

Article 3 – The Public 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 (set out in Part 4 of this Constitution):

(a) Voting and petitions

Residents on the electoral roll for Spelthorne have the right to (i) vote and (ii) sign a petition to request a referendum for an elected mayor form of Constitution.

(b) Information

The public 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

The public have the right to ask questions at meetings of the Council and at Area Forums. They also have the right to present petitions at Council meetings and address the Council before it makes any decision on a recommendation to it from the Executive or a committee.

(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; and

- (iii) the Standards Board for England about a breach of the Councillor's Code of Conduct.

3.2 Citizens' responsibilities

Citizens must not be violent, abusing or threatening to councillors or officers and must not willfully harm things owned by the Council, councillors or officers.