

AAPTLE Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the [Alliance of Associations and Professionals for Theatre and Live Events](#) was held via [Zoom](#) at 11am on 30th June 2020.

Attendees

Attendees included [Jo Town - ALD \(meeting co-chair\)](#), [Phil Wright - ASD](#), [Dan Shelley - PMF](#), [Catherine Kodicek - CITA](#), [Andy Rowley - SMA](#), [Mark Jonathan - ALD](#), [Ali Wade - SMA](#), [Paule Constable - FMTW \(meeting co-chair\)](#), [Neil Austin - FMTW](#), [Mandy Ivory-Castile - PMF](#), [Owen Thomas - SMA](#), [Fiona Watt SBTB](#), [Max Jones - SC](#), [Katrina Lindsay - SC](#), [Thomas Hescott - SDUK](#), [Nikki Edmonds - CITA](#), [Anna Fleischle - SC](#), [Rob Bettle - ASD](#), [Cat Silver - SBTB / TDF](#), [Lucy Carter - ALD](#), [Dominic Bilkey - ASD](#), [David Evans - PMF/ABTT](#), [Vicki Mortimer - FMTW/SC](#)

Meeting Agenda

- Any Association's updates from the week (hopefully including the Freelance Taskforce)
- Agree the aims of the cross association, please think what you might like to add
 - To inform and share each other's actions to have a unified voice
 - To work towards making sure we have an industry to return to
- Practically we should agree how to communicate with each other: Dropbox, Trello, email?
 - To everyone, or the core leader of each Association?
- Discuss and agree the Open letter wording
- Agree action for this week
- Agree regular date for this meeting and who chairs the meetings, do we take it in turn or not.

Meeting Minutes

It was agreed that the Minutes would be recorded using Chatham House Rules.

- Welcome from Co-Chairs,

ASSOCIATION UPDATES

- Introductions from Stage Sight and a little background.
- Updates from SMA and their discussions with SOLT. SOLT aware of our cross-association group and they are interested in being involved.
- Although the Freelance Task Force were unable to attend it was raised that they offer an important voice which is independent of all three collective agreements, at the moment. It is an important voice to be represented. We will continue to offer and encourage FTF to join.
- It was raised that SOLT had put the information they had, to the government. The outcome has been the DCMS 5-point road map. It was felt that information has been given to government and that this information is not being used usefully. This was discussed.

- It was raised that there is an expectation that there will be a financial package presented in the next budget announcement which is expected soon. The 5-point road map being the first step in the Governments process.

HEALTH & SAFETY

- It was raised that there seem to be quite a lot of productions that are being forced into restarting soon. Concerns were discussed on the H&S implications to a restart without clear, united, Covid-19 H&S plans from Government and our sector.
- Various associations had received concerns from their members regarding the lack of any consultations with their associations, to ensure safe working practices were in place. A few anecdotal examples were given.
- It was noted that there is an insurance stumbling block with the pressure to reopen and trying to conform to vague guidelines.
 - Major venues and NPO's are unable to open their doors without Insurance.
 - It was raised that we should be asking our members to ensure they are insured before they start work.
 - There is an expectation that companies restarting may be doing this without insurance.
 - There were also examples of Production Electricians being asked to sign waivers before starting work. To essentially waive their rights if they should contract Covid-19 while working. Although it was noted this would be very difficult to prove.
 - It was noted you cannot legally waive your H&S rights.
 - Insurance Cancellation applies to payments of fees, payments of wages etc if a show is cancelled due to an outbreak on the production.
 - Insurance or the lack of it applies not just to one's own personal health risk but a risk to the whole project.
- It was raised that we should look at cross association resource sharing of H&S Guidance post Covid-19
 - Creating and sharing guidance in light of the concerns of Government guidance. How to work in a Post Covid World. Pooling resources to help create a central source of all of these documents. FMTW has many resources on their website currently, as other associations do.
 - It was raised that we as a group of associations need to address the mistruths that are being expressed regarding singing. Although that was felt best left to the scientists.
 - It was raised that we should be asking ABTT to be the central resource for these going forward. One of our members presents both the PMF and ABTT, they offered to discuss this with ABTT. Now that some members of ABTT staff are coming off Furlough.
 - It was noted that ABTT need to remain unpolitical. This neutral stance is essential and can be very useful.

AAPTLE COMMS

- We confirmed that we were all happy to share Email Addresses with each other. That we were all happy to use information sharing Via Dropbox. Also, that we could benefit from using communication tools like Slack for conversations outside of meetings.

- The question was asked if our associations were having virtual Town Hall meetings with their members to receive feedback and raise concerns. Although not everyone confirmed verbally, most associations confirmed they were holding Town Halls or Discussion Boards.
- SOLT had raised that it was difficult to communicate with the many associations representing the Theatre & Live Events sector, we are thought to be quite diffuse. It is hoped this alliance will help to resolve this communication issue.

NAMING GROUP

- It was raised that we need to decide a name for our group.
 - With one contact email address.
 - After much discussion we decided upon the [Alliance of Associations and Professionals for Theatre and Live Events. AAPTLE](#)
 - Alliance of Associations for Professional Theatre and Live Events - Was a very close second.

AAPTLE Aims

- The Agenda proposed the following discussion.
- Agree the aims of the cross association, please think what you might like to add
 - To inform and share each other's actions to have a unified voice
 - To work towards making sure we have an industry to return to
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 - During this discussion various questions were raised.
 - It was agreed that we had covered Health & Safety earlier in the meeting.
 - We focused on - To work towards an industry that we can return to.
 - QUESTION: What is it, that the industry looks like when we return? In terms of who is it that makes up the work force?
 - We covered how do we recover safely back to the way we were.
 - Perhaps what is missing from the conversation is, what might we do differently? Or what might we plan to do now to make sure when we return, it is not quite what it was, its even better than what it was.
 - Discussion was had regarding our aims. What should or should not be included.
 - QUESTION: Is the aim of this group to deal with and pool together around this immediate crisis. Or is the aim of this group to do that AND make our journey into the future a more positive, representative, inclusive and sharing one?
 - These few questions prompted a thoughtful discussion of our prospective Aims.
 - It was agreed in a moment of crisis we should aim to be inclusive and representative. That should be our starting point. It should be something we strive towards. Moments of crisis bring clarity and we should embrace this. Better more diverse and inclusive industry. Better wider working practices, the way we function as an industry the hours we work should be included.
 - A representative industry.
 - It was raised that we don't want to come back to how it was before. We have an opportunity to address a whole raft of things that will bring representation into the industry: long hours culture, lack of job sharing etc, etc.
 - This could be a commitment to the building blocks of the future.

- In a moment of crisis, we should travel quickly but with care. Our aims are core. The building block should be the corner stone of this conversation. Ensuring there is a voice for the most vulnerable and those given the least time and space.
 - Diversity and inclusion should be within the core of buildings and companies, not sitting as a separate aim, when this happens it is easier to overlook.
 - Making better working conditions includes tackling long working hours culture alongside making a diverse and inclusive work force.
 - We hope to include Pipa going forward. A member offered to make contact with Pipa.
 - A more sustainable future. Ethical future.
- **Through discussion we attempted to rewrite the aims that were proposed in the agenda. They were rewritten through discussion and the chat function on Zoom to the following.**
 1. To inform and share each other's actions, to have a unified voice, in making the industry safer to return into.
 2. Work towards making the industry a more inclusive, safer and sustainable improved industry.

Another version was proposed in the chat function:

3. Because a financially and morally 'sustainable' vision for the theatre of the future must first understand an integrated definition of resource - in which environmental considerations are inseparable from financial spending, HR impact, reputation, and wider social responsibility.

It was agreed that both versions were a good start however we could and should continue to refine these aims via Slack and Meeting discussions over the coming weeks.

- **We need to keep this group longterm to ensure we can speak to our industry and Government with a single voice. We should plan for this to not just be a temporary group but a permanent Alliance.**
- **Opportunity to re-think how we lobby Government. To be clear eyed and rethink our approach. This is a time to reset these systems to ensure our voice is heard, because SOLT are not representing us well. We were a Growth industry before Covid-19. We are under-represented amongst other Arts. Reset how we are listened to by power. We have an opportunity. We may miss the curve if we cannot represent ourselves properly. Where is the Performing Arts represented within the Creative Industries conversation?**

[AAPTLE COMMS continued](#)

- **SLACK v's TRELLO was discussed briefly as a discussion tool. As noted earlier SLACK was decided as the best option.**

REPRESENT

- It was raised that we should aim to be an industry voice which talks to other industry organisations, rather than one that lobbies Government directly. Although we acknowledge SOLT talking for the industry creates difficulties because they represent Commercial Theatre. That is the method we currently have. Lines to Government are very broken but we cannot undermine systems that DCMS understand. DCMS do not understand our industry but we have to feed into existing channels without disrupting them. Hopefully our united collegiate approach could encourage them to function better in the future. We have to look to the future to ensure this doesn't happen again.

It was raised that there are some areas we do not represent. Wigs, Hair & Make-Up. It was suggested that CITA members ask Wigs, Hair and Make-Up reps to join. It was also noted Production Carpenters, Scenic Construction, Prop Makers and Scenic Artists do not have associations. Further suggestions are invited via SLACK discussions.

ABTT - revisit

An earlier point regarding links to ABTT was re presented when an associate ABTT member joined the meeting. We revisited the idea of ABTT becoming a central point for sourcing and storing resources for our collective associations. It was communicated that furloughed ABTT staff were returning to work shortly.

- The suggestion of a Post Covid 19 version of the Yellow Book was discussed. ABTT were open to this but may require assistance. AAPTLE would be very happy to offer ABTT this assistance going forward. We agreed that we would discuss this further at our next meeting, when we hope to have more ABTT reps present.
- We once again revisited our name briefly when we considered Professionals that sit outside of Associations. The final title of [Alliance of Associations and Professionals for Theatre and Live Events. \(AAPTLE\)](#) was decided upon as listed above.

OPEN LETTER

- The objectives of an Open Letter were discussed. Open Letter v's Writing to One's MP's may be more useful.
- What is the letter for? It is about us joining together and we are going to be one voice. An Open Letter should be about informing our industry that we are coming together. SOLT, UK Theatre, Bectu, Equity, Producers, Regional Theatre's, Fringe Theatre's, Pub Theatre's, The Palladium, The Stage etc etc. Saying we are talking, we are coming together and inviting people to talk.
 - We must also express the existential crisis we are all experiencing for the loss of Christmas. Also the wider losses of the buildings and venues. We are representing a lot of people who collectively feel very under-represented, disempowered and powerless.
- It was raised that we need to make a list of who we will be sending our Open Letter to. GDPR requirements were considered and discussed. It was suggested we could use our individual mailing lists and contacts also sending it to The Stage.

- Open Letter to the Industry. Announcing our Alliance.

CHRISTMAS IS CANCELLED Campaign

- It was also raised that the possible Christmas is Cancelled campaign should unite with the whole industry. UK Theatre, Bectu, SOLT, Regional Theatre's etc.
 - We can prepare the CiC Campaign once we know what the Chancellor announces. Having a prepared Campaign or idea may be useful.

Alliance of Associations and Professionals for Theatre and Live Events. (AAPTLE)

ACTION POINTS:

- Document communicated with aims.
Where we are going to try to articulate more succinctly the idea of a collective shared more positive journey forward and a more representative and inclusive one.
 We need to make suggestions to each other. Feels like a longer piece of work to ensure it is more succinct.
- Invite Pipa to the next meeting.
- We would also like to have a conversation with ABTT, inviting Robin Townley - Trying to create a document regarding the safe return to work for each of our different disciplines. We acknowledge ABTT have started this process however they are awaiting approvals to release certain documents.
- Jo Town to set up SLACK
- Dom Bilkey to set up Email
- Share all emails and create point person within each association. In Slack
- Draft of an Open Letter
- Confirm Platforms for Minutes - Agreed they will be added to SLACK.
- By placing documents or items that are able to be shared in the SLACK Public / For Publishing Conversation we all acknowledge this allows any member association to publish these documents on their websites. All other communication conversations should remain within the Alliance.
- The members of each association can feed back to their Associations, perhaps using a page on each of the individual websites dedicated to this Alliance and the information that comes from these meetings and this shared Alliance. A funnel of information.

NEXT MEETING

- Date of next meeting agreed **12pm til 1:30pm on Tuesday 7th July.**
- The ASD will Host Zoom, Chair and Minute the next meeting.

Minutes compiled by Mandy Ivory-Castile - PMF. Please forgive any verbose notes. I do hope you all feel the minutes are a true reflection of the meeting. Regards M x