

# ROTHERHAM FEDERATION

# CHAIRPERSON'S HANDBOOK

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Running the Meetings
- Preparing an Agenda
- Being a Spokesperson

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CHAIRPERSON

Being the Chairperson of an association is a very important position and how successful committee meetings are often depends upon how well the Chairperson carries out their duties. Below is a list of duties which are generally the responsibility of the Chairperson.

- To ensure that the meetings of the group are run efficiently, effectively, and fairly.
- To be the spokesperson for the group between meetings. It is usually the Chairperson who is the 'official voice' of the association.
- To help the Secretary prepare an Agenda for meetings.
- To work closely with the Secretary of the group about dates, times & places for Committee Meetings & Public Meetings.

## RUNNING THE MEETINGS

It often helps if the Chairperson can arrive a little early for a meeting in case any of the members wish to speak to them prior to the start of the meeting.

Meetings should always start on time and keep to a time limit. Be careful of getting stuck on one agenda item and not leaving enough time to go through the remainder of the items.

At the beginning of the meeting the Chairperson should welcome everyone, read out any apologies for absence and introduce any invited guests.

It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to make sure that everyone at the meeting gets the opportunity of contributing to discussions. Not everyone is confident about speaking up at meetings and the Chairperson should ensure that the quiet members of the committee have a chance to put their points of view forward.

If there is a vote taken on any of the agenda items, then it is the Chairperson who explains the voting procedure and makes sure that the vote is carried out properly and the result is recorded in the Minutes by the Secretary.

If there are any offensive, discriminatory, or problematic behaviour (including, but not limited to racist, sexist, ableist behaviour) made at the meeting then it is the responsibility of the Chairperson to challenge this. If the behaviour persists then the Chairperson has the right to exclude members from the meeting.

At the end of the meeting the Chairperson should arrange details and arrangements for the next meeting.

## PREPARING AN AGENDA

The best way to ensure that meetings run efficiently, effectively, and fairly is to have an agenda and stick to it.

It is the job of the Secretary, together with the Chairperson of the association, to prepare an agenda before the meeting and to make sure that everyone at the meeting is given a copy. Agendas will change according to what business needs to be dealt with and whether the meeting is a Committee Meeting or a Public Meeting.

## EXAMPLES OF AN AGENDA

### Committee Meeting Agenda

<b>Meeting of *GROUP NAME*</b>	
<b>To be held on *DATE* at *TIME*</b>	
<b>at *VENUE*</b>	
1.	Welcome & Introductions
2.	Apologies for absence
3.	Minutes of the last committee meeting
4.	Matters arising from minutes
5.	Treasurer's report
6.	Correspondence
7.	Any Special items, guest speakers
8.	Reports from outside the meeting
9.	Any other business
10.	Date, time & place of next meeting

### Public Meeting Agenda

<b>Meeting of *GROUP NAME*</b>	
<b>To be held on *DATE* at *TIME*</b>	
<b>at *VENUE*</b>	
1.	Welcome & Introductions
2.	Apologies for absence
3.	Correspondence
4.	Group update
5.	Main speaker or items for discussion
6.	Question time
7.	Any other business

Try not to get the two different types of meeting mixed up. Members who have turned up to a Public Meeting to listen to a particular speaker or to take part in discussions on a special subject may get put

off by having to go through lots of committee business. A brief update on what the group committee has been doing will usually be enough information for most people. If anyone wants more detail then they can read through previous minute or be invited along to the next committee meeting.

Some groups decide to have all their meetings open to everyone so that anyone in their group can go along to Committee Meetings even if they are not an elected Committee Member.

## **BEING A SPOKESPERSON FOR YOUR GROUP**

It is usually the Chairperson of an association who will be contacted by anyone wanting to get in touch with the group. Some of the people who are likely to get in touch are, local Councillors, local organisations, local press, etc.

The Chairperson should always try to keep up to date with current community issues, not only in their own particular area but also throughout Rotherham. It is a good idea to ask the Secretary what correspondence has been received prior to a Committee Meeting in case there is something which needs following up for the meeting.

The Chairperson must remember that any views & opinions given to outside bodies must be those of the group and not the personal views and opinions of the Chairperson.

If an outside body contacts the Chairperson to ask for a group representative to attend one of their meetings then this must be brought to a group Committee Meeting before a decision is made. It is the Chairperson who usually sets the tone and style of an association. They are normally the public face of the group and it is their comments which are most often quoted. The Chairperson's contribution to the work of the Committee should never be underestimated.