

Article 3 – Citizens and The Council

3.01 Citizens' Rights

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

(a) **Referendum**

Citizens on the electoral roll for the area have the rights to vote and sign a petition to request a referendum for an elected Mayor, providing that such a referendum cannot be held less than ten years from any previous such referendum.

(b) **Information**

Citizens have the right to:

- (i) Attend, record and report on meetings of the Council, Council committees and Cabinet except where personal, confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private;
- (ii) attend meetings of the Cabinet when decisions are being discussed or decided;
- (iii) find out from the Forward Plan what key decisions will be taken by the Leader, Cabinet or Individual Cabinet Members and when;
- (iv) see reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council, the Leader, Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members;
- (v) inspect the Council's accounts and make their views known to the external auditor;
- (vi) contact their any Councillor or Cabinet Member about any matter of concern to them; and
- (vii) obtain a copy of the Constitution (also available on the Council's website www.gloucester.gov.uk).

(c) **Participation**

Citizens have the right to:

- (i) participate in the Council's question time;
- (ii) take part in deputations and present petitions/calls for action to the Council;
- (iii) contribute to investigations by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(d) **Complaints**

Citizens have the right to complain to:

- (i) the Council itself under its complaints scheme;
- (ii) the Ombudsman after using the Council's own complaints scheme, if they think that the Council has not followed its procedures properly;
- (iii) the Monitoring Officer about a breach of the Councillors' Code of Conduct if they have evidence which they think shows that a Councillor has not followed the Council's Code of Conduct (Part 5 of this Constitution).

(e) **Petitions**

Any person who lives, works or studies in the district may petition the Council or the Cabinet about any matter which causes concern to them and affects the City. Details of the petition scheme are set out in Part 5 of this Constitution.

3.02 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.