

ARTICLE 3 – CITIZENS AND THE COUNCIL

1 Citizens' Rights

Citizens have the following rights. Their rights to information and to participate are explained in more detail in the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution:

- (a) **Voting and Petitions.** Citizens on the electoral roll for the area have the right to vote and sign a petition to request a referendum for an elected mayor form of Constitution.
- (b) **Information.** Citizens have the right to:
 - (i) attend meetings of the Council and its committees except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private;
 - (ii) attend meetings of the executive and executive committees when key decisions are being considered;
 - (iii) find out from the Notice of decisions (forward plan) what key decisions will be taken by or on behalf of the executive and when;
 - (iv) see reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the Executive;
 - (v) see reports and background papers, and any records of key decisions made on behalf the Executive; and
 - (vi) inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.
- (c) **Participation.** Citizens have the right to:
 - a) Present petitions to the Council.
 - b) Ask a written question at the Council in accordance with the agreed procedures.
 - c) Ask a supplementary question at the meeting provided it is relevant to the original question.
 - d) Contribute to the work of Overview and Scrutiny by providing written or verbal submission either voluntarily or on request.
- (d) **Complaints.** Citizens have the right to complain to:
 - (i) the Council itself under its complaints scheme;
 - (ii) the Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme;
 - (iii) the Monitoring Officer about a breach of the Member's Code of Conduct.

2 Citizens' Responsibilities

Citizens must not be violent, abusive or threatening to Members or officers and must not wilfully harm things owned by the council, Members or officers.