Report to	:	Full Council
Title of Report	:	Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Purpose of Report	:	To inform and to introduce a new policy document
Date of Report	:	November 2025

What is AI?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming a normal part of everyday life.

AI refers to computer systems that can do tasks that usually need human thinking. These systems come in many forms, and the definition of AI keeps changing as the technology develops.

Opportunities

AI is being used more and more across many industries, including the public sector, because it can help improve services and save time and money.

Used safely and correctly, AI can:

- Improve how we deliver services to customers and residents

- Help us manage and understand large amounts of data

- Make communication faster and easier

Examples of what AI can do:

- Create useful content (text, audio, images, code) without needing someone to manually write it all

- Understand and respond to normal everyday language, making it easier for anyone to use, even those whose first language is not English

- Analyse different types of data and turn unstructured information into clear, workable outputs

AI is likely to continue improving, giving Councils and public services more ways to deliver high-quality services efficiently and at lower cost to taxpayers.

Information Governance and GDPR

There is no law written specifically for AI yet. However, **if** AI uses or processes personal data, it must follow:

- UK GDPR

- Data Protection Act 2018

This applies when personal data is:

- Used to train or test an AI system

- Processed by an AI tool as part of Council work

It covers any personal data the Council holds about colleagues, customers, residents, or service users.

Confidentiality

Alongside data protection law, staff must think about the risks of sharing confidential or commercially sensitive information.

Confidential or personal information must never be put into a public AI tool (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Copilot).

This is because:

- The information could be stored or shared outside the Council

- The system could be hacked

- It could result in a breach of confidence, copyright issues, or legal action

Recommendations

1. The Council should adopt the attached AI policy.

2. A Privacy Impact Assessment must be completed and approved by the Data Protection Officer before using AI for any data analysis.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

1. Purpose of This Policy

This policy explains how staff, councillors, contractors, temporary workers and consultants can safely use AI tools (like ChatGPT, Copilot, Bard, Bing, Grammarly and similar tools).

Our aim is to:

- Make sure AI is used safely and legally

- Protect people's personal information

- Keep our work accurate, ethical and secure

AI is changing quickly, so this policy will be reviewed every six months.

2. What We Mean by "AI"

AI means computer systems that can do tasks that normally need human thinking.

Examples include:

- Chatbots and virtual assistants

- Tools that predict, analyse or summarise information

- Machine Learning

- Autocorrect, translation, or grammar tools

- Facial recognition tools

- Smart devices and monitoring tools

Some of these features may appear inside everyday software like email or video-calling tools.

3. The Most Important Rule

NEVER put personal, sensitive, or confidential information into a public AI tool.

Do not enter:

- Names, addresses, contact details

- Case notes or personal stories

- Health information

- HR information or financial details

- Anything that can identify a person

Why?
Most public AI tools store what you type and may use it to train their systems. This means your data could appear in answers given to other users. This is a data protection risk.

4. Traffic-Light Guide to Safe AI Use

🔴   **RED – Do Not Do This (High Risk)**

Never use AI for:

- Any personal data (even if the name is removed)

- Asking for advice about real people or real cases

- Making important decisions (e.g., hiring, funding, or assessments)

These actions break data protection laws.

🟠   **AMBER – Use with Care (Medium Risk)**

Allowed only if the information is fully anonymised:

- Summarising non-sensitive documents

- Writing newsletters or general communications

- Analysing feedback where all personal details are removed

- Brainstorming ideas

Before using AI, remove:

- Names → use [Person]

- Places and addresses → use [Location]

- Contact details

- Birth dates, ages, or anything that could identify someone

- Job titles that point to a single person (e.g., "the headteacher at [School]")

🟢 GREEN – Safe to Use (Low Risk)

These tasks do not involve any confidential information:

- Research on public topics

- Learning new skills (e.g., Excel formulas)

- Improving your own writing

- Creating public images or posters

5. Your Duty: Turn Off Data Training

If you use a public AI tool, you must switch off data training in your account settings.

- ChatGPT: Settings → Data Controls → turn off "Improve the model for everyone"

- Google Gemini: myactivity.google.com → turn off "Gemini Apps Activity"

- Microsoft Copilot (personal): Privacy → turn off model training for text and voice

This protects your information from being used to train AI systems.

6. Accountability

- Human responsibility: You must check all AI-generated content for accuracy, fairness and tone before using it.

- Transparency: If AI is used in a major way (e.g., a chatbot for service users), we will make this clear to the public.

- Compliance: Breaking this policy—especially the RED rules—may lead to disciplinary action.

If you are unsure, stop and ask for help before using AI.