

# Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

## Conducting your Club Annual General Meeting

Guidelines for Club Leaders, Secretaries, Public  
Relations Officers and AGM Chairmen



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## **General pointers about the AGM**

### **The following approaches should be considered:**

- It is the Club Leaders responsibility to co-ordinate preparations and to oversee the actual AGM evening.
- At least 2 months prior to the AGM the Club Committee should begin to consider and prepare for the event. The Club Leader should read this document and make sure key office bearers know what they have to prepare and do.
- Before the AGM all members who the committee wish to nominate/suggest for office should be contacted to acknowledge their services to the Club to so far and to ask if they wish their name to be put forward for re/election at the forthcoming AGM. If appropriate this should be done in writing enclosing a reply slip with a closing date.
- Those who have been written to and decline should be written to again and thanked for their services.
- Officials should be elected from those agreeing to stand and any additional nominations from members. (Permission from the latter should also be sought).
- A list of those willing to be considered should be available to everyone attending the AGM - further nominations can be sought from members attending on the night.
- Immediately after the AGM those elected, and not in attendance, should be advised, forwarded a Club Programme and any appropriate forms they have to complete and return.
- **Members should be advised that it is best practice to always ask those you wish to be considered and if they are willing to allow “their name” to be put forward for election.**

### **Presidents and Vice Presidents**

Well-established Clubs frequently accumulate a long list of Vice-Presidents. As an easy option they are often re-elected 'en bloc' at the Clubs AGM with, on occasions, additions being made. Many Vice-Presidents are unaware of their election and are not known to current members therefore it is vital that lists are revised annually.

A President and Vice-President is normally just out of active membership but are individuals who are supportive of the Club at the time of nomination. Typically the President or Vice President will be someone who has outgrown the role of Club Leader/Secretary but still has valuable experience and expertise to offer the Club. Also as a recent or past member they may want to have the opportunity of serving their Club in this way. It is however important to review these positions annually so that a fresh contribution can be made to the life of the club.

In cases where there is a long serving but inactive President clubs should consider electing them as Patron, allowing for a more active person to be elected President. The same applies for clubs who have inherited long lists of vice presidents. This should be restricted to a small number and a roll of honour generated to which inactive vice presidents can be moved.

## **Guidelines for Club Secretaries at the AGM**

Secretaries should:

1. Read this document thoroughly. Photocopy/print relevant sections of this document in preparation for the AGM (in particular page 11, procedures for electing Club Officials).
2. Agree the date and venue of the Annual General Meeting with the Club Committee. The date **must** be between **1st January and 31<sup>st</sup> January**.
3. **Inform Headquarters of the date of the meeting as soon as possible, at least one month notice should be given.**
4. A member of the YFCU Executive Committee must be asked to act as Chairperson at your AGM. Make sure he (or she) knows the time and the place of the meeting and is given a copy of the agenda well in advance. Inform all members of the date, place and time of the meeting at least two weeks in advance.
5. Consider asking the catering officer to arrange a special supper for the evening.
6. Consult with your Club Leader and Treasurer on the presentation of the reports. A report should be presented at the meeting by you, as Club Secretary, detailing the Club's year and also by the Club Treasurer who must report on the financial state of the Club by
  - (1) detailing the last set of audited accounts and
  - (2) an interim report for the current financial year up to the AGM. It is also advisable to have reports presented on any other special activity or project such as a Drama production or the Annual Show.
7. Hold a committee meeting some weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting to nominate/suggest people for office. This system is to be recommended because it saves valuable time at the AGM where all that is necessary is for the person nominated to be formally proposed, seconded and elected to office.
8. Two weeks prior to then AGM make sure the person who has agreed to be Chairperson has received the appropriate AGM pack from headquarters and is still available to attend the meeting.
9. See that notepaper, pencils, ballot papers and a copy of the YFCU Memorandum and Articles of Association are available for the Chairperson on the night of the meeting. If the Club has any bye-laws of its own, a copy of these should be to hand too.
10. After the election, and once you have filled in the particulars of the various office-bearers:
  - ask the Chairperson to sign the AGM Form (example attached as Appendix 1),
  - and send it along with the Self-declaration forms (example attached as Appendix 2) **within seven days**,
  - accompanied by a certified copy of the Secretaries Annual Report and Treasurers Report, to the Chief Executive of the Association.
11. Make sure the Chairperson leaves the meeting with all the necessary AGM and self-declaration forms completed and enclosed in an envelope ready for posting.
12. Club officials taking up office for the first time or newly appointed after a period out of office. They must complete an Access NI online application within 7 days of being elected.

### **Pointers for the Secretaries report:**

1. Have copies available for everyone to take home to parents etc.
2. It should be a complete chronological account of the year (subdivided by month) containing :
  - Activities
  - Notable events
  - Successes and achievements
  - Acknowledge losses and disappointments (without labouring them)
  - Offer thanks to supporters, sponsors others on the clubs behalf

**Further copies of this document or sections of it are available via email from  
info@yfcu.org or by post from Headquarters, tel. 028 9037 0713**

### **Guidelines for the appointed Chairperson at the AGM**

The Chairperson should:

1. Open the meeting by asking the Secretary to read and gaining approval of the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting.
2. Get the meeting to confirm whether voting should be by a show of hands or by secret ballot and, if necessary, how any additional counts should be taken in the event of there not being a clear majority in the voting. Explain the procedures so that younger members understand what is going on,
3. Ensure (with the exception of the President and Vice-President(s)), that all office bearers elected during the meeting are fully paid-up members and under 28 years of age; preference should be given to those under 25 years of age. The Executive Committee will approve the election of persons over 28 years in special circumstances, e.g. where the Club, although doing a good job, would have to close because it hasn't sufficient people under 28 to fill all the offices. In such circumstances you must use your own discretion.
4. Persons not present at the meeting may be elected to office provided the meeting agrees, unless, of course the Clubs by-laws state otherwise. Generally this difficulty will not arise except in the case of the President, Vice-President or Auditors.
5. Make sure the Club Committee does not exceed twelve in number and that it consists of the President, Club Leader, Secretary, Treasurer, Council Representative, Public Relations Officer as well as any other officials as the members at the AGM decide.
6. Each report should be proposed and seconded before you put it to the meeting for adoption. Any discussion about, or amendment to, the reports should be made before the reports are approved. If the meeting refuses to approve any report, the meeting may proceed to other business if the members agree by majority vote, but make sure that Headquarters is informed of the difficulty.
7. Check that treasurers are using the correct format to complete accounts.
8. Check whether there is a need to take action with regard to any of the Club's existing Trustees, e.g. since the last AGM some of them may have resigned, left the district, etc. Each Club should have not less than three or more than seven Trustees.

9. On completion of the AGM, ask the elected officials to complete the self-declaration forms provided and place them in the sealed envelopes provided. Collect these and place them into the SAE to be returned to Headquarters along with a copy of the statement of accounts and a copy of the Secretaries Report.
10. Remind the Club Secretary Club officials taking up office for the first time or newly appointed after a period out of office MUST complete an Access NI online application.
11. Distribute guidelines on Roles and advise newly elected officials about getting support from past officials, older members, club mentors or the YFCU Staff Team. Suggest that there is a handover committee meeting where new officials can learn about what has to be done and organised during the next year.
12. Ask the Secretary to complete the AGM form. Before you sign your name to the form, make sure that it has been completed in full. Place it in the envelope to be returned to Headquarters along with the other items listed above (point 10)
13. Return the AGM form and self-declaration forms to headquarters ASAP.

## Example Agenda for an Annual General Meeting

1. Welcome members to the AGM
2. Apologies
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Confirm housekeeping (for example voting arrangements)
5. Minutes of the last AGM
6. Business arising from minutes of the last AGM
7. Correspondence
8. Secretary's Report
9. Treasurer's Report
10. Election of Club Officials:

Thank outgoing office bearers for all their hard work during the past year and elect the following by asking nominations and approval by majority vote for:

- (a) President
- (b) Vice President(s)
- (c) Club Leader & Assistant Club Leader
- (d) Club Secretary & Assistant Secretary
- (e) Club Treasurer & Assistant Treasurer
- (f) Public Relations Officer & Assistant PRO
- (g) Auditor
- (h) Education and Library Board Grant Application Co-ordinator
- (i) Duke of Edinburgh's Award Co-ordinator
- (j) UFU Representative
- (k) Junior Co-coordinator/Senior Leader (if applicable)
- (l) Any additional posts (as advised by the outgoing Club Leader/Secretary)

11. Any other business
12. Thank outgoing Officials, confirm date of changeover and welcome new officials
13. Invite closing comments by Club Leader
14. Close and Date of Next Meeting

Thank members for their participation, attendance and wish them a safe journey home.

## **Guidelines for the Public Relations Officer following the AGM**

One of the last major tasks assigned to the outgoing Public Relations Officer is to generate and circulate a press release with appropriate photographs to the local and national farming press. This is one of the major points during the year when the clubs can advertise its successes and that it something worth belonging to (in other words give members a real sense of success, advertise the club to new members and parents and attract good will from sponsors, grant giving bodies such as the Education and Library Board other who help the club during the year,

### **The press release should contain:**

- Select highlights from the Secretaries report (do not use the whole report).
- Let people know the Clubs has dealt with its finances successfully.
- Let people know who has been elected into post and when they will take up office.
- What the clubs intentions are for the next year.
- Highlight and thank those who have helped during the year (be selective).
- Thank the AGM Chairperson
- Give advance notice of and an invitation to parents/friends and supporters night (usually held in March).

The Press Release should be accompanied by good quality photos of the new Office Bearer team and/or those present at the AGM.

### **Remember you can email your press release and digital photographs to:**

- Your local newspaper(s) / Farmweek / Farming Life /Newsletter
- Irish farmers journal / Any other paper you think appropriate

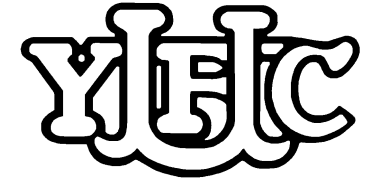
Or just post a typed copy and prints of any photographs.

It might be a good idea to contact the Editor to say the Press Release is on its way or check if it has arrived.

If you require support with this contact the Marketing, PR & Communications Co-ordinator in Headquarters.



**Appendix 1: Sample Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster AGM Form**  
**OFFICIALS FOR THE YEAR BEGINNING 1ST MARCH 20.....**



Annual General Meeting held on .....(date)    Number Members present .....

**PLEASE USE CAPITALS when completing this form.**

OFFICIAL	Name	Current Address	Daytime Tel	Mobile	Email address
President *					
Club Leader *					
Secretary *					
Asst. Secretary					
Treasurer *					
P.R.O. *					
Council Rep.					
ELB / Grants Co-ordinator					
Duke of Ed. Co-ordinator					
Auditors					
Senior Leader/ Junior Co-ordinator *					

Signature of person who conducted the election.....

**VERY IMPORTANT:** This Club holds its meetings as follows (fill in as Appropriate)

Commencing date: .....

Every .....evening    Every alternative ..... evening  
 1st & 3rd.....of each month    2nd & 4th ..... of each month  
 ..... Young Farmers Club.

Members filling posts marked \* are requested to complete Self –Declaration forms and give them to the AGM Chairperson on the evening of the election.

This form accompanied by the Self-Declaration forms listed should be completed and sent to YFCU Headquarters by the Executive Member who chaired the AGM, within **7 days of the Club's AGM.**

See over for guidance notes.

## Guidance Notes for the Election/Selection of Club Officials

- Club Officials are elected at the Club's Annual General meeting which according to the YFCU Articles of Association must be held between **January 1<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January** inclusive.
- The election of Officials should be chaired by a member of the Executive Committee who is also responsible for returning the names of newly elected club officials and associated documentation to Headquarters within 7 days of the meeting.
- The Club Secretary should advise Headquarters of the date and the AGM and ask to be forwarded an AGM pack which includes.
  1. Example AGM Agenda and minutes taker forms
  2. Guidance notes
  3. Self-Declaration forms for Senior Club Officials and individual confidential envelopes  
SAE for returning AGM forms and Self-declaration forms to Headquarters
  4. Club officials taking up office for the first time or newly appointed MUST complete an Access NI on line application.

Tellers should be appointed who will count and verify any voting.

- All officials are elected until the next properly constituted AGM unless action is taken under the Association's Sanctions Policy.
- Officials are proposed and seconded. If only one person is proposed and seconded they are elected and approved by a show of hands.
- If more than one person is proposed and seconded then the successful candidate is elected by popular vote as follows;
  1. All fully paid up members have an equal vote.
  2. Ideally voting should be by secret ballot however the meeting may take the decision to elect by a show of hands. If this is the case, proposed members should leave the room until the vote has taken place.
  3. The person with the majority vote is deemed elected.
- The senior club officials listed below should be asked to complete self declaration forms which the Executive member chairing the election should collect and (using the SAE) return to Headquarters along with the completed AGM form
  1. Club Leader
  2. Club Secretary
  3. Club Treasurer
  4. Club PRO
  5. Club President
  6. Any Junior Co-ordinator/leader of a junior club leader elected at the meeting
- Wherever possible Members completing self-declaration forms should do so on the evening of the AGM. Once completed the self-declaration forms must placed in the confidential envelope provided, which is sealed and handed to the Executive member chairing the election. Nobody should see what is on any of the forms until they are opened at Headquarters by the Chief Executive Officer or any deputised member of staff.
- It should be explained that:
  1. The forms will be kept securely at Headquarters for the member's period of office and then destroyed.
  2. No reference will be made to the contents other than for the Association's responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
  3. The Self-Declaration process in no way reflects on a person's credibility or character but it is regarded as best practice for an organisation such as the YFCU.
- The Executive member chairing the election will confirm when newly elected officials will take up office.
- The Executive member chairing the election should:
  1. Reassure newly elected officials and give them a copy of their role description and guidelines
  2. Make sure they have access to the Association's Policies and Procedures.
  3. Make sure they are aware of where to get help and advice.
- The club secretary should complete the AGM form and give a copy of it to the Executive member who chaired the election.
- The Executive member who chaired the election must collect the AGM form and the self-declaration forms (in sealed envelopes) and return them to Headquarters within 7 days.



**Appendix 2: YFCU Self-Declaration Form**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Self-declaration Form for YFCU Officials

Please note this form will only be kept for the duration of your period of Office and then destroyed. It will be kept strictly confidential and the information given will only be used regarding child protection and “keeping members safe”

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence, been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order? Are there any such pending against you?

YES

NO

**If yes please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Any surname previously known by: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:  
Inc. Postcode

DOB (dd/mm/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

**You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order (NI) 1979 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order (NI) 1987 you should declare all convictions above including ‘spent’ convictions). You will also be required by the Association to inform the Chief Executive or Executive Officer should the above circumstances change.**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**Appendix 3: 'Minute Taker' Template**

Minutes taken by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance at meeting**

**If necessary pass round the attendance sheet attached to the back of this form**

1		16	
2		17	
3		18	
4		19	
5		20	
6		21	
7		22	
8		23	
9		24	
10		25	
11		26	
12		27	
13		28	
14		29	
15		30	

**Apologies**

1		13	
2		14	
3		15	
4		16	
5		17	
6		18	
7		19	
8		20	
9		21	
10		22	
11		23	
12		24	

Time meeting started \_\_\_\_\_

**AGM Attendance form:** The following people are in attendance

Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Names

1		22	
2		23	
3		24	
4		25	
5		26	
6		27	
7		28	
8		29	
9		30	
10		31	
11		32	
12		33	
13		34	
14		35	
15		36	
16		37	
17		38	
18		39	
19		40	
20		41	
21		42	

**If this page is filled please use reverse side**

### 'Minute Taker' Template

Meeting		Date	
Venue		Page No.	

Item / Issue			
Discussion			
Decision reached			
Person responsible		Timescale / completion	
Proposed by:		Seconded by:	

Item / Issue			
Discussion			
Decision reached			
Person responsible		Timescale / completion	
Proposed by:		Seconded by:	

Item / Issue			
Discussion			
Decision reached			
Person responsible		Timescale / completion	
Proposed by:		Seconded by:	

Item / Issue			
Discussion			
Decision reached			
Person responsible		Timescale / completion	
Proposed by:		Seconded by:	

Item / Issue			
Discussion			
Decision reached			
Person responsible		Timescale / completion	
Proposed by:		Seconded by:	

**Appendix 4 : Sample “Minute Report” Template**

Meeting of Club:		
Held in:		
Date:		

**1. Welcome**

The Chairperson, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, welcomed members and declared the meeting opened at \_\_\_\_\_pm

In Attendance at the AGM were:

Chairperson:	
Secretary:	
Treasurer:	
PRO:	

Clubs Officials/Members present were:


The Total attendance at the AGM was \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Apologies**

Apologies received were:


### 3. Adoption of Agenda

Agreed as circulated:	Yes/No
Amendments to the agenda included:	
The agenda was proposed by:	
And seconded by:	

### 4. Confirmation of house keeping

Members agreed that voting would be by secret ballot *or*  
Members agreed that voting would be by show of hands

### 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Agreed as circulated:	Yes/No
Amendments to the minutes were:	
Minutes were proposed by:	
And seconded by:	

### 6. Business Arising

There were no matters arising *or*  
Matters arising were:


### 7. Correspondence

There was no correspondence *or*  
Correspondence received:




### 8. Secretaries Report

The Secretaries report was presented by:	
Comments and queries on the report were:	
The report was proposed by:	
And seconded by:	

### 9. Treasurers Report

The Treasurers report was presented by:	
Comments and queries on the report were:	
The report was proposed by:	
And seconded by:	

### 10. Election of Officials

Club Officials elected at the meeting were:

Position	Member	Proposer	Seconded
President			
Vice President (1)			
(2)			
Club Leader			
Ass. Club Leader			
Club Secretary			
Ass. Secretary			
Club Treasurer			
Ass. Treasurer			
Council Rep			
Public Relations Officer			

Ass. PRO.			
ELB. Grant Co-ordinator			
D of E Co-ordinator			
UFU Representative			
Junior Co/Senior Leader			

**11. A.O.B**

There was no other business *or*  
 Other areas of business were:


**12. Thanks**

The Chairperson thanked outgoing officials for the contribution to the work of the club and welcomed new members who would take up their new roles on\_\_\_\_\_

**13. Club Leaders Comments**

The (outgoing) Club Leader.....

**14. Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at:			
Next meeting will be held in:			
Date:		Time	

Signature:

Chairperson's Signature:		Date	
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