

ARTICLE 3 – CITIZENS AND THE COUNCIL

3.01 Citizens' Rights

The rights to information are explained in more detail in the Access to Information Rules in Part 5 of this Constitution. Other rights include:

(a) Voting and petitions:

People on the Electoral Register 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

The public have a right to:

- (i) Attend meetings of the Council and its Committees and Sub-Committees except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed (Committees for this purpose do not include Working Groups and/or Task and Finish Review Groups);
- (ii) Attend meetings of the Cabinet when key decisions are being considered;
- (iii) Find out from the Council's website what key decisions will be taken by Cabinet and when;
- (iv) See reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the Cabinet; and
- (v) In accordance with the published timescales inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.

(c) Remote Attendance by Members of the Public

The public notice of the date and time of a Council, Committee or Cabinet meeting will include details of whether the meeting is being held as a remote meeting, and if so details will be included and available on the Council's website on how to access the meeting.

(d) Participation

- (i) The public have a right to participate by submitting written questions to Full Council meetings and contribute to investigations by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The public can also participate at meetings of the Local Plan Committee and the Planning Committee in accordance with the relevant Public Speaking Schemes.

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- (ii) A member of the public's right to attend a Council or Committee meeting in order to exercise a right to speak includes remote meetings in the circumstances as set out in Council Procedure Rule 10A within Part 4 of the Constitution. Details on how to join the meeting for the purposes of participation on a particular agenda item will be provided.

(e) **Complaints**

The public have a right to complain to:

- (i) A Ward Councillor;
- (ii) The Council itself under its Complaints Scheme, details of which are available on the Council's website;
- (iii) The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, after using the Council's own Complaints Scheme;
- (iv) The Monitoring Officer about a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct (which sets out the standards of behaviour expected of a Councillor and is contained within Part 6 of this Constitution). The Complaints Procedure is available on the Council's website.

3.02 Citizens' Responsibilities

At meetings of the Council, its Committees or Cabinet, members of the public must treat Councillors and Officers with respect and courtesy and must not wilfully harm the property of the Council, Councillors or Officers.