proposed creating a mood board to which Committee members could add ideas for discussion in July. Regarding a mission statement, Hannah thought we should ask members what EGTG means to them and have it ready for our anniversary year. The second part of Martin and Robert's report concerned having a general publicity budget for use by the group as a whole and from which the publicity budget for individual shows would come. Each director would be consulted but the publicity would be done by the Committee and its publicity officer. Kate, however, emphasised that flexibility was important if a director wished to be more involved in publicity. Hannah was of the opinion that setting up next year's slate would be the appropriate time to implement the general publicity budget.

12. **AOB:** Kate asked if anyone would be available the morning of Thursday 1 June to meet a theatre group which wished to borrow items from Home Street. Hannah volunteered.

The next meeting will be held via Zoom on **Wednesday 28 June at 19h30**.