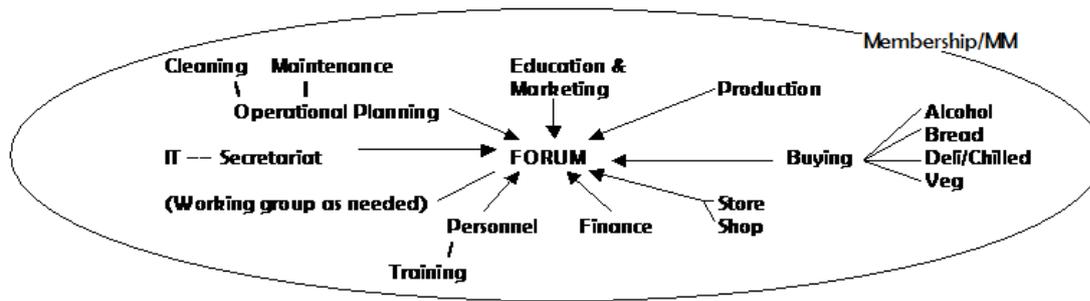


## Unicorn's Structure – Beyond 15 members



The above diagram shows the wheel-spokes-hub arrangement of the original devolved structure, designed in 2004.

### Membership

All members are company directors, and legally bound by our 'White Rules'. In addition, members are required to fulfil the Cooperative Member Job Description.

### Teams

Each member is part of one or more teams, the purpose of which is:

- To run the shop. Teams ensure that the shop functions day-to-day by implementing decisions, taking responsibility and identifying the need for change.
- Communication. Meetings provide a point of contact for feedback and updates between and within teams, which spread to other members via the Team Overview (and Forum) and written reports.
- To provide a place for peer review (in the individual's 'home team').

See the Teams List Appendix for a list of Unicorn's current teams and subteams, plus aims, objectives and roles of each team.

### Team Overview

The Team Overview is elected each year (half in spring, half in autumn). See Structure Policies appendix for the Team Overview job description.

### Training session

The fortnightly hour-long Training session is an integral tool to maintaining consensus and continuity within the membership. For many years we met in two halves, but a few years ago we worked out how to recombine into a single group (leaving a few key people to run the shop with casuals). If needed, we can also hold an Emergency General Meeting during this session. See Further Training appendix for more information.

### Forum

Each of the eight main teams sends its Overview to the fortnightly Forum meeting, which is supported by the minute taker and chair elected at the AGM. If these ten attendants do not incorporate members of certain larger subteams (Deli, Fresh, Veg, Store), Forum invites an eleventh member. Each Forum also includes an observer – a probationary member or a member who has not attended in some time.

Forum has full spending powers, although this is rarely used. Its main purposes are:

- To coordinate and monitor implementation of decisions from Members Meetings and business plan.
- To support teams and facilitate communication between teams and members.
- To make operational decisions (not policy or strategic decisions).

All Forum attendants must read the 'Forum pack' in advance. See Structure policies appendix for the policy governing forum meetings.

### **Members Meeting**

The MM is the sovereign body and meets quarterly (once as the AGM, below) to oversee policy decisions, medium- and short-term planning and tactics. All members are expected to prepare for the MM by reading the 'MM pack' in advance of the meeting.

### **Annual General Meeting**

The AGM is a special MM which takes place after the accounts are finalised (usually in April or May). The following official business (taking around one half-hour) must be carried out at the AGM, although some information may be presented at a preceding Training session.

- Appointment of accountant to review accounts or perform audit if required
- Report and presentation of last year's accounts
- Acceptance of last year's accounts
- Approval of next year's budget
- Forecast
- Election of chair and co-chair
- Election of secretary and co-secretary
- Election of treasurer and co-treasurer

Note: Before the election of new official postholders (see Structure Policies Appendix for the relevant policy), outgoing postholders may want to give a report on the year.

### **Members Away Days**

The annual Away Day is reserved for updating the three-year plan and other strategic planning, visioning, and team building. Popular sessions include 'round the rooms' on a certain topic, financial discussions, structure reviews or site improvement planning.

## **Applying the structure – The nitty gritty**

### **Managing (and encouraging!) change**

- Team Overviews: Should always look to train successor(s), delegate and spread responsibility as much as possible.
- Team recruitment: Personnel as main point of contact. To be advertised in staff newsletter, team & Forum minutes. Interested parties to approach team & Personnel. New team members to receive copy of Team Charter.
- In the case of any significant changes to team structure, rota or role: After informal discussion, the relevant teams discuss and agree a specific proposal, which is brought to Forum (MM if needed) for approval and implementation.
- Annual structure review: All members comment on transparency, accessibility, effectiveness of structure, make suggestions (big or small) for improvement.

### **Navigating the structure, one example**

- Bring up idea or issue with relevant team overview (informally or at Forum)
- The overview brings the issue to the next team meeting and
  - (a) the team makes a decision (if it involves only the team and is not policy), notes it on the forum report and may mention it at forum; or
  - (b) the team publicises the matter in the forum report as an upcoming proposal, and brings the proposal to forum.
- Forum may
  - (1) make a decision, publicise that decision through the fortnightly Training and newsletter, and implement it; or
  - (2) if the issue requires a policy decision, ask the Team Overview or interested member to write a proposal for the next MM.
- The Team or interested member submits a paper with the proposal clearly stated (plus any background) for consideration at the Members Meeting.

### **Preparation and paperwork**

At Unicorn, very specific timelines govern preparations for Forum and MMs.

Forum (fortnightly Thursdays, 1½ hrs)

- During the 2 weeks before every Forum: All teams meet and submit a Forum report (including summary of meeting, highlights for the staff newsletter, actions, decisions, any proposals for Forum and comments on the last Forum minutes) to the Secretariat
- Monday before Forum: The Secretariat compiles the upcoming Forum agenda with all 'Forum reports', issues copies to all Forum attendants (plus a few for the staff room), and emails a link to all members and probationers
- Monday-Thursday: All Forum attendants read the Forum pack (required)
- Monday following Forum (or earlier): The Secretariat issues the Forum minutes to all members and probationers by email (required reading)

Members Meetings (quarterly Mondays, 2-4 hrs), including annual AGM

- (In the timeline below, the MM falls on the Monday following Training; it would be slightly amended if the MM fell on the Monday after Forum.)
- 2-4 weeks prior to the MM: All Team Overviews work with teams to put together a MM report (including sales, wastage and margins if applicable,

training needs, recent activities, short and long term plans, any other relevant information and any MM proposals); Secretariat gets updates on any unfinished business or Actions/Decisions from previous MM

- 2 weeks prior to MM: MM reports and any other papers or proposals are due to Secretariat; Secretariat compiles MM agenda for inclusion in Forum pack
- 1½ weeks prior to MM: Forum approves the MM agenda
- 1 week prior to MM: Secretariat compiles all MM reports and papers and prints MM packs for all members and probationers (required reading)
- ½ week prior to MM: Secretariat works with Chair to run fortnightly Training session, initial discussion of most controversial proposals
- 1-2 weeks after MM: Secretariat issues MM minutes to all members and probationers by email (required reading)

#### Annual Away Day

- A coordinator (along with the Secretariat) follows the timeline below:
- 6 months prior: Set a date, get budget and book venue
- 1-3 months prior: Discuss and finalise themes for sessions and Away Day agenda, and book facilitators if desired