

Standing Orders governing the conduct of General Meetings

Approved at the AGM 21.04.90 and amended at the AGM 25.06.00.

1. GENERAL

These standing Orders shall apply in respect of the Annual General or any Special General Meeting

2. SPEECHES

- 2.1 Each speaker shall announce her or his name and if s/he represents an organisation, that organisation or, in the case of a member of the EC or Council her or his name and office before speaking on any point.
- 2.2 No member or delegate shall speak twice on any one motion or on any one amendment, other than a right of reply (see S.O. 3.3).
- 2.3 A motion may be formally seconded, or a seconder may reserve the right to speak later in the debate. Such reserved right shall not be exercised should the debate be closed by one of the formal mechanisms set out in S.O.s 4.1 to 4.5 before the seconder has chosen to exercise it.
- 2.4 (a) The time limits for speeches in debate shall be: 5 minutes for proposers of motions and 3 minutes for all other speakers.

(b) The time limits in (a) may be altered by the meeting.

(c) The Chairperson may, with the consent of the meeting, exceptionally permit an extension to any speaker's time.
- 2.5 An individual member (whether on their own behalf, or on behalf of a local group or affiliated organisation or on behalf of the Executive Committee) may speak on no more than four occasions during any one Annual General Meeting as a proposer or seconder of any motion.

3. MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

- 3.1 Before the start of any debate, The Executive Committee shall make recommendations as to the order in which amendments should be voted on. Such recommendations shall indicate the effect of passing any particular amendments on later amendments and may include proposals for consequential amendment to such later amendments.
- 3.2 Either the proposer or seconder on the order paper may move a motion or amendment. If neither is able to attend the Annual General Meeting then either may nominate another member or delegate to do so on their behalf provided that they have done so in writing to the Chair before the session when the motion is to be debated. Failing this the motion or amendment will fall.

- 3.3 The mover of an original motion shall have a final right of reply, which shall be restricted to answering points in the debate. The mover may exercise the right of reply on any amendment or on the substantive motion but shall only exercise that right once. If an amendment is carried during debate the motion becomes the property of the AGM and there is no subsequent right of reply. If an amendment is accepted prior to debate that right of reply is retained.
- 3.4 Except as provided for in S.O. 3.5 all amendments shall be moved and voted on in order following the moving and seconding of the original motion and each amendment must be disposed of in turn before another can be moved. When all amendments have been dealt with the debate shall continue on the substantive proposition being the original or amended motion.
- 3.5 The Executive Committee may make recommendations for sequential voting whereby closely associated matters are all moved at the beginning of a common debate.
- 3.6 Remission: A motion that an item be remitted to the Council may be made at any time in the debate. It shall be put to the vote immediately before the vote on the substantive motion but the EC shall first have an opportunity to state whether they would wish to accept such remission and the mover shall have an opportunity to indicate their view on remission.

4. CLOSURE OF DEBATE

- 4.1 Unless there is a speaker against any motion or amendment the matter, having been moved and seconded, shall proceed to the vote without further debate.
- 4.2 Moving the vote be taken: Any member or delegate who has not spoken in the debate may at any time move formally that the vote be taken. If that is seconded it shall be put to the vote without discussion. If carried the item under discussion shall move to the vote following a statement on behalf of the Council if such has not already been made, and any right of reply.
- 4.3 Moving Next Business: Any member or delegate who has not spoken in the debate may at any time move that the meeting proceed to next business. If that is seconded and carried the meeting shall move immediately to the next item of business on the agenda (not to an amendment to the item under discussion).
- 4.4 Should any of the formal propositions in S.O.s 4.2 or 4.3 be lost the debate shall resume at the point at which it was interrupted.
- 4.5 Before putting a motion to close the debate to the meeting the Chairperson may advise the meeting of the consequences of closure at that time.

5. POINTS OF ORDER

Points of Order deal only with the conduct or procedure of a debate. They shall take precedence over all other business, except that a speaker may not be interrupted, and shall take the form of a question to the Chair. The person raising the point of order shall state the rule the question is raised under. There shall be no other speech or discussion other than the ruling of the Chairperson on the point of order.

6. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Points of information may be raised by any member or delegate rising and catching the Chairperson's eye provided the speaker holding the floor agrees to give way. They must consist of information offered to or asked of the speaker who has given way. Points of information may not be raised while the mover is exercising the right of reply.

7. THE CHAIR

- 7.1 The Chair shall be taken by the Chairperson of the Council, the Vice-Chairperson, or another member of the Council.
- 7.2 The Chairperson shall not participate in any debate.
- 7.3 The Chairperson shall conduct the debate in accordance with the rules and standing orders. If a question arises which is not covered by the rules s/he shall rule in accordance with normal procedure of debate.
- 7.4 The declaration by the Chairperson that a motion or amendment has been carried or defeated shall be conclusive, although a recount may be taken at the Chairperson's discretion or if requested immediately after the vote by not fewer than 12 members or delegates.
- 7.5 The Chairperson shall have the discretion to call for the use of tellers on any vote.
- 7.6 The ruling of the Chairperson shall be final on any question, unless it is formally challenged immediately it has been made. If such a challenge is made by at least twelve members or delegates the Chair shall be temporarily vacated. It shall then be taken by the Vice chair, who shall allow the Chairperson to speak on their ruling, following which the challenge shall be put to the vote. The result of the challenge shall be binding on the meeting and on the Chairperson, who shall immediately resume the Chair. If the Chairperson declines to resume the chair, another person under S.O. 7.1. shall take the chair, or failing that, any person elected by the AGM.

8. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Any Standing Order may be suspended if a motion to that effect and specifying the Standing Order and the period of the suspension is carried by two thirds of those voting.