

Article 3 –Members of the Public and the Council

3.1 Members of the public have the following rights. ~~Their rights to information and to participate are explained in more detail in the Access to Information Rules contained in Article 17 Decision Making.~~

(a) Voting and petitions

People on the electoral roll for the area have the right to vote and sign a petition to request a referendum for an elected mayor form of Constitution. If the Council receives a valid petition signed by at least 5% of the local government electors in South Kesteven, it must hold a referendum. This type of petition must follow the regulation on how the petition should be formatted and how signatories must be record as set out in Regulation 10 of the Local Authorities (Referendum) (Petitions and Directions) (England) Regulations 2000 as amended.

The Council also has its own petition scheme through which Members of the public can highlight matters about which they are concerned. The Council's petition scheme is included in Part xxx of this Constitution.

(b) Information

Members of 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~~ that part of the meeting ~~dealing with that information~~ is therefore held in private.
- (ii) Attend meetings of the Cabinet when key decisions are being considered.
- (iii) Find out from the ~~Schedule of Decisions-Forward Plan~~ what ~~key~~ Key decisions- Decisions will be taken by the Cabinet and when.
- (iv) See reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Council and the Cabinet.
- (v) Inspect the Council's accounts and related documents, then object to them to the external auditor if they believe that there is something amiss. These documents are available to inspect during a period of 30 working days in June and July each year. ~~make their views known to the external auditor~~

(c) Participation

People have the right to participate in:

- 1) the Council's public open forum

- II) ~~as detailed under Article 4 and public~~ Public speaking sessions at ~~Development Management Planning~~ Committee [\[Article x\]](#).
- III) Public speaking sessions at Licensing Committees [\[Article y\]](#).
- ~~III~~IV) ~~During the 'comments from members of the public' session at the start of overview and scrutiny committee meetings. as detailed in Article 9. They~~ Members of the public may also be invited to contribute to investigations carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. ~~Details of the public speaking [Article z]arrangements for each committee are set out in the relevant article.~~

(d) Complaints

Members of the public have the right to complain to

- (i) The Council itself through the customer feedback process: <http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=8599>.
- (ii) The Ombudsman after using the Council's own customer feedback process <https://www.lgo.org.uk/>.

3.2 Responsibility of Members of the Public

Members of the public must not be violent, abusive or threatening to Councillors or Officers and must not wilfully harm things owned by the Council, Councillors or officers.