

# Quick Guide to.....the AGM

## What is the AGM?

The Annual General Meeting is the opportunity for members, the general public and any other interested parties to hear from the elected Management Committee about the work of the association throughout the previous year. The business of the AGM includes:

- a) **Presenting the Annual Report of activities/achievements**
- b) **Presenting the audited accounts for the financial year**
- c) **The election of Officers and other members of the committee**
- d) **Appointing an auditor or independent, competent person**

The AGM is also the opportunity for any 'motions' (or proposals) to be presented by and to the membership. This is necessary where decisions need to be taken on areas or issues that require the majority of the membership's knowledge and approval.

The AGM is a formal requirement. Companies are required by law to hold one, but in the case of voluntary associations, the requirement for an AGM is expressed in their Constitution. To this end, it is very important that the Management Committee are familiar with the protocol and procedures for arranging and carrying out the AGM as stated in that Constitution.

Finally, it is important to use a venue that is fully accessible and to bear in mind any other special requirements eg. loop for the hard of hearing.



## AGM Agenda

A typical agenda for an AGM will include the following:

- Opening remarks (Chairperson)
- Apologies
- Minutes of previous AGM
- Matters arising from the minutes
- Presentation of the Annual Report
- Presentation of the Annual Accounts
- Appointment of auditor or independent examiner
- Election of the Management Committee
- Motions to the AGM
- AOCB
- Closing remarks (Chairperson)

See overleaf for further details about the main items.

## Guest Speaker?

To attract maximum numbers to an AGM it is often good practice to invite a guest speaker. It is important to make sure that this person is someone that the audience would be interested in hearing from, and whom they might not generally have the opportunity to meet. For instance, the local Member of the Scottish Parliament or perhaps the Lord/Lady Provost. The guest speaker will usually follow when the main business of the AGM is complete.

## The Protocol & Procedures for calling the AGM

The Constitution will outline the processes that must be followed when arranging the AGM. It will specify when the meeting will take place each year which will usually fall within 2 to 6 months of the annual accounts being audited or checked. It will also specify how people will be notified about the AGM and how soon beforehand eg. 'a public notice of the AGM will be placed in the local media at least 21 days prior to the meeting taking place', or, 'members will be notified in writing no later than 14 days before the meeting taking place'.

It is important that members are given sufficient time to raise a motion to be put to the AGM and within what timeframe this request must be received by the Committee. The time factor is also important when it comes to the Committee elections. That is, there needs to be sufficient time for members to complete and return nomination forms for electing Committee members at the AGM.



## What happens at the AGM!

### 1. Apologies

The names of those who have forwarded apologies as they are unable to attend should be recorded in the minutes.

### 2. Minutes of the previous AGM

It is important to give those attending the AGM some time before the meeting begins to read over the minutes of the previous meeting. Any 'matters arising' (issues or areas requiring further clarification or questions) should be invited from the body of the meeting. The Chairperson should co-ordinate any questions unless they will ultimately be covered within the main Agenda.

The minutes should then be adopted by a proposer and seconder both of whom must have been at the previous AGM.

### 3. Annual Report

As it is not practical for *all* members to attend *every* Committee meeting of the association, the AGM is the chance for them and others to find out what significant activities or achievements have occurred during the year. This is also the opportunity for those present to ask questions of the Committee. The Annual Report is usually presented by the Chairperson and can be either a simple verbal report or in some cases, a written report to which the Chairperson will talk to.

It is best to stick to particular things rather than referring to *everything* that has occurred during the year. Think about significant events, successes, funding issues, staff changes, project changes, and even failures if necessary. Keeping the presentation informative yet concise is the main challenge although there should also be some time allowed afterwards to answer any questions.

### 4. Financial Report (and appointment of auditor/independent examiner)

The AGM will normally take place after the annual accounts have been audited or checked so that an accurate report of the finances for the year can be presented to those attending. Those attending need time to look over the accounts so copies should be given out before the meeting begins (usually along with the minutes of the previous AGM).

### 4. Financial Report (Cont/...)

The financial report is usually presented by the Treasurer and again, those attending the meeting will have the opportunity to ask questions. In some cases the Auditor or Independent Examiner may be present at the meeting so that they too can answer any questions. It is common practice to appoint the auditor or independent examiner at this stage of the AGM. If the association is happy with the service they currently receive they can move to re-appoint the same one. See our *'Managing the Money'* quick guide for further information on reporting accounts and the difference between an 'auditor' and 'Independent examiner'.

### 5. Election of Management Committee

The AGM is the time to elect a new Management Committee who will look after the business of the association over the coming year. How this process will be carried out should be outlined in the Constitution. It may be that some Committee members have resigned/retired, or a certain % of the Committee stands down annually but are eligible for re-election, or it may be that those in 'co-opted' Committee positions need to be ratified by the membership. In all circumstances, a member of the association needs to 'propose' and another will need to 'second' any nominations before they are accepted.

### 6. Motions to be put to the AGM




These are basically proposals that require a vote by the membership before they can be accepted or declined. For instance, there may be a motion to lobby the Scottish Parliament; or to suggest a change in direction of the association; or an amendment to the Constitution. Only motions proposed and seconded will be discussed and voted upon. Whatever the case, the voting procedures need to be clear eg. a simple show of hands, ballot papers, voting cards etc. Again, the Constitution should highlight the voting procedure and in the case of an equality of votes, the Chairperson will normally have the casting vote.

### 7. AOCB (Any other competent business)



This could be any final comments or questions there hasn't been the opportunity to address within the main meeting. Be careful however, not to let this part go on too long!

## WHO CAN HELP?

### RCVS (Council for Voluntary Services)

The Wynd Centre, 6 School Wynd, Paisley  0141 587 2487  [info@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:info@rcvsweb.co.uk)  [www.rcvsweb.co.uk](http://www.rcvsweb.co.uk)

### Renfrewshire Council External Funding Team



Chief Executives Dept., North Building, Cotton St, Paisley  0141 840 3273  [chiefexec@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:chiefexec@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

 [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)






### Renfrewshire Council Capacity Building Team

Linwood Community Education Centre, Brediland Road, Linwood  01505 320573  [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)

### Paisley Partnership (Community Action Team)

Falcon Crescent, Ferguslie Park, Paisley  0141 887 7707  [www.paisleypartnership.com](http://www.paisleypartnership.com)

RCVS has produced a full range of 'Quick Guides to.....' which include:

-  Fundraising
-  Managing the Money
-  Becoming a Charity
-  The Constitution
-  The Committee



Contact RCVS for copies on 0141 587 2487.