

Annual General Meetings (AGM's)



Aim

The aim of the AGM is to provide the opportunity to explain the management of the group to its members and any other people entitled to attend. It is the ideal opportunity to review the year's activities and celebrate successes. It also gives members of the group the opportunity to ask any questions before voting on the business items on the agenda

An AGM is held once a year and members of the group can attend and vote. The governing document, constitution or memorandum and articles of association will state how it must be held. It is very important to run your AGM in accordance with the governing document.

The business that must be considered by the AGM will usually be specified in the governing document. There is not normally 'any other business' on the agenda unless it is an urgent matter.

Preparation

The management committee of the organisation should meet at least once to prepare for an AGM. It may be best for a number of members to form a sub-committee to make the necessary arrangements.

Unless the governing document states otherwise, the notice of the AGM will need to be sent to all the members of the group any to any other people entitled to receive them. The governing document may state the number of day's notice that must be given for calling an AGM. If it does not, reasonable notice should be given for example 21 days.

The notice should set out the date and time of the meeting; the venue; the details of the business to be considered; an invitation to propose resolutions; and if appropriate, requests for nominations (or the names of proposed nominees) for officers to be elected.

We recommend that copies of the groups Annual Report and Audited or Independently Examined accounts are either sent to each member, or made available at the venue prior to the start of the meeting.

When arranging the AGM we recommend that the group:

- sends out the notice of the AGM together with the relevant documents at least 21 day clear in advance of the meeting unless the governing document states otherwise
- Check that the notice and any proposed resolution are drafted in plain language. This will ensure that there are no misunderstandings over any matters being proposed
- Give the full names of the members that are standing for election or re-election in the notice of the AGM

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AGM's ... continued



In order to make sure that all members receive the information, we advise groups to maintain an accurate and up to date list of members

The governing document may specify who will chair the AGM. If the Chair is not specified then someone responsible should be nominated to Chair the meeting.

Who can attend the AGM

The governing document will usually state who can attend and vote at an AGM.

Even if members have been contacted individually, we recommend the group considered wider publicity if it is appropriate. For example, placing an advertisement in a local or national newspaper or displaying a copy of the notice on a local notice board or in the local library or shop. Extra publicity not only helps to ensure that members are aware of the meeting but may encourage interest from the public or potential new members. Where there is no formal membership, general publicity is very important if the group wishes to maximise attendance at the meeting.

At the meeting

- Record attendance and eligibility to vote
- Have accounts available to be seen
- Have the governing document and any standing orders available
- Ensure minutes of the meeting are kept
- Allow time for questions

An AGM should:

- Approve the minutes of the previous AGM
- Receive or approve the audited or independently examined accounts
- Receive a report on the accounts (treasurers report)
- Receive a report from the committee on the activities for the organisation (Annual Report)
- Deal with other AGM matters specified in the governing document

Other AGM functions may be:

- To elect committee members and if appropriate officers
- To appoint independent examiners (or auditors if necessary)
- To consider any resolutions put forward by members

Elections

You should always follow the election procedures detailed in the governing document. If there is no guidance the committee should agree the format for the election including:

- A secret ballot
- Open show of hands
- A method of ensuring that only those entitled to vote actually do so
- Procedures to taking nominations
- Whether nominations need to be seconded

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AGM's ... continued



During the AGM

To help the AGM run smoothly we recommend that the group adopt the following points of good practice:

- All members can attend the AGM
- The Chair does not propose his or her own (re) election
- The Chair allows sufficient time for members' questions during the meeting
- The Chair explains the effect and purpose of each proposed resolution before putting it to a vote

After the meeting

- Make all necessary changes to the records including updating membership and committee lists
- Write up the minutes of the meeting
- Carry out induction procedures for new committee members

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