

What makes a Good Chair?

The personal qualities of a good chair

- An understanding of the issues and topics being discussed
- A personal knowledge of the Committee's members
- Strength of personality and character allowing you to stand your ground and to effectively manage the meeting.
- The confidence and ability to use your authority e.g. prevent discussions wandering, prevent those with out anything knew to add repeating the same point, being able to move on when a point is discussed as far as possible etc
- Ability to sum-up the points made in discussions so that, before a vote, the participants know what they are being asked to decide on. – you will need not only to understand the issues, but also to have listened very carefully (take notes of contributions) so you are able to refer to different contributions in your summing up
- A knowledge of the standing orders and rules – so you can ensure that things are done properly
- The ability to deal with people outside meetings
- It is important to get feedback from others about your ability to chair. Ask others what they think your weaknesses are, possibly asking them how the meeting progressed and what might have improved it.