



Committee Meetings

Introduction

Committee meetings are where the majority of the work of a tenant association is carried out and are therefore an important part of running a successful group.

At committee meetings the committee should work towards achieving its aims. Discussions should take place about current issues and then a decision be made on how to move forward. If a decision cannot be agreed upon a vote must be taken. In the event of a tie, the chair shall have a second vote. Once a decision is made it is important to agree upon who will carry out any necessary tasks i.e. writing letters, making 'phone calls etc. If possible, tasks should be divided fairly amongst all the committee and not left to one or two people. At subsequent meetings committee members who have undertaken tasks should report back on progress made.

Agenda's

As with all meetings it is important to put together an agenda for each committee meeting. When preparing the agenda it is a good idea to decide how much time will be spent on each item. This will help to ensure that one item does not take up the whole meeting! It is the duty of the Chair to make sure that the agenda is kept to, the meeting stays on track and finishes on time. Below is an example of what a typical committee meeting agenda may look like:

Dibcot Close Tenant Association Committee Meeting

Wednesday 30th January, 2002

Agenda

7.00 Attendance and Apologies

7.05 Minutes of Last Meeting

7.10 Matters Arising

7.20 Correspondence

7.35 Vandalism of Empty Properties

7.55 Speeding Cars

8.15 Any Other Business

8.25 Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

8.30 Close

Minutes

Minutes must always be taken at meetings. Two of the first things on the agenda should be Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising. Previous minutes should be checked and agreed as a true record or amendments agreed. If anyone has anything to add about an item discussed at a previous meeting this can be done under Matters Arising.

Correspondence

The Secretary should inform the rest of the committee about any correspondence received for the group. Any action required as a result of correspondence should be agreed and again it needs to be decided who will carry out the action needed.

Who to Invite

On the whole committee meetings should be attended by the committee only. However, occasionally in order to move forward with a particular issue it may be necessary to invite somebody else to a meeting. For example if a group has concerns about the Policing in the area it may be appropriate to invite the local community Police Officer.

Attendance

All committee members should attempt to be present at all committee meetings. It is obvious however that there will be times when not everyone can attend for one reason or another (e.g. sickness, holidays, work etc.). Apologies must be given by members unable to attend a meeting. If a committee member misses three consecutive meetings without offering apologies or regularly fails to attend meetings the committee may decide to take a vote of no confidence in that person. Advice should be taken from TPU.

Quorum

The minimum number of people that need to be present for a committee meeting to be valid (a quorum) is four committee members. If less than four people attend a meeting it should be rearranged. The issues may be discussed but no decisions can be made.

Frequency of Meetings

The committee decides how often it will meet. Most groups meet every four to six weeks (the minimum number of times a group should meet per year is four) and follow a set cycle e.g. every first Monday of the month, the last Wednesday of each month. By doing this a whole year's worth of meetings can be mapped out which enables the committee to enter these dates into their diaries well in advance.

Duration of Meetings

Committee meetings should last between an hour and an hour and a half, certainly no longer than two hours.

Venue for Meetings

It is up to the committee to agree on a suitable venue for meetings. Many groups meet in the home of one of the committee members or alternate between a few of their homes. This is not always possible so some groups meet in local buildings e.g. library, community centre, school etc. There is sometimes a charge to meet in such places which should be paid from the association's grant (*see guidance note: Grants*). Where possible groups should meet in the cheapest venue or a place where no charge is made. Some community buildings will waive charges for groups that have similar aims to their own i.e. to improve the environment and encourage a community spirit. When exploring places to meet the committee

should mention what they have set up to do and try to negotiate a lesser fee or no fee at all.