

Minutes of Committee Meeting 11 February 2024 (amended)

Present: Hannah Bradley Croall

Darran Cosgrove

Siobhan McGovern

Claire Morand

James Scott

Alastair Smith

Kate Stephenson

Claire Wood

Robert Wylie

Non-Committee Minute Taker: Alma Forsyth

1. Apologies: Martin Foreman

2. Approval of Minutes of last meeting (7 January): the Minutes were approved by Hannah and seconded by Robert. Between the last meeting and this the Committee held a vote by email and agreed to invite Darran to join them. Hannah, therefore, formally welcomed him.

3. Taiwan: update - Because of conflict of interest, Kate left the meeting for this item. Director, Claire M, reported that the first rehearsal without a prompt, although a tad rocky, had been very encouraging. Hannah thought it was a good position to be in two weeks before curtain up. Richard Spiers, assisted by Darran, had finished the set and Darran had been recruited as stage crew. A sound operator was still being sought; Claire M would do it if no one came forward. Claire W suggested Maria to whom she would send a request for help, along with a rehearsal schedule for information. The principal remaining task was that of finding someone to drive the van on performance day. Hannah suggested Emma Carter and Gregor McElvogue. Claire M will contact the former and Hannah the latter. Hannah also mooted the possibility of asking a group participating on the same day as EGTG to share a van.

4. The Fastest Clock: update – Kate rejoined the meeting. Claire W announced that the first audition had been reasonably attended; the second taking place at the time of this meeting. Abbye was optimistic that a good cast would be found. As working candles will be used on stage, the appropriate safety information had been given to the Roxy. The publicity image had been created and Claire W would push the Roxy to step into action as soon as possible. Hannah would like tickets to go on sale at the beginning of March. Claire W issued a plea for stuffed birds which figure prominently in the set dressing. None were to be found in Home Street. The cast will be announced officially after 24 February, the night on which EGTG performs *Taiwan* at the SCDA one-act festival. Siobhan asked that all who use BP for rehearsals be reminded to clear up afterwards in order to prevent complaints from other users. As BP is to be redecorated, Hannah will approach the University for a space which Abbye can use during the work.

5. Fringe 24: update – Production manager, Claire M, had met directors Hilary Spiers (*A Singular Deception*) and Robert Wylie (*The Ruffian on the Stair*) to discuss the running order which was decided as ASD at 19h00 and TRotS at 21h00. Gordon Hughes will light both shows and Richard Spiers will provide sound for ASD. Robert had not yet approached anyone for sound on TRotS. In order to ensure that EGTG members receive a ticket discount (currently not possible at the Fringe Box Office), Claire M proposed allocating each day 60 tickets to the Fringe and retaining 20 for members to buy in advance or on the door. Hannah would prefer to retain only 10. A discussion

ensued as to the best method of proceeding while still allowing EGTG control over its allocation. Claire M will put her proposal in writing and Hannah will investigate third party involvement. In the past Kate had used Ticket Taylor which she found to be efficient. Claire M asked the Committee's approval to join once again the Fringe's 2-for-1 ticket promotion, not just for opening night but also for the second which is often marked by lower ticket sales. Approval was given. Depending on Abbye's use of BP for *Fastest Clock* rehearsals, provisional dates had been chosen for a table read of the Fringe plays (3 April) and auditions (17 April). Hannah was concerned that only one round of auditions would be held. Robert was anxious that the pool of potential actors for Fringe shows was quickly dwindling. He wished to audition clusters of actors whom he regarded as having the necessary talent for *TRotS* and who would get on well together. Kate advised that auditions should be open to all. Hannah, while sympathising with Robert's concern, reassured him that April/May was the time most Edinburgh groups held their auditions. Robert suggested that potential auditionees register beforehand to give the directors an idea of who might appear. To this end, Claire M will set up a google form. Auditionees not available on 17 April, would be given an alternative time. Hilary, whose play requires a black actor, was pleased to have received already notes of interest. Claire M asked for clarification regarding the expense of printing scripts. Hannah informed her that this would be covered by EGTG and so would not come out of the show director's budget. Hilary had raised the point that her play, *ASD*, might provoke unintended controversy and wondered how much publicity should focus on the protagonist (Dr Barry) having been a woman passing as a man. Kate, backed by Siobhan and Hannah, was of the opinion that historically Dr Barry was a woman dressing as a man and why she did it was not an issue in the play. It is her story which is important and other issues need not be included in publicity. Nevertheless, Hannah will prepare a response document lest questions arise. For the auditions, Hannah had received the story summary for each play but also required character descriptions. She will send a template to Robert. With reference to costumes, Kate had already been approached by Hilary.

6. Membership: update – EGTG has 42 active members and four pending. Hannah was pleased to report that renewals were being received from those not involved in productions, which seemed to indicate that the new system of a rolling 12-month membership and automatic reminder was working well.

7. Treasury: update – The 2023 season made a profit of £630 (+ £150 for *Copenhagen*, - £50 for *Chalk*; Fringe productions did well but not to the same level as 2022). Hannah would prefer the group to be in a more secure financial position in order to survive years in which it might not make any money. The accounts had been examined by independent auditor, Rob McKean, and Hannah will circulate them at a later date to the Committee.

8. Confirmation date of AGM: Hannah proposed Wednesday 27 March (19h00 for 19h15) which was agreed by the Committee. As EGTG will be changing bank accounts, Hannah was willing to remain as acting Treasurer and hand over the accounts by June. Alastair felt it was inappropriate to propose to the Membership that the President and Treasurer be the same person. Day to day accounts must be run by the Treasurer but the person taking on this role could wait until June to have their name on the accounts. Kate proposed that a new Treasurer be elected and that the Committee explain to the Membership that there would be a gradual handover. Alastair concluded, therefore, that one of the documents circulated to the Membership prior to the AGM should give the name of the proposed new Treasurer (Darran). As last year's AGM in form of a 'scratch night' had been a success, Hannah wondered if it could be repeated. Kate agreed that it had provided an excellent opportunity for members to engage. She will investigate possible venues, a room at the Waverley being favourably

mentioned. This would have to be decided soon in order to include the information on the invitation to the AGM which must be sent 30 days before the meeting date.

9. Constitution: sub-Committee report – Alastair had already shared with the Committee a document stating why EGTG should become an SCIO and one in the form of a draft new Constitution. Robert asked if the Committee thought the document proposing the new Constitution was ready to go before Members. Hannah noted a change regarding honoraria and fees. Alastair explained that Members cannot be paid for acting or directing but other services by Members (eg. as playwright or technician) could be remunerated. He added that the new Constitution would be much less prescriptive, allowing EGTG to be more flexible as to the timing of productions and what to put on. Replying to Hannah's further remark that the minimum number of trustees would go to three from five, Alastair confirmed that it was in line with current legislation. Hannah also observed that the minimum period of notice for the AGM would be reduced to 14 days from the former 30. After discussing the pros and cons of such a change, the Committee agreed to accept 14 days (which would not disallow a longer period of notice). Alastair also informed the Committee that independent auditor, Rob McKean, had put him in touch with a conveyancer with a view to the transfer of Home Street to EGTG as SCIO. Robert thanked Alastair for his work on the new Constitution. Answering a question from Claire M, Kate confirmed that the minimum age for membership was 16. Hannah summed up the Constitution discussion by confirming that Alastair's draft Constitution would be sent to the Membership with the invitation to the AGM and other relevant documents. Alastair was of the opinion that it would be better to provide a link to the draft Constitution rather than circulate the document itself. This suggestion was accepted. The accounts breakdown would be available to the Membership on request. Hannah concluded that by presenting the proposed new Constitution now, EGTG should be an SCIO by 2025.

10. Devising Workshop: update – Claire M would like to start by mid-March. It was agreed that publicity could go out after *Taiwan* at the SCDA one-act festival and after the announcement of the cast for *The Fastest Clock*.

11. AOB: a) As a welcome gesture, Robert invited Darran to join him and Siobhan for coffee.
b) Hannah would send out a doodle poll to ascertain the next date for a clear out of Home Street.

The next meeting will take place via zoom on Sunday 17 March at 19h00.