

## Developing Meeting Ground Rules

To stimulate good practice for meetings amongst Committee Members or alternatively when meetings are not going well, it may be worth trying a team exercise which establishes as a group, some agreed meeting protocols / expectations. For example, meetings that go late into the night or drag on for little purpose can be a real turn-off. In this instance, some of the agreed protocols may be to end the meeting at a given time, no matter and to give the President license to move proceedings along if needed.

A group brainstorm with the Committee around what is desirable for an effective meeting can be quite a useful exercise. An A3 sheet detailing in dot form, the agreed expectations, laminated for the meeting room as a reminder is something that has worked well for some committees.

In establishing some agreed meeting rules, here are some areas you may wish to consider:

- Meetings to commence and finish on time (2 hours maximum is the benchmark)
- Members to do the necessary preparation before the meeting e.g. read Minutes
- When issues are raised, the Committee will focus on the solution
- Committee members focus on the issues not individuals
- Committee members to always treat each other with respect
- Everyone is to be listened to, regardless of whether members agree
- Listening does not signal agreement
- Committee members to value that there are different perspectives in an organisation
- One person to speak at a time
- When discussion becomes repetitive, the President/Chair can move it along without anyone feeling offended
- The Committee will refer back to the rules and the Constitution for guidance
- The Committee seeks *progress not perfection*