

## Article 3 - Citizens and The Council

### 3.1 Citizens' rights

Citizens have the following rights. Their rights to information and to participate are explained in more detail in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 Section 2 of this Constitution:

- (a) **Voting and petitions.** Citizens on the electoral roll for the District 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 during those parts where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private;
  - (ii) attend meetings of the executive when key decisions (see Article 13) are being considered;
  - (iii) find out from the forward plan what key decisions will be taken by the executive and when;
  - (iv) see reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the executive; and
  - (v) inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.
- (c) **Complaints.** Citizens have the right to complain to:
  - (i) the Council itself under its complaints scheme;
  - (ii) the Ombudsman after having first raised their complaint with the Council under the Council's own complaints scheme, although the Ombudsman may get involved earlier in extenuating circumstances;
  - (iii) the Standards Board for England about a breach of the Councillor's Code of Conduct.

### 3.2 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.

