

There are many ways you can embed good governance in your charity. There are different kinds of meetings. Some can be informal, such as over the phone or around your kitchen table, while others must follow certain requirements. Your charity's rules and any legislation that applies to your charity may set out how many meetings you must have and when to

have them. Who needs to be at the meetings. There may be a quorum requirement where a certain number of people must be present for the meeting to be valid. Whether minutes need to be taken, how to keep them and who can read them. Who can vote on certain topics and how voting happens.

Be familiar with any requirements your charity may have for holding meetings and be clear about what kind of meetings you are holding. For example, the way you run a board meeting and the responsibilities of the people attending will be different to a meeting with general members, even if the board and the members are the same people.

You may like to read the ACNC's quick tips on holding annual general meetings in the link provided. The board needs to be aware of all the things the charity is doing and the board meeting is the place where important issues are to be discussed.

Agenda items should not be limited to solely the broader high level strategic items, but also include aspects of daily operations and management so that the board is aware of the charity's work and performance. Minutes need to be thorough, accurate, approved and they need to be sent out to participants as soon as practical after the meeting.

You should assume everyone with an interest in your charity has a desire to know what is going on. Target the content and the amount of detail in your communications to the specific audience. Effective communication is at the heart of transparency and also helps with accountability.

Having taken the time to establish policies and procedures, they must be accessible. This means that the people involved with the charity, that is the people who carry out the actions covered by the policies and procedures and those who supervise them, need to know them and be able to refer to them as they go about their day-to-day

tasks. Note that there are Federal and state laws applicable to workplaces, and you need to know what these are and follow them as they apply to your charity's operations and workforce. Having defined processes for handling complaints and taking feedback means having a set, clear and consistent way that your charity can address issues which arise.

Consider the improvements your charity can make to its operations and internal culture by taking the time to think about complaints and negative feedback seriously. We will address reviews, record-

keeping and reporting separately. Review the things your charity does and take the time to learn lessons from the exercise.

This could be at a major project level. For example, you review what went right, what went wrong, and then you document the findings for next time, or you could review them at a smaller level. For example, you review administrative processes after a year, or you review the meeting structure your charity has after a period of time, or

you could review the arrangements your charity has with suppliers or third parties. Performance reviews can also be built into processes. Make reviewing and improving a part of the culture of the charity. Record-keeping assists with governance and is an obligation that registered charities have to the ACNC.

Record-keeping is simple and involves the effort to make sure there is a record, that the record is stored somewhere safe. It can be electronically or physically, and that people can access it when they need it. Take the time to maintain a good record keeping system so your charity has ready access to the information it needs and the

information it may need to produce to others, such as the ACNC. This can help with day-to-day operations, with managing finances, with disputes and dealing with complaints or negative feedback. Registered charities are required to keep records of transactions and other financial information.

A charity board must know its reporting requirements. What information about the charity needs to be reported and to whom. The following are some ways to make sure you meet these obligations. Have a register that lists all the charities reporting obligations. Add deadlines and due dates to shared calendars. Have the obligation as a standing agenda item for all

meetings. Make sure the people responsible for submitting reports are aware of the deadlines. Mention obligations regularly in communications. For example, in newsletters or email updates.