

## **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 Procedure Rules and the Public Speaking Procedure Rules 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 Full 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 except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be discussed;
- (iii) find out from the Schedule of Key Decisions what key decisions will be taken and when;
- (iv) see reports and background papers, unless they are exempt, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the Leader and/or 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 Monitoring Officer 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.