

Information Sheet No.12

Meeting Procedures

Regular and properly convened meetings are necessary for your association to run democratically. A meeting may be as formal or informal as your P&C wants. The important thing is that all decisions and agreements are formally recorded with movers and seconders and that the Chair ensures that all who want to speak have the chance to do so.

Agenda

While there should be a meeting agenda, members of your P&C may change the order of the items by placing urgent business ahead of reports. The agenda is prepared in advance of the meeting.

The agenda along with the minutes of the previous meeting should be available beforehand to allow members time to consider the topics to be discussed. Following the meeting, the minutes should be written up by the Secretary. Some committees may find it helpful to have an action list drawn up. A sample agenda and sample minutes are available from the Council Office.

Chairing the Meeting

The Chairperson should ensure that members have been advised of the meeting time and location and that an agenda has been prepared. The chairperson presides over the meeting to ensure that proceedings are conducted in a proper and orderly manner and to guide the meeting towards achieving its aims. In order to do this the chairperson has the power to:

- rule on procedure
- decide who can speak and in what order
- close debate when sufficient discussion on the matter has taken place and
- reject motions if insufficient notice has been given or if the motions are phrased in objectionable or ambiguous language

When chairing a meeting the Chairperson should:

- determine that a quorum of members is present
- begin the meeting on time
- follow the agenda
- sign the confirmed minutes of the previous meeting
- conform to the rules of accepted meeting procedures
- give all members the opportunity to speak
- ensure that the discussion is addressed through the chair
- sum up the debate without personal bias to ensure motions/amendments are clearly understood before the vote is taken.

The Chairperson should not:

- impose personal views
- influence the debate
- dominate the meeting
- chair the meeting without preparing for it beforehand.

Formal meeting procedures are available on request from the Council office. ★