

# 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 Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution:

### (a) **Voting and Petitions**

Citizens whose names are included 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, Cabinet, committees and sub-committees except for that part of the meeting where confidential or exempt information is disclosed, and that part of the meeting is therefore held in private;
- (ii) find out from the Forward Plan what key decisions will be taken by the Cabinet and when; Access to Information Regulations - Regulation 13;
- (iii) see reports and background papers, (except where confidential or exempt information is disclosed) and any records of decisions made by the Council, its Committees, Sub-Committees and Cabinet; and
- (iv) inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.

### (c) **Participation.**

Where a petition is being presented to the Council, the citizen presenting it may address the meeting on the subject for three minutes. Petitions may be presented to the Council, Cabinet, or Committee or sub - committees.

### (d) **Complaints.**

Citizens have the right to complain to:

- (i) the Council itself under its complaints scheme;
- (ii) the Local Government Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme;
- (iii) the Monitoring Officer about a breach of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

## 3.02 Citizens' Responsibilities

Citizens must not be violent, abusive or threatening to Councillors or officers and must not willfully harm property owned by the Council, Councillors or Officers.