Minute-taking for SCA Board and Committee Meetings

Function
The taking of minutes is carried out for two main reasons:
- For the Board or Committee to be able to recall decisions that it has taken, accurately in order to build on this for the future
- To enable proof of compliance

Purpose of minutes
- To enable there to be a clear list of decisions taken and actions agreed

What minutes are not
They are not:
- a transcript of a conversation/meeting, and should not be confused with process recordings as used in therapeutic relationships. A transcript can run into two problems, one of confusion due to the amount of content, and far too much for busy people to read
- a 'he said, she said' list
- a substitute for being at the meeting – the process of the meeting cannot be accurately recorded

Acceptable format for minutes
- Title of Committee/Board
- Date and venue of meeting
- Names present, with titles/roles – avoid nicknames, shortened names. If initials are going to be used in the minutes then these should be defined at the start
- Those not present, apologising for absence
- Clear list of agenda items, with decisions taken, or not, whether 'pending', to be discussed again' etc.
- Names of person responsible for action, and the timescale in which it is agreed that this action will be taken. An Action List can be used to summarise the agreed actions. NB actions can only be assigned to those present at the meeting
- All abbreviations, acronyms etc. must be explained. In general, people referred to outside of the group should be named by their role rather than by e.g. 'John' or 'Jane'
- Nobody should be referred to in a defamatory way. If there is an issue or complaint about somebody not present, it should both be minuted in a polite way, and the action recorded, and by whom, to put the matter right
- Long conversations cannot be accurately recorded, and are usually referred to as 'much discussion took place…', or 'the Committee had trouble coming to a conclusion'

Desired outcome
- For those reading minutes, whether internal or external to that group, to be quite clear as to the role and function of the group