

## **Group Decision Making Process** Updated August 2017.

This process applies to all full meetings of Ahi Wai Eco-Neighbourhood. Only members (Associate or Full) have speaking & decision-making rights - others have observer status. Speaking rights maybe given to a visitor(s) with the agreement of members.

It is recommended that any proposal is discussed informally before bringing it to the full meeting.

The method for discussion and decision making shall be by consensus, using coloured cards as follows:

Discussion: Each person including any facilitator taking part in the discussion has six coloured cards which are raised at any time during the discussion to indicate a wish to speak.

- Black I have an interpersonal difficulty that is preventing my full participation.
- Red I have a process observation, e.g. the discussion is off the subject.
- Orange I wish to acknowledge someone or something.
- Yellow I have a question, or need clarification.
- Green I can provide clarification.
- Blue I have a comment or opinion.

Cards are accorded differing priority and are heard in the order listed above.

Black cards have first priority. The facilitator first calls on the person with the black card to state their difficulty and to say how they would like the matter dealt with. The group can then decide whether this should be processed within the group or between the individuals concerned.

The red card, the “stop the process” card, has the next priority. It is used to point out a breach in the agreed-upon procedure, such as an item has exceeded time limits or if the discussion is off the point.

Next, people holding up orange cards are called upon to deliver their acknowledgment. Acknowledgments may also be done at any stage by raising and waving hands (sign language for applause).

People raising yellow cards to indicate questions have the next priority. After a question has been asked, people holding green cards are called on to provide clarification to that question.

After all questions have been answered, the facilitator calls on participants holding blue cards. At this time, comments regarding the topic of the discussion can be put forth.

After the discussion the facilitator shall check with the proposer whether they wish to make any amendments to their proposal in the light of the discussion.

### Decision making

Each person, including the facilitator, taking part in the decision making has five coloured cards. When deciding on an issue, each person must raise one of the coloured cards, which now have the following meanings.

- Green I agree with the proposal at hand.
- Blue I am neutral or basically for it, with some slight reservation.
- Yellow I have a question to be answered before I can make a decision. That question is answered before proceeding.
- Orange I have a serious reservation, but I am not willing to block Consensus.
- Red I am entirely against the proposal and will block Consensus.

If any orange or red cards are raised, those people with reservations should voice their concerns, if they have not already done so.

At this point, an amendment to the current motion could be made which may address concerns raised. Another show of cards can then follow. If Consensus is still blocked by the showing of red cards, the proposer and the blocker must meet before the next meeting to find a workable compromise.

If consensus is not blocked the voting should be recorded in the minutes.

If consensus is still not reached after a further meeting on the topic, the decision can be made by a three quarters majority of Full Members votes. It is expected that this will be a rare occurrence – consensus will be the norm.

### Process for Revisiting Decisions

A Full Member absent from a meeting may request to revisit a decision made at that meeting, at the next meeting only. Otherwise decisions may only be reopened with the prior agreement of 50% of full members.