

West Suffolk Shadow Council

Article 3 – The Public and the Shadow Council

3.1 The public's rights

The public has the following rights. Their rights to information and to attend meetings are explained in more detail in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution.

- a) **Information** – the public has the right to:
 - (i) obtain a copy of the Shadow Council's Constitution;
 - (ii) attend meetings of the Shadow Council, Shadow Executive and its committees except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be discussed and the meeting is, for that reason, held in private;
 - (iii) see the Shadow Executive's Decisions Plan to find out what key decisions will be taken by the Shadow Executive, its committees, or officers, and when;
 - (iv) find out from the Shadow Executive's Decisions Plan when the Shadow Executive, its committees or officers will consider any matters in private;
 - (v) see reports and background papers, and any records of decisions made by the Shadow Council, Shadow Executive or officers subject to the usual rules regarding confidential or exempt information;
 - (vi) inspect the Shadow Council's accounts and make their views on them known to the external auditor.

- b) **Participation** – People who live or work in the Shadow Council's area have the right to participate in public question time at meetings in accordance with the Protocol set out in the Shadow Council and Shadow Committee Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution.

- c) **Complaints** – the public has the right to complain to:
 - (i) the Shadow Council itself under the complaints scheme for Forest Heath District Council/St Edmundsbury Borough Council
[\[Comments, Compliments and Complaints\]](#)
 - (ii) the Local Government Ombudsman, if the complaint has not been resolved by the Shadow Council's own complaints scheme;
 - (iii) the Interim Monitoring Officer about a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct set out in Part 5 of the constitution.

- d) **Whistleblowing** – the public has the right to bring to the Shadow Council’s attention any concerns about corruption or bad practice. Details are available in the Whistleblowing Policy for forest Heath District Council/St Edmundsbury Borough Council [[Whistleblowing Policy](#)]

3.2 The public’s responsibilities

The public must not be violent, abusive or threatening to councillors or to the Shadow Council’s employees and must not wilfully harm things owned by the Shadow Council, councillors or Shadow council employees.