

# **Chatswood Public School**

## **Parents and Citizens' Association**

### **Standard Operating Guidelines – Proposed amendments**

Chatswood Public School Parents and Citizens' Association (the Association) has developed these Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) to ensure transparency and due process in its decision-making and expenditure of funds. The SOGs are intended to guide the Association in its operations during the Annual General Meeting and other General Meetings.

The SOGs should be read in conjunction with related documents such as the Association's Constitution and By-laws. These Guidelines are intended as a general guide; variations in procedures may occur from time to time due to given circumstances. Nonetheless, the principles of transparency and due process should be maintained.

#### **1. Definitions**

The definitions listed in the Chatswood Public School Parents and Citizens Association By-laws apply in this document.

#### **2. Annual General Meetings**

The primary purpose of the Association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) is specified in the Constitution.

The order of business at the AGM will generally be:

- President's Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country
- Attendees & Apologies
- Declarations of Conflicts of Interest
- Confirmation of the minutes of the previous AGM. Note: the only permissible discussion on the motion for confirmation of minutes will be the accuracy of reporting. Objections on this score must be moved, seconded and voted upon.
- Principal's report
- Correspondence
- Presentation of the audited financial statements for the preceding year (including Canteen and Uniform Shop reports)
- Motion to adopt the financial reports
- Motion of Appointment of Auditor
- Presentation of draft budget
- Motion to adopt the draft budget
- Presentation of the President's Annual Report
- Presentation of other sub-committee reports
- Election of Executive Officers, sub-committee convenors and treasurers, and any other appointments
- Other business
- Close

If an Executive, Convenor, Sub-committee Treasurer or other nominated position is vacant following an AGM, a person may be elected to that position at a subsequent General Meeting of the Association.

### **3. General Meetings**

As a guide, General Meetings may include most or all of the following agenda items (the order may vary):

- President's Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country
- Attendees & Apologies
- Declarations of Conflicts of Interest
- Report from the President
- Guest Speaker/s (if any)
- Correspondence
- Confirmation of the minutes of the previous General Meeting
- Report from the Principal
- Matters arising from the minutes / Outstanding items
- New items (including new Proposals and Motions)
- General business
- Report from the Treasurer (including progress to date of actual expenditure against budget)
- Motion to approve expenses arising in the Treasurer's report
- Reports from sub-committees (budget update once per term)
- Close

Reports should be brief and highlight noteworthy issues such as major operational or funding items. Unfinished business on notice at the previous meeting can be dealt with as 'Matters arising from the minutes'.

#### **4. Requesting agenda items**

Members of the Association may request agenda items for discussion at the Annual General Meeting or a General Meeting. Agenda items generally are one of three types:

- an item seeking or providing information
- a proposal to undertake exploratory work or initial investigations on behalf of the Association (that does not involve expenditure of Association funds)
- a proposal to undertake works that involve expenditure of Association funds.

A member wishing to request an agenda item should contact the P&C President or Secretary no later than seven (7) days prior to the scheduled meeting, so that the item may be considered. It is expected that the member requesting the item will normally attend the meeting to speak to that item.

An agenda item seeking or providing information usually does not include a motion. A proposal to undertake work (whether involving expenditure of funds or not) should be submitted in writing according to the guidelines below, and should include a proposed motion. A member of the Executive Committee can assist members with these processes.

#### **5. Submitting a Proposal to the P&C**

Each year, the P&C receives and considers numerous ideas and requests from parents, the school and occasionally, from the student body. Ideas and requests should be submitted to the P&C in the form of a brief proposal. Having an initial discussion with an Executive Officer is often helpful.

##### *Preparing a proposal*

The same process applies to all ideas and requests, whether small, medium or large, or short term or long term. A proposal is usually not a lengthy document (it may be less than 1 page). A proposal can be completed using the P&C Proposal Template. A proposal needs to answer the following questions:

- a) What is needed?  
(A brief description of the idea or project, or sketches, or even brochures)
- b) Why is it needed?  
(Details of why this is needed and what benefits it will provide to students and the School. If it is related to School buildings, how does it fit with the School's Masterplan?)
- c) How much will it cost?  
A rough estimate, or if possible actual quotes depending on the item. Items exceeding \$5,000 would usually need a minimum of two independent quotes, and may include two or more funding options (e.g., cheaper and more expensive options)
- d) Timeframe?  
(How long will it take to develop/implement? An estimate is sufficient. Is this a short, medium or long term project?)
- e) Contact details

(Name and contact details (phone and email) of the person submitting the proposal (the proposal Sponsor) who can be contacted for more information)

Proposals should be submitted to the Association President or Secretary. If additional information is needed, this will be requested in the first instance by the Secretary. The person submitting the idea or request needs to be prepared to sponsor that idea, gather relevant information and/or quotes (where funds are involved), and then help in some way with the implementation of the idea if it is approved. A member of the Executive Committee may be able to assist.

#### *What happens to a proposal?*

All proposals will be reviewed by the Executive Committee for completeness and relevance to the aims of the Association. Proposals may also be referred to a relevant sub-committee for consideration and comment. The Executive may then liaise with the proposal sponsor for further information/next steps, or may recommend that the Proposal and associated Motion (see below) be placed on the agenda for the next General Meeting of the Association for broader discussion (see Item 6 below, Motions).

## **6. Motions**

Any member of the Association may submit a **Motion** to be included on the agenda of an upcoming meeting (AGM or General Meeting).

A Motion, however arising, should include exact wording. Any Motion for a Proposal or expenditure should include specific dollar amounts as to the limit of approved expense. The Motion should be submitted to the **Secretary or President** at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting at which the Motion is to be considered and debated, and will be included on the meeting's agenda. At the meeting:

1. The Member who submits the Motion on notice will read its text, as stated in the agenda.
2. The Member will then make his or her arguments in support of the Motion.
3. Any Member (including the Member submitting the Motion) who perceives any conflict of interest with respect to the Motion, either for themselves or anyone present, should declare it.
4. The Members at the meeting will discuss the Motion freely.
5. Following discussions, one of three things may happen...
  - The Member submitting the Motion agrees further development or a significant rewording of the Motion text is required. The Motion (in its current state) is withdrawn pending re-submission as a new Motion at a later meeting.  
OR
  - Any Member at the meeting may request voting on the Motion be deferred to the following meeting. Such deferral may only be requested once for a given Motion text. The Member requesting deferral is not required to state reasons.  
OR
  - The Motion is "moved", usually by the original Member submitting it.

A member who has submitted a Motion may withdraw it at any time before it is moved at the meeting.

A motion may also be submitted at a General Meeting under "General business". However where possible a submitted proposal as a pre-published agenda item is preferred.

## **7. Conflict of Interest**

Members of the Association, including those holding leadership positions, must be aware of and declare any conflicts of interest, including actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. In general, a conflict of interest occurs when there is a conflict between a member's duty to the Association and their private interests. For example, a member may submit a proposal for landscaping work at the school, including a quote for the work from the member's brother's landscaping company.

Any member with a conflict of interest that may affect their duty to the Association should declare that conflict at the earliest time either to the Executive or at a meeting of the Association.

## **8. Review and updating of these Guidelines**

These Standard Operating Guidelines may be reviewed by the Executive Committee from time to time, and changes made by the Committee to ensure they reflect the relevant processes and operations of the Association.