

FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

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Clerk: Sally Thurston



The Role of All Chairs

Good practice in chairing covers the activities of meetings of the full council, of its committees and of any working groups. The following responsibilities are shared by the chairs of any of these meetings.

1. Chair's responsibilities

- a) To determine that the meeting is properly constituted and that a quorum is present
- b) To inform themselves as to the business and objects of the meeting
- c) To preserve order in the conduct of those present
- d) To confine discussion within the scope of the meeting and reasonable limits to time;
- e) To decide whether proposed motions and amendments are in order
- f) To formulate for discussion and decision questions which have been moved for the consideration of the meeting
- g) To decide points of order and other incidental questions which require a decision at the time
- h) To ascertain the sense of the meeting by:
 - Putting relevant questions to the meeting and taking the vote thereon (and if so minded giving a casting vote);
 - Declaring the result; and
 - Causing a ballot to be taken if duly demanded;
- i) To approve the draft of the minutes or other record of proceedings (with the consent of the meeting);
- j) To adjourn the meeting when circumstances justify or require that course; and
- k) To declare the meeting closed when its business has been completed

2. Voting During the meeting

if a vote on a matter is tied, the Chair, or other person presiding, has a second or casting vote. Some councils apply a convention that the Chair will use his or her second or casting vote in a way to support the status quo and keep the question open for reconsideration at a later date, which is generally considered to be best practice.

3. Enhanced Role

The Chair of a committee may have an enhanced role, where functions are delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the Chair of a Committee. This means that the decision and the responsibility for it, remains with the Clerk (not the Chair) but that he or she must first bring the matter to the attention of the Chair and consider the views of the Chair when coming to his or her decision.

It is also likely to be the case that the Chair will be the person whom the Clerk will approach:

- for information about the council and the town;
- to seek to discuss informally matters with and;
- to consult informally on decisions that are in the Clerk's remit to make or pass back to a formal meeting.