



People living in the rural community who have concerns about their area, can get together in a group to try to deal with these concerns.

The early stages of forming any community group are the most important, as good organisation at the start ensures the best chance of the group lasting and being successful. Your rural community group will gain more support if, the newly formed group appears to know what they are doing.

How to do this:

The group who have decided to get together need to form a Steering Group. The Steering Group will then organise a public meeting that will give the rural community a chance to get involved and to have their say in what they feel is needed for their area. The Steering Group at this point need to think about producing a Draft Constitution outlining the aims, objectives and functions of the group. They should also be thinking on how to move forward with the group and how to achieve this. If the group needs money to move forward looking into Funders is now a good idea.

Support Given By TADA RSN.

Things To Think About When Holding A Public Meeting

A) Venue

Choose somewhere within your rural community that is assessable to everyone.

B) Date

Be careful that the date and time do not clash with other community events.

C) Publicity

Make sure everyone in your rural community know about this meeting by putting up posters, distributing leaflets in local shops and advertise in your local paper.

Do this 2-3 weeks before your meeting to give the community prior notice.

D) Chairing the Meeting

An independent Chair from outside the community is the best option for the meeting. Choose someone able to Chair for the meeting to run effectively.

E) Agenda

Drawing up an agenda is essential to ensure that the meeting runs smoothly and that all issues on the agenda get properly discussed and in an orderly fashion. The Chair and the organisers should all be aware of what is on the agenda beforehand, and a time for the meeting to start and to end.

Keep your meeting simple, discuss enough about concerning issues but not too much as the meeting could go on forever.

You could base your Agenda like this:

1. Welcome and Introductions.
2. Explanation of Why the Meeting was called.
3. Guest Speaker (if applicable)
4. Identifying the Local Concerns from the organisers
5. Motion that a Rural Community Group be Formed
6. Adoption of a Constitution
7. Nomination/Election of Committee
8. Date and Venue of First Committee Meeting.

F) Committee

An ideal committee will have at least 6 and no more than 12-15 members. Elect your officers and decide who will do what. Set yourself a few objectives and work towards getting these done. Set down strong foundations to ensure its effectiveness and success. Knowledge and Skills in the Committee Procedures need to be built upon and the roles of members within the group should be laid out and understood by all. Look at your Committee as an overall representation of your group and ensure it reports back to the Community by producing regular newsletters to keep everyone up to date with your progress. Hold Annual General Meetings and make sure your committee are aware of the rules around the Constitution., quorum at meetings, voting procedures etc.

Your Nominations for Committee should look like this:

Role of Chairperson	Nominee	Joe Bloggs
	Proposed by	
	Seconded by	Name

Make sure precise records are kept of these nominations as they can be useful for the following years election.

Roles of Office Bearers

After your election of Committee members set out their roles so as each person elected knows exactly what their official job is Delegate tasks evenly as this makes sure everyone in the group feel they have an important role to play.. Make sure precise records are kept of these nominations as they can be useful for the following years election.

Guideline for Conduct after your Group is formed.

Remember you are elected representatives for your rural area and should act in a way to show a good example at all times.

- Try to facilitate open and easy communication both within your group and outside of it.
- Keep properly maintained and recorded minutes, a regular news sheet circulated round your area.
- Recognise as a group you are working to an agenda, rather than individual motives.
- Always show a united front as a collective identity - A COMMITTEE.

Management Committee Member

Role description & person specification

The Management Committee takes on the ultimate legal and financial responsibility for all the activities of the organisation. They maintain an overview of policy and strategic direction rather than being involved in day-to-day operations. The role of the Management Committee is summarised below.

Vision and Leadership

- To be committed to the vision, mission and values of the organisation.
- To provide strategic direction, including agreeing and monitoring strategic plans.
- To keep informed of the activities of the organisation and the wider issues that affect its work.
- To ensure the work of the organisation is monitored and evaluated.

Accountability & Legal Responsibilities

- To ensure the organisation complies with its governing document (e.g. Constitution or memorandum and articles of association).
- To ensure the organisation makes efficient use of resources, in particular that all monies are applied to its objects, agreed plans and budgets.
- To ensure that risks to the organisation, staff, volunteers and service users are at an acceptable level and are effectively managed.
- To be accountable to membership, funders and other stakeholders.

Financial & Staff Management

- To understand the financial position of the organisation.
- To ensure the organisation's finances are properly managed.
- To ensure adequate financial resources for the organisation.
- To contribute to fundraising strategies.
- To ensure the organisation is properly insured against all reasonable liabilities.
- To ensure the organisation is a responsible employer and adheres to legislation.
- To effectively support and manage the chief officer.

Quality and Skills of Management Committee Members

- Good leadership skills.
- Understanding of and commitment to the organisation's mission & values.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Impartiality and fairness.
- Ability to respect confidences.
- Good time-keeping.

Commitment Expected

Each Management Committee member is expected:

- To be objective, honest and able to deal with issues of a confidential nature.
- To attend and contribute to all Management Committee meetings. This means devoting the necessary time and effort to prepare for meetings.
- To use their specific skills, knowledge or experience to contribute to sound decision-making, in the best interests of the organisation and not the individual.
- To advocate the needs of the organisation and not his/her own particular nominating or employing body.
- To let the Chairperson know of any development that may result in a direct conflict of interest with decisions being taken by the Management Committee.
- To treat matters within the organisation as confidential and abide by decisions taken.
- Management Committee member should not seek to undermine any previous decisions.
- To serve on at least one sub-committee.
- To attend occasional events, functions, and negotiations on behalf of the organisation.

Each Management Committee member should have an awareness of the current issues and government policy relevant to the organisation's purpose and the voluntary sector.

Legal Position

The organisation is: a recognised charity (Inland Revenue), and a limited company governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. Each member of the Management Committee is a charity trustee and company director.

Liability

As the organisation is a company limited by guarantee, Management Committee members are not normally legally responsible for its debts beyond the amount they have guaranteed, i.e £1. In certain circumstances Management Committee members cannot avoid personal liability, for example, if they act criminally, negligently, beyond their powers or objects of the organisation, in breach of statutory duty or if they are guilty of wrongful or fraudulent trading. As long as Management Committee members have not acted dishonestly or fraudulently, and have accessed all reasonable means of support and guidance, it is unlikely they will face personal liability.

Management Committee Meetings

- Meetings take place every month (excluding July and August), and last approximately 2-3 hours.
- If you miss 3 consecutive meetings without apologies you can be asked to resign.
- The organisation's Development Manager normally attends the meetings and is accountable to the Management Committee through the Chair.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The organisation's AGM takes place every year. Every Management Committee members is expected to attend. Elections to the Management Committee take place every year.

Support & Training

As a Management Committee member you will receive:

- Induction training covering background information and the work of the Management Committee
- Additional training from time to time, which will contribute to the effectiveness of your Management Committee
- Additional training from time to time, which will contribute to the effectiveness of your Management Committee involvement
- Management Committee members are encouraged, at any time, to seek further information on relevant matters from the Chair or Secretary.

Expenses

Out-of-pocket expenses can be reimbursed to cover the cost of travel to and from meetings, telephone, stationary or other pre-approved costs (see expenses policy).