

West Suffolk Council

Article 5 – Chairing the Council

5.1 Role and function of the Chair

The Chair and Vice Chair will usually be elected annually by the Council. In the event that the Council's Annual Meeting is cancelled, deferred or delayed, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall continue to serve until such time that the Council appoints a successor.

Neither the Chair nor Vice Chair may be a member of the Cabinet. It would not normally be expected for the Chair to act as Chair of any other Committees during their term of office.

The role and function of the Chair is to maintain an apolitical stance at all times, in that they are to serve as a representative of the whole Council during their term of office, and not seek to favour any political group or organisation.

The Chair and, in their absence, the Vice Chair have the following roles.

5.2 Procedural role

The Chair:-

- a) Will chair meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently in accordance with the Council Procedure rules and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community.
- b) Will uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution and interpret the rules of procedure at Council meetings.
- c) Will ensure that Council meetings are a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the community and one of the places at which Councillors who are not on the Cabinet are able to hold the Cabinet to account.
- d) Should exercise their casting vote with appropriate caution. A casting vote is only called upon when Members cannot reach a majority and due respect should be given to the lack of consensus. However, the Chair is ultimately entitled to exercise their vote as they consider appropriate.

5.3 Civic and ceremonial role

The Chair is the ceremonial head of the Council and will be its representative at civic and ceremonial events. This part of the role includes:-

- a) Representing and promoting the whole district during their term of office.
- b) Enhancing the image of the district.
- c) Encouraging understanding of the Council's role, priorities and partnerships.
- d) Promoting public involvement in the Council's activities.