

**Article 3 – Citizens and the Council**

**3.1 Citizens' Rights**

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

**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, sign any other petition they wish to support and other matters under Localism Act.

**Information**

Citizens have the right to:

- a. attend meetings of the Council and its Committees (including Cabinet, when key-decisions are being considered) except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private;
- b. find out from the key decision list what key decisions will be taken by the Cabinet and when;
- c. make representations to the Executive that decisions which it intends to take in private should instead be taken in public, and to receive a response;
- d. see reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the Cabinet, except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed;
- e. inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor;
- f. contact their local councillor about any matters of concern to them;
- g. obtain a copy of the Constitution.

**Participation**

Citizens have the right to contribute to the work of Scrutiny.

## **Complaints**

Citizens have the right to complain to:

- a. the Council under its complaints scheme; ([make a complaint to the council](#))
- b. the Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme; ([Local Government Ombudsman](#))
- c. the Governance and Ethics Committee about a breach of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. ([Code of Conduct Complaint](#))

### **3.2 Citizens' Responsibilities**

In pursuing these rights Citizens must not harass or be violent, abusive or threatening to Councillors or employees and must not wilfully harm things owned by the Council, Councillors or employees or be disruptive at meetings.