

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 Access to Information – Policy Statement and the Procedure for Public Participation at Meetings set out in Part 4 of this Constitution:

(a) Voting and petitions

Citizens on the electoral roll for Surrey Heath 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 and its committees except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private;
- (ii) attend meetings of the Executive when decisions are being considered;
- (iii) find out from the Forward Plan 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; and
- (v) inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.

(c) Participation

Citizens have the right to present petitions to and ask questions of Councillors at meetings of the Council.

(d) Complaints

Citizens have the right to complain to:

- (i) the Council itself under its complaints procedure;
- (ii) the Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme;
- (iii) the Standards Board for England about a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct set out in Part 5 of this Constitution.

3.2 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.