

Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

1. Purpose and Introduction

The District Council of Peterborough (Council) recognises that artificial intelligence (AI) can improve efficiency, analysis, communication and service delivery. This Policy establishes a consistent framework for the safe, ethical, transparent and accountable use of AI and algorithmic systems in Council business.

AI is a support tool. It does not replace employees' professional judgement, statutory obligations, Council decision-making processes or accountability for work produced. The Policy will be reviewed as technology and associated risks evolve.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to Council employees, elected members, contractors, consultants, volunteers and other persons using AI in connection with Council information, systems, services or official duties, to the extent relevant to their role and engagement. It applies to generative AI, AI-enabled applications and other algorithmic tools used for Council business.

3. Policy Principles

- **Transparency:** Council will be open about material uses of AI and provide appropriate disclosure where AI meaningfully contributes to public-facing material or service outcomes.
- **Accountability:** A responsible person must review, verify and approve AI-assisted outputs before they are relied upon or issued.
- **Ethical use:** AI must respect human rights, fairness, dignity and accessibility, and must not be used to discriminate or cause harm.
- **Compliance:** AI use must comply with applicable legislation, confidentiality requirements, Council policies and contractual obligations.
- **Security and privacy:** Council information must be protected against unauthorised disclosure, retention, reuse and access.
- **Human oversight:** AI may inform decisions but must not independently make statutory, regulatory, financial, employment or strategic decisions on Council's behalf.

4. Definitions

Artificial Intelligence (AI): A machine-based system that uses inputs to generate predictions, recommendations, decisions or content.

Generative AI (GenAI): AI capable of producing text, images, audio, video, code or other content from prompts or data.

Bias: Unfair or inappropriate preference, exclusion or prejudice reflected in AI data or outputs.

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Hallucination: Plausible-sounding but fabricated, inaccurate or unsupported AI-generated information.

Confidential information: Non-public Council or third-party information, including confidential Council meeting material, commercially sensitive information and protected records.

Personal information: Information or an opinion about an identified or reasonably identifiable individual. Sensitive information includes, for example, health, criminal history and other particularly private information.

5. Guidelines for Responsible Use of AI

5.1 Approved tools and appropriate uses

Only AI tools authorised by the CEO or delegated officer may be used for Council business. Approval should consider security, data handling, contractual terms, cost and suitability.

AI may assist with brainstorming, drafting, summarising public material, formatting, research planning and analysis where staff independently check the result.

The original policy permits ChatGPT subject to strict information restrictions. For DCP, use of ChatGPT or any other platform is subject to formal Council approval; no platform is approved merely by being named in this Policy.

5.2 Information security and intellectual property

Do not enter confidential Council records, non-public financial information, legal advice, personnel information, personal or sensitive information, passwords or protected third-party information into public or unapproved AI tools.

Use de-identified or publicly available information wherever practicable. Do not assume a paid account, private mode or deletion setting makes a tool suitable for confidential data.

Protect Council and third-party intellectual property. Check copyright, licence conditions, attribution and originality before reproducing AI-assisted material.

5.3 Accuracy, integrity and quality assurance

Independently verify factual statements, figures, calculations, legislative references, quotations, citations and recommendations against reliable original sources.

Review outputs for bias, misleading information, inappropriate tone, accessibility and the risk of plagiarism.

Staff remain accountable for Council reports, correspondence, policies, public notices and other outputs prepared with AI assistance.

5.4 Transparency and community engagement

Disclose significant AI involvement when appropriate to the nature of the material, audience and risk. Routine spelling or formatting assistance will not ordinarily require a separate disclosure.

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AI-generated images, audio or video must not be presented as authentic records of events or people where this could mislead the community.

Public communications must be reviewed by an authorised Council officer before publication.

6. Monitoring and Risk Controls

- Data management: Ensure information used in approved AI processes is lawful, relevant, current and accurate.
- Bias mitigation: Assess outputs and applications for fairness and unintended impacts, especially where community services or individuals may be affected.
- Security: Apply appropriate access controls and promptly report suspected information breaches or misuse.
- Training: Provide role-appropriate guidance and training on AI limitations, verification, privacy and ethical use.
- Recordkeeping: Retain official records, substantive inputs, outputs and approvals as required by Council recordkeeping obligations.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- Council (elected body): Sets policy direction and oversees Council's governance approach to AI.
- Chief Executive Officer: Oversees implementation, approves or delegates approval of tools and establishes operational controls.
- Managers and supervisors: Ensure appropriate use, staff guidance, review processes and escalation of risks.
- Employees and other users: Comply with this Policy, check outputs, protect information and report concerns or incidents.
- ICT support / service providers: Advise on technical safeguards, system access, information security and approved tool configuration.

8. Quality Service Delivery Controls

AI must not be used as the sole information source for advice, statutory interpretation, risk assessment or recommendations to Council. Human review and evidence-based checking are mandatory.

Particular risks include bias, data privacy, misinformation, malicious third-party data use, copyright infringement, insensitive or dehumanising language and erosion of public confidence.

Council decisions and delegated decisions must remain with the properly authorised decision-maker. AI must not independently determine rates, enforcement actions, procurement outcomes, staffing decisions or confidential Council matters.

Where AI is used in preparing a formal Council report, the author must verify all substantive content and ensure the recommendation is the considered recommendation of the responsible officer, not the AI system.

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9. Incident Reporting and Non-compliance

Suspected disclosure of protected information, inaccurate high-impact outputs, discriminatory content or misuse of an AI tool must be reported promptly to the relevant manager and CEO in accordance with Council incident and information security processes. Non-compliance may be addressed under applicable employment, contractual or governance arrangements.

8. Document administration and control

Policy title:	Responsible use of Artificial Intelligence Policy
Policy number:	791026
Policy type:	Governance
Responsible officer:	Manager Corporate Services & Finance
Committee Review:	NA
First issued / adopted:	XX
Review period:	Reviewed within 12 months following the conclusion of a periodic election or by resolution of Council.
Last reviewed:	10/26
Current Version:	Version 1
Date revoked:	n/a
Related documents/legislation:	Local Government Act 1999 (SA); Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA); Copyright Act 1968 (Cth); Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) where applicable; Spam Act 2003 (Cth); and applicable records, confidentiality and information-access obligations.
Public consultation required / undertaken:	No
Availability	This Policy is available for inspection at the Council office, and any person may obtain a copy of this Policy upon payment of the fee fixed by Council in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges adopted each financial year. It is also available on Council's website www.Peterborough.sa.gov.au. Any grievance in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing to the Chief Executive Officer of the Council.
File reference:	To be confirmed