

The Chairman's Role

The Chairman is elected by the members of the Council at the Annual Council meeting and serves for twelve months (Section 15 (1) of the Local Government act 1972).

The Chairman's main role is to run council meetings. He/she can suggest the content and design of the agenda, but as legal signatory, the Clerk has the final say. The Chairman is responsible for ensuring that effective and lawful decisions are taken at meetings of the council and, assisted by the clerk, guides activities by managing the meetings of the council. The Chairman is responsible for involving all councillors in discussion and ensuring that councillors keep to the point. The Chairman summarises the debate and facilitates the making of clear resolutions and is responsible for keeping discussions moving so that the meeting is not too long. The Chairman has a casting vote. His/her first vote is a personal vote as a member of the council. If there is a tied vote, the Chairman can have a second, casting vote.

The Chairman will often be the public face of the council and will represent the council at official events. He/she may be asked to speak on behalf of the council in such circumstances should only express the agreed views of the council and not his/her personal views.

The Chairman cannot legally make a decision on behalf of the council.