



EAST COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes,
Isle of Wight, PO32 6RU

Tel: (01983) 299082 Email: clerk@eastcowestowncouncil.co.uk

Minutes of a meeting of **Theatre Committee** held at The East Side Curve, York Avenue, East Cowes **Thursday 17th July 2025 at 5pm**

Present:

Councillors: Cllrs Reardon, Lake, Palin

Also Present:

Amy White Theatre: Tressa Lambert, Becky Savage, Dave Priddle

Clerk: S Chilton **Deputy Clerk:** C Jones

TC12/25 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Nominations were received for Cllr Cameron Palin for Chair; Cllr Palin was nominated and seconded.

Resolved: Cllr Palin was elected Chair

TC13/25 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

Nominations were received for Cllr Sharon Lake for Deputy Chair; Cllr Lake was nominated and seconded

Resolved: Cllr Lake was elected Deputy Chair.

TC14/25 WELCOME NEW COUNCILLOR

1.1 This item was deferred to the next Committee Meeting.

TC15/25 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Warleigh-Lack and Cllr Love.

TC16/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

5.1 Cllr Reardon declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of East Cowes Community Partnership and East Cowes Business Association.

5.2 No written requests for dispensations were received.

TC17/25 MINUTES

6.1 The Committee approved and signed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 17th April 2025.

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting on Thursday 16th January 2025 were approved and signed.

TC18/25 FINANCE

7.1 The Deputy Clerk explained the Qtr. 1 budget report and the Committee noted the report.

7.2 The Deputy Clerk explained the financial report in result of the Mid-year show with a profit of £596.80 and this was noted by the Committee.

Resolved: To note the Quarter 4 budget report and the Mid-Year Shows financial report.

TC19/25 MID YEAR-SHOW – THE PROJECTIONIST

8.1 The Chair noted that the temperature during the mid-year show was uncomfortably high and requested that the committee explore the feasibility of acquiring an air conditioning unit or similar cooling solution to improve conditions for future events.

Becky raised a concern regarding potential matinee performances during the summer months, particularly in the evenings, where sunlight through the windows could be disruptive. She suggested exploring options to block the

light more effectively. The committee discussed the possibility of installing blackout blinds, though it was noted that this could be a significant expense. It was agreed that more cost-effective alternatives should also be considered. The black curtains recently installed at the front of the stage were noted to have had a positive impact on the performance and fulfilled their intended purpose effectively. Becky and Tressa suggested exploring the option of pleating the fabric to prevent disruption from wind and maintain a more polished appearance.

It was noted that the fire alarm was triggered during one of the performances. To enhance safety and ensure clarity during future events, it was suggested that a clearly visible fire evacuation procedure be displayed. This should include instructions for both the safe exit of the premises and guidance on how to silence the alarm if necessary. For administrative purposes, it was agreed that a booking form should be completed for all future performances and rehearsals.

Resolved: To Investigate the cost of A/C units and black out blinds and to a blank copy of the booking form to T Lambert. To get more curtains made and pleated for the stage.

TC20/25 CHRISTMAS PANTO – 2025

9.1 The Committee were informed that 'Cinderella' has been selected as the Christmas pantomime. The Clerk reminded members that any anticipated expenses for costumes and props should be submitted to the Clerk's office for prior approval, to ensure spending remains within the allocated budget. Becky confirmed that there will be four performances of 'Cinderella', with discussions ongoing about the possibility of increasing this to five depending on ticket sales. The Deputy Clerk was asked to notify the Assistant Facilities Officer to update the number of performances from four to five on the PPL annual renewal licence. If a fifth performance is confirmed, an additional rehearsal may be required on the Monday evening. The Deputy Clerk will liaise with the Assistant Facilities Officer to ensure that the Amy White Theatre is booked for rehearsal on the previous Monday and recorded in the electronic diary. The Chair requested that the recruitment of volunteers for the servery be included as an agenda item for the September meeting. It was confirmed that Ollie and Dan will be assisting the production and tech team for the Christmas Panto also.

Resolved: Ollie and Dan will be the Tech team for the Christmas Panto, recruitment of volunteers will be on the September Agenda. To advise Assistant Facilities Officer of number of performances for the PPL Annual renewal license.

TC21/25 FUTURE USE OF THEATRE – 2026

10.1 It was confirmed that there will be no pantomime or mid-year show scheduled for 2026. However, there is potential for the Picture House to be shown in November. The Chair expressed interest in exploring alternative entertainment options for the Town Hall. Becky and Tressa announced that, after 13 consecutive years of involvement, they will be stepping back from organising performances in 2026. They highlighted the increasing popularity of tribute bands as a possible option but advised that thorough research and due diligence would be necessary to ensure selected acts are not already performing free of charge at local pubs or restaurants. The committee also discussed the possibility of inviting other theatre groups to use the Town Hall, as well as hosting comedy or quiz nights. It was noted that professional acts not associated with pub venues typically cost around £1,000 per performance. Becky informed the committee that one of the cast members is a former pub landlord and still holds a valid alcohol licence, which could present an opportunity for licensed alcohol sales at future events. Tressa proposed developing a questionnaire to be distributed to groups who have previously booked the Town Hall and made repeat bookings, to gather feedback and support future planning. It was agreed that all potential acts for 2026 should be brought forward for discussion at the September meeting, to allow sufficient time for bookings to be made thereafter.

Resolved: To issue questionnaire to groups hiring the town hall, requesting feedback on what would encourage them to re-book. Potential acts for 2026 will be brought forward to the September meeting.

Meeting closed 5.55pm