

2.6 The Chairman (or 'Leader') of the Scout Fellowship



Taking the lead

Every Scout Fellowship must have a 'leader'. In most cases it is recommended that this 'leader' is selected or elected by the membership and approved by the GSL or appropriate Commissioner. Alternatively, the GSL or Commissioner may directly appoint a 'leader' for the Scout Fellowship.

The role of the Chairman of the Scout Fellowship

The exact role of the Chairman of the Scout Fellowship will depend upon the actual remit of the individual Scout Fellowship.

One skill that will definitely be needed is the effective running of meetings as described in the section 2.7 'Running a Scout Fellowship Business Meeting' and 2.8 'Scout Fellowship AGMs'.

There are some mandatory responsibilities that are described in the Job Description in section 2.8. This sample should be used by the GSL or appropriate Commissioner as the basis for developing an individual job description.

The approval of an Elected Chairman

It has been traditional in the Scout Fellowship to elect a Chairman (usually on an annual basis), responsible to the membership for the overall running of the Fellowship. The GSL or Commissioner then gives their approval (or otherwise) to the election of the Chairman.

It would be unusual for a GSL or Commissioner to refuse to approve an elected Chairman. However, it is important to remember that these two people may have to work closely together. Therefore the right of the GSL or Commissioner to approve an elected Chairman exists to ensure that a good working relationship can be established and maintained.

There are several ways in which this approval can be sought and given. It is expected that the GSL or appropriate Commissioner will reach local agreement with the membership of the Scout Fellowship on exactly how a 'leader' is chosen. It is also recommended that the chosen method incorporates both the democratic choice of the membership and the right of approval of the GSL or Commissioner. The method should also be documented, possibly as part of the Scout Fellowships remit or of its wider constitution.

Suitable methods for approving an elected Chairman:

- The GSL or Commissioner is confident in the work of the Scout Fellowship as a whole, and is happy to accept any elected Chairman from amongst the membership.
- The GSL or Commissioner reserves the right to approve nominations for the position of the Chairman, and only 'approved' nominations actually go forward for final selection by the membership.

- The GSL or Commissioner reserves the absolute right to approve the Chairman once elected by the membership. In other words, the membership elect a 'Chairman Designate', who is then confirmed in the position by the GSL or Commissioner.

It is expected that good long-term working relationships should exist between the GSL or Commissioner and the Scout Fellowship as a whole. This means that any of these methods could be applied satisfactorily, with the preferred option being the first of these.

(Note: the term 'Chairman' is used for convenience and is not intended to be gender specific).

Other 'leaders' of the Scout Fellowship

Although not appropriate for 'traditional' Group, District or Area/County based Scout Fellowships, there may be other circumstances where the GSL or appropriate Commissioner will wish to directly appoint the 'leader' for other types of Scout Fellowship.

As an example, the 'leader' of the Scout Fellowship may be the Assistant District Commissioner for the Scout Fellowship - the ADC (SF) - and there may be no elected Chairman. This may be the case where there is a single section of the Scout Fellowship in a District, and where an elected Chairman and an ADC (SF) would be unnecessary. This may also be the case at the Area/County level.

Alternatively, Scout Fellowships with a specific remit may also benefit from having a directly appointed 'leader'. An example may be where a campsite warden is appointed 'leader' of the Camp Service Crew, for instance, or where the Gang Show Chairman is appointed 'leader' of the Gang Show Scout Fellowship.

In all of the above examples, the 'leader' may have a variety of existing titles which may not directly relate to the actual body of the Scout Fellowship. It is recommended that the additional title of 'Chairman' (or 'Honorary Chairman') of the Scout Fellowship also be used to help clarify roles and responsibilities.

It is good practice for the GSL or Commissioner to seek the views of the Scout Fellowship members prior to appointing a new 'leader'. This is to ensure that the members can work effectively with their 'leader' - to the benefit of Scouting.

Who has the right to approve/appoint a Scout Fellowship Chairman?

The right to approve or appoint a Chairman of the Scout Fellowship rests with the Group Scout Leader or the 'appropriate' Commissioner. Who the 'appropriate' Commissioner is depends on where the individual Scout Fellowship is registered. See below:

Type of Scout Fellowship	Right to approve/appoint a Chairman
Group Scout Fellowship	Group Scout Leader
District Scout Fellowship	District Commissioner
Area/County Scout Fellowship	Area/County Commissioner
Regional Scout Fellowship	Area/County Commissioner, or National Commissioner for Scout Fellowship
National Scout Fellowship	National Commissioner for Scout Fellowship
Headquarters Scout Fellowship	National Commissioner for Scout Fellowship

Note: the person responsible for approving or appointing the Chairman of the Scout Fellowship (or other 'leader') may choose to delegate this responsibility. For example, a District Commissioner may choose to delegate approval of the Chairman of a Scout Fellowship within the District to the ADC(SF). In a similar manner, the National Commissioner for the Scout Fellowship may choose to delegate approval of the Chairman of a National or Headquarters Scout Fellowship to another appropriate National Commissioner.