

Article 3 – The Public and the Council

3.01 Rights of Members of the Public

Members of the public 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 the Constitution:

- (a) Voting and petitions: Members of the public on the electoral roll for the area have the right to vote and sign a petition to request a referendum for an elected mayor.
- (b) Information: Members of the public have the right to:
 - (i) Attend meetings of the Council and its 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 Council and its committees and when.
 - (iii) See reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and its committees, except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed.
 - (iv) Inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.
- (c) Complaints: Members of the public have the right to complain to:
 - (i) The Council itself under its complaints scheme or any other statutory scheme; and
 - (ii) The Local Government Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme.

3.02 Responsibilities of Members of the Public

Members of the public must not be violent, abusive or threatening to councillors or officers and must not wilfully damage property owned by the Council, councillors or officers.