



DUTIES OF THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Although the General Committee may be called by another name such as the Management Committee we are referring to the main committee that is responsible under the Rules or Articles of Association for the conduct and operation of the club as a whole.

(reviewed June 2011)

This committee usually manages and controls the affairs of the club through a series of regular meetings held at monthly intervals or at such intervals as circumstances dictate. The Rules are likely to contain a clause setting out requirements for meetings which may cover:

- ✎ The composition of the committee
- ✎ The voting arrangements
- ✎ Summoning of special meetings
- ✎ A quorum
- ✎ The election of chairman.

The Rules may also set out the powers of the committee. These are particularly important in relation to:

- ✎ the spending/borrowing/investment powers
- ✎ the purchase and disposal of assets/property
- ✎ control and appointment of staff
- ✎ the signing of contracts on behalf of the club
- ✎ making of byelaws
- ✎ fixing subscriptions and entrance fees
- ✎ the safety of staff and members

Committee members have an obligation to attend meetings unless there is a special reason which makes attendance impossible on a particular occasion. If a committee member misses a number of meetings, the chairman would be within his rights to ask that member whether he felt that he is carrying out his duties conscientiously. A member also has a duty to represent his proposers in a manner they would expect of him.

Members should ensure that they prepare themselves properly before meetings by reading the minutes of the last meeting, the agenda and any reports that have been submitted for

consideration. The secretary should ensure that minutes, reports and agenda are circulated prior to the meeting to enable people to do their homework. This should save time on the night. Members have a particular responsibility to ensure that minutes record the results of meetings accurately, bearing in mind that committees change and people take over who did not participate in that particular discussion.

The duty of committee members is to reach decisions. Very often meetings spend a long time kicking a particular topic around and at the end reach no clear conclusion. There should always be a final decision, even if it is to defer the matter to the next meeting. Also, the meeting should clearly identify the person responsible for implementing or progressing each decision. In a large governing body such as a committee it is easy to be vague about these matters allowing members to 'pass the buck'.

At General Committee Meetings the Agenda may include all or some of the following items for consideration:

1. A review of the minutes and reports from sub committees
2. A financial review of the club operations including:
 - ✎ Monthly management accounts/income and expenditure
 - ✎ Capital spending
 - ✎ Performance against budgets
 - ✎ Approving annual budgets & cash flow forecasts
 - ✎ Bar Trading Account and Profit Margin
 - ✎ Stock controls
 - ✎ Credit control
3. Membership including election, resignations, subscriptions etc.
4. Members' discipline
5. Legal and insurance matters
6. Staff remuneration and discipline
7. Suggestions Book
8. Correspondence
9. Arrangements for special sub committees
10. Delegation of matters to sub committees as appropriate

11. Annual accounts and arrangements for general meetings of members
12. Periodic review of the Club Rules & Byelaws
13. Health & Safety

A General Committee should try to restrict itself to matters of policy that affect the club as a whole or that affect the welfare of all the members. Matters to do with specific club activities such as the course and the catering should be delegated to the relevant sub-committee for a decision. As an example, the general committee will lay down general guidelines on wage and salary increases and will then ask individual sub committees to make recommendations on the staff under their control for final approval by the General Committee.

Once policy decisions have been taken, committees should also try to delegate as much of the implementation and day to day administration as possible to the Secretary/Manager and other staff. Although, obviously there are situations where committee members will get involved in the administration, ie running social events or competitions, because of the need to generate a club atmosphere.

The General Committee is the body that is responsible for the control of the secretary and for ensuring that he carries out his duties diligently. They should not shirk that responsibility and should not be afraid to deal with him as they would any other employee. He is the servant of the committee and should expect certain basic controls on his performance. He should also expect clear guidance on policy decisions but with the minimum of petty interference. There must be mutual respect between the committee members and the secretary, if there is to be a good working relationship.

The General Committee should approve all general communications to the members and to any external sources, in order to ensure that they do not expose the club to any unnecessary criticism. General circulars are expensive and the opportunity to combine topics should be borne in mind.

What Does the General Committee Do? – Check List

- ⌘ When are General Committee Meetings held?
- ⌘ Who is the Chairman and how is he appointed/elected?
- ⌘ What is the Standing Agenda for the General Committee Meetings?
- ⌘ What are the spending/borrowing limits of the General Committee?
- ⌘ What are the arrangements for fixing members' subscriptions?
- ⌘ What financial information is placed before General Committee meetings?
- ⌘ Does the General Committee delegate satisfactorily to sub committees and staff?