

Article 3 - Citizens and the Council

3.01 Citizens' Rights

Citizens have the following rights. Their rights to information and to participate are explained in more detail in the Access to Information Procedure 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 to sign a petition to request a referendum for a change to the governance arrangements of the Council.
- (b) **Information.** Citizens have the right to:
- 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;
 - find out from published work programmes what decisions will be taken and when;
 - see reports and background papers (other than those disclosing confidential or exempt information), and any records of decisions made by the Council and Committees;
 - inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the External Auditor;
 - obtain a copy of the Constitution; and
 - inspect the register of Councillors' interests.
- (c) **Participation.** Citizens have the right to:
- participate in the question time at meetings of the Council, Committees and other Council bodies; and
 - contact their local Councillor about any matters of concern to them.
- (d) **Complaints.** Citizens have the right to complain to:
- the Council itself under its complaints scheme;

- the Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme; and
- the Council's Monitoring Officer about an alleged breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct.

3.02 **Citizens' Responsibilities**

Citizens must not be violent, abusive or threatening to Councillors or Officers and must not wilfully harm things owned by the Council, Councillors or Officers.