



Minutes of SHADDO Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 24 February 2021 (Via Zoom)

Present:

Gareth Jones, Angela Jones, Hilary Tucker, Cheryl Milne (Chair), Rebecca Strong, Liz James, Pam Hudgell, Henry Loud, Neill Wilkinson, Simon Classey, Ellie Classey

In attendance

Peter Crowther

Cheryl, as Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and summarised the agenda and aims of the meeting.

1. Matters arising from last meeting

(a) Donation to Shaddo

Cheryl reported that she had composed a letter of thanks to the donor and would be sending this out with a thank you card on behalf of the society. Cheryl would also check with the donor as to whether they wished to remain anonymous or whether they wished for their details to be publicly recorded.

The committee decided that it was too early to make plans for any definite activities or events linked to this donation but this would be done in due course when times allowed.

Action - Cheryl

(b) Play readings

Nobody had come forward to hold further online play readings.

It was decided to focus on a return to 'face to face' play readings (if permitted) in summer 2021. Peter confirmed that he would be happy to organise play readings for June and July 2021 in such circumstances and was thanked by the committee. He advised that he would then be handing over the organisation of the play readings to someone else for the future.

It was decided to make any further decisions on dates/details/venues in April or May when it would hopefully be clearer as to exactly what might be permitted and when.

Action – Committee and Peter

(c) Panto Quiz

Cheryl reported that she had contacted Phil Johnson with thanks from the committee for organising this quiz. It was agreed that this had been a successful and fun evening and the committee reiterated its thanks to Phil. It was agreed that Gareth would archive this event on the website so others could reference it in future, either to see details or to use as a template for a similar future event.

Action – Gareth

2. Shaddo Newsletters

Gareth reported that he had created a new web page resource for newsletters as members might find it of interest to read past ones as well as the current one.

Cheryl thanked Hilary for writing the February newsletter. It was generally thought that a quarterly newsletter might be appropriate but this would be driven partially by Shaddo news and events. It was thought that members might be more likely to read the newsletter than the minutes on the website. Hilary confirmed that she would be happy to write future newsletters as part of the secretarial role.

Action – Hilary

3. Arrangements for the 2021 AGM

This would normally be held in March but it was decided a later date would be preferable this year (as permitted by the constitution) so that the committee could assess what form of meeting would be possible under the COVID-19 rules. It was recognised that it might not be possible to hold a face-to-face meeting and that the AGM might have to be virtual, either in the form of a questionnaire (as per 2020) or via a Zoom meeting (perhaps combined with a questionnaire for those who could not attend).

It was decided that the committee would meet again at the end of March (see date at end of minutes) to decide how best to proceed. Meanwhile, a provisional AGM date of 28 April was suggested, which would give ample time for notice to members to be given after the committee meeting and for Cheryl, Gareth and Hilary to deal with the “formal” AGM requirements.

It was agreed that all committee members would think before the next committee meeting about the best way to proceed if the AGM is to be a virtual meeting or questionnaire.

Action: Committee

4. Website and Social Media -future use and development

Gareth led this discussion by outlining the history of the Shaddo website since its creation in the early 2000s, the current position and some possible ideas for future development. **A copy of Gareth’s report is attached to these minutes.** Gareth also explained that he had produced a “recovery” document which would contain all the necessary information for someone else to deal with the website if he was prevented from doing it for any reason. A copy of this document would be held by Hilary to keep (as secretary) and by Neill (as a committee “technical expert”). Cheryl thanked Gareth for his work in producing these documents.

Gareth stressed that it was essentially an “interim” website which he felt, although perfectly functional, was now looking rather dated.

There followed a detailed committee discussion, some key points of which can be summarised as follows:

- We have a Facebook (FB) presence, which Becca keeps up to date and which is more visual, but which is not so good for use as an archive;
- It was suggested that the society could perhaps make greater use of FB but maintain the website for archive and other specific purposes;
- Gareth felt that more ideas were needed as to potential re-design of the website to give it a re-fresh and make it look more modern;
- It was suggested that some of the Shaddo donation could perhaps be used to invest in the website and other social media/comms enterprises;
- Neill stressed that there were really two different aspects to the website development – (1) the design and presentation aspects and (2) the technical aspects. He also stressed he felt that “content is king” and that if we had a lot of good content, the rest would follow;

- Simon stressed the need to post consistently and to reach a suitable audience (e.g. those who would be likely to attend Shaddo events etc);
- Gareth commented that it essentially boiled down to two key issues – (1) the design of the current website and (2) how Shaddo should actually present its face to the public (e.g. should we be focussing on the website or more towards the use of FB/Instagram etc)? He stressed the need for all platforms to be co-ordinated with a person to channel information to the respective outlets;
- It was felt that one idea would be to have a communications (comms) sub-group to deal with this and to bring it all together so it was not ad hoc. Liz agreed that this tied in with her publicity role and that such a sub-group would be helpful;
- Becca explained how she felt FB, Instagram and TikTok could all play a role for Shaddo publicity and information purposes;
- Cheryl suggested that it would be a good idea to have a specific committee role or roles going forward for website and social media responsibilities.

Following extensive discussion, the following was agreed by the committee:

- The ‘foundation’ was really the website and other social media platforms provided additional content;
- The committee would send potential website design ideas to Gareth (e.g. ideas from looking at other websites) or put these on WhatsApp so Gareth could assess these;
- This would be an item on the AGM agenda for further discussion – with a view to having a comms leader and team;
- Meanwhile all the committee would think about these issues and send general ideas (in addition to those design ideas given to Gareth) to Liz;
- Becca agreed to write a short report for the AGM on FB and Instagram use and benefits;
- Becca, Gareth and Liz would collate all the information and ideas and liaise with each other to take this forward between now and the AGM.

Action: Gareth, Liz, Becca, Committee

5. AOB

Cheryl said that she felt we should give serious thought as a committee to a community performance or some form of show in summer 2021 (if permitted). This was agreed and everyone is to give this further thought. This might be for the new committee following the AGM but it would be good to have thoughts at the next committee meeting in any event.

Action: Committee

6. Next meeting

The main purpose of this meeting will be to revisit the areas above and plan for the AGM. Meanwhile it was agreed that all committee members would think about whether they wished to re-stand for the committee for 2021-2022 (and, if so, whether they wished to take on a particular role) as it would be very useful to have some idea by the time of the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 24 March 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom. Hilary to send out minutes of this meeting and an agenda for the next meeting in due course.

Action: Hilary

Cheryl closed the meeting with thanks to all for attending.

SHADDO Website

Background

The original SHADDO website was created in the early 2000's. It was based on the then HAODS website (not our HAODS – but the Horsham Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society!) customised with the SHADDO logo and colours.

A few years ago we decided it was time for an upgrade and Cath and I were tasked with looking for a suitable alternative design. This was a more difficult task than we had expected and we didn't make much headway.

With the prospect that this would be a long project I updated the existing website with an improved look and based on a more advanced design that made it much easier and quicker to add and change pages. The migration of the original to this interim site was completed in 2020.

The Current Position

The 2020 Christmas events prompted the start of a website upgrade to improve the presentation of webpages on mobile devices. The technical changes are now well under way, with all the core pages being 'responsive' i.e. able to adapt to a mobile device. The 'archive' pages, covering past productions, will be progressively updated during 2021. In the meantime there may be some layout issues on some pages – if you spot any please let me know.

Where next?

The current, interim website is fully functional but lacks the visual impact of more modern website designs. As it was designed, and continues to be used, mainly as an archive this is no great limitation but if it is to be used more proactively then a full redesign may be desirable. Given that SHADDO also has an active Facebook presence we could use this to be the proactive face of SHADDO and retain the website for primarily archive use – in which case the visual look could be improved with minor changes.

By far the biggest limitation is that it is a bespoke website and needs coding skills to manage and update. A move to a content-management-system based solution, such as Wordpress, would make it possible for anyone to maintain the site with minimal training.

Gareth Jones

Feb 2021