



## How Do P&C Meetings Work?

The P&C Constitution (Prescribed and Standard) state that Associations meet 'at least once during each school term'. Meetings are usually held at the school but if they need to be held at an alternate site consideration should be given to accessibility and availability for all members. The Secretary may use email, the school newsletter or website (with Principal's agreement), school sign, or other means to advertise meetings. Motions on notice, issues and events to be discussed should be advertised along with names of guest speakers.

The Secretary, in consultation with the President, prepares an agenda for each meeting that includes the format listed below and any specific item/s that may have been notified to the Secretary. Any items not listed on the agenda can be addressed in General Business or held over to the next meeting of the Association. The notification of the agenda to the school community with sufficient time allows for a full and informed discussion of the issue.

### **Meeting elements:**

- Notice of Meeting: mentioned at end of previous meeting and at least seven (7) days notice, in writing, given to all members and the wider school community.
- Agenda: is a list of items of business to be considered at a meeting. Where possible this should be included with the 'Notice of Meeting'. It should include any specific items, including requests for funds that have been scheduled for discussion at the meeting.
- Chair: is the person who facilitates the meeting and this duty is assigned by the Constitution to the President.
- Minutes: are a record of the discussion and decisions made at a meeting. These should be written and distributed to members no later than fourteen (14) days following the meeting.
- Motions: each motion/resolution/decision of the meeting requires a member to move the motion and another member to second the motion. The motion is then discussed before the Chair puts the motion to the meeting to vote. The motion is recorded as either 'carried' or 'lost'.
- Mover: this is the person that puts the motion forward for consideration.
- Seconder: each motion needs a member to second it before it can be discussed by the meeting. If a motion does not have a seconder then the motion lapses and is not voted on.
- Voting: all financial members are eligible to vote on motions, elections, etc.

The 'Notice of Meeting' announcement should include: name of the organisation, the type of meeting (eg Annual General Meeting, General or Special meeting); where the meeting will be held; the date the meeting will be held and the time the meeting will commence. It is useful for members to have the financial (Treasurer), President, Principal and any Committee reports distributed prior to the meeting to allow proper review and encourage positive discussion.

**Recommended agenda:**

1. Opening & apologies
2. Receipt of previous meeting minutes
3. Matters arising from previous minutes
4. Reports:
  - a. President
  - b. Treasurer
  - c. Principal
  - d. Sub-Committees – Canteen, Uniform Shop, Fundraising, etc
5. Correspondence
6. Motions of which notice has been given
7. General business
8. Notices of motion

Minutes produced by the Secretary should be a formal, brief, summary of proceedings at meetings. Accurate minutes officially record – attendance (not just ‘as per book’), decisions, resolutions and actions to be taken and by whom. They provide evidence of expenditure authorised, inform members not present at the meeting, provide documentary evidence for audit purposes and provide a permanent record of the P&C Association’s history. The key function of minutes is that they are a record of what is decided and what is done, they are not a record of conversation.

**Frequently Asked Questions****➤ Can anyone call a P&C meeting?**

No. The Constitution states how a Special meeting may be called and General meetings are agreed by the members, usually at the AGM each year. The By-Laws may further specify when meetings are held but they cannot override the stipulations set out in the Constitution.

**➤ Can anyone come along to a P&C meeting?**

Yes. There are no restrictions as to who is allowed to attend a P&C meeting but if they are not financial members of the Association then they should be recorded as an Observer and they have no voting or speaking rights at the meeting. Permission must be asked of and provided by the Chair if observers wish to participate in any discussion/debate during the meeting.

**➤ Does notice have to be given for all motions to be raised at a meeting?**

No. It is not essential that previous notice is given for routine motions and approval for small sums of expenditure. However, it is important that members are given notice for any motion that has significant impact on the members or school community to enable proper discussion and debate. If the meeting is requesting approval for any large amounts of expenditure this should also be included on the agenda and included in the ‘Notice of Meeting’. If the matter is raised at a meeting and such notice has not been given then it would be prudent to defer the matter to the next meeting and include it on the agenda to allow for members to be made aware of the proposed discussion.



➤ **Are P&C Meetings the place members raise specific complaints about/with the school?**

No. P&C meetings are the vehicle for matters that affect the majority of the school community. Individual or specific issues that members may have should be raised through the appropriate channels within the school. The initial point of contact is usually the Principal who can advise how the query can be addressed. If satisfaction is not agreed then other avenues within DEC processes can be followed by the individuals. Contact can be made with the local DEC office.

**Relevant Links**

Prescribed Constitution, clauses 7, 8 and 9 – Prescribed Constitution

Standard Constitution, clauses 7, 8 and 9 – Standard Constitution

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