

JARGON BUSTER

Here are some of the words which are commonly used:

Agenda – List of subjects to be discussed at the meeting

Chairperson – The person responsible for running the meeting (Sometimes called the Chair, Chairman or Chairwoman)

Minutes – A written record of the meeting

Proposer – Person who puts forward a clear suggestion (also known as a motion) as the basis for a decision

Secunder – Person who supports the suggestion made by a proposer thereby seeking a vote

Vote – A count of opinions. People can vote for or against a suggestion or they can abstain (not vote at all). If more people vote for than against, the motion is usually carried. If more people vote against than for, the motion is defeated

AGM – Annual General Meeting. Each group has to have an AGM each year enabling the committee to be voted in by the members.

The committee of the group/association is usually made up of a:

- Chairperson
- Vice Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Elected members of the association/group

The Role of the Committee is:

- To represent the Community they serve
- To be open and accountable to the public
- To ensure the group/association operates within its rules and with the law
- To enter into any agreements on behalf of the group/association
- To authorise the payment of expenses to any group member in accordance with the group/association's rules
- To decide which organisations, if any, the group/association will affiliate to
- To decide who should be co-opted members of the committee
- To ensure that information is passed to all members of the group/association so that they understand how the group/association works, and what decisions have been taken
- To conduct their affairs to the highest standard
- To ensure the group has an Annual General Meeting which follows the procedure in the Constitution
- To ensure the code of conduct is being adhered to

CODE OF CONDUCT

General

The Code of Conduct has been produced to supply groups with a guideline on standards of behaviour, and how to deal with any problems that may occur. Members of the groups want their work to be respected, and they need to handle matters in a business like way to secure the best possible level of service for everyone, and avoid any action which might bring the group into disrepute. This Code of Conduct applies to all members of the group.

Confidentiality

Members should respect all individual members confidentiality, whether present or not, and refrain from mentioning specific individual cases which may cause embarrassment or identification of an individual unless the person gives their consent.

Personal Interests

Group members will not use their position in the association to bypass procedures for personal gain.

Members should say if they are personally involved in any issue being discussed by the group, and accept that they may not be able to speak or vote on such issues if the group feels it would not be right for them to do so.

Equal Opportunities

Members must accept that the group works for the benefit of all members, irrespective of race, age, sexuality, class, disability, gender, religious or political beliefs or appearance. The group should be prepared to eliminate all types of discrimination from the way it works, and actively promote equality of opportunity.

Respecting Each Other

Group members should treat each other with consideration, showing regard for peoples' feelings and respect for their contribution. Membership of the group is voluntary; members do not have to suffer being treated unfairly.

Team Work

Because a group works best as a team, every member should take responsibility for helping. Contributions should be welcomed from new members, or those whose circumstances make them less active, so that the group is not dominated by a few. Members who are able to be less active should not criticise those who are more involved.

Reliability

Members should always try to do what they promise, and not let other members of the team down. If a member is unable to do what they have promised, they should let the group know as soon as possible.

Differences of Opinion

The group is working for everybody's benefit, but differences of opinion are bound to occur. Group members should recognise this, and should respect difference views. They should be prepared to talk differences through and accept group decisions made after discussion.

Conflict

Differences will sometimes get personal, or be hard to resolve for other reasons. Members should be prepared to recognise when this is happening. They should be ready to find fair ways of cooling things down through mediation or team building sessions for example, to allow the group to work together and their good name to continue.

Staff

Staff will be expected to work to clear, agreed, reasonable standards in delivering services to the group. If problems occur with a member of staff, they will be taken up in a business like way with the employer, using grievance or complaints procedures where they exist. In return, members of the group should treat staff employed by the organisation and others courteously, showing an understanding for any difficulties they might face in doing their job.

Money

The group will have clear basic guidelines for handling money. These will include keeping a bank account, numbers of signatures needed for cheques, items money can be spent on, maintaining accurate records of spending and income and providing regular finance reports to meetings. No money should be spent without a decision at a meeting to do so.

Cause for Concern

Issues that can cause concern include:-

- Conflict between committee members that means the group ceases to operate effectively and is no longer representative
- Financial mismanagement
- Behaviour in breach of equal rights guidelines
- Inappropriate or offensive behaviour
- Allegations of verbal or physical assault by a member of the group
- Allegations of criminal behaviour made against a group or member of the group

Breaking the Code of Conduct

The group at the earliest opportunity should consider any report of a breach of the Code of Conduct. In responding to any breach, the group can carry out

any action it decides is appropriate, provided the action is in accordance to the Constitution.

THE ROLE OF THE CHAIRPERSON

The role of the Chairperson is to guide the group/association towards achieving their aims as set down in the Constitution.

The following are key activities for a Chairperson.

In Meetings

- Chairing meetings, welcoming newcomers
- Signing the approved minutes of the last meeting
- Keeping the group to the agenda and timescales given
- Ensuring that the meeting is orderly and keeps to the group's own rules
- To assist in finding common ground in discussions
- To ensure that everyone gets the chance to take part in any discussions, tactfully keeping to the time limits
- To summarise the discussion and clarify decisions taken between meetings if required.

Outside Meetings

- Prepare the agenda for the meetings
- Ensure other committee members are carrying out their tasks and offer support and assistance to achieve the tasks
- Be kept informed of all activities being carried out on the group/associations behalf
- Encourage all members to be more involved for example via posters, adverts, newsletters
- Ensure all action identified at meetings is carried out and feed back to the group/association

- Represent the group/association at other meetings and report back relevant information

Duties of the Chairperson

- Makes sure that all the facts are presented at meetings
- Makes people aware of the rules, where necessary
- Makes sure everybody gets a chance to express their views – only one person speaking at a time
- Encourages people to join in discussions
- Acts fairly and ensures order is maintained
- Ensures that when decisions are made that everyone understands
- Assists in preparing the agenda
- Checks minutes for accuracy before distribution
- Opens the meetings and ensures the agenda is kept to
- Keeps overall control of the meetings

THE ROLE OF THE VICE CHAIR

The vice-Chairperson is the person who chairs the meeting when the Chairperson cannot attend. It is important that they understand the Chairperson's role so that they can step in when needed. The vice-chairperson must be kept up-to-date on the group's/association's activities and should attend meetings regularly. Outside meetings, the vice-Chairperson should be prepared to act in the same supportive role as the Chairperson.

THE ROLE OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary plays a crucial role in the smooth running of the group. The role may be divided between two or more people and the group/association can decide this. (The group/association may decide to nominate a person whose sole role is to take minutes (notes) at meetings).

In Meetings

- To ensure a record of who attends a meeting is taken
- To take the minutes of the meeting
- To ensure all correspondence received by the group/association is reported at the meeting

Outside Meetings

- Ensure all members are aware of the next meeting(s)
- Preparing the agenda for the next meeting and distribute with the minutes of the previous meeting
- Ensure the venue is booked
- Invite guest speakers if required
- Writing and receiving letters on behalf of the group
- Keeping a record of addresses and telephone numbers of group members
- Assist in producing newsletters/flyers/posters promoting the group along with the other committee members
- Assist in producing newsletters/flyers/posters promoting the group along with the other committee members
- Arranging and promoting social events for the group as agreed by the group.

Duties of the Secretary

- To keep safe all the information relevant to the group
- To deal with correspondence to the group
- To write and send letters on behalf of the group always keeping a file copy for the group to refer to
- To file and keep safe correspondence received once the information has been passed on at the meetings
- To prepare the agenda for the next meeting with the chair and send it out with any additional information if required
- To take minutes at the meeting, noting who attends, what decisions are taken and who agreed to take on the follow up work if required
- To check minutes, with the chair, for accuracy prior to distribution
- To copy and circulate minutes of meetings to all members and other interested parties as soon after the meeting as possible, preferably within 2 weeks of the meeting
- To assist the Chair in follow-up work between meetings
- To ensure that the right number of meetings take place according to the groups constitution

THE ROLE OF THE TREASURER

The Treasurer is the person with overall responsibility for the groups finances.

- Open and maintain a bank or building society account in the name of the group/association ensuring there are three signatories
- Keep accurate records of all the group's financial transactions (for example receipts, cheques made out, invoices paid, cheques/cash received)
- Prepare a regular financial report for the meetings
- Allow any member of the group to inspect the account books
- Prepare the books for the annual audit/examination
- Bank any monies received, make payments and write receipts
- Ensure any petty cash held by the group is kept in a secure place

Duties of the Treasurer

- Report at all meetings the bank balance along with recent transactions which haven't already been reported on
- Distribute copies of the report to all committee members
- Complete annual grant application and provide relevant supporting documentation
- Ensure all expenditure is approved by the group before cheques are written or money is spent.

THE AGENDA

An agenda lets everyone know what is going to be discussed at the meeting and in what order. Ideally it should be circulated in advance of the meeting. The agenda should be headed with the name of the group and give the time, date and place of the meeting. It may be useful to have a timetable for items, particularly if there is to be a guest speaker.

An agenda usually contains a number of standard items:

- Apologies for absence
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters arising from the previous meeting
- Chairperson's report
- Correspondence
- Treasurer's report
- Any other business
- Date, time and place of the next meeting

'Minutes of the last meeting' gives everyone a chance to check that an accurate record was taken of the previous meeting. The group should agree that the minutes are an accurate record and this would be minuted.

'Matters Arising from the last meeting' gives everyone a chance to check that decisions made last time have been acted on and feedback to the group can be given if the subject is not an agenda item.

'Any other business' gives anyone a chance to raise an issue which has not already been covered in the meeting which may be of interest to the group. If the group decides that a further discussion is required at the next meeting the issue can be put on the next agenda as an item.

EXAMPLE OF AN AGENDA

**HILLHEAD COMMUNITY CENTRE
123 ANY STREET
ANYTOWN**

Thursday 9 January 2017 at 6.00pm

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last meeting
3. Matters Arising from the last meeting
4. Chairperson's Report
5. Correspondence
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Update on repairs
8. Date, time and place of next meeting

MINUTE TAKING

Minutes are the official record of what took place at a meeting.

They should record:

- ❖ The names of the people present
- ❖ Information under each agenda item
(for example under apologies the names of people who gave apologies for not attending should be listed here in the minutes)
- ❖ Decisions reached and action to be taken and by whom
- ❖ The minutes should be distributed just a few days after the meeting so that people who agree to take action are reminded of what is required
- ❖ Minutes are also a way of letting people outside your group know what you are up to

Handy hints for minute takers:

- At the top of the minutes it should state the name of the group along with the date of the meeting
- Minutes should be laid out according to the agenda, item by item
- You don't need to record all the details of the discussions. A brief summing-up will do
- Record any important information given during the meeting and always be precise about money
- It is useful to have an action column down the right hand side of each page. There you can put the names of the people who have agreed to do something, alongside the decision they've agreed to carry out.

EXAMPLE OF MINUTES

CAMPSIE COMMUNITY CENTRE 123 Any Street, Anytown, A12 3BC

MINUTES OF MEETING – 1 January 2017 2.00pm

ITEM	ACTION
<p>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies Present at the meeting were:</p> <p>Karen Smith (Clachan Council) Chair, Robert Jones (Youth Project), Gail Fulton (Women's Group), Moira Flanagan (Food Co-op), Michael Brown (youth club), Hamish Strachan (Clachan Amateur Boxing Club), Mrs Strachan (Clachan Amateur Boxing Club), Norman Cairns (Clachan Council), Lorraine Buchan (Clachan Community Forum)</p> <p>Karen thanked everyone for coming and advised that no apologies had been received although a large number of group members were not in attendance.</p> <p>Apologies were received from:</p>	
<p>Approval of previous minutes</p> <p>Approved – Lorraine Seconded - Norman</p>	
<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Upgrade of Community Centre</p> <p>Norman advised that the following repairs come under separate Council programmes. The socket for the Credit Union would come under Maintenance and Repairs and there may be a small charge for this. The other repairs/upgrades – showers/changing area, replacing front door, replacement windows, youth area kitchen would all come under the capital programme. Norman explained that any small repairs would be assessed under</p>	

<p>the Maintenance and Repair Programme however any repair/upgrade under the Capital Programme would require to be costed and tendered. Norman suggested that any upgrades/repairs which fall under the Capital Programme should be notified to Karen in the first instance and this will then be considered.</p> <p>Outbuildings</p> <p>Moira visited the garages at the rear of the Town Hall and they are not suitable for the Food Co-op. The portacabins will be retained by the Art Group as they have funding for another year. The garden area can be cultivated by Centre users. The perimeter fence will be looked at to determine whether or not this falls under Maintenance and Repairs or the Capital Programme. Norman will report back to the group at the next meeting regarding the fence.</p> <p>Newsletter</p> <p>Lorraine has consulted with the Clachan Community Forum and they are happy for the centre users to provide articles for the newsletter. All articles should be submitted to Lorraine either by calling 01224 578 0219 or by email to lorraine.buchan@clachan.org.uk It is hoped that the newsletter will be issued week commencing 29 August so all articles should be with Lorraine before Friday 29 July. Lorraine will compile all the articles and attach any photographs and consult with the printers.</p> <p>Moira suggested that all centre users could assist with the distribution of the newsletter.</p> <p>Clachan Community Awareness Day</p> <p>Karen suggested that a Community Awareness/Fun Day should be organised. Everyone agreed. Robert asked if anyone was willing to take ownership to organise and run this event. Some discussion took place regarding this and it was decided that a separate meeting should be held to plan this event. A Date of 22 June was agreed. Centre users were encouraged to consider if they could host a stall at this event.</p>	<p>NC 27 June</p> <p>All 29 July</p> <p>LB 29 Aug</p> <p>All 22 June</p>
<p>Youth Area</p> <p>Michael expressed concern that the youth room was now being shared on Monday evenings by both the Youth Club and Youth Project. As the groups catered for different age groups this was not a suitable arrangement. Robert agreed to speak to his manager before the next meeting and Karen suggested that she look at alternative accommodation for the Youth Club within a local school and report back at the next meeting.</p> <p>Robert advised that the painting of the youth room will take place shortly and this might mean that the area will be close for a short period of time. Robert will advise Michael of the dates for the repainting.</p>	<p>RJ KS 27 June</p> <p>RJ Immed</p>
<p>AOCB</p> <p>Lorraine informed the group that the Clachan Community Forum had been advised that</p>	

<p>the plans for the Town Hall refurbishment have been resubmitted to the planning department. Michael expressed concerns as the old Town Hall would have to be demolished and the groups would have to find alternative accommodation while the new centre was being built. It was agreed that all groups and the local council would have to work closely together to ensure that all information was up to date with the future plans for the Centre.</p>	
<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>A large number of groups were not represented at today's meeting and some discussion took place regarding this. Michael suggested that a day time meeting might not be suitable for everyone as some of the group organisers work. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in the evening.</p> <p>Karen will issue minutes from this meeting and advise all group leaders of the date of the next meeting by the beginning of next week. She will also notify them of the planned Awareness event.</p> <p>22 June 2017, 7pm – to discuss Community Awareness Event 27 June 2017, 7pm – full Centre Users Forum meeting</p>	<p>KS 20 June</p>

TREASURERS REPORT

It is important that the treasurer gives a report at each meeting so that everyone on the committee understands the current state of the finances. Decisions about future spending can be taken more easily and more effectively if everyone is aware how much the group has and all the committee take responsibility for how money is spent and how much effort needs to go into raising more. Each year, at the Annual General Meeting a full account of the year's expenditure and income should be available and reported on.

Each treasurer's report should contain:

- 1) How much money the group had at the beginning of the period
- 2) How much has been received
- 3) How much has been spent, and on what
- 4) How much is left

How to write the report:

- 1) Use the bank statement to check balances
- 2) Look on the bank statement for all cheques written that month to see if they have been presented (cashed)
- 3) Check that all money paid in is shown on the bank statement
- 4) Try to keep figures in neat columns so that it is easier for others to read

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

Each group should hold an annual general meeting. The date, time and venue must be advertised prior to the event. This can be done in a number of ways, for example:

- Leaflets to households within the groups defined area as stated in the constitution
- Posters around the area displayed in local amenities. For example: shops, library, post office and community centres

At the AGM the following should be standard items on the agenda:

- Chair's annual report
- Treasurers annual report
- Stand down of officers
- Nomination for officers
- Voting of officers
- Election of officers

Chairs Annual Report

This would contain information about the group over the last twelve months. For example, achievements of the group and ongoing issues.

Treasurers Annual Report

This would be similar to the monthly report but would contain the end balance of the previous years' report. All expenditure during the year and all income received during the year.

Stand Down of Officers

All officers must retire from their current roles enabling a fair nomination procedure to take place. All officers can be nominated the following year.

Nominations of Officers

Anyone can nominate a person or people for each committee role in accordance with the constitution. It is up to the group to decide whether the nominations have to be received prior to the AGM and in writing and also whether nominations will also be accepted at the AGM. A group may decide to take nominations verbally at the AGM. Any person nominated must be asked if they are willing to take up the role if successfully elected.

Voting of Officers

If more than one nomination is received for an officers post the group must have a vote. The group can decide whether the vote is a show of hands or written.

Election of Officers

An independent person must count the votes with a witness present. Once the votes are counted the results must be read to the group and confirm the elected officer.