

## **Group Structure and Management**

### **Management**

The club/project will be managed by a management committee and the constitution must state the maximum and minimum number of committee members and what officers will be appointed, e.g. chairperson, treasurer, and secretary.

To make the committee effective there should be more than 4 on the committee and less than 15 (if the group is too large it can be difficult to make decision). The number of members present in order to constitute a valid meeting and make binding decisions must also be stated, this is known as the quorum is usually set at 3 or 4 committee members.

All this must be stated in the constitution and it important to remember that young people should have a role to play in the management of the club/project and at least 2 should be involved in the management committee.

### **AGM and Election of Committee**

The committee should be elected at a publicised meeting (usually publicised at 2 weeks before the meeting) of all club/project members e.g. "committee member shall be elected by majority vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Following their election, committee members shall elect a chairperson and other officers of the club". An

alternative is that the Officers may be elected by all the members and not just the management committee.

The Constitution should also state the length of time a committee member is elected for. It is common practice for the whole committee to stand down at the AGM and a new committee be elected but this has to be determined.

At the AGM, club business should be discussed and all members should be allowed the opportunity to voice their opinions as well as electing the new committee. The financial report should also be made available. The constitution should set out the rules following in setting the date of the previous AGM e.g. within 15 months of the previous AGM and the length of notice that must be given to publicise the AGM.

Sometimes, in order to reach a decision, a vote will have to be taken and who can vote should be defined or it may be that everyone who attends the AGM can vote.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of Committee**

The constitution should set out the duties of the committee e.g.

- To support the youth workers/volunteers in the delivery of youth work
- To encourage young people to take an active role in the running of the club/project

- To ensure that the club/project is properly run and that the correct policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the club/project complies with the legislation in place
- The appointment of youth workers and other staff/volunteers

### **Alterations to the Constitution**

Alterations to the constitution should only be made at the AGM or a meeting called especially for this purpose (an Extraordinary General Meeting or EGM).

### **Dissolution**

In the constitution, it should be stated what happens to the clubs assets if the club is disbanded. It could be that the assets are given to another local group or left in a trust until the group has reorganised itself.

### **The role of the Committee**

Committee members are appointed as stated in the constitution, as well as the committee structure, and are responsible for the running of the club/project and for everything that happens. The committee should meet regularly and this should be dependent upon need, this may range from once a month to quarterly.

**The responsibilities and main roles within the committees are:**

The **Chairperson** — He or she is in control at the committee meetings, they make sure that every body gets heard at the meetings. The role of the chairperson is to ensure that the committee works as a team and manages the organisation effectively by ensuring the following.

- Ensures the aims and objectives of the club are maintained.
- Delegate responsibilities to other members and officers.
- To ensure the club is adequately insured.
- Keep in touch with the members and committee.
- To ensure there is an annual report for the AGM.
- Ensure recruitment and vetting procedures are in place.

Prior to meetings, the chair should (with the help of the secretary and other committee members). At meeting, the chair is in control and they have to take the meeting through the agenda ensuring that everyone has a say, whilst at the same time making sure that any business is dealt with effectively.

The **Secretary** — He / she is the spokes person for the organisation and is usually the first port of contact to the committee. Together with the Chair they prepare and set up the meeting.

- Prepare the agenda.
- Take the minutes at the management meeting
- Distribute all of the necessary documents

- Keep record of the meetings
- Send out letters and correspondence from the actions set out in the meeting.

The **Treasurer** — Responsible for the funds for income and expenditure of the club/project.

- To receive money and deal with banking requirements.
- To advise the management committee on financial policy.
- Attend and report at committee meetings, resending accounts and balance sheets.
- To consider and advise in respect to the financial well-being of the group.

The Treasurer should ensure that:

- A record is kept of all transaction
- Receipts are given for all cash received
- Receipts or invoices are obtained for monies paid out
- Budgets and forecasts to guide the committee are prepared
- An up to date statement of finances is presented at each committee meeting

### **Other Committee Members**

Other Officer posts can include - Vice Chair, Publicity, Fundraising or even president.

The committee may also be given power to co-opt additional (often non-voting) members between AGM elections.

**Members** who are not officers have the responsibility to:

- Attend the committee meetings
- Advise and help on specific areas of the clubs needs.
- Assist other committee members I officers
- Help determine club policy.
- Support young people and management committee.

### **Young People Representation**

Young people should be involved with the management committee and have an active role in the running and management of the project. This is important to remember and ensure that management committee meetings are run with young people in mind.

### **Committee Meetings**

Committee meetings often follow a standard agenda for the routine business for example:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising
3. Reports e.g. Chairperson's Treasurer's, Youth Worker's
4. Addition agenda item submitted by committee members

5. Any other business
6. Date/venue of next meeting

### **Make Meetings Part of Youth Work**

Structured meetings may be efficient but they can be intimidating and boring, especially for those not used to the process. This is particularly true for young people and this could be a barrier that can prevent them from taking part. The involvement of young people serves to make the project meet the wants and needs of young people, making the club more democratic and inclusive. It offers young people the chance to develop skills that can be used later in life.

Meetings are not just about ensuring the project complies with group rules but is an opportunity to develop understanding, ideas, co-operation and commitment between members. This will benefit the project .

Meetings can be held which meet the requirements of attending to club business whilst being dynamic, encouraging the inclusion of all members and being part of the process of developing the skills of young people.

To achieve these goals it is necessary to think of how meetings can be held, to make them more flexible and fun. A possibility is to break up the meeting into smaller discussion groups or perhaps not take such detailed minutes, further option is to allow a young person to run

the meeting. It is a question of trying to be as flexible as possible and encourage people to take part, even adults can find meetings difficult.