

Chairing skills

A bite-sized classroom session (2 or 3 hours) or a 90-minute webinar

Meetings are a traditional and essential component of local government. They 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.

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.

But chairing them is a skill you need to work at. Here's the perfect opportunity.

Learning objectives

- Understand the roles, responsibilities and qualities of an effective chair
- Learn ideas and approaches for how to chair successful meetings including preparation, presenting and dealing with challenges
- Be able appreciate how to manage yourself and others well
- Have some actions and ideas to take away and use

Audience

This is a popular 'master class' programme with elected members. It can also be tailored for managers (particularly those starting to chair meetings of people other than their usual team).

Format

Flexible: a practical workshop (two-three hours) for a group of up to 12 people or a 90-minute webinar. Length of session can depend on time of day (eg, early evening for elected members).

The expert trainer

[Amanda](#) is always the first port of call for public service clients. She is an extremely popular trainer, facilitator, coach and consultant with an in-depth understanding of what it means to work in the public sectors.

Session overview

1 We can't go on meeting like this

- Common meeting challenges for chairs and why they fail or succeed
- Consequences and impact for the Council
- What's the context you are working in?
- Why is effective chairing important?

2 Roles and responsibilities of an effective chair

- Clarifying the chair's role
- Skills and qualities of an effective chair
- Communicating and listening for better results

3 Chairing for success – ideas and approaches

- Managing time and boundaries
- Preparation and planning
- Good practice for constructing an agenda
- Creating the right environment
- Good meeting behaviour and managing more difficult situations

4 Takeaway actions

- Review
- What's your plan?

5 Close