



Understanding the Role of the Management Committee

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There are many skills required to be an effective member of a management committee, and it is important that everyone involved understands the role of the committee in order to effectively work together in the provision of quality services.

The following list identifies the main roles of the committee. Committees may delegate some of these responsibilities to staff or sub-committees, however the committee will always remain accountable for them.

1. Giving Direction to the Organisation

Establishing primary purpose, goals and principles; reviewing and monitoring progress.

2. Managing People

Ensuring that staff and volunteers are being used to their best effect, including the direct supervision, appraisal and development of the Play Leader; taking an overview of the development of the staff team as a whole.

3. Accountability

Ensuring that parents and related organisations, funders and agencies receive full reports on activities and use of resources

4. Adherence to the Constitution

Ensuring that the organisation abides by its governing instruments and obeys the law.

5. Managing Money

Ensuring that money and property are used in line with the objectives and purpose of the group, and are administered properly and efficiently.

6. Effective Committee Functioning

Ensuring that the committee functions well, meetings are effective, decisions are made, and members participate fully.

Recruiting Committee Members

When recruiting individuals to the Committee it will be important to ensure people are approached or come on to the Committee for the 'right' reasons. This will avoid difficulties within the group at a later time.

Good reasons for joining the Committee:

- You are committed to the project and keen to see it succeed
- You have some time to give to the work of the committee
- You are happy to accept the responsibilities that come with committee membership
- You have appropriate special talents or expertise

Not so good reasons:

- You have plenty of spare time
- You will agree with everyone about everything
- You have access to funding sources
- Your friend is on it

Office Bearers

The following identifies the core office bearers of any Committee; however there may be other roles which the group identify related to marketing, fundraising or other areas.

It is considered best practice, and can assist with the sustainability of the Committee, if persons are appointed to deputise for each of the Office Bearer roles. This avoids the difficulties which can often be caused when someone is away on holiday, or is ill and cannot fulfil their duties.

Chairperson

The focal point of an effective Committee will be the Chair. The Chairperson should know the way members behave and control the meeting in that knowledge. They should also undertake to ensure that all members are reminded of the objectives of the group and of their individual roles and responsibilities. The Chair should avoid taking on the duties of other members of the Committee and should guide and support office bearers to carry out their tasks effectively and efficiently.

General Responsibilities of the Chairperson:

- To chair the majority of meetings of the Committee.
- To be the spokesperson for the organisation between meetings – the ‘official voice’ of the group.
- Liaise closely with the secretary about dates / arrangements / agendas for committee meetings.
- To take the lead on public relations for the Committee.

At meetings of the Committee:

- Ensure the meeting runs to time and that all agenda items are adequately covered
- Facilitate discussion and encourage all members to contribute
- Bring agenda items to a conclusion with a quick review of points raised and any decisions requiring to be made or inviting further specific proposals
- Clarification of voting procedure and enact this as required (Chairperson may have to take a casting vote)
- At the close of the meeting ensure a date, time and venue has been fixed for the next meeting
- Liaise with Secretary on actions resulting from the meeting

A good Chairperson will:

- Be aware of the challenging task they have taken on
- Appreciate that there will be less opportunity to voice own opinions at meetings
- Get to know Committee members and take time to recruit and induct new members to the Committee
- Set the tone and style of the organisation
- Be sensitive to the needs of others
- Have a sense of the ‘bigger’ picture
- Have clear goals for each meeting and stand up to time wasters

Vice Chairperson

It is considered best practice to appoint a Vice-Chair who can assist the Chairperson in their duties and can deputise for them as appropriate. It is also a good way of succession planning, ensuring future consistency for the Committee.

Secretary

This role is different from the Company Secretary who will undertake activities relating to the registration of the organisation as a Company Limited by Guarantee with Companies House. The Secretary of the Committee often has the most interesting and rewarding role – however this can be a challenging and busy role which is often undervalued by other Committee members.

General Responsibilities of the Secretary

- Manage all correspondence – all correspondence both in and out must be noted on the agenda for the forthcoming committee meeting. Correspondence must be logged and taken to the meeting for discussion. The secretary shall then prepare and send out the responses as agreed. All correspondence must be appropriately filed and stored.
- Maintain a contact list for all Management Committee members and a contact list for all children registered to use the service.
- Keep a record of all meetings with agendas, minutes and any papers distributed filed as per date of meeting.
- Make arrangements for meetings. Book venue, prepare the agenda in conjunction with the Chair and send out before the meeting. Ensure all Committee members are given advance notice of date, time and venue for meetings and are in receipt of a copy of the minute of the previous meeting.
- Minute meetings if no minute secretary has been appointed.
- Make arrangements for the Annual General Meeting and any Emergency General Meetings called
- Ensure all regulatory paperwork is completed and submitted to the Care Inspectorate, if the group is required to register.

A good Secretary will:

- Be organised
- Have access to a computer
- Have some experience of administrative work
- Have space to store files and documents
- Be happy to be accessible to staff and committee members as a point of contact for information sharing
- Keep everyone to task

Minute Secretary

The minutes are an essential record of meetings and must be prepared in a consistent and effective way which shows how decisions were taken and actions agreed. As the secretary's job is often very busy, it is a good idea to try to appoint someone with appropriate skills to take on the role of minute secretary. Their role will be to record meetings, type up the minutes and forward to the secretary for distribution. They should keep a record of any amendments made to minutes at meetings when they are being approved.

Treasurer

The role of the Treasurer is different to that of other Committee Members in that they hold considerable responsibility yet have no absolute power over the way in which financial resources are used. In an ideal situation the treasurer will have some expertise in financial matters which will complement those of the other Committee Members. Where this expertise is not available the Committee should engage with a local accountant to undertake the bulk of the work and appoint someone in the role of Treasurer who can liaise with them and work under their direction as required.

General Responsibilities of the Treasurer

The Treasurer is more than a book-keeper, they must:

- Advise on the use of resources to maximum advantage
- Protect the financial interests of the organisation
- Maintain accounts and manage the Bank Account
- Prepare estimates of expenditure and income and budgets
- Submit financial reports to each Management Committee Meeting
- Liaise with the Inland Revenue and the (Company) Secretary including any statutory returns
- Ensure that all staff are paid according to their contract and that National Insurance and Income Tax are deducted and processed as appropriate
- Ensure all employee benefits such as sick pay, maternity pay etc are processed appropriately

A good Treasurer will:

- Be honest
- Have no history of bankruptcy or financial irregularity
- Be organised
- Have some experience of PAYE

Staffing Liaison Officer

As the Committee will be responsible for employing staff it will be vital to appoint either one or two people to take on a formal role in liaising between the Committee and the Staff. This will ensure that staff are clear of the expectation the Committee place upon them and that the Committee know and understand the needs of their staff. The challenge of managing staff should not be underestimated and disagreements about how to best undertake this are not uncommon.

General Responsibilities of Staff Liaison Officer

- Recruitment and Selection including job descriptions, contracts etc in partnership with other members of the Committee as appropriate
- Regular meetings with the Play Leader to discuss any issues or concerns, workload or any other general issues to do with the running of the service.
- Dealing with any complaints about staff in the first instance
- Dealing with any staff grievances in the first instance
- Arranging additional staff cover for annual leave or sickness absence
- Checking and approving timesheets
- Staff appraisals

Good Staff Liaison Officers will:

- Have experience of managing and recruiting staff
- Have an understanding of, or willingness to learn, basic employment practices
- Be a good listener and communicator
- Have some understanding of the work staff are undertaking
- Be happy to be accessible to parents and staff members

Other Roles

A number of other roles may be taken on by Committee Members including:

- Fundraiser
- Publicity Officer
- Membership Secretary
- Health and Safety Officer
- Newsletter / Communications Officer
- Rota Secretary
- Equipment and Resources Officer

This list is not exhaustive and each Committee can decide how it wants to organise / distribute tasks

Meetings

Committees will usually meet once a month. Staff representatives (not just the supervisor) should attend meetings although only in an ex-officio capacity i.e. without the right to vote. Staff will not be able to be present when items such as pay reviews or staff appraisals are discussed.

The Secretary should ensure all members of the Committee have the date, time and venue for each meeting, sending out reminders at least one week before as appropriate. The Chairperson should set an agenda for each meeting, working with the Secretary to ensure all relevant business has a place on the agenda and that any information or supporting materials which will be required will be available at the meeting.

A typical agenda for a Committee Meeting will include the following:

- Welcome and Apologies for absence
- Minutes of the previous Meeting
- Matters Arising
- Correspondence
- Reports (from Office Bearers)
- Any individual items of business (e.g. Care Inspectorate Inspection)
- Any Other Competent Business (AOCB)
- Date, time and venue for next meeting

Annual General Meeting

In addition to regular meetings the Committee will be responsible for holding an Annual General Meeting (AGM) which demonstrates the group's accountability to its members. This must be well organised and requires careful planning. The group's constitution will contain the rules for calling an AGM, including information on when it should be called, the notice required for members, the number of Committee members required to attend to form a quorum and the procedures for making changes to the constitution. (Note: If the numbers present at the AGM do not constitute a quorum the meeting cannot proceed and must be postponed.)

A Typical agenda for an Annual General Meeting will include:

- Welcome and Apologies for absence
- Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting
- Matters arising from the minutes
- Annual Reports
- Accounts for the year
- Appointment of an independent financial examiner (auditor)
- Setting of Fees
- Election of Committee
- Any individual items of business
- AOCB
- Date of next AGM

Special General Meetings

Sometimes referred to as Emergency General Meetings, these can be called at any time throughout the year and are normally only necessary to appoint Committee members, review fees or to address an urgent issue which requires all members to have an input.

Checklist for Committee Members (adapted from SPPA)

- Know the aims, policies and procedures of the service
- Know the function and the structure of the Committee
- Prepare for Committee Meetings by reading the agenda and any papers distributed beforehand. Consider the points you want to raise.
- Work at being a member of a team and avoid cliques.
- Discuss issues and problems openly at committee meetings but be aware of confidentiality once you leave the meeting.
- Involve others, as appropriate, in the work of the service.
- Be alert to conflicts of interest.
- Respect and value the contribution individuals make to the service
- Respect the confidentiality of committee business
- Respect the chairperson's authority in calling a meeting to order.

Committee Checklist

Statutory Activities

- Appoint Office Bearers
- Renew Insurance and Care Inspectorate Registration (if required to register)
- Maintain, revise and update the constitution as appropriate to ensure it meets charitable status conditions imposed by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)
- Ensure any alterations to the constitution are notified to OSCR
- Register as an employer with the Inland Revenue
- Complete annual PAYE returns
- Complete annual accounts
- Arrange independent examination of annual accounts
- Adopt accounts by the committee and present at the AGM
- Submit accounts to OSCR and / or Companies House as required
- Comply with any requirements notified by the Care Inspectorate and the Local Authority

Review

- Staff contracts
- Staff pay and terms of employment
- Recruitment and Selection Procedures
- Staff Induction Processes
- Health and Safety Policy
- Admissions Procedure and any waiting lists
- Inventory of equipment and other assets
- Policies and Procedures
- Constitution
- Service Information Leaflets
- Grievance and Disciplinary procedures
- Structure of committee meetings
- Financial procedures including Fees collection
- Payment of Wages

Meetings/Events

- Committee Meetings (not less than monthly)
- Staff Meetings
- Open Days / Evenings
- Fundraisers
- In-service Training for Staff
- AGM
- EGM (as appropriate)

Check

- Fire Equipment in the premises used for the Service
- Fully Equipped First Aid Box
- Fire Drills are undertaken regularly and appropriately logged

Keep Records Of

- Incidents or Accidents
- Insurance Cover
- Minutes of Meetings
- Equipment Inventory
- Financial Records
- Constitution
- Current and past committee members including service dates
- Charitable Status and conditions
- Employer Registration and RSI Number
- Records as required by the Care Inspectorate and any funding bodies

Confidential Files

- Staff personnel files
- Employee wages and tax records
- Interview and appointment procedures
- Disclosure information
- Medical Information