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Episode 14 Making the Call

Every committee decision — big or small — should be able to answer yes to five simple questions. Use this checklist before an important vote, or as a quick check on a decision the Committee has already made. Answering yes to all five means your decision is informed, responsible and defensible, whatever the outcome turns out to be.

#	PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT MEANS	YES
1	Did we take reasonable care?	We have read and understood the information in front of us, we've asked questions about anything that was unclear, and we've given this the same level of care we'd apply to a significant decision of our own.	☐
2	Did we act in good faith and for a proper purpose?	We're making this decision in the best interests of the association and its members — not for personal gain, not to please a particular group, and not to avoid an uncomfortable conversation.	☐
3	Was anyone influenced by a personal interest?	Any financial, family or other personal interest in the outcome have been declared, and anyone with a conflict of interest has withdrawn from the discussion and the vote.	☐
4	Did we make reasonable inquiry?	We've sought enough information to make this decision properly, in proportion to its size and significance for our association.	☐
5	Do we rationally believe this is in the best interests of the association?	Based on what we know now — not what we might know in the future — every member voting for this decision could explain, in plain language, why they believe it's the right call.	☐

Document your decision-making.

Record the information you considered, the alternatives you discussed, and the reasons for your decision in the minutes.

A good process and good records are the Committee's protection — not a guaranteed outcome. No-one can guarantee a good outcome from every decision, but if you can tick all five boxes, the Committee can show that it did its homework to the best of its ability.