

# The Secretary's Role at Meetings

The Secretary is crucial to the smooth running of a Management Committee meeting. This involves activities before, during and after Committee meetings.

In order to be effective, the Secretary of the Management Committee should ensure that they carry out the following activities:

## Before the Meeting

- Consult with the Chairperson on the order of business for the meeting, and the way in which it should be dealt with on the agenda. Decide what business requires discussion and what requires a decision by the Management Committee
- Ensure that the notice of the meeting is given, that suitable accommodation is arranged and confirmed, and that copies of the agenda is prepared
- Circulate to all members (a) any papers to be discussed at the upcoming meeting and (b) a copy of the agenda, minutes of the previous meeting
- Make sure that any reports or information requested at the last meeting is available or that there is a good reason why not

## At the Meeting

- Arrive in good time before the meeting with the minutes and with all the relevant correspondence and business matters for that meeting, in good order. Record the names of those who are present, and convey and record apologies received from those who are absent
- Read the minutes of the previous meeting, and if they are approved, obtain the Chairperson's signature on them
- Report on action or matters arising from the previous minutes. Read any important correspondence that has been received
- Unless there is a Minutes Secretary, take notes of the meeting, recording the key points and making sure that all decisions and proposals are recorded, as well as the name of the person or group responsible for carrying them out. Make sure action points are clear
- Make sure that the Chairperson is supplied with all the necessary information for items on the agenda, and remind the Chairperson if an item has been overlooked

## After the Meeting

- Prepare a draft of the minutes (unless there is a minutes secretary) and consult the Chairperson and most senior staff member (where relevant) for approval
- Send a reminder notice of each decision requiring action to the relevant person; this can be done by telephone, or by an 'action list' with the relevant action for each person duly marked
- Promptly send all correspondence as decided by the Management Committee