



Savernake Parish Council

AI Usage Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out how Savernake Parish Council will use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools responsibly, ethically and transparently. It aims to support efficient service delivery while protecting the rights, privacy, and trust of residents, Councillors and partners.

In practise it is not expected that SPC will have any use for AI in the usual run of things but it was deemed responsible to ensure that an AI Policy was in place.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Councillors using AI for Council business.
- All AI tools and services, including generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Microsoft Copilot and any other AI assisted technology).

Definition

AI refers to computer systems that perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence such as learning, reasoning, generating text or images, predicting outcomes or making decisions.

Principles

The Council will ensure AI use aligns with the following principles:

- Lawfulness and Ethics - Comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Transparency - Clearly disclose when AI is used in service delivery.
- Accountability - Human oversight is required; AI will not make decisions.
- Accuracy - AI outputs must be checked for correctness and relevance.
- Privacy and Security - Personal or sensitive data must not be processed without safeguards and explicit approval. AI tools must be assessed for cyber security risks before deployment.
- Fairness and Inclusion - AI must be monitored to avoid biased or discriminatory outcomes.
- Human Oversight - AI use must always be subject to human judgement and review.

Acceptable Use

AI may be used to:

- Draft reports, minutes and communications (with human review).
- Summarise large volumes of text or data.
- Support research, policy development and data analysis.
- Subject to safeguards, automate routine administrative tasks.

All AI-assisted work must be:

- Reviewed and approved by a Councillor.
- Clearly identified as AI-generated where appropriate.
- Stored and shared in line with Council data policies

Prohibited Use

- Making decisions.
- Processing personal or confidential data without lawful basis and approval.
- Generating misleading, false or defamatory content.
- Political, lobbying or campaigning purposes.
- Creating deep-fakes or impersonations.
- Any use that breaches copyright, confidentiality or Council policies.

Risk Assessment and Procurement

- Complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) when procuring or adopting AI systems
- Conduct an IT Security Assessment.
- Review licensing, vendor terms and data handling practices.
- Ensure suppliers meet UK data protection and cybersecurity standards.
- Seek systems with transparent and explainable decision-making.

Governance and Review

- The Chair will oversee AI governance and compliance.
- This policy will be reviewed when significant changes in legislation or technology occur.

Training and Awareness

Any training for Councillors on responsible AI use will:

- Promote awareness of risks such as bias, misinformation and overreliance.
- Encourage ethical reflection and critical evaluation of AI outputs

Environmental Impact

Councillors must be mindful of the environmental impact of AI use. The use of AI technologies can have a significant environmental impact due to the high energy consumption of data centres and model training, contributing to carbon emissions.

Breaches

Misuse of AI systems or breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action, withdrawal of access or other appropriate measures under Council procedures.

Related Policies and Legislation

- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty)
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018