

## 1. USER NOTE FOR THIS GUIDE

**PLEASE NOTE:** This document and the commentary provided throughout the document are only intended to provide a general overview of matters of interest. They are not intended to be comprehensive and do not in any way constitute legal advice by Racing Queensland.

This document is intended as a general guide to supporting the conduct of Committee meetings, including processes and strategies to help to ensure that meetings run smoothly and effectively. Highlighted in yellow are notes for reference.

Users should carefully review this document, consider the information and then adapt to suit your own Committee requirements, taking your own Club constitution into account. See also AGM Guidelines for information specific to Annual General Meetings.

## 2. Purpose of meetings

Meetings should enable collaboration, discussion and decision making.

The best meetings include effective discussions where all parties have the chance to contribute, while staying on topic and within scope, arrive at informed decisions, and are clear on actions and responsibilities going forward.

Minutes of meetings provide a permanent record of key points, actions and decisions taken.

## 3. Preparation

Ideally, Committee members should be aware of the meeting dates well in advance. It is a good idea to set the calendar of meeting dates at the beginning of the year and circulate to the Committee. **[Note: Your club's constitution may include specific requirements around how much prior notice must be given and how notice is given. Any such requirements should be reflected in your processes.]**

Meeting papers (including the agenda) should be distributed in a timely manner, preferably at least one week prior to the meeting.

Ensure that the meeting venue is available and has been booked in advance.

Provide an invitation / notice of the meeting and ensure that all attendees know the time and place.

Understand who is expected to attend and ensure that any apologies are noted. **[Note: Your club's constitution may have quorum requirements (e.g. how many Committee members must attend for a meeting to be valid). Consideration should be given to ensure that any meeting will meet any quorum requirements according to the Charter of your Committee. If there will not be a quorum, consider rescheduling to a time when a quorum will be available, for decisions of the meeting to be valid.]**

Ensure that any technical requirements are covered – e.g. all attendees have received a link to join online if that is an option, and any required audio-visual equipment is available.

Is catering required? If the meeting is going for more than a couple of hours, consider providing refreshments and structuring breaks into the agenda.

Use the agenda as a template for the minutes so the minute taker follows the same order as the meeting and takes notes for each item on the agenda.

Prepare a hard copy of the previous meeting minutes for the Chair to sign once they are agreed by the Committee.

## 4. Structuring the agenda

The secretary or minute taker would generally consult with the Committee Chair to determine the business to be covered in the meeting and create an agenda.

It can help to structure the agenda in a consistent manner for each meeting, typically including the following:

- Club name
- Committee name
- Meeting date, location and time
- Apologies
  - Note any apologies received from Committee members that are unable to attend.
- Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
  - Are there any items on the agenda that will preclude a Committee member from participating in the discussion and any subsequent decisions due to a perceived or real conflict of interest? If so, consideration should be given to the Committee member declaring this, and removing themselves from the meeting while that item is discussed. This should be noted in the minutes.
- Confirmation of previous meeting minutes
  - The Committee should have received the minutes of the previous meeting prior to being asked to confirm those minutes. If any corrections are required, the Chair should record the correction on the actual minutes, initial the correction and confirm that correction by reading it aloud. The correction should also be recorded in the current meeting minutes.
- Actions arising
  - Allows the Committee to review the actions from the previous meeting/s and discuss their progress/ status. Some actions may be covered later in the meeting under their own agenda item/s.

Once the administrative part of the meeting has been dealt with, move onto the key issues for discussion and decision in the main part of the meeting, with a separate agenda item for each topic.

- The final part of the meeting can cover any matters that are for noting, e.g. regular reports.
  - It is not necessary to read the contents of a report, but the Chair may invite the report writer to summarise the key points, then invite attendees to ask questions and discuss the issues raised.
- A General Business item allows all attendees the opportunity to raise any matters not already covered.
- Meeting review



- Optional item that allows for Committee members to provide feedback on the conduct of the meeting – i.e. was the meeting well structured, did all attendees have a chance to contribute to the discussion, were the meeting papers well written etc., and any recommendations for improvements going forward.
- Date / time of next meeting should be communicated.
- Close of meeting

## 5. Meeting Papers

Are meeting papers required to inform the Committee's discussions? Papers can provide valuable background and context for issues so Committee members can come prepared to have a robust discussion and ask any questions. At a minimum, meeting papers should include the agenda, the minutes from the previous meeting and an action list.

If background papers are included, it can be helpful to understand whether the paper is for discussion, decision or noting. Is the paper writer asking the Committee to have a discussion about an issue, make a decision, or simply be aware of the issues put forward in the paper?

Consider creating a template for meeting papers, using a consistent structure and drawing attention to the key issues.

## 6. During the meeting

Ensure the meeting papers are available, either on a shared screen, individual devices or hard copy, including the meeting agenda. It can be helpful to provide printed copies of the agenda for all attendees.

Follow the agenda and remind the Chair if an item has been overlooked. The Chair may elect to discuss the items out of order, but this should be noted in the minutes.

After the final agenda item has been completed, the Chair should declare the meeting closed.

## 7. Taking minutes

Take notes of the meeting, including the date, time and place, who is in attendance and any apologies. If an attendee leaves and / or rejoins the meeting, this should also be noted.

Minutes of the previous meeting should be confirmed and noted in the current meeting minutes. If any corrections are required, ensure that they are recorded, and the previous minutes updated with those corrections before they are signed by the Chair.

Report on the key points of the discussion for each agenda item, not every statement by every person.

It is important to record any actions arising from the discussion and any decisions /resolutions and highlight these clearly in the minutes, e.g. by using Action and/ or Resolution headings and / or text boxes. If there is an expectation that an action is completed within a certain time, this should also be noted.

It can be helpful for the minute taker to repeat the action items and resolutions before moving on to the next item, to ensure that they have been captured accurately.

The time that the meeting closed should be noted in the minutes.

Meeting minutes are a legal document and should not be altered, once ratified and signed. **[Note: Under your club's constitution, club members may have the right to access minutes of Committee**



meetings. Accordingly, when preparing minutes they should be prepared as if they may need to be disclosed in the future (e.g. potentially to members or other authorities).]

See Taking Minutes and Record Keeping guide for more detail.

## ***8. After the meeting***

Draft minutes should be prepared for review by the Chair as soon as possible after the meeting. Once the draft is approved by the Chair it should be circulated to the rest of the Committee.

Compile an action list, including due dates and who is responsible for completion and circulate as appropriate.

Monitor the actions and update the status of each action, following up if needed. The minutes and action list should be included in the meeting papers for the next meeting. Once ratified at the next meeting, minutes should be signed by the Chair, and a copy retained for your records.