

## SFJB15

# Manage the work of democratic and decision making meetings



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### Overview

Meetings are a vital part of the democratic and decision making processes in local government. For local democracy to be effective, it is vital that meetings are prepared for efficiently and effectively so that discussions can be focused and relevant and decisions taken in a timely and informed way. It is also crucial that the meetings are fully supported and accurately recorded and that decisions are actioned as required. This unit covers both the executive and scrutiny functions of local authorities where they apply as well as more traditional committee structures, advisory bodies, partnership groups etc.

### Target Group

This unit is appropriate to the work of local government staff working, for example, in Committee Services, Democratic Services, Scrutiny or other departments who have a leading role in assisting the local authority to achieve the most effective and appropriate democratic and decision making processes.

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#### Performance criteria

*You must be able to:*

- P1 ensure your draft agenda for the meeting is based on:
  - P1.1 records of previous meetings
  - P1.2 other relevant papers
  - P1.3 forward agenda plans
  - P1.4 legal and internal requirements
  - P1.5 liaising with relevant people
- P2 provide people responsible for providing papers for agenda items with timely reminders and briefings
- P3 ensure any papers you are required to produce are available in good time
- P4 provide relevant people with the opportunity to provide amendments to agenda and papers
- P5 ensure final versions of the papers and agenda:
  - P5.1 are accurate, complete and available within specified deadlines
  - P5.2 conform to legal and local authority requirements
  - P5.3 meet the requirements of exempt and confidential information
  - P5.4 are dispatched to the relevant people
- P6 ensure the meeting meets local authority and legal requirements, or you intervene to provide guidance and support
- P7 contribute to the meeting:
  - P7.1 in accordance with your role and responsibilities
  - P7.2 following the conventions of your local authority
  - P7.3 in a relevant, clear, accurate and succinct manner
- P8 provide people who require support with it tactfully and diplomatically
- P9 provide adequate briefing, supervision and support for staff for whom you are responsible
- P10 record the meeting:
  - P10.1 clearly, accurately and in a style that is appropriate to its purpose
  - P10.2 meeting legal and local authority requirements
  - P10.3 obtaining the agreement of relevant people
- P11 follow the correct procedures for action to be taken by yourself and others as a result of the meeting

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#### Knowledge and understanding

*You need to know and understand:*

- K1 the purpose and nature of the meeting and how it fits into decision making processes
- K2 the purpose of an agenda and how it should be drafted
- K3 the information you need in order to produce an agenda and how to access such information
- K4 situations in which you may need to produce papers yourself
- K5 the principles and methods of report writing
- K6 meetings for which advanced notice may have to be given
- K7 the purpose of pre-meetings and why they are important
- K8 who you should meet with in advance of the meeting, according to the type of meeting and the issues to be discussed
- K9 the scope and depth of the briefing that should take place
- K10 actions that may have to be taken as a result of a pre-meeting
- K11 the purpose of checking papers and agendas in advance of the meeting and what to check for
- K12 who should receive papers and agendas according to the type of meeting and the issues being discussed
- K13 protocols for the broad range of meetings in which the candidate is involved
- K14 the candidate's roles and responsibilities in regard to the meeting
- K15 the range of information and advice the candidate may be called upon to provide
- K16 situations in which people, for example, elected members or members of the public, may need support
- K17 the type of support they may need and how to provide it
- K18 voting procedures for the types of meetings in which the candidate is involved and their role in regard to votes
- K19 the requirements for taking notes at meetings: both legal and local authority
- K20 effective writing skills
- K21 how to produce minutes of meetings: legal and local authority requirements
- K22 the importance of verifying your minutes and how to do so
- K23 the importance of action sheets and the information that should be contained within them
- K24 the importance of seeking advice when you are unsure about actions or who should take them
- K25 distribution methods and how to use them
- K26 the importance of carrying out the actions required of you
- K27 the importance of carrying out actions within agreed timescales
- K28 how to recognise situations in which you may need to seek advice from others

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- K29 situations in which you may need to seek advice and support and who could help you
- K30 how to monitor actions delegated to others whilst maintaining effective working relationships
- K31 the importance of recording what you and others have done

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#### Additional Information

This unit covers the following types of meetings:

#### Scope/range related to performance criteria

- 1 executive meetings
- 2 overview and scrutiny committees
- 3 partnership bodies
- 4 Consultative or advisory bodies
- 5 NHS or Community Safety Scrutiny Committees
- 6 Decision making committees

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#### Behaviours

#### You must show that you work in the following way

- 1 you demonstrate political neutrality
- 2 you identify and build relationships with people essential to your work
- 3 you identify people's preferred communication media and styles and adopt media and styles appropriate to different people and situations
- 4 you work to develop an atmosphere of professionalism and mutual support
- 5 you show integrity, fairness and consistency in decision making
- 6 you prioritise objectives and plan work to make best use of time and resources
- 7 you use effective and efficient means to gather, store and retrieve information
- 8 you present information clearly, concisely, accurately and in ways that promote understanding
- 9 you monitor the quality of work against progress and plans
- 10 you take pride in delivering high quality work
- 11 you focus attention on specific details that are essential to success
- 12 you keep confidential information secure
- 13 you present ideas and arguments convincingly and in ways that strike a chord with people
- 14 you show sensitivity to internal and external politics that impact in your area of work
- 15 you act to understand and influence the climate and culture of the organisations/partnership
- 16 you consider the impact of your own actions on others

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#### Links to other NOS

- 1 A51 Take effective decisions
- 2 C11 Manage your own resources and professional development
- 3 C22 Maintain and develop effective working relationships in local government
- 4 C32 Facilitate the implementation of local government legislation, regulations and procedures

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