



How Do I Chair Meetings?

The responsibility of chairing P&C meetings lies with the President but in their absence this may be undertaken by one of the Vice Presidents. If there are no Vice Presidents at the meeting then the meeting will elect a chairperson to run that particular meeting.

The role of the Chair is to remain neutral and provide the opportunity for all sides of the discussion to be heard. If the Chair wants to participate in a discussion/debate then they should step down from the role and allow a Vice President to chair the meeting for the entire period of discussion of that specific item. It is important that the Chair recognises the influence, either verbally or visually, that they may have on a discussion and ensure that no preference is given to the direction of the debate to the members present.

It is vital that the Chair provides the environment for the variety of individuals, values, beliefs, viewpoints and ideas that exist in each P&C. The Chair is expected to preserve order, including ruling on contentious matters of procedure and assisting the progress of the discussion by preventing irrelevant or repetitious discussion or offensive remarks.

Helpful Hints when chairing:

- Stick to the agenda and set a time for the meeting to finish;
- Know the rules – the Chair must apply the rules of the Constitution and By-Laws to retain the confidence of the meeting;
- Ensure one speaker at a time has the floor;
- Ensure all speakers are heard and their points of view are respected;
- Do not ridicule – the Chair should ensure each member is shown courtesy and respect and has the opportunity to contribute to their views;
- Limit the time for speakers for and against;
- Monitor the number of speakers on any one motion/topic.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Does anyone have a deciding vote?**

No. Each decision or action that a P&C wants to make should be put forward with a motion to the meeting to be voted on. Each member has one vote and no-one has a deciding vote. If there is a tied vote then the motion is lost.

- **Does anyone have the right of veto on any decision or vote?**

No. Each decision or action that a P&C wants to make should be put forward with a motion to the meeting to be voted on. No position has any additional rights regarding any decision of the meeting.



➤ **Can the Chair put a motion forward?**

No. The Chair should remain impartial and if the person in the chair wishes to put forward a motion then they should step down from the chair as outlined above. Motions put forward from the Chair might be seen to be influencing the direction of the meeting.

➤ **Can the Chair vote?**

Yes. The Chair, as a member of the P&C is entitled to the same voting rights as any member. However, whoever is in the Chair will often abstain from voting, in order to preserve the impartiality of the position.

Relevant Links

Prescribed Constitution, clause 5 – Prescribed Constitution

Standard Constitution, clause 5 – Standard Constitution

NE Renton – Guide for Meetings and Organisations Vol 2 (ISBN-13 – 9780455220840)



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