

FACT SHEET

Meeting Tips

- Record the attendance and apologies for every meeting. Only mark apologies for those who have let you know that they will not be in attendance. The minutes should be an accurate record of who was at the meeting, who provided an apology and who was absent.
- The meeting should be declared open at the time stated on the agenda, or as soon as a quorum is present after the stated start time. This is to be courteous to attendees who are on time and to help ensure that the meeting will finish on time.
- It is not necessary to read out the minutes of the previous meeting. These should have been circulated soon after the last meeting, so those in attendance will have had a chance to read through them for accuracy.
- If your minutes from the previous meeting are accurate and contain action items, it will be easy to go through business arising from the minutes quite quickly, as it is simply a matter of asking everyone to provide an update on the actions against which their names are listed.
- It is only necessary to read out non-routine or particularly important correspondence during meetings. Routine or expected correspondence can be summarised, detailing who sent the correspondence, the date, the purpose or general contents of the correspondence and any actions required.
- When voting on correspondence, the committee is voting to accept inward correspondence and endorse outward correspondence. Business arising from correspondence can be addressed immediately following that vote.
- The Treasurer's report should provide a summary of the financial dealings of the club since the last meeting and/or for the financial year-to-date. The report should provide information on income and expenditure, as well as assets and liabilities. It is good practice for the Treasurer to present a current bank statement or online banking print-out at each meeting of the Management Committee.
- Although any Management Committee member can move that the Treasurer's report be adopted or received, it is more appropriate for the Treasurer to move this motion.
- Every payment made by an incorporated association must be either approved or ratified by the Management Committee. Any payments that the organisation will make before the next meeting can be approved. Payments that have been made leading up to the current meeting, for example utilities payments, can be ratified retrospectively. No one position on the committee, eg the Treasurer or President, has authority to approve any payment without the consent of the entire Management Committee.

- Written reports from sub-committees or committee members are better than verbal only reports. They help to save time during meetings and limit the Secretary's workload in preparing for the meeting and taking minutes.
- Discussion at meetings should commence with the clear and unambiguous wording of a motion. This helps to keep conversations on track and stop meetings from running too long. Motions on notice are therefore included on the agenda, rather than simply listing topics about which people would like to speak.
- Motions should clearly outline any decisions that people would like the meeting to make. By including motions on the agenda, when the agenda is circulated prior to the meeting, attendees will have a chance to prepare for the discussion or come up with alternative solutions. This helps to ensure that everyone comes to the meeting well prepared.
- All motions on notice should be received by the Secretary with enough time to add each item to the agenda and distribute to committee members.
- Every motion must be moved and seconded prior to any discussion. The person who placed the motion on the agenda should move it. If a motion is not seconded, it is an indication that it is only the idea of one individual and does not have the support of anyone else. Such a motion lapses and does not need to be recorded in the minutes.
- If issues arise during discussion at a meeting that are to be dealt with during a later agenda item, the Chair should defer discussion until the relevant part of the meeting.
- Only items that are of a general nature should be discussed during general business.
- If significant issues arise during general business discussion, these should be deferred to the next meeting by being listed as notices of motion. Rather than perhaps rushing a decision, important matters should be held over as motions for the next meeting to allow everyone to fully prepare for the decision.
- Electronic minute keeping reduces double handling and allows for prompt distribution.
- Minutes from Management Committee meetings should be distributed as soon as possible to allow committee members to read them prior to their adoption as a true and accurate record at the next meeting.
- Circulating minutes using a cloud computing solution ensures their immediate distribution, eliminates any chances of the wrong file being edited and allows for their safekeeping and easy transfer to incoming committees.
- Most Management Committee meetings should run for between 45 minutes and 1 hour. If meetings are running for too long, you can appoint a timekeeper to help the Chair to keep things on track