

The Group Committee

Election

The Group Committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Parents' Association. At this meeting a Group Secretary and a Group Treasurer are also elected. Scouters may not fill either of these positions, nor may they be elected to the Group Committee. The Group Committee is the Group Scouter's committee, and it is essential that it should consist of people with whom he is able to work harmoniously. For this reason the rule says that the AGM shall elect "in consultation with the Group Scouter, a Group Committee, a Group Secretary and a Group Treasurer". The advice of the Group Scouter is valuable when nominations are called for, or when people are approached beforehand with a view to their nomination.

The most effective Committees are not haphazardly elected at the Annual General Meeting. The members are carefully selected before the meeting because of their ability and willingness to serve. The requirements of the specific positions they are to fill should be Fully explained to them so that they are conversant with the service expected of them. Job descriptions of the more important positions are set out in "Group Committee Roles".

The Group Chairperson is not elected at the AGM. He or she is appointed by the Group Scouter in consultation with the Group Committee. He or she is chairman of both the Parents' Association and the Group Committee. A Scouter may not be appointed to this position.

Groups attached to schools fall into a special category in that they may be registered by the headmaster or headmistress as an "Open Sponsored Group" (membership open to any boy) or as a "Closed Sponsored Group" (membership open only to boys who belong to the school). Normally the sponsoring authority where it is a committee may not be appointed as the Group Committee (Rule 603.9.ii). Where special circumstances exist (e.g. isolated schools in rural areas) the Provincial Commissioner may give his approval for the school committee to also perform the Functions of the Group Committee of the school-sponsored Scout Group (Rule 604.2). However, it is desirable for a separate Group Committee to be elected whenever possible.

Composition

The Group Committee may be composed of parents of SCOUTS in the Group, former SCOUTS, representatives of the Sponsoring Authority in the case of a Sponsored Group, and others interested in the Group.

In many cases all the members of a Group Committee are parents of SCOUTS, but it is worthwhile to endeavour to attract people from the wider field permitted by the rules and, in this way, to obtain the help of people other than those immediately connected with the Group. It should be realised that the Group Committee is essential in the running of the Group and is the body on which the Group Scouter will rely for support.

Troop and Pack Scouters do not attend meetings of the Group Committee, unless specially invited to a meeting for a specific purpose.

Functions

The Group Committee is responsible for Group property and finance, assisting the Group Scouter with public relations and publicity, obtaining accommodation, equipment, camping grounds and adult help for the Group. It is responsible for the recruitment of suitable Scouters. It is also expected to assist, if necessary, in finding employment for members of the Group, and it accepts responsibility for the actions of any body of parents, supporters or persons engaged in any undertaking for and on behalf of the Group or any Branch of the Group.

This Committee is not concerned with or responsible in any way for the actual training of any of the members of the Group. Reference has been made to the fact that the Group Committee is responsible for Group property, and it is most important that where a Group possesses property of any value, including real estate, such property be held and registered in accordance with POR Rule 923 (see section 11). The members of the Group Committee must clearly understand that they are appointed to assist the Group Scouter and therefore endeavour to satisfy his reasonable requests and those of the Group Scouters' Council.

Sub-Committees

People who are elected to a committee and are not given anything to do soon lose interest. To avoid this everyone should be given a specific responsibility. Having been given a task (a “department” or “portfolio”), it is up to the person concerned to get on with it -- if necessary, forming a small sub-committee to assist. Some of the members of such a sub-committee will be members of the Group Committee, but others may be people chosen by the convenor. The size of the sub-committees will vary. The nature of the sub-committees will depend on the circumstances of the Group, but suggestions are: finance (convened by the Treasurer); property; maintenance; ladies’ committee (for Fund-raising, refreshments, etc); “Welcome”; information; transport, etc. The convenors will report to the Group Committee from time to time. Sub-committees must always operate under the same conditions as the Group Committee.

Any funds raised by such a sub-committee must be paid to the Treasurer of the Group Committee as soon as the money is available, and must not be kept in a separate account not under the control of the Group Committee.

The Group Committee Meeting

It is important that the Group Committee should meet on a regular basis, normally not less than once a month. A specimen agenda for a Group Committee might read as follows:

1. WELCOME – Opening prayer
 2. APOLOGIES
 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (to be taken as read if previously circulated).
 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES
 5. TREASURER’S REPORT
 6. GROUP SCOUTER’S REPORT including a brief account of Branch activities (Pack, Troop etc).
 7. CORRESPONDENCE
 8. MAIN ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION (including reports of sub-committees)
 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
- Keep the meeting businesslike so that members may return home feeling that something has been achieved and their time well spent.
 - Sub-committee reports should be concise but informative.
 - It is important that proper management principles be used at Committee meetings. It is frustrating, especially for busy executives, to attend meetings that are unproductive waffling sessions. It is essential that as soon as possible after the Annual General Meeting each office-bearer set targets for the year ahead. He or she must make an assessment of the Group’s needs and formulate plans for meeting these needs during his term of office. At each meeting of the Group Committee he should report on the progress made during the past month and his objectives to be achieved during the ensuing month. The Chairperson of the Committee should request that these reports be submitted in writing. At first glance the procedure may seem to be unnecessarily complicated, but it is generally accepted that every business – however large or small – should be run efficiently on sound management principles.
 - Plan a budget and set a target for the year.
 - Arrange for a letter of welcome to be sent to the parents of new members. Appoint a “welcome” sub-committee which, with the Group Scouter, will make a prompt personal call on the parents of new members joining the Group.
 - All parents are potential Scouters, committee members and resource advisers. They can assist your fundraising activities and provide for camps and outings. Remember Cubs’ parents, in particular, could be associated with your Group for up to 10 years.
 - Hold meetings in comfortable surroundings, provide good seating and heaters if required.
 - Arrange occasional social activities for all members of the Committee to enjoy. Give some service to the community. Maintain the spirit of a happy family unit.
 - When the moments of doubt, indecision or disagreement arise, remember the guiding principle: DO WHAT IS BEST FOR THE SCOUT.
 - A copy of the minutes should be sent to Headquarters via the District Commissioner.