



# Community & Voluntary Service

Mid and North Bedfordshire

## How to Plan and Hold an Effective Annual General Meetings

### 1: Introduction

Every registered charity must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) once a year. At this meeting the organisation will present a report to its members about what the group have been up to in the previous year.

Many groups use them as an opportunity for members to meet each other by following the formal part of the meeting with a social event.

In your constitution, you should have the minimum period of notice required for the AGM. If nominations to be elected onto the management committee are needed before the meeting, you will have to send out forms for nominations alongside the agenda. On these, there should be a date by which the forms should be returned. If there are more nominations than available positions you will have to have a vote at the meeting.

An AGM is valuable to members and, if it is written into the constitution, an organisation must hold it whether the management committee wish to do so or not.

### 2: The essential functions of an AGM

- to approve the minutes of the previous AGM
- to receive or approve the audited accounts
- to receive a report on the activities of the organisation – the Annual Report
- to deal with any other matter specified in the governing document

### 3: Other functions of an AGM

- to elect committee members
- to appoint independent examiners (or auditors if necessary)
- to consider any resolutions put forward by members

#### **4: Before the meeting**

- arrange a suitable date and time well in advance
- book/arrange a suitable location
- if required by your constitution, prepare the organisation's accounts and submit them in time for the audit to be completed and for approved accounts to be sent to members
- ensure notice is given of the AGM and that notices are sent in accordance with your constitution
- check the rules on elections and produce any necessary voting forms
- if postal/proxy voting is allowed deal with those votes before the meeting
- if a company limited by guarantee, ensure that the auditor is informed of the meeting (this is a legal requirement for companies)
- consult your constitution to ensure that the meeting will be run in accordance with it

#### **5: At the meeting**

- record attendance and check proof of eligibility to vote
- have originals of accounts available to be seen
- ensure minutes of the meeting are kept

#### **6: After the meeting**

- make all necessary changes to the records
- update membership and committee lists
- write up the minutes of the meeting
- if the organisation is a limited company send all necessary information to Companies House within 14 days of the meeting
- carry out induction procedures for new committee members

#### **7: The annual report**

The annual report is one of the key tools accessible to voluntary organisations to help them communicate information. The annual report plays a very important role in providing information to enable stakeholders and the general public to gain a greater insight into your organisation's activities and achievements.

Reasons to produce a good annual report:

- A good annual report explains your organisation to the outside world. It reports back your aims, achievements and commitment
- A good annual report reports back to supporters and others. A bad one can destroy a supporter's confidence
- A good annual report encourages staff and volunteers, giving them pride in their work

## 8: Purpose of a charity's annual report and accounts

The purpose of preparing a charity's annual report and accounts is to discharge the charity trustees' duty of public accountability and stewardship.

The report and accounts should:

- Provide timely and regular information on the charity and its funds
- Enable the reader to gain an understanding of the charity's activities and achievements
- Enable the reader to gain a full and proper appreciation of the charity's financial transactions during the year and of the position of its funds at the year end

## 9: Further help

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**Businessballs** - free organizational and personal development -  
[www.businessballs.com/meetings.htm](http://www.businessballs.com/meetings.htm)

### *Reference Books:*

- **The Minute Takers Handbook** – Lee Comer and Paul Ticher –  
[www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk) - £19.95

*CVS – Mid & North Beds has the aforementioned book in our reference library & this can be loaned to CVS members*

### **See Other Related CVS – Mid & North Beds Information Sheets:**

- **How to Develop an Effective Management Committee**
- **How to Create Effective Publicity Materials**

*This is one in a series of fact sheets produced by CVS – Mid & North Beds, on subjects of interest to voluntary and community groups. It is intended for guidance only and is not a comprehensive statement of the law.*