

## 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 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, 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 by Overview and Scrutiny Committees. They also have a right to participate in meetings of the Area Committees and sometimes to vote.

#### (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.