

The role of a committee chairman

The role of a chairman is to:

- approve agendas and minutes for the committee;
- consult the committee secretary for advice as needed;
- manage the efficient and effective running of meetings by grasping the detail of a wide range of business, and contribute to objective decision making by exercising sound judgement;
- facilitate open discussion, and good decision-making;
- ensure that the meeting is conducted in accordance with the standing orders, and that all members keep to the code of conduct;
- act as spokesperson for the committee if required;
- exercise a casting vote if such action is necessary; and
- take ‘chairman’s action’ if needed.

Notes on chairman’s action

It may be the case that deadlines, and the dates of committee meetings mean that the chairman of a committee is asked to take ‘chairman’s action’ in between committee meetings. A ‘chairman’s action’ is when the chairman is asked to take a decision on behalf of the committee.

Chairman’s action should only be taken if the committee has previously agreed that the decision on this matter will be delegated to the chairman between meetings.

Whenever a chairman’s action is called for, it always be documented by the committee secretary and presented to the committee for ratification at their next meeting. Wherever possible, the use of a chairman’s action will be limited.

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