

BC  
Chair/ Committee  
  
Handbook

## Policy Framework:

Much research on organisational effectiveness shows that there is a direct correlation between an individual's capability to give and receive feedback, and the capacity of the organisation to achieve its desired outcomes. This becomes demonstrably obvious in dealing with conflict.

This proposed handbook for your committee's functioning has as its purpose the intention of creating a structure that enables the safe resolution of conflict and more importantly offers the possibility of harmonious functioning in an extremely complex environment.

It is offered as a work in progress which I am happy to discuss with you to customise its development for your BC.

## Policies Index

1. Chairperson's Roles & responsibilities *(page 3)*
2. Committee's Roles & responsibilities *(page 4)*
3. Meeting Process *(page 5)*
4. Meeting Procedures *(page 5)*
5. Meeting Agenda *(page 7)*
6. Committee Principles *(Page 8)*
7. Agenda items (pro-forma attached) *(Page 9)*

## 1. Chairperson's Roles and Responsibilities

- Governance responsibility for your Body Corporate is now vested in the Chairperson through the vehicle of the Unit Titles Act 2010 and the ensuing regulations. These responsibilities are detailed by:
  1. The Act
  2. The Body Corporate Rules
  3. The will of the Body Corporate as expressed throughout its formal 'General Meeting' process.
- Your Body Corporate has resolved to contract a professional organisation (currently Strata Title Administration) to fulfil the duties of the Chairperson.
- It is the responsibility of the Chairperson and Committee to ensure Strata complies with its duties to the Body Corporate.
- Additionally any other Service Providers (Building Manager; Consulting Engineers; Solicitor etc) will fall under these authorities.
- The Chairperson is the statutory leader of the Body Corporate and carries overall responsibility for the integrity of the Committee's processes.
- The Chairperson of the Committee need not be the Chairperson of the Body Corporate, but if not needs an effective working relationship with the Body Corporate Chair.
- The Committee Chairperson role involves the following responsibilities:
  - Spokesperson for the Committee on strategic matters.
  - Establishment and maintenance of an on-going working relationship with contractor's/ employees.
  - Building of an effective committee culture.
  - Protected Disclosure Officer
  - Chairing of the meetings
    - Meeting discussion content will only be those issues that, according to Committee policy, clearly belong to the Committee to decide.

- Deliberation will be timely, fair, orderly and thorough, but also efficient, limited to time and kept to the point.
- Meeting procedures are observed except where the Committee has suspended them. Information on meeting procedures is found in the section on meetings.

## 2. Committee Roles and Responsibilities

The Committee has a mandate from the Unit Titles Act 2010 and the AGM (*date*) that:

- It will comprise of (#) members elected at the AGM.
- The quorum of any Committee meeting shall be (#) members of the Committee currently holding office.

All Committee members come to the Committee table entrusted to ensure effective governance despite the different perspectives they bring to Committee discussions. Individuals are neither advocates nor delegates with sectional interests but work for positive outcomes for all concerned.

The Committee is committed to ethical conduct in all areas of its responsibilities and authority.

Committee Members shall:

- Ensure the needs of the Body Corporate are paramount.
- Respect the integrity of the 'employees', contractors of the Body Corporate.
- Observe the confidentiality of non-public information acquired in their roles as Committee members and not disclose such information to any other persons.
- Attend Committee meetings prepared for full and appropriate participation in decision-making.
- Ensure that individual Committee Members do not act independently of the Committee's decisions.
- Speak with one voice through its adopted resolutions and ensure that any disagreements are resolved within the Committee.

- Avoid any conflicts of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.
- Recognise that only the Chairperson can speak for the Committee unless the Committee specifies otherwise.
- Continually self-monitor their individual performance as members against the 'will' of the Body Corporate policies and against any other current Committee evaluation tools.
- Avoid 'email' meetings

### **3. Meeting Process**

Committee meetings are to be effective and efficient.

Meetings will:

- Be held with the expectation that members have prepared for them and will participate in all discussions at all times within the principles of acceptable behaviour
- Include any non-Committee member the Committee chooses in its discussions.
- The meeting duration will be 120 minutes provided that
  - The committee by resolution may extend this time by 30 minutes

### **4. Meeting Procedures**

#### General:

- The Chairperson shall be elected at the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting if not the elected Chairperson of the Body Corporate.
- The Committee meetings will be scheduled by agreement of the committee.
- A minute secretary will be appointed by the Committee to record the meeting.
- Any Committee Members with pecuniary interest in any issue shall not take part in any debate on such issues and may be asked to leave the meeting for the duration of the debate.
- Minutes of the meetings will be kept detailing resolutions of the committee.
- The minutes will be distributed within five working days of the meeting.

- Minutes will be forwarded to the Body Corporate secretary who will retain them as recorded on behalf of the Body Corporate.

#### Special meetings:

- A special meeting of the Committee may be called by delivery of notice to the Chairperson signed by at least one half of the Committee Members.

#### Motions/Amendments:

- All motions and amendments moved in debate must be seconded unless moved by the Chairperson.
- Motions and amendments once proposed and accepted may not be withdrawn without the consent of the meeting.
- No further amendments may be accepted until the first one is disposed of.
- The mover of a motion has right of reply.
- A matter already discussed and decided may not be reintroduced at the same meeting in any guise or by way of an amendment.

#### Proxy voting

- Committee members may submit a written proxy vote if they are unable to attend the meeting.
- The proxy will be submitted to the Chair.
- Proxy voting may only be on specific issue as advised in the meeting Agenda.
- Proxy votes may not be used to form a meeting quorum.

#### Termination of debate:

- All decisions will be taken by open voting by all Committee Members present in person. In addition 'permitted' proxies will be counted.

#### Suspension of Meeting Procedures:

- Standing Orders may be suspended by resolution of the meeting.

### Agenda:

- The order of the Agenda may be varied by resolution at the meeting.

## 5. Meeting Agenda

- Items for placement on the agenda will be forwarded to the Chair (preferably by email) at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.
- The agenda will be circulated to the Committee by email at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time.
- Items not on the agenda will be considered by the Committee for additions to General business at the beginning of each meeting.
- Items submitted for the agenda will preferably be in the prescribed format. (see attachment)

A typical agenda will be as follows.

Committee Meeting Agenda – date

Meet and greet (15 minutes)

Administration Matters (5 Minutes)

- Apologies
- Confirmation of minutes  
*[(additions and amendments will be noted)]*
- Declaration of interests

*[Unless otherwise requested, the above will be moved as a consent agenda]*

Committee Reports (30 Minutes)

Presentation of the financial accounts

General Business (60 Minutes)

- Issues arising on the agenda
- Progress on committee matters, special projects etc and analysis against Committee criteria
- Exploration of issues
- Committee discussion

Meeting Closure (10 Minutes)

Comments on meeting procedures and outcomes

Preparation for next meeting

## 6. Committee Principles

The Committee may set up sub-committees/ individual delegations to help carry out its responsibilities and due process. Guidelines for these are:

- They are used sparingly to preserve the Committee functioning as a whole when other methods have been deemed inadequate.
- May use non Committee Members as sources of advice but only Committee Members can be part of the decision making process.
- May not speak or act for the Committee except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Such authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority of the Chairperson/ Committee.
- Help the Committee do its work.
- Assist the Committee chiefly by researching alternatives and implications for Committee deliberation.
- Are to have a written brief as required. It is suggested that this contains information about the following:
  - Purpose
  - Duties and responsibilities
  - Reporting procedures/schedule



## Agenda item for consideration:

### 1. Desired outcome (s)

1st step

If the issue was resolved, what would be the benefit that would follow.

Describe the benefit in writing (bullets are good)

*e.g.*

- *The committee is well informed about what the needs of the community are.*
- *The committee is well informed about the needs of the building*
- *The committee is seen as an effective body.*

### 3. Suggested strategies

3rd step

Brainstorm suggested strategies

*e.g.*

- *Distribute minutes among investors/ owners*
- *Make minutes public via website*
- *Hold open committee meetings for tenants/ occupiers*
- *Roster committee members to be available on site to meet*
- *Create on site newsletter*
- *Organise social events (Committee BBQ etc)*

### 2. Current Situation

2nd step

What is the current 'reality'

*e.g.*

- *The committee has little interaction with 90% of the occupiers (tenants)*
- *The committee has little interaction with absent investors*

Notes:

1<sup>st</sup> step:

- Is this a concern of the committee? Are these all the effects that we are looking for arising from this issue?

2<sup>nd</sup> step

- Is this a concern of the committee? Is it a real issue that is worth investing in? Are these all the causes impacting the desired outcome?

3<sup>rd</sup> step

- Be expansive in creating this list. Include any ideas that you have without judgement. At this stage this is a suitable working document for the committee. If you wish to take it further see next example: By following this process through you can end up with a 'to do' list where the ideas become action points...

*Desired outcome*

- *Minutes are distributed among owners/ investors*

*Suggested strategies*

- *Chairperson to instruct secretary to circulate minutes when approved*
- *Institute minute process as outlined in committee handbook*

*Current situation*

- *We do not have contact details for these people*
- *We do not have formal minutes*
- *There is no process for circulating minutes*
- *Secretary has address list*