

Constitution

Part 2: Articles of the Constitution

Article 5: Chairing the Council

5.1 Role and function of the Presiding Member

The Presiding Member and in his or her absence, the Presiding Member, will have the following roles and functions:

(In the absence of the Presiding and Deputy, the Council will elect a Chair for a specific meeting)

5.2 Powers

The Presiding Member has no Executive powers, other than those relating to Family Absence.

5.3 Chairing the Council Meeting

The Council will elect the Presiding Member annually. The Presiding Member will be chairperson of the Council and, as such, will have the following responsibilities:

- to uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary;
- to preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community;
- to ensure that the Council meeting is a Committee for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which members who are not on the Cabinet are able to hold the Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members and the chairpersons of Scrutiny Committees and other Committees to account;

5.4 Conduct of the Council Meeting

Standing Orders provide that the Presiding Member or person presiding at the meeting shall conduct the meeting so as to secure a proper, full and effective debate of business items where a decision is required.

The steps the Presiding Member may take include:

- Calling for more time to allow the speaker to properly explain the matter;
- Permitting a Councillor to speak more than once;
- Allowing employees of the Council to advise the meeting as appropriate;
- Allowing a full discussion of reports and matters for decision.

5.5 Selection and Deferral of Mayoralty

Selection and Deferral

Newport City Council's method of selecting the Mayor is fair and balanced and determined exclusively on seniority. What this means is that the longest serving member on the Council who has not served as the Mayor will be nominated to serve as Mayor, irrespective of which political party he or she represents.

However, from time to time the prospective incoming Mayor may need to defer his or her election as Mayor for personal reasons.

Council has agreed that in such circumstances, an individual can defer for twelve months to allow the individual time to resolve any specific issues but it does not allow the opportunity for individuals to 'pick and choose' when they serve as Mayor.

This constitution allows an individual to defer for one year from his or her original nomination date and that any longer deferral be a matter for decision by the Council.

Election year

In January of each year an individual is nominated to serve as Mayor. In an election year, if the individual who is nominated fails to retain his or her seat then the Mayoralty will fall to the next in line, according to seniority.

However it is recognised that an individual could be re-elected to the Council following an absence and, on strict seniority rules would qualify as Mayor in the year of his or her election. However by that time the Council will have already made a nomination for the coming year.

In such circumstances the person already nominated by the Council will become Mayor in the election year and the re-elected member will take his other place according to seniority in the following year. Any agreed deferrals will then be extended for a further period of time.