ARTICLE 3 - CITIZENS AND THE COUNCIL

3.1 CITIZENS' RIGHTS

Citizens have the following rights. Their rights to information and to participate are explained in more detail in the Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution:

Voting and Statutory Petitions

Citizens on the electoral roll for the area have the right to vote and sign a petition to request a referendum for an Elected Mayor form of Constitution.

Information

Citizens have the right1 to:

- (i) attend meetings of the Council and its Boards/Panels;
- (ii) attend meetings of the Executive when Key Decisions are being considered;
- (iii) find out from the List of Forthcoming Key Decisions what Key Decisions will be taken by the Executive and when;
- (iv) see reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the Executive;
- (v) inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor;
- (vi) Make a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000;and
- (vii) inspect the Members' Register of Interest available on the Council's website.

Participation

Citizens have the right to submit deputations to Community Committees and full Council, and petition the Council. They may be asked to contribute to investigations by Scrutiny Boards.

¹ The rights set out in this article are subject to the Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules and the Access to Information Procedure Rules, but in addition to a citizen's other private rights. An individual's private rights include the right to make a subject access request under the Data Protection Act 1998 to obtain details from the Council of the information the Council holds in relation to them.

Complaints.

Citizens have the right to complain:

- (i) to the Council itself under its complaints scheme;
- (ii) to the Local Government Ombudsman² after using the Council's own complaints scheme; and/or
- (iii) about breaches to the Members' Code of Conduct, in accordance with the procedure set out in Part 5 of this constitution.

3.2 CITIZENS' 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.

² Or through a designated person, to the Housing Ombudsman in relation to social housing matters