

Elected Member Master Class

Chairing Meeting Skills

Meetings are a traditional and essential component of local government. For both elected members and managers, meetings serve as a forum for discussion and agreement, planning and monitoring, communication and leadership and decision making. Used appropriately, meetings can challenge, inspire, illuminate and inform. And while they are not the only meetings that elected members will be asked to attend, committee meetings, in particular, are a mainstay of the political management process.

Effective chairing is important because it can provide clear leadership and direction, ensure that debates are focused and balanced, enable decisions to be reached and ensure that resources are used to best effect.

This two hour master class will help elected members to understand their role, offer some approaches and ideas that will help to tackle typical challenges and help to generally improve their effectiveness as a chair.

Aim

To enable elected members to develop the skills and knowledge for chairing meetings effectively.

Objectives

- To understand the skills and qualities of a good chair
- To learn ideas and approaches for chairing a successful meeting that is on time and achieves its outcomes
- To understand the protocols and boundaries for appropriate meeting etiquette and the chair's role in managing this effectively
- To appreciate how to manage yourself and others appropriately
- To take away personal actions to apply to your role

Approach

This is a facilitator led session but one that very much includes member discussion and participation. The master class is structured around a presentation and includes opportunities for discussion, contributing to session topics from the floor and completing a few short exercises with other members.

In modelling the perfect meeting we always start and finish on time!

OUTLINE PROGRAMME

Welcome and Introductions

Objectives

What's the challenge for you?

We can't go on meeting like this

- Common meeting challenges for chairs and why they succeed or fail
- Consequences and impact for the Council
- What's the context?

The skills and qualities of an effective chair

- Activities and input that explore skills and qualities and testing a few of them out
- Role of the chair: what is it and how to do it well
- Noting legalities you work within

Chairing for success - ideas and approaches

- managing time and boundaries
- preparation and planning
- creating the right environment
- self management
- challenging situations and personalities

Final plenary

- What's your plan? Take away actions.

Flexible Content

Not quite the right content? No matter. Consider it a starting point to deciding what the ideal programme is for you. This is a generic programme that can be amended to fit specific aims and needs.