

## 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 Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution:

#### (a) Voting and Petitions

Citizens on the Electoral Roll for the Borough have the right to vote, request a Councillor to initiate a Call for Action on their behalf and sign petitions:

to request a referendum for an elected Mayor form of Constitution

#### (b) Information. Citizens have the right to:

- (i) attend meetings of the Council, the Cabinet, and Committees except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and 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;
- (iii) see public reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the Cabinet; and
- (iv) for a limited period each year in connection with the Annual Audit of Accounts, to inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.

#### (c) Participation

Citizens have the right to participate in the public question time at Cabinet and Committees and contribute to investigations and Task Groups established by Overview and Scrutiny Committees. They also have a right to participate in meetings of the Planning and Development Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and to both participate and vote at Area Committees, to be involved in the process of participatory budgeting.

#### (d) Complaints

Citizens have the right to complain to:

- (i) the Council itself under its complaints scheme;
- (ii) the Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme;
- (iii) the Standards Board for England about a breach of the Councillor's Code of Conduct.

### 3.02 Citizen's responsibilities

Citizens must not be violent, abusing or threatening to Councillors or Officers and must not wilfully harm things owned by the Council, Councillors or Officers.