

A committee's function is to be accountable to the young members, the community and funding agencies for the correct running of the group by following good practice guidelines.

A voluntary committee can be recruited through the local community and typically group leaders will also fill a role on the committee. However remember, when recruiting volunteers, that people may be willing to sit on a committee even if they do not wish to be a group leader. Training is available to help people carry out the tasks of a committee.

HAVING A COMMITTEE

- Helps to share the responsibility of running the group.
- Gives the group a structure.
- Provides a formal opportunity to discuss plans, ideas and any other issues.
- Ensures accountability of the group's finances.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Everyone on the committee has an important role to play in running and developing the group. Committee members can be made up of leaders, young people, parents or other volunteers. From these members, officer roles (see below) are filled every year at the AGM. Each officer will be expected to carry out specific tasks and volunteers may need training to help them fill these roles.

The officer roles within a committee are:

Chairperson

- Draws up the agenda for meetings.
- Facilitates discussion at meetings.
- Sums up the discussion at the end.
- Is fair and impartial.
- Co-signs cheques for the group.

Secretary

- Helps draw up the agenda.
 - Sends out notice of the meetings, the AGM and the agenda.
 - Takes the minutes during the meeting.
 - Reads correspondence at the meeting.
 - Is the person that all correspondence should be sent to.
 - Keeps contact details and records up to date.
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Treasurer

- Pays all bills.
- Gives updates at each committee meeting on the group's finances.
- Signs/co-signs cheques for the group.
- Keeps account of money coming into the group and of money spent.
- Keeps account of membership fees.
- Controls petty cash.

Public Relations Officer

- Is responsible for publicising group events.
- Advertising when the group is recruiting new volunteers.
- Advertising when the group is open to new members.

Child Protection Person

- Is responsible for making sure that issues of good practice are considered.
- Should be the person that young people or other leaders can turn to, to discuss issues of safety and welfare.
- Is responsible for general health and safety.

Some of the tasks carried out by the child protection person will require specific skills, particularly in dealing with the safety and welfare of young people. To fill this role, the child protection person should have a clear understanding of good practice in youth groups. It is essential that this officer receive training or perhaps already have these skills through work experience.

Young Persons Representative

- Is a young person selected by the group members to represent them on the board.
- Ensures that the voice of other young people is heard on the board.
- Feeds back committee decisions to the group members where relevant.

How often do we need to meet?

Most committees meet six to eight times a year. However this can change during the year as the committee might meet more frequently getting ready for a big event and not need to meet during holidays. It is important that everyone is kept informed and a suggested timeframe is somewhere between once a month to once every two months.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

In preparing and running committee meetings it may be helpful to consider the following:

Preparing

- Ask people if they have any business to put on the agenda.
- Draw up the agenda and circulate it beforehand.

At the Meeting

- The Chairperson begins by noting the attendance and apologies.
- Reads through the minutes of the last meeting and sees if there are any updates or changes to the minutes. Adopts these minutes.
- Discusses each item on the agenda and agrees on actions to be taken.
- Any items not on the agenda can be discussed under any other business (AOB).

KEEPING MINUTES

The minutes of meetings are important records of the decisions taken by the committee. They should be kept securely by the secretary. The minutes do not have to detail the entire discussion but should record the decision made and:

- What needs to be done?
- Who is responsible for implementing the decision?
- When it needs to be done?
- What costs are involved if any?

After the meeting the minutes should be written up by the secretary and circulated to all the committee members.

A SAMPLE AGENDA

This is a sample of what items to include on an agenda, which help in the smooth running of a meeting.

1. Date.
2. Attendance.
3. Apologies.
4. Minutes of previous meeting.
5. Matters arising from the minutes.
6. Correspondence.
7. Items for the agenda.
8. AOB.
9. Date of next meeting.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS (AGM)

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) must be held once a year:

The function of an AGM is:

- To decide the roles of committee members and elect a new committee.
- To hear reports from the young people and the leaders on the activities during the year.
- To hear a report from the treasurer on the finances of the group.
- To make amendments to the group constitution if necessary.
- Any other business that the committee and group members would like to have discussed and has been included on the agenda.

COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Officer Title	Name	Date Elected
Chairperson		
Secretary		
Treasurer		
Public Relations		
Child Protection		
Members Representative		