

## Meeting Guidelines

These guidelines have been drawn up to assist with the smooth running of meetings. To ensure that every member of the group has a chance to participate, all ideas are considered and discussed and decisions are made in the best interest of the organisation. Above all that all participants are respectfully treated as true team members who are essential to the decision making process and are able to express their opinion and be heard.

- **Be willing to reach consensus.** Keep an open mind that there probably is an acceptable decision that everyone can support, even if some degree of compromise is required.
- **Listen actively to others.** Listen to understand what is being said. Do not “pretend” to listen while you are thinking of how to respond to statements others have made.
- **‘Round Robin’.** Discussions and updates will take place in a ‘round robin’ style to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to voice their ideas or update on their current commitments.
- **No ‘one-on-one’ side meetings or conversations.** This is really distracting and lead to misunderstandings. Essential discussion is meant for everyone!
- **Do not interrupt other participants.** Be respectful to others, as you would expect the same for yourself. You will get a chance to be heard, it may help to have a notepad with you to remind you of the points you’d like to raise.
- **Keep to the topic in hand.** To ensure all items are covered it is important that we stay on topic. Changing topics half way through a discussion can lead to confusion and misunderstandings.
- **Decision making.** Decisions will be made by voting at the end of the discussion by way of a show of hands. In the event of a tie the Chair will have the casting vote.
- **Leave the meeting with a clear sense of next steps.** Make notes of who is responsible to do what and by when!
- **Discussions will be treated as confidential as appropriate.**
- **Once consensus has been reached, support group decisions and actions.** Do not leave the meeting after decisions have been made and talk about how your idea was the better one, or refer back to it at future meetings (unless a new discussion is required as plans need to be changed).

NB: The role of the Chair is to ensure the smooth running of the meeting (assisted by the Secretary). It may, on occasion, be necessary for the Chair to bring discussions back to the point in hand or to bring discussions to a close to ensure that the all items on the agenda a covered within the meeting.

Assume responsibility for yourself and any commitments that you make to the organisation. If you can no longer meet a commitment for whatever reason within the timescale please be honest so that the group can help in any way they can.

These guidelines can be added to if necessary to address any new concerns.