Dinnington St John's Town Council

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

October 2026

Applies to: Councillors, employees, contractors, volunteers, and anyone using council systems or acting on behalf of Dinnington St John's Town Council

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools may be used safely, lawfully and responsibly by Dinnington St John's Town Council. The Council recognises that AI can support productivity, drafting and research, but it must not replace professional judgement, democratic decision-making, or legal obligations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all use of AI tools for council business, whether through council-owned devices, personal devices, or third-party platforms.

3. Permitted Use

AI may be used for low-risk support tasks such as:

- drafting first versions of emails, reports, agendas, minutes, policies or publicity;
- summarising public documents or notes;
- improving spelling, grammar, layout or readability;
- generating ideas for communications, events or service improvements;
- research assistance, provided outputs are checked against reliable sources.

4. Prohibited Use

Users must not:

- enter confidential, personal, sensitive, commercially restricted or legally privileged information into public AI tools;
- use AI to make decisions on behalf of the Council;
- rely on AI output without human review;
- use AI to create misleading, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive content;
- use AI in a way that breaches data protection law, copyright, procurement rules, equality duties, or the Council's codes and policies;
- generate fake records, altered evidence, or inaccurate minutes.

5. Data Protection and Security

No personal data or restricted council information must be uploaded to an AI tool unless its use has been approved and appropriate data protection safeguards are in place. Users must follow the Council's GDPR, data retention, IT security and records management requirements at all times.

6. Accuracy and Human Oversight

AI outputs may be inaccurate, incomplete or biased. Any content produced using AI must be checked by a competent person before use. Responsibility remains with the officer or councillor using the tool, not the software.

7. Transparency

Where AI has materially assisted with a document, report or communication, this should be declared internally where appropriate. Formal council decisions must always be taken by the Council or properly authorised officer, not by AI.

8. Copyright and Intellectual Property

Users must not assume AI-generated content is free from copyright or licensing restrictions. Any images, text or other material must be checked before publication or reuse.

9. Training and Monitoring

The Clerk may issue guidance on approved tools and good practice. Misuse of AI may be treated as a disciplinary matter or breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct, depending on the circumstances.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to reflect changes in law, guidance and technology.

Adopted date: 12/10/2026

Minute reference: 98/27 (B)

Review cycle: Annually

Next review date: October 2027