



CSPA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

GUIDANCE FOR NEW DELEGATES

8-9 OCTOBER 2025



THE AGM

Attending the CSPA Annual General Meeting (AGM) can be daunting for new delegates, when they see the long agenda booklet and references to the “Standing Orders”. This guidance is intended to explain what to expect and what it all means.

The AGM has three main purposes:

- To approve the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for last year.
- To decide CSPA policy for the future through debates on motions.
- To elect the Executive Council (EC), Officers and Standing Orders Committee.

Only delegates have a vote.



Standing orders committee report

After the formal opening of the AGM, the first session is spent discussing the Standing Orders Committee's (SOC) Report. This is the committee responsible for preparing the agenda and the order of motions for debate in accordance with the CSPA Rules and Constitution. The SOC operates completely independent of the EC.

The SOC's proposed Agenda and Timetable are contained in the AGM Report (issued with the AGM papers) and in supplementary SOC Reports.

There is an opportunity for Groups and Branches to challenge the SOC's recommendations. Notice of a challenge (normally called a reference back) must be sent to the General Secretary by a specified date in September.

Those groups that have given notice of a reference back and have been rejected might wish to challenge further as set out in the Agenda.

There may be several Emergency Motions sent to the General Secretary which will be contained in a supplementary SOC Report. These are the motions which refer to events after the original deadline for motions to be sent into the CSPA office.

Shortly after the AGM begins, you will be asked to approve the SOC's report. Once that is approved, the agenda and timetable will be set.



Important rules

The CSPA National Chair is the Chair of the AGM and is responsible for the conduct of the business. They know the rules of debate. It is their job to get us through the agenda in accordance with the Rules and in an efficient but friendly manner.

If the Chair is absent, the Vice Chair will undertake this role.

The Rules are those set out in the Standing Orders, shown in Appendix 1 of the AGM Agenda Booklet.

They are there to assist business, not to impede it. We will now touch on some of the more important rules.

Standing Order 4 The AGM will only debate motions marked “A”. We will not deal with those marked “B”, “C”, “D” or “X”.

Some motions have procedural consequences. For example if a motion is carried, then one carrying an opposing viewpoint falls automatically and will not be debated.

Some very similar motions are usually composited into a single motion.

Where a number of motions deal with various aspects of the same issue, the SOC can decide to combine these into one Comprehensive Motion.

Standing Order 6 Any motion not moved when called by the Chair will be lost. So, if you have a motion to move, please be ready.

If there is not enough time within a section of the Agenda to debate all the motions in that section in the time allotted to the section, the outstanding motions will be “guillotined” and will be picked up on the Thursday afternoon of the AGM. If there is still insufficient time, undebated motions are referred to the EC

Important rules

Standing Order 7 Motions must be seconded immediately following the mover's speech. So, if you have a motion, make sure that your seconder is ready. The seconder can speak, second formally, or second formally and reserve the right to speak later in the debate.

Standing Order 8 Speakers must either support or oppose the motion under discussion and must stick to the point.

Unless you have mobility difficulties, you must speak from the rostrum. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand. Wait until the Chair calls you. Then move to the front, so that you are ready to speak when it is your turn. There will be chairs available for you to sit on while you wait to speak.

Start by stating your name and your Group. Also please ensure you stand near enough to the microphone for your voice to be picked up. Some delegates seem to think the microphone bites!

For anyone with mobility difficulties there will be a roving microphone available. Please indicate to the nearest Teller if you need one.

Standing Order 10 Apart from the circumstances set out in Standing Order 10, speakers can speak only once on any motion. So, make sure you say all you have to say. Please check that your contribution is within the time limits which will be strictly followed by the Chair.

Standing Order 11 A motion may be remitted to the EC or withdrawn. Remittance is usually requested by the EC when, although there is some merit in the motion, they do not wish to be tied to the precise detail. The EC speaker will state the grounds for remittance. Remission can also be sought by a speaker in debate. The mover is invited to say whether they agree to remission and then the Chair will call for a vote.

Important rules

Standing Order 20 There are time limits on speeches. The mover of any motion and the EC speaker get a maximum of 5 minutes. Other speakers get a maximum of 2 minutes. There are coloured lights to tell you how you are doing. When the amber light comes on, you have one-minute left. When the red light comes on you must stop at once.

Standing Orders 21 and 22 Deal with motions to “adjourn” or to move to “next business”. If such a situation arises, the Chair will advise you how to proceed.

Standing Orders 23 to 25 Deal with points of order. These can be moved if you think that people are straying from the rules, or the subject under debate. The Chair will rule. You can challenge the Chair’s ruling but you will need five other delegates to support your challenge and the votes of two thirds of the delegates present in your favour.

Standing Order 26 Voting on motions will normally be by show of hands. We would expect only the delegate to vote on behalf of their Group. Sponsored representatives should not vote, unless the delegate is absent. Delegates are provided with a laminated card for this purpose. Other representatives and observers cannot vote.

The Chair, or at least **20 delegates**, may call for a card vote. Delegates will have a pack of voting cards. The Chair will explain which card to use and the tellers will collect the card votes. Those in favour will cast their votes first and then those against will cast their votes.

Under Rule 12 of the CSPA Rules and Constitution, any motion to amend the rules or standing orders will require a **two-thirds** majority.

Finally, something that is not in the Standing Orders. Where your Group has both a delegate and a sponsored representative, we would expect only one of you to speak on any one motion. But, of course, you can share-out the motions between the two of you.

Our advice is to listen to what the Chair has to say, make your contributions at the appropriate time and, most of all, enjoy the AGM.

