



Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

# County Chairperson

Role Guide





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# Introduction

## **Congratulations on being appointed County Chairperson!**

We have produced this booklet to help you in your role as County Chairperson of your Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU) County.

As County Chairperson you will lead your County through all aspects of the year. You should be democratic, hardworking and a good listener. What you do as County Chairperson will ensure that your County remains active within your community and the wider YFCU organisation; not only for your time in the role but for years to come.

The overall performance of the YFCU within your County, in the next year will depend, to a large extent, on how well you and your team of County officials carry out your roles. It's important to remember you are the face of the County and must set a good example for other members.

Remember 60% of your work is done outside County meetings, the other 40% is spent communicating, encouraging debate, or gaining feedback at meetings.

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## DUTIES OF THE ROLE

- Chair all meetings hosted by the County (full county and sub-committees)
- Create a club leader group chat for filtering information
- Plan and coordinate all events throughout the year (such as county dinner, fundraisers etc.)
- Remind all clubs in your county to have their membership returns submitted to HQ on time
- Communicate with HQ and filter communications down to the clubs via your secretary and support HQ if needed
- Make decisions on behalf of your county
- Attend all county and sub-committee meetings
- Delegate tasks to your Assistant Chair
- Liaise regularly with the YFCU HQ team
- Facilitate training as and when required for clubs within your county
- Initiate and play a strong part in planning events for the county
- Read the Articles of Association and the YFCU policies and procedures



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- Facilitate county efficiency judging
  - Seek out leaders and potential/ future county officials
  - Complete an adequate handover with the incoming Chair

### **County meetings (also applicable for sub-committee meetings)**

Any effective organisation needs to hold regular meetings. It is the main method by which any voluntary group or organisation does its business. It is, therefore, crucial that meetings are well run and efficient. It is also important that they are used for reaching decisions and that these decisions are properly recorded and carried out.

Before the meeting, a set agenda should be outlined, this should be circulated in advance (where practical). This should be drawn up by the secretary following consultation with the Chairperson and circulated by Headquarters (sub-committee agendas are not required to be sent to HQ).



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## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ROLE

- Effectively chair and ensure, during meetings, the agenda is adhered to
- Ensure events are well managed and run efficiently, with all involved completing tasks assigned
- Communicate with clubs in your county and support anyone struggling
- Effectively communicate to ensure information is shared to/from clubs to/from HQ
- Work with county committee to ensure decisions are made effectively and efficiently
- Represent your county by attending and engaging in meetings
- Support the development of your Assistant Chairperson through delegation of tasks and duties
- Ensure training is relevant and effective and meeting the needs of clubs in your county
- Ensure plans and events, as agreed, are completed
- Implement the Articles of Association and be in a position to inform others
- Support members seeking to develop and take on roles within the county
- Ensure the incoming Chair fully understands the role and you share all relevant information for them to perform their role

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## PERSONAL QUALITIES OF A COUNTY CHAIRPERSON

- Be proactive
- Show leadership throughout your role
- Be a role model to the rest of the committee and general membership within your county
- Adopt a teamwork ethos
- Ensure you are organised and ahead with all requirements
- Motivate and encourage other elected officials in your county
- Be supportive and constructive and avoid criticising others at meetings or in their roles
- Whilst it is important to be committed to your role, you must avoid becoming burnt out and take on too many duties





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## COUNTY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

After any meeting, it is important for the County Chairperson and the rest of the Officer Bearer team to action any points raising as this allows tasks to be completed efficiently and effectively.

The purpose of any meeting is to update members and make decisions. Whilst it's important to have an effective discussion to ensure that all factors are taken into account, prior to decisions being arrived at, each discussion should result in a decision. Meetings should be as brief as possible to ensure time is used effectively.

Below are some common issues that may arise:

- Lots of talking but no decisions
- Members not following up on decisions or tasks
- Long winded and repetitive contributions
- The same individuals talking all the time
- More than one person talking at the same time
- Meetings being poorly planned i.e. no agenda or the agenda not being adhered to
- Meetings starting late
- Meetings dragging on too long
- Too many meetings being held

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The responsibility of the Chairperson, with the support of the Secretary, is to ensure the above points do not occur. Therefore, being involved in the planning and recording of the meeting is essential as Chairperson.

Asking for feedback on the meeting, from members or fellow committee members, can be very beneficial. If you are having any difficulties with meetings, you can consult your predecessor, another chairperson from a neighbouring County or a member of the HQ staff team. It's important that efficient minutes from the meeting are taken by the County Secretary and checked/signed off by the County Chairperson.



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## COUNTY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is a very important meeting for the County this is when the office bearers for the incoming year are elected. Your County AGM should be scheduled as a County Meeting in March.

### Before the AGM

- Read all appropriate documentation
- Discuss as a committee who would be suitable for the Office Bearer roles and nominate / suggest / contact those who you think (it is always good to do this after efficiency judging)
- Agree the date and venue of the AGM in advance
- Consider asking the host club to arrange a light supper for the evening
- Make sure your County Secretary has received the appropriate AGM pack from HQ
- Ensure that notepaper, pencils, ballot papers and a copy of the YFCU Memorandum and Articles of Association are available
- Agree the agenda for the AGM

### After the AGM

- Ensure all Officials have completed the relevant paperwork
- Support the new Office Bearers in their first few weeks in the new role

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## EXAMPLE SITUATIONS

During your role, you may experience various situations that you need to manage. It is important that situations are dealt with in a professional and timely manner. Any child protection or first aid issues should be reported to the Designated Officer(s) at HQ ASAP.

Below are example situations and how to deal with them. However, if you need more advice please contact Central Officials or HQ staff.

### *Office Bearer not carrying out their duties*

- Speak to the other Committee members and approach the Office Bearer together.
- Talk to the County Official and ask if something is wrong.
- Suggest utilising their assistant.

### *Poor behaviour at County & HQ events*

- Speak to the other Committee members and work out an approach together.
- Talk to all clubs about the behaviour at the next sub-committee meeting  
*(it is best for moral in the county to not single out any clubs, unless required)*
- If essential, speak with parents/guardians about the behaviour.



## HANDOVER

It is good practice to spend some time with the incoming County Chairperson to brief them on the role. Talk them through this booklet and familiarise them with your approach to maintaining the County as a whole. Pass on any advice you think they will need and offer them your help and support while they are in their role. However, it is worthwhile spending time training incoming County Chairperson before they take over so they understand the role, to ensure an overall wellbeing for your County.





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## QUESTIONS FOR SELF-APPRAISAL

- Do I work effectively to maintain an efficient team?
- Do we have a county plan and are we adhering to it?
- Am I punctual?
- Do county meetings start on time?
- Are all of the members and officials enjoying their roles?
- Do some officials need help?
- Are meetings being run efficiently and effectively?
- Are we having enough / too many meetings?
- Are decisions taken at meetings being followed up on?
- Do I have enough contact with other County or Central officials?
- Am I in regular contact with YFCH HQ?
- Are all of the clubs participating in the County?
- Am I aware of and understand my responsibilities in accordance with the Associations Policies and Guidelines and how to implement them and be in a position to inform others?

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- Am I becoming burnt out?
  - Am I positive about the Organisation?
  - Is work evenly distributed amongst the County Officials?
  - Are there new leaders coming through at county level?
  - Am I seeking out new leaders?
  - Are procedures being adhered to?
  - Am I thanking and encouraging the County Committee for their work?
  - Have I made myself proud?
  - Do I feel like I have accomplished success in my Chairperson role?



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## **APPENDIX**

### **Sample Agenda**

#### **1. Open meeting**

The Chairperson must declare the meeting open and welcome members attending. This helps to make it clear that the meeting has commenced.

#### **2. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda should be proposed and seconded with the proposer and seconder being recorded in the minutes. This gives the members a chance to propose the addition of items to the agenda subject to the approval of the meeting.

#### **3. Apologies**

Any apologies presented should be recorded in the minutes.

#### **4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

These should be circulated in advance to give members an opportunity to consider them before they are ratified. The minutes require a proposer and seconder whose names should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The recording of their names means the minutes are ratified.

Minutes should be brief but must record the attendance at the meeting, any correspondence received, all decisions taken, any actions to be taken and who is undertaking/ responsible for them.

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The minutes only become the official record of the meeting when they are passed at the next meeting. Once they are passed they become the legal record of the proceedings of the meeting. They should be signed by the Chairperson and stored for safe keeping. Best practice is to keep a digital copy & physical copy in the secretary file.

## **5. Matters arising**

Once the minutes have been ratified the next item should be matters arising. Under Matters Arising the Chairperson, Secretary, or any other individual or group who has been given responsibility for carrying out an action point from the previous meeting should update the meeting on their progress.

The Chairperson should start by outlining their progress on matters they have taken responsibility for and then call on the other individuals or groups to give their updates. If a matter or report in the minutes is on the agenda for later in the meeting then it should not be discussed under matters arising but deferred until that item comes up for discussion.

Matters arising is an extremely important part of any meeting as it ensures that decisions taken by previous meetings are properly followed up. If they are not followed up, then discussions/ actions can easily be forgotten about, or remain unactioned.

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## 6. Correspondence

Correspondence refers to any relevant updates, which could include the likes of information from HQ, event dates, meeting dates or invites to events. Correspondence should be read by the Secretary, who will summarise the information where possible

## 7. Main Agenda Specified Business Items

Each agenda item is discussed

## 8. Reports

Committee members elected on to YFCU Central Committees will provide an update/report on any meetings they have attended along with a general summary of the outcomes of the meeting.

## 9. Headquarters Business (not applicable for sub-committee meetings)

At this point in the meeting, the staff member in attendance will update the committee on what is happening across the Association. They will also consult or raise any matters which the staff or Presidential team feel the committee needs to be aware of or discuss.

## 10. Any Other Business

Any Other Business (AOB) provides all members with an opportunity to raise brief points. If a member has a major issue which they want discussed, then they should



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propose this at the start of the meeting (when the agenda is being adopted) as this will allow the item to be added to the agenda. In general, if the Chairperson considers a point raised under AOB is an important but non-urgent matter that will take some time, they should suggest that the issue be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

### *Notes*

It is a sign of a poorly planned meeting if a lot of matters are being raised under AOB. A long AOB is one of the main reasons why meetings drag on.

## **11. Date of next meeting**

The proposed date can be noted and circulated to all committee members.

## **12. Close meeting**

The meeting should be officially declared closed at the end and members attending thanked for their contribution.



Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster  
475 Antrim Road  
Belfast  
BT15 3BD

T: 028 90 370 713  
E: [info@yfcu.org](mailto:info@yfcu.org)  
[www.yfcu.org](http://www.yfcu.org)

Charity Registration No: 100972  
Company Registration No: NI 003964 (Northern Ireland)  
Registered Office: 50 Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7FW

