

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 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 to sign a petition to request a referendum for an elected mayor form of constitution.	
(b)	Information
Citizens have the right to:	
(i)	obtain a copy of the Constitution;
(ii)	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;
(iii)	find out from the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions what key decisions will be taken by the executive and when;
(iv)	Inspect reports and background papers, any records of decisions made by the Council, its committees and the executive, except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed; and
(v)	inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.
(c)	Participation
Citizens have the right to:	
(i)	contact their local councillor about any matters of concern to them;
(ii)	participate in Council meetings by asking questions;
(iii)	contribute to investigations by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee;
(iv)	Petition the Council on matters of local concern

(d)	Complaints
Citizens have the right to complain to:	
(i)	The Council itself under its complaints scheme about the standard of service, actions or inaction by the Council or its staff; unfair treatment or other allegations of maladministration;
(ii)	The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme;
(iii)	The Monitoring Officer about a breach of the Councillor's Code of Conduct.
3.02	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.	