



Good Practice for Annual General Meetings

Annual General Meetings

There is an almost universal complaint that hardly anyone ever turns up at Annual General Meetings, even when they are combined with social events. However, the AGM is the one occasion when the PTA/PA Committee reports back to its members on what it has done in the past year and it is important for the committee to make itself accountable in this way. It also provides a good annual record of everything that has been done and is the time when new committee members are elected/appointed. And this may be why not too many people turn up - they don't want to take on the commitment!

Inevitably the meeting is somewhat formal starting with the fact that members should be given proper advance notice and invited to submit any items of business for inclusion on the agenda. It is up to the Chairperson and Secretary to accept or reject such items but the AGM is essentially about the PTA/PA and how it is run, so only items relating to that would normally be included. For example a proposal that a PA becomes a PTA would be a legitimate item of business. Indeed, any changes to the constitution should be done at the AGM and members should be informed in advance of what is proposed. However, problems about establishing a safe walking route to school would not be a proper item of business for the AGM.

If a problem arises with, for example, the constitution of the PTA/PA during the year, the Chairperson can call an Extraordinary General Meeting - an EGM - at any time to discuss it. The EGM should be run as an AGM.

Agenda

It helps to have a clear idea of what items of business will be covered, and an agenda would look something like the following.

1. Apologies for absence - this should record anyone who has sent their apologies - e.g. a committee member. It should not record all the members who have not turned up.
2. Minutes of the previous AGM - the minutes of the last AGM should be circulated and approved. In general, very few people will be able to remember whether the minutes are an accurate record of a meeting that was a year ago, so it is sensible to keep minutes brief and covering only the main items of business and any decisions.
3. Matters arising (unless covered by other items). This is the point to report that, for example, the Secretary had to resign and someone else took his/her place.
4. Chairperson's Report
This is a reasonably chatty report on the PTA/PA's activities during the year and an outline of any events. There is no need to go into a lot of detail. For example it is fine to say "We decided to hold a Christmas Fair in December. It was well attended and we raised £xx. The PTA also agreed to set up a crèche for parents' meetings and these have been very popular".
The Chairperson should say how much money was raised in total and what the PTA/PA spent it on. If the PTA/PA has bought things for the school, it's a good idea, if at all possible, to have these available for parents to see at the AGM. The chairperson's report should include any specific thanks that should be made e.g. to the school janitor for his/her help, to retiring committee members etc.
The Chairperson's report is essentially the annual report and members should be invited to approve it as an accurate record of the year's events.
5. Treasurer's Report
The Treasurer's report is more formal and is really the presentation of the audited accounts. The Treasurer should explain the income and expenditure and any balance remaining.
At the end of his/her presentation, the Treasurer should ask for the accounts to be formally accepted and approved.
6. Appointment of Auditor
This is a fairly brief item when the person who has agreed to audit the accounts for the up and coming year is agreed by those present.
7. Appointment of committee members
New members of the PTA/PA are either elected at this point, if there are more nominees than places available, or else appointed. This is also an opportunity to call for volunteers if more support is needed.
8. Other items
If you want to amend the constitution or agree how a portion of any money raised should be spent, such proposals should be

detailed as separate items.

9. Any Other Business

This is an opportunity for anyone present to raise a matter which has been forgotten. However, questions of substance should not be brought up at this stage. The Secretary should have been notified of such matters and already included them in the agenda.

10. Close of business

Votes

If any votes are needed at the AGM then, as long as all members were given proper information about the AGM, they should be decided by the simple majority of those present.

Minutes

As with any ordinary committee meeting, minutes should be taken of the AGM. The minutes should correspond to the items on the agenda and should record the main decisions. For example, they should include the names of those who sent apologies, record that the minutes of the previous meetings were approved, record that the chairperson gave his/her report and that this was approved and so on. If there was an extended discussion on any item, the minutes should simply record that there was a discussion, the main points raised and the final decision.

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