

## Chairing meetings skills for Elected Members Masterclass

### Overview

Meetings are a traditional and essential component of local government. For both elected members and officers, 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 'masterclass'-style workshop 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.

### Learning 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

### The expert trainer

**Amanda** Dudman's background includes working in local government. She has personal experience of chairing large public meetings and community associations as well as committee work. She weaves some of the 'highlights' and lessons learned from her own chairing into the session as well as encouraging those present to build on their own practice.

### Outline

- 1 **Welcome and introductions**
  - Objectives
  - What's the challenge for you?
- 2 **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?
- 3 **Roles and responsibilities of an effective chair**
  - Activities and input that explore the role, skills and qualities needed
  - Role of the chair: what is it and how to do it well
- 4 **Chairing for success – ideas and approaches to meet the challenges**
  - Managing time and boundaries
  - Preparation and planning
  - Creating the right environment
  - Self-management
  - Challenging personalities and good meeting behaviour
- 5 **Final plenary session**
  - What's your plan? Take away actions