

Chairing advice forum meetings

The following paper outlines the role of the chair to provide guidance to those who agree to undertake this role.

Preparation:

In preparation for the meeting the chair should read papers from the last meeting and look at the agenda for the meeting that they are chairing. They should think through the following points:

- Have you got enough information about each of the agenda items?
- Have you thought through how each of the agenda items are to be introduced, by yourself or
- by another forum member?
- Have you allocated times to each of the agenda items?
- Have you anticipated likely areas of difficulty or conflict?

During the meeting:

The chair has a number of responsibilities during the meeting, they are listed below:

- Time keeping – including starting the meeting on time and finishing the meeting. This includes ending sessions that are overrunning appropriately – i.e. give them five minutes to finish.
- Welcoming and thanking members of the forum and visitors for their attendance and contribution– this includes dealing with late comers and those who have to leave early.
- Presenting agenda items and the main issues for discussion
- Involving everyone in the discussion
- Setting, agreeing and reminding people of ground rules when necessary.
- Dealing with conflict appropriately and moving to consensus.
- Ensuring orderly debate – people speak in the order that they requested to do so.
- Summarising the debate and agreeing courses of action.

After the meeting:

It is the role of the secretary (state name) to take minutes of the meeting. The secretary will ask the chair to check the minutes for accuracy before they are sent out.