

How to be a...

LOCAL PARTY VICE CHAIR.

What's the role?

The Vice Chair is a position that has strategic value to any party. It involves you in the heart of your local party and is good experience for those who may want to become **Chair in the future.**

The Vice Chair can be a kind of 'Minister Without Portfolio', available to take on some tasks not obviously someone else's responsibility. It works equally well as a leadership and an advisory role.

Key tasks

- Chairing the meetings fairly and effectively when the Chair is unavailable.
- Taking the place of the Chair in acting on behalf of the local party, for example in responding to a media enquiry, or in contacting members of the Executive Committee to get a quick decision on an urgent matter.
- Advising the Chair, for example acting as a sounding board.
- Helping the Chair when they have difficulties, for example offering to take on some tasks when the Chair has too many; or advocating the Chair's perspective on matters during meetings; or speaking in support of the Chair when necessary.
- Undertaking specific tasks. This is a matter of local discretion. It will take into account the objectives of the local party, as well as the Vice Chair's particular skills and experience. Some local parties choose to structure themselves in a way that the Vice Chair also sits on various committees, but that is a decision within the gift of each local party and extraneous to the Constitution.

Help & Support

- You can join the Liberal Democrats [Local Party Officers](#) Facebook Group.
- To make contact with Lib Dem campaigners around the country, find out what they are doing and swap ideas, join the [Lib Dem Campaigners](#) group on Facebook.

Skills & Attributes

The interpretation of the role of Vice Chair allows more flexibility than some of the office roles, such as [Data Officer](#) or [Treasurer](#). As such, rather than a definitive list of key tasks or skills, here are some recommended suitabilities that local parties should look for when electing their Vice Chair.

Members who are interested in being on the Executive Committee of their local party, and who recognise themselves in this list, could consider standing for Vice Chair. That person's strengths should include:

- The ability to work productively in a team.
- Adaptability, and a preparedness to take on unexpected new roles and responsibilities when the Chair is unavailable.
- The ability to identify issues that require actions, and to facilitate decision-making.
- A chairing style which balances the need to be inclusive, and ensuring everyone's views are heard, with the need to avoid significant overruns of time or a descent into excessive detail.
- Sufficient personal influence within the local party to ensure officers are working towards the agreed strategy.
- The soft skills which help meetings emerge from potential conflicts or arguments.
- An understanding of the importance of acting within due process, and an awareness of those processes.
- The ability to speak on behalf of the local party with clarity and judgement.