

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 Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution:

(a) Voting and Petitions

Anyone who lives, works or studies in the Borough of Crawley including under 18s may sign, organise and submit a petition under the Crawley Borough Council Petitions Scheme.

Citizens on the electoral roll for the area have the right to vote and sign a petition to request a community governance review* or a referendum for an elected Mayor form of Constitution.

(b) Information

Citizens have the right to:

- (i) attend formal meetings of the Council and its Committees and the Cabinet except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private (citizens may make representations about why a Cabinet meeting or part of a Cabinet meeting, should be open to the public when notice of an intention to meet in private is published);
- (ii) find out from the forward plan what key decisions will be taken by the Cabinet and when;
- (iii) see reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the Cabinet; and
- (iv) inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor.

(c) Participation

Citizens have the right to ask questions at Council, the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Commission question time and make statements at meetings of the Planning Committee and may be invited to give evidence at investigations by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and its panels.

In addition to the rights conferred in Council Procedure Rule 10.1, Citizens have the right to send in written questions to the Cabinet or to Full Council at any time during the Committee cycle about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the Borough, and to get a written reply. Such questions should be addressed to the Head of Legal, Democracy and HR.

(d) Complaints

Citizens have the right formally to complain to:

- (i) the Council itself under its complaints scheme;
- (ii) the Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme;
- (iii) the Monitoring Officer about an alleged breach of the Councillors' Code of Conduct which is included under Part 5 of this Constitution'.

3.2. Citizens' Responsibilities

Citizens must not be violent, abusing or threatening to Councillors or employees and must not wilfully harm things owned by the Council, Councillors or employees.