

## ARTICLE 3 - CITIZENS AND THE COUNCIL

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### 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 have the right to present a petition, in accordance with the Council's adopted petition scheme and to address members in support. This is however subject to the Rules of Procedure in Part 4 of this Constitution and the petition scheme. A copy of the petition scheme is available on the Council's website.
- (b) **Information.** Citizens have the right to:
  - (i) attend meetings of the Council, monitoring bodies, boards and committees except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed;
  - (ii) attend meetings of the Cabinet when decisions are being considered;
  - (iii) find out from the Executive Decision Notice what decisions will be taken when and by whom;
  - (iv) see reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council, Cabinet and officers;
  - (v) speak at meetings of the Planning Committee or the Licensing Committee in favour of or against planning or licensing applications, subject to the procedures laid down by those bodies; and
  - (vi) inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the External Auditor.
- (c) **Participation.** Citizens have the right to participate in the Council's question time and that of the Scrutiny Committees and contribute to investigations by those committees.
- (d) **Complaints.** Citizens have the right to complain to:
  - (i) the Council under its complaints scheme;
  - (ii) the Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme;
  - (iii) the Monitoring Officer about a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

## **3.02 Citizens' Responsibilities**

- (a) Citizens must not be violent, abusive or threatening to councillors or officers and must not wilfully damage things owned by the Council, councillors or officers.
- (b) When attending meetings citizens must not behave improperly, offensively or interrupt the business of the meeting. If they do, they will be removed and excluded from the meeting.