What does an effective chair do?

A range of skills necessary for a chair of the meetings of the Council, committees, community or partnerships. In the case of formal meetings some administrative or legal roles might be undertaken by officers, however these actions still need to be understood and ensured by the Chair.

A good chair

Knows the context

- Understands the general purpose of the meeting or committee
- Understands the Terms of Reference
- Knows the roles of the participants – members, officers, witnesses

Knows the rules

- Quorum
- Apologies
- Interests
- Motions
- Voting
- Press and public
- Confidential items
- Use of Social Media

Prepares for each meeting

- Knows who will be attending, their role and why they are attending
- Chooses an appropriate venue
- Makes sure that minutes will be taken
- Understands the purpose and content of each agenda item
- Makes sure that papers have been distributed in time
- Makes sure that the meeting has been publicised effectively
- Facilitates a pre meeting when appropriate
- Checks whether the meeting is to be broadcast

Manages the meeting

- Welcomes participants and makes introductions as necessary
- Explains the purpose of the meeting at the beginning
- Takes apologies
- Explains how contributions should be made

- Uses plain language but is tactful
- Manages the Politics of others and acts apolitically themselves
- Introduces each agenda item and its purpose
- Manages the meeting but does not dominate
- Summarises discussions
- Ensures that everyone has a chance to contribute
- Encourages contributions from the reticent
- Manages the contributions of the over enthusiastic or unfocussed or emotional
- Moves the agenda along and manages the time spent on each item being flexible if necessary
- Checks the meaning of any unclear contributions
- Makes sure decisions are made or actions decided and that both are recorded
- Thanks people for attending at the end
- Reminds people of the date of the next meeting

Follows up

- Checks on the progress of action/decisions
- Checks that any communications arising from the meeting are actioned
- Addresses any issues which may have arisen with participants such as non-contribution