



TRAWDEN FOREST
PARISH COUNCIL

AI Use Policy

Prepared by : Adele Smith

Trawden Forest Parish Clerk and RFO

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Trawden Parish Council AI Use Policy

Trawden Parish Council (TPC) recognises the potential benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to support efficient administration, communication, and service delivery for the local community. This policy outlines our responsible approach to AI use, in line with UK Government and Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) guidance.

Scope

This policy applies to all councillors, the Clerk, and any individuals acting on behalf of the Council when using AI tools (e.g., generative AI like ChatGPT, image generators, or other automated systems) for Council-related work.

Principles:

- AI supports, but never replaces, human judgement or democratic decision-making.
- AI use must follow transparency, fairness, and accountability principles.
- Personal data must be handled in line with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Equality must be maintained under the Equality Act 2010.

Permitted Use

AI may be used to assist with:

- Drafting routine documents, correspondence, reports or press releases.
- Summarising non-confidential information or generating ideas.
- Basic data analysis or translation (where appropriate).
- Improving accessibility of communications.
- Research

All AI outputs **must** be reviewed, verified, and edited by a human before use or publication. Final decisions and official documents remain the responsibility of Council officers or councillors.

Prohibited Use:

- AI must not process personal or confidential data without legal reason and DPIA approval (Appendix A).
- Automated decisions affecting residents or staff are not permitted without human oversight.
- AI must not infringe copyright (Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988).

Limitations of AI and Inevitable Errors

AI tools have significant limitations:

- They can produce inaccurate, outdated, biased, or fabricated information ("hallucinations").
- They lack true understanding, reasoning, or contextual awareness specific to local issues in the area.
- Outputs may reflect biases in training data, leading to unfair or inappropriate results.
- They may not comply with data protection or equality obligations without careful oversight.

The Council advises the public and all users: Both human and AI errors are inevitable. AI is a supportive tool only — not a replacement for professional judgment. Always independently verify important information, especially on planning, finances, regulations, or personal matters.

The Council is not liable for any inaccuracies arising from AI-assisted content. If you spot an error in Council materials, please contact the Clerk.

Key Principles (aligned with UK Government AI Playbook and ICO best practices)

- **Human oversight:** Meaningful human control is required at key stages. No solely automated decisions affecting individuals.
- **Lawfulness and data protection:** Comply with UK GDPR. Conduct Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) where personal data is involved. Seek advice from the data protection lead as needed. Do not input sensitive or confidential Council/personal data into public AI tools unless approved.
- **Transparency:** Be open about AI use where it materially affects outputs (e.g., in public documents). Explain decisions where AI has been used.
- **Fairness and ethics:** Actively check for bias and ensure equitable outcomes, in line with public sector equality duties.
- **Security:** Use approved tools; avoid sharing sensitive information.
- **Accountability:** The Council retains full responsibility for all outputs.

Responsibilities

- The Clerk oversees AI use and maintains records of significant applications.
- All users must familiarise themselves with this policy and report concerns.
- Regular review of this policy will occur as technology and guidance evolve.

Key Legislation & Guidance:

- Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- NALC Guidance

This policy promotes innovation while prioritising accuracy, transparency, and public trust.

Appendix A

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) Template

Project / AI Tool Details

Project Name: _____

AI Tool / System: _____

Purpose of AI Use: _____

Date DPIA Completed: _____

Responsible Officer / Contact: _____

Personal Data

Types of data: _____

Data sources: _____

Processing purpose: _____

Storage location: _____

Necessity & Proportionality

Why AI is needed: _____

Can anonymised data be used instead? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Risk Assessment

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Inaccurate output	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High	Human review required	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High
Unauthorised access	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High	Access control & encryption	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High
Bias / discrimination	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High	Staff training & audits	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High
Data breach	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High	ISO27001 / Cyber Essentials	☐ Low ☐ Med ☐ High

Consultation

• Reviewed by Clerk/DPO: ☐ Yes ☐ No

• Staff trained: ☐ Yes ☐ No

• Public consultation required: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Measures to Protect Data

☐ Anonymise where possible

☐ Encrypt storage & transmission

☐ Restrict access to authorised users

☐ Document outputs & approvals

Compliance

- UK GDPR / Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 Decision & Authorisation

DPIA Reviewer / DPO: _____

Date Approved: _____

Outcome:

☐ Proceed

☐ Modify

☐ Do not proceed