

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage Policy

Little Hoole Parish Council

1. Purpose

This policy provides a framework for the responsible, lawful, and transparent use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by Little Hoole Parish Council, in line with:

- NALC model policies and guidance
- The Members' Code of Conduct
- The Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

AI may be used as a supporting tool, but must not undermine democratic accountability, officer responsibility, or public trust.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All councillors
- The Clerk and any other employees
- Contractors or volunteers acting on behalf of the Council

It applies to any AI tool used in connection with council business, whether:

- Free or paid
- Used on council or personal devices
- Used occasionally or routinely

3. Definition of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to software or systems that generate content, analyse information, or assist tasks that would normally require human judgment, such as drafting text, summarising information, or identifying patterns in data.

4. Relationship to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside, and does not override:

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Members' Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Publication Scheme and Transparency obligations

Where conflict arises, statutory requirements and adopted council policies take precedence.

5. Guiding Principles (NALC-Aligned)

The Council's use of AI will reflect the following principles:

5.1 Democratic Accountability

- Decisions are made by councillors or officers under proper authority.
- AI must not be used to make decisions on behalf of the Council.

5.2 Human Oversight

- AI outputs are advisory only.
- Responsibility remains with the councillor or officer using the tool.

5.3 Transparency

- The Council will be open about the use of AI where it materially contributes to council work.
- AI must not be used to misrepresent authorship or decision-making.

5.4 Proportionality

- AI use must be appropriate to the scale and capacity of a parish council.
- Unnecessary complexity or risk will be avoided.

5.5 Compliance with Law and Guidance

AI use must comply with:

- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

- Equality Act 2010
- Relevant local government legislation and guidance

6. Permitted Uses

Subject to this policy and existing delegations, AI **may be used** to:

- Assist with drafting documents (e.g. policies, reports, agendas, newsletters)
- Improve clarity, spelling, or grammar
- Summarise publicly available information
- Support research or option development

All AI-generated material must be:

- Reviewed by a human
- Edited where necessary
- Approved in accordance with the Council's usual procedures

7. Prohibited Uses

AI **must not** be used to:

- Make or automate council decisions
- Replace professional advice where this is required
- Process personal, sensitive, or confidential data without explicit approval
- Produce official council correspondence without review
- Carry out surveillance, profiling, or automated assessments of individuals
- Undertake any activity that could breach the Members' Code of Conduct

8. Data Protection and Confidentiality

In line with NALC data protection guidance:

- Personal data, confidential information, or unpublished council material must not be entered into AI systems unless a data protection assessment has been carried out.
- Councillors and staff must assume that data entered into public AI tools may be retained or reused by third parties.

- The Clerk acts as the Council's primary adviser on data protection matters.

9. Accuracy, Risk, and Reliability

- AI outputs may be inaccurate, biased, or outdated.
- AI must not be relied upon as a sole source of information.
- Officers and councillors remain responsible for checking accuracy and appropriateness.

The use of AI forms part of the Council's overall risk management approach.

10. Procurement and Approval

- Any AI system procured, licensed, or formally adopted by the Council must be approved by the Council or under proper delegated authority.
- Contracts must address data protection, information security, and transparency.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Full Council

- Sets policy and overall governance framework
- Retains ultimate responsibility for AI use

Clerk

- Oversees day-to-day compliance
- Advises on data protection, risk, and governance implications
- Ensures alignment with NALC guidance and statutory duties

Councillors and Staff

- Use AI responsibly and in accordance with this policy
- Remain accountable for all work produced

12. Training and Awareness

The Council will:

- Promote awareness of AI risks and limitations

- Provide guidance where appropriate, proportionate to the Council's size and capacity

13. Breaches

Misuse of AI may be treated as:

- A breach of council policy
- A breach of the Members' Code of Conduct
- A disciplinary matter (where applicable)

14. Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- At least every two years
- Or earlier if legislation, NALC guidance, or technology changes

Adopted by: Little Hoole Parish Council

Date: [Date]

Next Review: [Date]