



Subscribers to *THE COMMITTEE ROOM* are permitted to use this checklist for their own [non-commercial](#) use.

Questions are Gold (Episode 6)

Good governance depends on committee members who ask questions. These are examples of the questions every Committee member should ask.

On any item before you vote:

- *What could go wrong with this decision?*
- *Is this within our Delegated Authorities Register, or does it need a different process?*
- *Which of our strategic goals does this relate to?*
- *Is there anything you'd like to draw our attention to?*

On financial reports

- *Can you help me understand what's included in this line item?*
- *How does this compare to the same period last year?*
- *Is there anything in here that needs a committee decision?*

On items that keep reappearing:

- *This has been on the agenda for three months — what do we need to make progress?*
- *Who is responsible for this, and what do they need from us to get this sorted?*

When something doesn't feel right:

- *I might be missing something — can you walk me through the thinking behind this?*

The questions the Chair should ask

- *Before we agree to approve this, does anyone have questions? (Ask. Then wait.)*
- *Before I put this to the vote, does anyone have questions? (Ask. Then wait.)*

How to ask well

Frame questions to open a frank conversation, not close it.

'Why did we spend \$14,000 on Miscellaneous?' invites defensiveness.

'Can you help me understand what's included in the Miscellaneous line this month?' invites explanation.

Ask to understand. Then actively listen to the answer.

And don't be afraid to raise the elephant in the room. That's your job.

