

What Makes a Good Chair?



Preparation

- Confirm that consent to convene a VARM have been obtained (In cases where consent is not granted, it has been justified that concerns of significant harm are warranted)
- Identify times, dates and venue considering seating arrangements and plan for the individual's circumstances including the use of an advocate and/or online participation
- Send out invitations to the appropriate agencies and voluntary groups to meet quoracy
- Confidentiality and information sharing agreements are completed
- Set the agenda
- If the VARM meeting is in person, consider seating arrangements to ensure the individual is as comfortable as possible
- Pre read the background information. This may include reports and other information ensuring the voice of the adult is reflected
- Consider the legal and statutory frameworks that apply
- Confirm whether a minute taker has been identified/appointed
- Clarify the meeting objectives
- Identify if it may not be appropriate for the individual to be present in parts of the meeting due to sensitivities

Starting the meeting

- Welcome everybody to the meeting and begin introductions and apologies
- Put people at their ease and explain the process and the legal context of the meeting. Be explicit about wellbeing and caretaking
- Ensure the meeting is accurately recorded
- Clarify the meeting objectives, highlighting any safeguarding issues e.g. confidentiality and a need to share information appropriately
- Check that relevant background information has been circulated
- Check the agenda with participants.
- Be clear about the expectations of participants' behaviour

During the meeting

- Follow the agenda/clarify objectives.
- Keep things concise
- Maintain focus and draw back in if discussions get side tracked
- In case of disagreement with action plans and decisions, direct people to the relevant escalation policy
- Keep the language simple – avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Highlight any gaps/issues and risks not resolved during the meeting.
- Clarify agreed tasks and actions, who is responsible for which and timescales ensuring the actions are:
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Achievable
 - Realistic
 - Time bound and
 - Anti-discriminatory
- Summarise the outcomes of the meeting (may include the need for separate meeting/review meeting)
- Remember to close the meeting by thanking participants for their time and input.

Other Considerations

- Should concerns within the meeting grow and cross into safeguarding Section 42 threshold, these concerns must be escalated to Warwickshire Social Care and Support

Follow Up

- Ensure a debrief for the individual, whether or not they have attended the meeting
- Ensure the action plan and other identified actions and minutes are shared with the participants
- Ensure any wider actions or learning are identified and acted upon
- Understand and complete actions agreed at the meeting for you or your organisation.

