

# Chairing A P&C Meeting

## Helpful hints for the P&C President and others who chair meetings

### Responsibilities

The P&C Constitution states that the President, when present, will chair the P&C meeting.

It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to:

- Determine that a quorum is present.
- Create an agenda before the meeting in consultation with the Secretary.
- Give an Acknowledgment of Country
- Follow the meeting agenda and keep members on track.
- Sign the confirmed minutes of the previous meeting. Minutes are not an official record until confirmed at a subsequent meeting.
- Control the debate.
- The Chairperson should seek to promote orderly and relevant discussion.
- Ensure motions and amendments are clear and relevant.
- Keep speakers to the point and allotted time; and ensure that they are not interrupted.
- Ensure that all discussion is addressed through the Chairperson.
- Sum up both sides of any debate, taking care that no personal bias is introduced.
- Ensure motions/amendments are clearly understood by all members before voting.

### Running the meeting

The Chairperson must guide the meeting towards achieving its aims.

They have the power to:

- Open the meeting.
- Rule on procedure.
- Decide who speaks and in what order.
- Close debate - when sufficient discussion has taken place or there are no further speakers for or against any motion or amendment.
- Reject motions - if they are outside the power of the Association; insufficient notice has been given (some motions require a minimum notice); are inconsistent with a previous decision; phrased in objectionable language or have ambiguous wording.
- Request that a speaker be seated or stop speaking.
- Close the meeting.

### Dissent from the chair

A motion of dissent from the Chair offers members/delegates the opportunity to disagree with the Chair's ruling. A motion of dissent is not a motion of no confidence in the Chair. Once the motion has been accepted, the Chairperson shall vacate the chair until a decision has been made on the ruling that cause the dissent (not on the original motion). Typically, the Vice-President will act as Chair during this period, until the Chairperson recommences role as Chair.



## The 'art' of being a good chairperson

### The Chairperson

- Has an important role - they preside over meetings in a proper and orderly manner, ensuring that the constitutional requirements are observed.
- Should be an active listener, be able to summarise the discussion and ask members what they want next.
- Should allocate a timekeeper when members speak to a motion, especially when debating or discussing an issue. This will prevent meetings running overtime and prevent straying from the agenda. They can set an agreed time for open discussion between members.
- Should be able to identify the strengths and skills of the other members and know when to call on them.
- Should concentrate on the 'art' of getting the group to work together to reach its goals with collective decision-making.