

Article 4 - The Council meeting

This article explains the role of the Council meeting (which is when all councillors attend a formal meeting) and the role of the chairperson.

2.4.1 Council meetings

2.4.2 Types of Council meetings

2.4.3 There are three types of Council meeting:-

- (a) The annual meeting
- (b) Ordinary meetings
- (c) Extraordinary meetings

2.4.4 Rules applying to Council meetings

2.4.5 The council rules (in Part 4 section 1) will apply to Council meetings.

2.4.6 Functions of the council meeting and functions scheme

2.4.7 The functions of the Council meeting are set out in the functions scheme (part 3)

2.4.8 Chairperson of the Council

2.4.9 Election

2.4.10 The chairperson of the council and the vice-chairperson are elected by Council annually.

2.4.11 Functions

2.4.12 The chairperson of the council and, in their absence, the vice-chairperson will have the following roles and functions:

- (a) to uphold and promote the purpose of the constitution;
- (b) to decide what the constitution means if there is a dispute, on advice from the monitoring officer;
- (c) to chair Council meetings so that decisions can be taken efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community;
- (d) to make sure that Council meetings are a place for debating matters of concern to the local community and the place at which members who are not on the cabinet are able to hold the cabinet to account;
- (e) to promote public involvement in the council's activities and in the democratic process;
- (f) to be the conscience of the council;
- (g) to attend those civic and ceremonial functions which they or the council consider appropriate; and
- (h) to approve, as urgent, decisions which will not be subject to call in, when no chair of a scrutiny committee is available.

2.4.13 Roles

2.4.14 The chairperson of the council fulfils several roles:

- (a) **Ceremonial role** - The chairperson is the ceremonial head of the whole council and its countywide representative at civic and social occasions. The chairperson has considerable discretion in exercising the ceremonial aspects of the office.
- (b) **Apolitical role** - It is important that the chairperson maintains an apolitical stance especially when chairing Council meetings. The chairperson must act entirely neutrally allowing different opinions to be fully and fairly presented and debated subject to any relevant procedure rules.
- (c) **Chairperson's announcements** - Any group leader or committee chairperson may approach the chairperson before a Council meeting to suggest items for the chairperson to use in making announcements to Council. The chairperson has complete discretion as to which items they may think appropriate to announce.
- (d) **Rules of debate** - The chairperson's role in conducting meetings is to enforce the council rules at the Council meeting as set out in part 4.
- (e) **Casting vote** - If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the chairperson will have a second or casting vote. There will be no restriction on how the chairperson chooses to exercise a casting vote.