Local Government Association

RESEARCH

Local government: State of the sector: AI

Research report, 2024

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Foreword

In February 2024, the Local Government Association (LGA) launched a survey to explore the landscape of Artificial Intelligence (AI) deployment within local authorities. This initiative aimed to achieve three key objectives:

- **Levels of Adoption:** Understand the current scale of AI implementation across local government in the UK.
- **Amplify Local Voices:** Ensure local government is actively involved in the national conversation on AI as a vital part of the public sector innovation ecosystem.
- **Inform Support and Advocacy:** Build an evidence base to solidify and update the understanding of risks, opportunities, and support needs for local authorities. This will guide the development of tailored support services and advocacy efforts for the sector.

While the survey results are not representative of the entire sector, they provide a valuable snapshot of current trends in local government's AI adoption journey. The insights gathered will inform the LGA's ongoing engagement, research, and advocacy efforts, ultimately enabling us to better support local authorities in the safe deployment of AI.

The survey findings echo the recent National Audit Office (NAO) report on AI in government, suggesting that local and central government are at similar stages of AI maturity. Despite being at an early stage of adoption, many councils are actively identifying use cases and piloting a diverse range of AI solutions across various service areas. This proactive approach demonstrates a commitment to exploring the potential benefits of AI, with some councils beginning to realise the benefits of pilots and early-stage adoption.

The survey also highlights a level of caution among local authorities, particularly the recognition of the importance of establishing robust governance frameworks and implementing safeguards to mitigate potential risks associated with AI.

Despite the encouraging signs of innovation, the survey also identified several barriers hindering further AI adoption and readiness within local government. These challenges primarily centre around limitations in staff capacity and capabilities in this emerging field. Additionally, a lack of funding emerged as a significant concern.

This report aims to provide valuable insights into the current state of AI in local government. By understanding the opportunities, challenges, and support needs of local authorities, the LGA can shape targeted initiatives to help the sector harness AI's transformative potential, and advocate for the support local government needs to further explore the safe deployment of AI.

Summary

Background

In February 2024 the Local Government Association conducted a survey to explore the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English councils. The purpose was to build a picture of where AI is currently being deployed in local services and council business units and to map where the greatest opportunities and risks lie, to build an evidence base for its support to councils in this space, and to ensure that local government is part of the national conversation.

The survey used the Government's definition of AI: '*The theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages. Modern AI is usually built using machine learning algorithms. The algorithms find complex patterns in data which can be used to form rules*.' (November 2023, Introducing the AI Safety Institute.)

It also defined four types of AI, using information provided by the Alan Turing Institute:

- Perceptive AI, such as systems that recognise faces and fingerprints, or try and analyse images, audio or video, for example in the analysis of consultation responses or identifying car registration plates in the prevention of fly tipping. This includes sensing AI such as remote or continuous sensing through smart sensors.

- Predictive AI, such as systems that try and make a prediction about an outcome for an individual, or try and assign people to appropriate service or system, for example predicting an outcome in services or assigning an adult social care treatment pathway.

- Generative AI, such as systems that generate text or images, such as ChatGPT and DALL:E

- Simulation AI, such as digital twins and agent based modelling.

Key findings

- Responses were received from almost a quarter (23 per cent) of councils, which may reflect the level of AI usage among councils with, those not using it preferring not to take part in the survey. As such, the results of the survey should not be taken to be more widely representative of the views of all councils. Rather, they are a snapshot of the views of this particular group of respondents.
- Most respondents (85 per cent) reported that they were using or exploring AI with half (51 per cent) at the beginning of their AI journey, 16 per cent developing their AI capacity and capabilities around AI, 14 per cent making some use of AI while 4 per cent are innovative and considered as leaders among councils in their use of AI
- Among respondents who were using or exploring AI, the most commonly adopted type was generative AI (systems that generate text or images etc) which was being used by 70 per cent. This was followed by perceptive AI, (systems that recognise faces or analyse images, audio or video, etc) which had been adopted by 29 per cent and predictive AI, (systems that try to make a prediction about an outcome) which was being used by 22 per cent
- The functions where respondents using or exploring AI had most commonly utilised it were corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance, cyber security (85 per cent), health and social care (adults) (35 per cent) and health and social care (children's) (31 per cent)
- Almost two-thirds (63 per cent) of the respondents using or exploring AI were paying external suppliers for the provision of AI tools or technologies, or were in the process of procuring this
- The areas where most respondents had realised benefits from using AI were staff productivity (35 per cent), service efficiencies (32 per cent) and cost savings (22 per cent). The areas where respondents saw the greatest AI opportunities were corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance, cyber security, identified by 85 per cent, followed by health and social care (adults) (43 per cent), and advice and benefits (36 per cent)

- The five biggest barriers to deploying AI identified by respondents were lack of funding (64 per cent), lack of staff capabilities (53 per cent), lack of staff capacity (50 per cent), lack of sufficient governance (including AI policy) and lack of clear use cases (41 per cent each)
- Among respondents using or procuring external suppliers for the provision of AI tools or technologies, three-quarters (75 per cent) identified ‘project scoping: understanding where AI can add value’ as representing a barrier to a great or moderate extent. followed by ‘evaluation: understanding how to evaluate solutions’ (65 per cent) and ‘market intelligence: understanding who is a trusted partner’ (63 per cent).
- The issues most commonly considered to represent a great or moderate AI risk were cyber security (81 per cent), organisational reputation and resident trust (75 per cent) and deep fakes disinformation (69 per cent)
- Two-thirds (65 per cent) of respondents were using their existing policies to manage AI risk. Existing boards, a senior responsible owner, or staff training and skills development were each being used by 31 per cent of respondents

Introduction

In February 2024, the LGA's Cyber, Digital and Technology team invited Heads of Information and Technology (IT), or Senior Responsible Officers (SROs) in English councils to take part in a survey designed to build a picture of the sector's position in relation to the use of AI and to identify any support needs. The survey asked about councils' AI readiness, including consideration of governance arrangements, policies in place and other approaches to ensure responsible deployment, as well as AI adoption, benefits and opportunities, barriers and risks, and support requirements.

Methodology

An individual survey link was sent to either the Head of IT or the SRO in each council in England, via email, in February 2024. Two reminders to complete the survey were also sent, and information about the survey was circulated via LGA networks and in relevant bulletins to ensure that IT leads were aware of it. The survey closed at the end of March 2024, after six weeks in the field. A total of 74 responses were received representing 23 per cent of councils. This level of response means that these results should not be taken to be more widely representative of all English councils. Rather, they are a snapshot of this particular group of respondents.

The survey defined corporate usage as the adoption of AI enabled technologies by a council, either in business function or in service delivery, such as AI-powered chatbots in call centres, and this is reflected in the findings which show respondents focussed on more recent iterations of AI, particularly generative AI, when answering the questions.

A full breakdown of the responses received by council type can be seen in Table 1. County councils had the highest response rate, at 38 per cent, whilst district councils had a lower response rate, at 16 per cent, despite this group submitting the highest number of responses. Table 2 provides a breakdown by region, and shows there was a good geographical spread with responses coming in from all regions. The highest proportion of responses were from Yorkshire and Humber (53 per cent) while the lowest came from the Eastern region (18 per cent).

Table 1: Response rate by type of council

Type of council	Number of questionnaires	Number of responses	Response rate
County	21	8	38%
District	164	26	16%
London Borough	33	8	24%
Metropolitan District	36	11	31%
Unitary	63	21	33%
All	**317**	**74**	**23%**

Table 2: Response rate by region

Region	Number of questionnaires	Number of responses	Response rate
East Midlands	39	9	23%
Eastern	50	9	18%
London	33	8	24%
North East	12	3	25%
North West	36	7	19%
South East	70	14	20%
South West	29	9	31%
West Midlands	33	7	21%
Yorkshire and Humber	15	8	53%
All	**317**	**74**	**23%**

The following should also be considered when interpreting the findings of this survey:

- Where tables and figures report the base, the description refers to the group of people who were asked the question. The number provided refers to the unweighted number of respondents who answered each question. Please note that bases can vary throughout the survey
- Numbers and percentages are provided for any questions where the base was less than 50. To calculate the number of respondents who provided a certain response for other questions, simply multiply the percentage provided by the base
- Throughout the report, percentages may not appear to add up to exactly 100 per cent due to rounding
- All brand, organisation and council names have been redacted from the text answers provided by respondents and replaced with descriptors shown inside angle brackets. For example, where a council mentions its name in an answer, this is shown as <*Council name*>

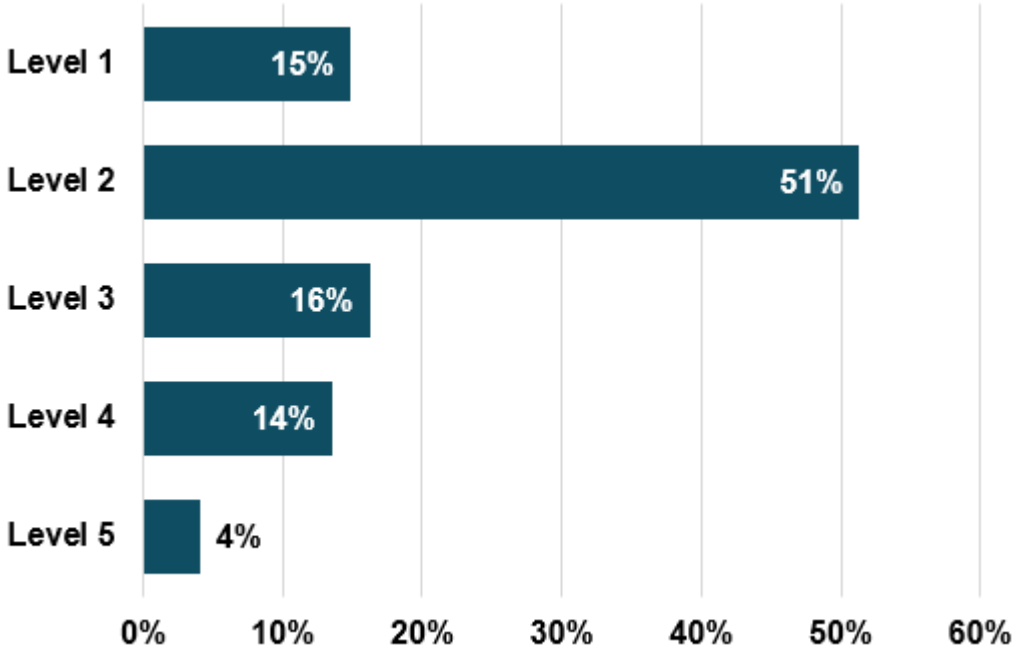
Local Government: State of the Sector: AI

This section contains analysis of the full results from the survey.

AI Adoption

Respondents were asked to select the statement that best described their council's current use of AI capabilities, from a list provided. Half (51 per cent) described their council as being the beginning of its journey in terms of working with AI (Level 2), 16 per cent reported that their council was developing its capacity and capabilities around AI (Level 3) while 14 per cent said their council was making some use of AI, exhibiting good practice and incorporating guidance from expert organisations (Level 4), and just 4 per cent of respondents indicated that their council was innovative in its use of AI and is considered a leader among its peers (Level 5). A further 15 per cent reported that their council was not currently using or exploring AI capabilities (Level 1). Figure 1 illustrates these findings and they are shown in Table 3.

Figure 1: Level of respondent council's current use of AI capabilities



Base: all respondents (74).

Table 3: Which of the following statements best describes your council's current use of AI capabilities?

	Per cent
Level 1: The council is not currently using or exploring AI capabilities	15%
Level 2: The council is at the beginning of its journey in terms of working with AI	51%
Level 3: The council is developing its capacity and capabilities around AI	16%
Level 4: The council is making some use of AI, exhibiting good practice and incorporating guidance from expert organisations	14%
Level 5: The council is innovative in its use of AI and is considered a leader among its peers	4%
Don't know	0%

Base: all respondents (74).

Respondents who answered Level 2 and above were asked to indicate the year in which they first deployed AI, from a list provided. Over half (55 per cent) had first deployed AI between 2023 and up to March 2024 (when our survey closed); 22 per cent in 2024 and 33 per cent in 2023. There was far less deployment in the previous years listed with fewer than 10 per cent reporting deploying AI in each of those years. Of the 13 per cent who answered 'other', most said they had not yet deployed AI while one stated that they had started using machine learning to develop predictive models in 2015 but had only deployed AI in apps in 2024. A breakdown of these findings can be seen in Table 4 and a list of the answers specified by those who used the 'other' category can be found in Table A1 in Annex A.

Table 4: In what year did your council first deploy AI?

	Per cent
2024	22%
2023	33%
2022	8%
2021	6%
2020	5%
2019	5%
2018	5%
2017	0%
Pre-2017	3%
Other	13%

Base: Respondents who were using or exploring AI (63).

The respondents who indicated that their council was not currently using or exploring AI capabilities (Level 1) were asked which year they anticipated their council would start to deploy AI. Just over a quarter (27 per cent) reported that it would be in 2024 and the same proportion (27 per cent) indicated it would be in 2025 while 36 per cent said that they had no plans currently in place. The respondent who answered 'other' said that they anticipated deploying AI between 2025-27. These findings are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: In what year do you anticipate that your council will start to deploy AI?

	Number	Per cent
2024	3	27%
2025	3	27%
2026	0	0%
2027	0	0%
2028	0	0%
2029	0	0%
2030	0	0%
Post-2030	0	0%
Other	1	9%
No plans currently in place	4	36%

Base: Respondents who were not using or exploring AI (11).

Among respondents who were using or exploring AI, the most commonly adopted type was generative AI (such as systems that generate text or images, such as ChatGPT and DALL:E) with 70 per cent indicating they used it. This was followed by perceptive AI (such as systems that recognise faces and fingerprints, or try and analyse images, audio or video, for example in the analysis of consultation responses or identifying car registration plates in the prevention of fly tipping, including sensing AI such as remote or continuous sensing through smart sensors), which had been adopted by 29 per cent and predictive AI (such as systems that try and make a prediction about an outcome for an individual, or try and assign people to appropriate service or system, for example predicting an outcome in services or assigning an adult social care treatment pathway), which was being used by 22 per cent. Simulation AI (such as digital twins and agent based modelling) was used by

just 3 per cent of respondents while 19 per cent were not using any of these types of AI. Figure 2 illustrates these findings and a full breakdown is shown in Table 6.

Those who reported that they had adopted one of the listed types of AI were asked to provide more detail on any tool/s utilised. Among respondents using generative AI, most were using generative chatbots or large language models, as highlighted in this response:

> "We are an early adopter of <*generative AI tool*> and seen as a leader in using tools to support staff. We are intending to use <*generative AI tool*> for FOI requests and staff HR enquiries."

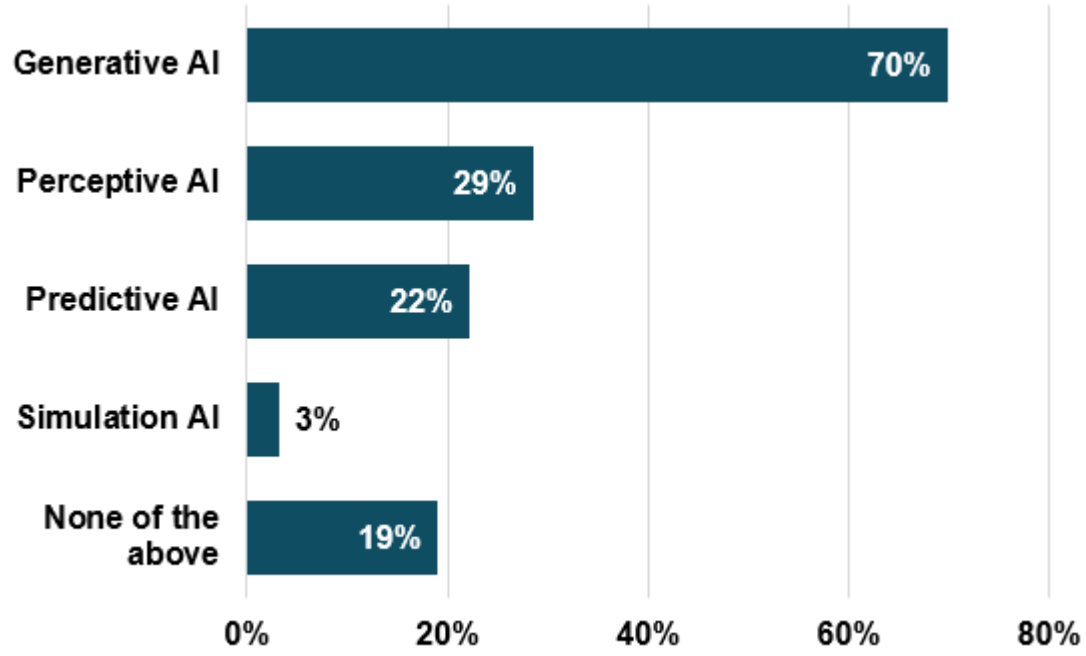
Those using perceptive AI were using tools such image/facial recognition and smart sensors, whilst those using predictive AI were mainly using bespoke or self-developed tools and apps, and respondents using simulation AI were using digital twins or self-developed tools, as shown in these two examples:

> "We are running small-scale pilots on perceptive AI for fly tipping recognition, predictive AI for assessing potential homelessness, and generative AI to produce internal business documents"

> "Predicative AI is being developed by our Data, Performance and Insights team predominately in Adult's and Children's service areas."

All of the answers provided, including details of scoping and development work, and use cases, are listed in Table A2 in Annex A.

Figure 2: Types of AI adopted by respondent councils



Base: Respondents using or exploring AI (63). Please note: Respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Table 6: Which of the following types of AI, if any, has your council adopted?

	Per cent
Generative AI, such as systems that generate text or images, such as ChatGPT and DALL:E	70%
Perceptive AI, such as systems that recognise faces and fingerprints, or try and analyse images, audio or video, for example in the analysis of consultation responses or identifying car registration plates in the prevention of fly tipping. This includes sensing AI such as remote or continuous sensing through smart sensors.	29%
Predictive AI, such as systems that try and make a prediction about an outcome for an individual, or try and assign people to appropriate service or system, for example predicting an outcome in services or assigning an adult social care treatment pathway.	22%
Simulation AI, such as digital twins and agent based modelling.	3%
None of the above	19%

Base: Respondents who were using or exploring AI (63). Please note: Respondents were able to select more than one answer.

AI capabilities have most commonly been adopted for corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance, cyber security, with 85 per cent of respondents using or exploring AI identifying this as a function where it had been utilised. This was followed by health and social care (adults), identified by 35 per cent, and health and social care (children's) which was cited by 31 per cent. The functions selected by the fewest respondents were community safety and leisure and culture, both of which were selected by 8 per cent of respondents. A full breakdown of these findings is shown in Table 7 and details of how AI is being used are provided in Table A3 in Annex A. Uses described included production of meeting notes, creation of job descriptions and fall predictions.

Table 7: In what functions, if any, has your council utilised AI capabilities, even in an exploratory capacity?

	Per cent
Corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance, cyber security	85%
Health and social care (adults)	35%
Health and social care (children's)	31%
Transport and highways	23%
Environmental Protection	23%
Housing	21%
Schools and education	19%
Business and employment	19%
Advice and benefits	19%
Planning and building control	15%
Democratic services	13%
Licences, permits and permissions	10%
Leisure and culture	8%
Community Safety	8%

Base: Respondents who were using or exploring AI (63). Please note: Respondents were able to select more than one answer.

A quarter (24 per cent) of respondents who were using or exploring AI reported that they were developing AI tools in-house. These included chatbots, machine learning tools and data analysis tools. These findings are shown in Table 8 and all the details provided in relation to the development of tools can be found in Table A4 in Annex A.

Table 8: Is your council developing AI tools in-house?

	Per cent
Yes	24%
No	71%
Don't know	5%

Base: Respondents who were using or exploring AI (63).

Among all respondent councils, 35 per cent reported that AI tools were permitted on corporate devices while 19 per cent indicated that they were permitted on corporate devices depending on service need and 5 per cent of respondents reported that AI tools were banned corporate devices. The one respondent (1 per cent) who answered ‘other' to this question reported that:

> “Use via browsers is permitted. Any AI tool that requires installation would have to be reviewed as part of standard ICT processes for new software.”

A further 38 per cent of respondents indicated that their council did not have an AI usage policy for corporate devices while 1 per cent did not know. These findings are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Which of the following most closely reflects your council's AI usage policy for corporate devices?

	Per cent
AI tools are permitted on corporate devices	35%
AI tools are permitted on corporate devices depending on service need	19%
AI tools are banned on corporate devices	5%
Council does not have an AI usage policy for corporate devices	38%
Other	1%
Don't know	1%

Base: all respondents (74).

Respondents who had not reported that AI tools were banned on corporate devices were asked to select which AI tools were blocked or permitted from a list provided. They were also asked to indicate whether there were any conditions applied to their use. Half (50 per cent) of respondents reported that Text generation tools (like large language models such as Chat GPT) were permitted with conditions and a further 27 per cent indicated they were permitted without conditions. Open source data analysis tools – such as Python, PyTorch and R – followed, with 47 per cent indicating they were permitted with conditions and 16 per cent reporting they were permitted without conditions.

All of the other tools listed - image generative tools (such as StyleGAN), audio generation tools (such as WaveNet), video generation tools (such as Synthesia) and open source coding generation tools (such as Vertex AI) had similar levels of usage with between 30 and 36 per cent of respondent councils permitting them with conditions and between 14 and 19 per cent permitting them without conditions. A breakdown of these findings is shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Which of the following AI tools are blocked and which are permitted?

	Blocked	Permitted with conditions	Permitted without conditions	Don't know
Text generation tools (like large language models such as Chat GPT)	13%	50%	27%	10%
Open source data analysis tools – such as Python, PyTorch and R.	10%	47%	16%	27%
Image generative tools (such as StyleGAN)	14%	36%	19%	31%
Audio generation tools (such as WaveNet)	13%	34%	16%	37%
Video generation tools (such as Synthesia)	13%	33%	17%	37%
Open source coding generation tools (such as Vertex AI)	16%	30%	14%	40%

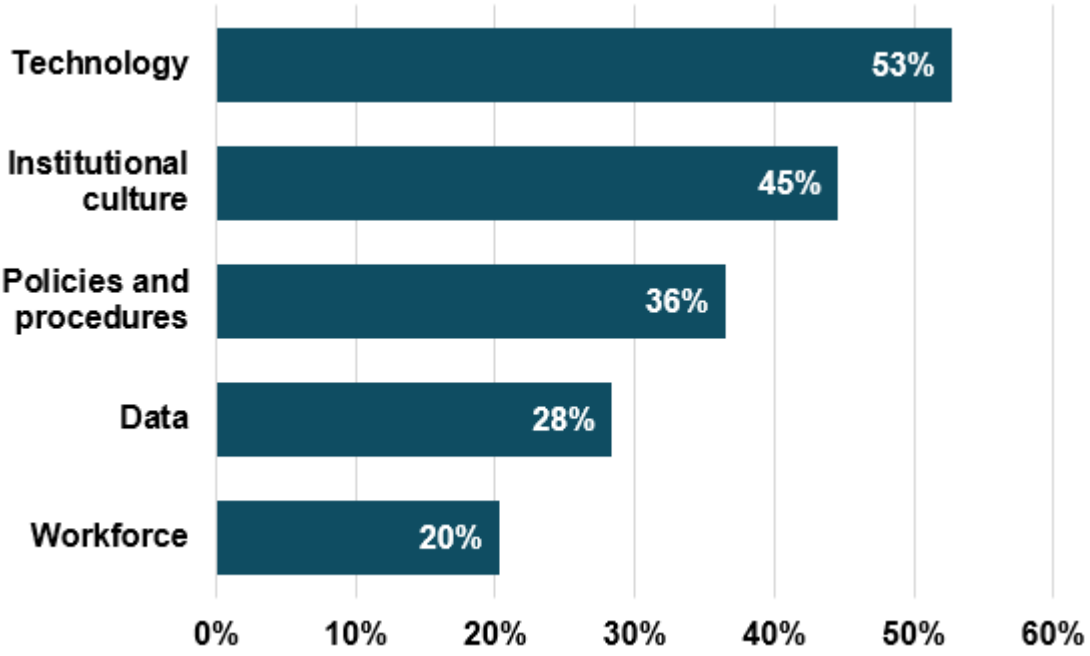
Base: Respondents who had not reported that AI tools were banned on corporate devices and answered the question (70).

AI Readiness

All respondents were asked to indicate how ready, if at all, their council was to adopt or to continue to adopt AI in terms of their council's culture, workforce, technology, data, and policies and procedures to support the safe and secure deployment of AI. Technology (e.g., infrastructure, software, cloud) was the area most respondents felt ready with just over half (53 per cent) indicating they were very or fairly ready, 45 per cent felt their institutional culture (e.g. leadership, receptivity to change) was very or

fairly ready while 36 per cent identified policies and procedures (e.g. governance frameworks and risk management) as an area where they were very or fairly ready. Data (e.g., availability quality, storage) and workforce (e.g., skills, knowledge, expertise) were the areas where the fewest number of respondents felt very or fairly ready with 28 and 20 per cent selecting these options. These findings are illustrated in Figure 3 and a full breakdown is shown in Table 11.

Figure 3: Proportion of respondents who were very or fairly ready to adopt or to continue to adopt AI by area



Base: all respondents (74).

Table 11: Overall, how ready, if at all, is your council for adopting or continuing to adopt AI?

	Very or fairly ready	Not very or not at all ready	Not considering AI
Technology (e.g., infrastructure, software, cloud)	53%	45%	3%
Institutional culture (e.g. leadership, receptivity to change)	45%	49%	7%
Policies and procedures (e.g. governance frameworks and risk management)	36%	58%	5%
Data (e.g., availability quality, storage)	28%	68%	4%
Workforce (e.g., skills, knowledge, expertise)	20%	72%	5%

Base: all respondents (74). Please note: A further 3 per cent answered 'Don't know' in relation to Workforce (e.g., skills, knowledge, expertise).

When asked to explain more about their state of readiness, respondents reported a mixed picture with pockets of activity in relation to most of the five areas they were asked about. Respondents who mostly answered very or fairly ready, for the listed categories, reported that they had policies and procedures in place as well as a supportive institutional culture towards the adoption of AI, as shown in these answers:

> "We've started the AI journey. Have an AI Board in place from governance perspective but as we're all learning something new and still comprehending full impact"

> “We have invested in our infrastructure to have good foundations for further development of AI technology however work will need to be completed on the digital workplace to ensure that AI is used effectively across the organisation.”

Answers provided by respondents who mostly said they were not very or not at all ready indicated that, although they were at different stages of their AI journey, they were all moving towards being ready, which can be seen in these answers:

> “We are very early in exploring what AI means to us. We are finalising our policies on responsible and ethical use of AI.”

> “Discussed at senior level, messages out to staff, AI policy in place, pilots underway with some simpler tools.”

All of the answers provided can be found in Table A5 in Annex A.

AI Investment and Spending

The areas where respondents had most commonly increased their investment in AI over the last five years were applications (39 per cent), data foundations (32 per cent) and frameworks, guidance and governance (31 per cent). In all of the areas asked about in the survey, less than 10 per cent of respondents had seen a decrease in investment, while investment remained unchanged among over half of respondents for training (59 per cent), capabilities (staff or contractor) and frameworks, guidance and governance (58 per cent each). Table 12 shows a full breakdown of these findings.

Table 12: Thinking about your council's investment in AI, how has spending changed in the last five years?

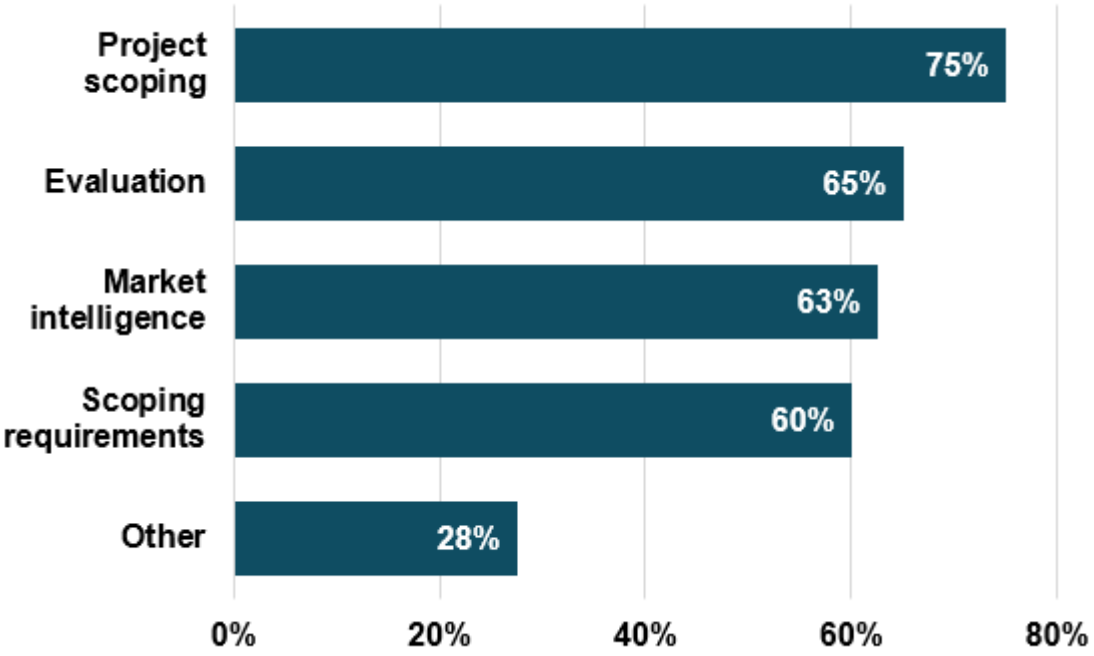
	Increased	Decreased	Unchanged	Don't know
Infrastructure	30%	8%	51%	11%
Applications	39%	7%	46%	8%
Capabilities (staff or contractor)	30%	4%	58%	8%
Training	24%	8%	59%	8%
Data foundations	32%	5%	50%	12%
Frameworks, guidance and governance	31%	3%	58%	8%

Base: all respondents (74).

Almost two-thirds (63 per cent) of respondents using or exploring AI were paying external suppliers for the provision of AI tools or technologies, or were in the process of procuring this. These respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they saw issues, from a list provided, as barriers or as potential barriers when it came to the procurement of AI tools or technologies.

Three-quarters (75 per cent) identified 'project scoping: understanding where AI can add value as representing a barrier' to a great or moderate extent, this was followed by 'evaluation: understanding how to evaluate solutions' which was selected by 65 per cent and 'market intelligence: understanding who is a trusted partner' chosen by 63 per cent while 60 per cent opted for 'scoping requirements: understanding how AI is embedded in a product'. These findings are illustrated in Figure 4 and there is a full breakdown shown in Table 14. None of the respondents who selected the 'other' option provided any further information.

Figure 4: Issues seen as barriers or potential barriers, to a great or moderate extent, when it comes to the procurement of AI tools or technologies



Base: Respondents who were paying external suppliers for the provision of AI tools or technologies, or in the process of procuring this (40).

Table 13: To what extent, if at all, do you see the following issues as barriers or potential barriers when it comes to the procurement of AI tools or technologies?

	To a great or moderate extent	To a small extent or not at all	Don't know
Project scoping: Understanding where AI can add value.	75% (30)	14% (10)	0% (0)
Evaluation: Understanding how to evaluate solutions.	65% (26)	18% (13)	3% (1)
Market intelligence: Understanding who is a trusted partner.	63% (25)	19% (14)	3% (1)
Scoping requirements: Understanding how AI is embedded in a product.	60% (24)	22% (16)	0% (0)
Other	28% (11)	9% (7)	55% (22)

Base: Respondents who were paying external suppliers for the provision of AI tools or technologies, or in the process of procuring this (40).

There was a broadly even spread among respondents around the most commonly used types of AI supplier policy with 27 per cent reporting that suppliers were not required to declare if they were using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents, and 26 per cent stating that suppliers were not required to declare if they were using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents, but it was informally discussed. A further 18 per cent indicated that their suppliers were required to declare if they were using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents while 30 per cent of survey respondents did not know the requirements of their policy, as can be seen in Table 14.

Table 14: Which of the following most closely reflects your council's AI supplier policy?

	Per cent
Suppliers are not required to declare if they are using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents.	27%
Suppliers are not required to declare if they are using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents, but it is informally discussed.	26%
Suppliers are required to declare if they are using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents.	18%
Don't know	30%

Base: all respondents (74).

Respondents who indicated that they required suppliers to declare if they were using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents, and those who said they informally discussed this with their suppliers, were asked to provide an estimate of the proportion that were using it. No respondents thought it was being used by all/almost all of their suppliers, 3 per cent thought it was being used by most of their suppliers and 9 per cent estimated that some of their suppliers were using it. Just under half (44 per cent) felt it was used by a few of their suppliers while 19 per cent thought none of their suppliers used AI in the delivery of their services and a further 25 per cent did not know. These findings are shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Thinking about all of your council's current contracts, approximately what proportion would you say are using AI to deliver goods/services to the council or residents?

	Number	Per cent
All/almost all	0	0%
Most	1	3%
Some	3	9%
A few	14	44%
None	6	19%
Don’t know	8	25%

Base: Respondents who indicated that they required suppliers to declare if they were using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents (32).

AI Benefits and Opportunities

Respondents who were using or exploring AI were asked to indicate where they had realised benefits from using AI as well as where benefits had been negligible, using a list of provided. Over a third of respondents (35 per cent) selected staff productivity as an area where they had realised benefits, followed by service efficiencies (32 per cent) and cost savings (22 per cent). The areas most commonly identified as yielding negligible benefits were decision-making and resident engagement (both 25 per cent), as well as product and/or service development and recruitment (both 24 per cent). A full breakdown of these findings is shown in Table 16.

When asked whether they had realised any other significant benefits from using AI most stated that it was too early to say but a small number identified areas such as delivery of greater intelligence leading to the generation of new insights, and positive reputational benefit (communities, organisation, supplier/partners). All of the answers provided are shown in Table A6 in Annex A.

Table 16: Please tell us where, if at all, your council has realised benefits from using AI and where benefits have been negligible

	Realised benefits	Negligible benefits	Don't know
Staff productivity	35%	19%	46%
Service efficiencies	32%	22%	46%
Cost savings	22%	22%	56%
Service user outcomes	19%	21%	60%
Managing demand/backlogs	17%	22%	60%
Resident engagement	14%	25%	60%
Decision-making	11%	25%	63%
Product and/or service development	10%	24%	67%
Recruitment	5%	24%	71%
Income generation	0%	22%	78%

Base: Respondents who were using or exploring AI (63).

When asked to select the three functions, from a list provided, where they saw the greatest AI opportunities for their council, most (85 per cent) identified Corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance, cyber security. This was followed by Health and Social Care (Adults) (43 per cent) along with Advice and Benefits (36 per cent). The areas where fewest respondents saw the greatest AI opportunities were Environmental Protection, which was chosen by just 1 per cent of respondents, and Community Safety and Schools and Education, both selected by 3 per cent. A further 4 per cent answered that they saw no potential opportunities for their council. A breakdown of these findings is shown in Table 17 and details of how respondents thought AI could be used to support functions they selected are listed in Table A7 in Annex A.

Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide further information on where they saw the greatest AI opportunities for their council more generally. Of those who answered, a number provided details on how they thought that the listed areas would benefit from AI, as shown in these examples:

> “Area of greatest spend is social care and business value realisation will be in this area and for better service and resident engagement. Housing is a core area for developing AI capabilities, especially complaints.”

> “We see all areas benefitting from AI, mainly through freeing up staff time to do the things that really need humans, plus allowing better decisions at all levels to help us move from respond to anticipate.”

A smaller number shared their strategy for AI adoption, such as this respondent:

> “There will be lots of possible opportunities for us to utilise this technology across all areas of the council. We will need to focus on the areas of greatest value first to help tackle budget pressures and limited resources / recruitment and retention challenges.”

All of the answers provided are shown in Table A8 in Annex A.

Table 17: The functions where respondents saw the greatest AI opportunities

	Per cent
Corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance, cyber security	85%
Health and social care (adults)	43%
Advice and benefits	36%
Health and social care (children's)	31%
Planning and building control	19%
Housing	11%
Licences, permits and permissions	11%
Transport and highways	11%
Democratic services	10%
Business and employment	6%
Leisure and culture	4%
Community Safety	3%
Schools and education	3%
Environmental Protection	1%
No potential opportunities	4%

Base: all respondents who answered this question (72). Please note: Respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Respondents were asked to select, what they saw as the three biggest potential benefits to their council of adopting or further adopting AI, from a list provided. Just under two-thirds (64 per cent) chose staff productivity, 62 per cent selected service efficiencies and just under half (49 per cent) picked cost savings. The options for the biggest potential benefits which were selected by the fewest number of respondents were decision-making (16 per cent), product and/or service development (8 per cent)

and recruitment (3 per cent). These findings are shown in Table 18 and the answers specified by those who selected 'other' are listed in Table A9 in Annex A.

Table 18: What, if anything, do you see as the biggest potential benefits to your council of adopting or further adopting AI?

	Per cent
Staff productivity	64%
Service efficiencies	62%
Cost savings	49%
Managing demand/backlogs	38%
Service user outcomes	30%
Resident engagement	18%
Decision-making	16%
Product and/or service development	8%
Recruitment	3%
Other	4%
No potential benefits	0%

Base: all respondents (74). Please note: Respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Almost all respondents indicated that they would find examples of use cases (99 per cent) and testbeds (93 per cent) helpful in understanding the potential benefits and opportunities of AI in a local government context. Just 5 per cent and 1 per cent, respectively, said these would be helpful to a small extent while no respondents said that they would not be helpful at all. These findings can be seen in Table 19.

Table 19: To what extent, if at all, would testbeds and examples of use cases be helpful in understanding the potential benefits and opportunities of AI in a local government context?

	To a great or moderate extent	To a small extent	Not at all	Don't know
Use cases	99%	1%	0%	0%
Testbeds	93%	5%	0%	1%

Base: all respondents (74).

AI Barriers and Risks

When asked to identify what they saw as the five biggest barriers to their council in deploying AI, almost two thirds (64 per cent) of respondents selected lack of funding. This was followed by lack of staff capabilities (53 per cent), lack of staff capacity (50 per cent), lack of clear use cases (41 per cent) and lack of sufficient governance (including AI policy) (41 per cent). The five barriers selected by the fewest number of respondents were lack of testbeds and sandbox initiatives (15 per cent), lack of supplier transparency (12 per cent), lack of digital infrastructure (11 per cent), lack of suitable suppliers (5 per cent) and lack of political leadership buy in (5 per cent). A full breakdown of these findings is shown in Table 20.

Table 20: In your view, what are the biggest barriers to your council in deploying AI?

	Per cent
Lack of funding	64%
Lack of staff capabilities	53%
Lack of staff capacity	50%
Lack of clear use cases	41%
Lack of sufficient governance (including AI policy)	41%
Lack of clear standards/regulation	38%
Lack of data infrastructure	38%
Concerns regarding resident trust	20%
Tracking its impacts	20%
Fears of cyber threats	20%
Lack of senior leadership buy in	16%
Lack of testbeds and sandbox initiatives	15%
Lack of supplier transparency	12%
Lack of digital infrastructure	11%
Lack of suitable suppliers	5%
Lack of political leadership buy in	5%
Don’t know	0%

Base: all respondents who answered this question (72). Please note: Respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they considered issues in a list provided to be an AI risk, and which of these risks they were actively seeking to

mitigate. Cyber security was identified as a great or moderate risk by 81 per cent of respondents, with 28 per cent seeking to mitigate this risk. Organisational reputation and resident trust was identified by 75 per cent of respondents, with 23 per cent seeking to mitigate it, while deep fakes disinformation was seen as posing a great or moderate risk by 69 per cent of respondents, with 12 per cent seeking to mitigate this risk. The issues seen as representing great or moderate risks by the fewest number of respondents were national security (41 per cent), with 8 per cent seeking to mitigate it, workforce displacement (35 per cent), with 11 per cent mitigating this risk and physical safety (11 per cent), with 4 per cent seeking to mitigate it. A full breakdown of these findings can be seen in Table 21.

Answers provided by respondents who specified how they were seeking to mitigate the risks included following government guidance, upskilling staff and introducing clear policies and guidelines for the safe and ethical use of AI tools. All of the answers provided are shown in Table A10 in Annex A.

Table 21: To what extent, if at all, do you consider each of the following to be an AI risk? Which AI risks, if any, are you actively seeking to mitigate?

	To a great or moderate extent	To a small extent or not at all	Seeking to mitigate
Cyber security	81%	12%	28%
Organisational reputation and resident trust	72%	15%	23%
Deep fakes disinformation	69%	14%	12%
Personal/individual privacy	66%	23%	26%
Regulatory compliance	65%	30%	23%
Lack of IT capabilities	65%	30%	22%
Equity and fairness	59%	27%	24%
Transparency of suppliers	57%	28%	12%
Explainability of how AI technologies work	55%	38%	22%
Low level of broader workforce skills	54%	30%	16%
Contestability and redress from residents	51%	31%	15%
Electoral stability: security and integrity	47%	32%	8%
Contestability and redress from suppliers	41%	35%	5%
National security	41%	42%	8%
Workforce displacement	35%	47%	11%
Physical safety	11%	69%	4%
Other	4%	4%	7%

Base: All respondents (74).

Two thirds (65 per cent) of respondents used existing policies (including information governance, data protection etc.) to manage AI risks, while just under a third (31 per cent) were using existing boards, staff training and skills development (information governance, legal teams etc.) or a Senior Responsible Owner. The policies and processes being used by the fewest number of respondents were resident engagement (9 per cent), councillor training and skills development (8 per cent) and quality assurance processes (7 per cent). A further 22 per cent said they were not using any of the listed policies and processes to manage AI risks. Table 22 shows these findings are shown in full.

The respondents who reported that they used existing board were asked to specify which boards they used, their answers included the Council's Compliance Assurance and Risk Board, IT Steering Group, Cyber Security Board and AI Steering Group. All of the answers provided are listed in Table A11 in Annex A. Respondents who stated they were using other policies and processes specified these as AI guidance for staff and ethical consequence scanning.

Although this question did not ask respondents to elaborate on how they were using policies and processes to manage AI risks, comments provided elsewhere in the survey provided some insights. The following answers were provided in relation to the question which asked ‘Overall, how ready, if at all, is your council for adopting or continuing to adopt AI?’:

> “We have existing governance and risk management frameworks which consider individual applications of AI through DPIAs for example.”

> “…the direction of travel towards AI is clear and the council are open to the potential and have started putting the frameworks and governance in place.”

> “Developed a data ethics policy that contains guidance on use of AI tools and provides a governance structure for eventual use.”

Table 22: Which policies and processes, if any, do you have to manage AI risks?

	Per cent
Existing policies (including information governance, data protection etc.)	65%
Existing boards	31%
A Senior Responsible Owner	31%
Staff training and skills development (information governance, legal teams etc.)	31%
A specific AI policy	28%
Additional AI powered cyber security monitoring	19%
A specific AI ethics board	9%
A data ethics board	9%
Resident engagement	9%
Councillor training and skills development	8%
Quality Assurance processes	7%
Other	4%
None of the above	22%
Don't know	1%

Base: all respondents (74). Please note: Respondents were able to select more than one answer.

AI Support

The survey asked respondents to indicate which possible AI support they would find helpful, from a list provided. Most (92 per cent) selected a set of use cases specific to local government, followed by a 'useability framework' (85 per cent) and training support offer for officers and members (74 per cent). Table 23 contains a breakdown of these findings.

Table 23: Thinking about possible AI support, which of the following, if any, would you or your council find helpful?

Type of support	Per cent
A set of use cases specific to local government	92%
A 'useability framework' focused on identifying AI risks and opportunities and opportunities and supporting the identification of appropriate governance approaches.	85%
Training support offer for officers and members	74%
A set of explanatory guides on different types and applications	73%
A local government AI conference	62%
A maturity self-assessment tool	53%
A community of practice on the development of AI tools in-house	53%

Base: all respondents (74). Please note: Respondents were able to select more than one answer.

When asked to indicate other support that might be useful when considering the use of AI in their organisation, respondents most commonly identified guidance, access to funding and knowledge sharing. All of the answers provided are shown in Table A12 in Annex A.

At the end of the survey respondents were given a final opportunity to add comments on the use of AI in their council or in local government more generally, if they wished. A small number did so, with most providing information about their local situation and a few noting the need for guidance in this field. All the comments received are shown in Table A13 in Annex A.

Annex A

Answers provided to open text questions

Table A1: In what year did your council first deploy AI? Other answers provided.

Not yet deployed (x 5)
N/A (x 2)
Technically ML models to develop predictive models 2015 but AI in applications only just this year

Table A2: Please provide more detail on any tool/s utilised

Generative AI
Generative AI tools/apps (x 21)
Contact centre Chatbot using <*Generative AI tool*> has been deployed
Deployed <*Generative AI tool*> for pilot number of users (Under 10)
Exploration
<*Generative AI tool*> - a project is underway to provide a chatbot capability on <*Council name*>'s public website
<*Generative AI tool*> for website search engine, <*Generative AI tool*> for prototype code generation
<*Generative AI tool*> rolled out to all staff (5000) last summer with clear message not to use likes of <*Generative AI platform*> and risk data loss
Speech 2 text. <*Generative AI tool*> deployed within council. Generative AI used in tasks ranging from classification to creating responses.
Use of <*Generative AI tool*> to work more efficiently

Used a tool developed in partnership with <*organisation name*> to respond to complaints within <*product name*> CRM.
We are an early adopter of <*Generative AI tool*> and seen as a leader in using tools to support staff. We are an early adopter of <*Generative AI tool*> which we are intending to use for FOI requests and staff HR enquiries.
We are only using <*Generative AI tool*> as this can be locked down at the enterprise level
We have been using the following: - digital chat assistant to support our contact centre - RPA to migrate data out of a legacy application
We have begun to experiment with <*Generative AI tool*> and other generative AI tools, and have put in place guidance on their use. We also understand tools like <*product name*> are likely to deploy AI-based technology in its back office, e.g. for handling emails through <*product name*>.
We have more recently been using Generative AI predominately in self-created applications (Easy Read, SAR's, Care Act Conversation recording/transcribing) rather than council-wide initiatives currently (though that is being planned out at the moment).
We have used AI to develop voice overs for videos and also as part of our meeting support to aid agendas and to summarise key points. We will be using it in our new CRM and also in our platform development
We use a chatbot with limited AI capabilities and we have begun to explore <*Generative AI tool*>
Perceptive AI
Perceptive AI tools/apps (x 2)
Developed custom image analysis tools using <*AI development tool*>
Face recognition is used on all Council Issued laptops, smart phones use finger print ID - this is also used by manual worker instead of timesheets.

Highways using counting systems from video data; for instance counting people, vans, buses etc as part of monitoring the highway system. Analysis of reading ability
In planning we're using an AI validation tool, in streetscene we're using objective visibility of network conditions (an app in the windscreen of vehicles which identifies and records asset defects)
Invested in cyber tools that use AI and learning to detect and prevent attacks to <*Council name*>'s perimeter
Smart sensors
This was via IOT devices
Threat detection software uses AI
Voice recognition on switchboard
We have been using a product called <*Perceptive AI product*> to consider / predict falls in Adult Social Care and are now looking to use the same technology to tackle loneliness.
We use <*Perceptive AI tool*> (image recognition) in a couple of applications. We use sensors in a security context, monitoring standard behaviour and actioning when unusual behaviour is identified.
Predictive AI
Predictive AI tools/apps (x 4)
Estimate households energy ratings using predictive approaches.
Modelling time series
<*Predictive AI tool*> to review years' worth of specific system data and project forward to inform budget and sufficiency planning
Predicative AI is being developed by our Data, Performance and Insights team predominately in Adult's and Children's service areas. Natural Language Processing and Deep Learning is used in Sentiment Analysis and Translation.
Risk based verification for Benefits first tool employed

Simulation AI
Simulation - although basic
The Department of Business, Energy, Industry, and Strategy (BEIS) oversees the National Digital Twin Programme (NDTP), <*Council name*> was chosen as a testbed for the study.
Scoping/Development work
All three are at pilot stage: we are running small-scale pilots on perceptive AI for fly tipping recognition, predictive AI for assessing potential homelessness, and generative AI to produce internal business documents (among other uses)
At the moment we are looking to deploy <*Generative AI tool*> for <*Product name*>
<*Council name*> has previously explored various forms of AI, most notably its virtual agent <*Generative AI tool*> now discontinued and all current work is on <*Generative AI tool*>
Enforcement teams looking at AI to analyse images to identify offenders e.g. fly tipping, litter etc Work in progress. Lessons learnt AI better in towns than rural areas. In latter nature sees trees, hedges and everything constantly growing which nullifies decent analysis.
In the process of building capacity and use cases around generative AI.
More recent testing with generative AI in recent months.
No tools are used at present however we are investigating what the different tools offer and how these could benefit the council
Part of a feasibility study for use of AI in Children's Social Care with What Works Centre/Turing Institute in 2019. Findings led to predictive AI not being adopted.
Pilot on using AI to data mine across huge data sets and visualise the information for a social worker. AI to support call routing. Exploring translation services.
Tried to build the foundations that are essentials as preparatory for AI. Data being the biggest. Started creating Data Services Platform, we have rolled out 30 <*Generative AI product name*> Licenses and want to point this to data as well as

supporting adoption. We have used <*AI development tool*> and <*AI development tool*> to embed the emphasis of automation in the workplace and tried to create an AI library in Python that can find duplicates for data cleansing. Data is <*product name*>, we also have process orchestration layer in <*product name*> to build logic and for AI to take over at some point.
We are broadly piloting <*Generative AI product name*>, however we are yet to agree governance, ethics and projects
We are [developing] our AI usage policy for standalone (<*Generative AI product name*>, <*Generative AI product name*>, <*Generative AI product name*>), before releasing these for use by officers, this also includes the usage of embedded AI within applications. We are trialling the ones mentioned above to determine if there is one we could deploy and support as a standard tool. We are looking at embedded AI for use this our Customer Experience programme to create one Digital Front door for Contact Centre and Contact Cares, and will be looking at it as part of our Technology Enabled Care Model which we will be doing proof of concept throughout 2024/25. In addition we have already rolled out the <*Generative AI product name*> platform and are actively using it in Social Care for Case Note management, and in Revenues and Benefits, the use of the platform is being further explored in a range of our services, including API replacement.
We are just starting to explore AI tools for our contact centre.
We are investigating the use of <*Generative AI product name*> for our Software Development Team.
We are piloting <*Generative AI product name*> and also working with a third party exploring the potential within Childrens Social Care.
We are still in the investigative stages of AI and have not yet deployed. There have been some early tests of <*Generative AI product name*>, <*Generative AI product name*>, <*Generative AI product name*> but these have not been formally adopted.
We are only beginning to map out what tools would be appropriate for the council to deploy.

We have previously used chatbot AI in our Customer Service area, via our website answering customer enquiries. We are not using this currently
We're currently trialling the use of <*Generative AI product name*> to understand the extent to which it will benefit the organisation to support efficiencies.
Working with external vendors on text analysis / topic modelling
Use cases
1. <*Perceptive AI product*> is a solution used by the Council that provides Security information and event management (SIEM) and security orchestration, automation, and response (SOAR). <*Perceptive AI product*> fuses <*Product name*>, a correlation engine based on scalable machine learning algorithms, to automatically detect multistage attacks (also known as advanced persistent threats or APT) by identifying combinations of anomalous behaviours and suspicious activities that are observed at various stages of the kill chain. On the basis of these discoveries, <*Perceptive AI product*> generates incidents that would otherwise be difficult to catch. These incidents comprise two or more alerts or activities. By design, these incidents are low-volume, high-fidelity, and high-severity. 2. <*AI development tool*> is a low-code development platform which provides tools for us to develop, deploy and manage omnichannel enterprise applications. A powerful combination of AI and machine learning that infuses AI throughout the <*AI development tool*> platform to eliminate friction, long lead times, errors, and technical debt. AI mentors guide developers through the <*AI development tool*> platform, dramatically accelerating and improving application development. It scans, reviews, and validates application portfolios, enabling the delivery of high-quality smart apps up to 100x faster. 3. The Commercial Vehicle and Trailer (CVT) permit scheme for vehicles and trailers that wish to use a Household Recycling Centre for the disposal of household waste. Automatic number-plate recognition (ANPR) is the technology that uses optical character recognition on images to read vehicle registration plates. This technology will be used within our commercial vehicle and trailer permits system developed on our low code platform, <*AI development tool*>, to

identify vehicles and look up number of permits available to use against the vehicle.

4. <*Generative AI product name*> is the solution used by the council to provide the Chatbot service on our public facing website. The chatbot uses an active learning technique to automatically match phrases entered by customers to specific service information held within the chatbot flows. The more phrases that are matched increases the accuracy of the chatbot in providing the correct answer.
5. <*Perceptive AI product*> an intelligent nurse call system from <*organisation name*>, helps staff improve care quality and provide greater privacy for residents, targeting of resources for staff to focus on residents that need their help, while reducing operational costs. A requirement by the NHS for acoustic monitoring in care homes. A sensor monitors sounds in a room at night. When any sound profile exceeds its individually set threshold, or unusual behaviour for the resident, then an alert is sent to a central station or forwarded to a mobile device to care workers to notify them that they need to check on the resident and ensure their health and wellbeing needs are being met. This is part of a 12-month NHS pilot.
6. <*Predictive AI product*> Predict and detect early deterioration of patients to avoid admissions, and identify and monitor patients for earlier discharge, virtual wards and hospital at home services, using our real-time remote monitoring platform.
7. AI is used in four 3 types of technology:
8. Vitals for people with health conditions where it is useful to see constantly monitored vital signs, such as COPD.
9. The <*Product name*> watch shows sedentary behaviours and promotes activity. Perfect for people who are starting to worry about falling at home. linked up with Community OT and neighbourhood teams.
10. <*Product name*> assists with the delivery of right medication, at the right time to avoid over or inappropriate self-medication.
11. It is intended these products will also be used to create virtual wards in conjunction with the NHS trial scheme. This is part of a 12-month NHS pilot

12. <*Perceptive AI product*> is <*organisation name*>'s flagship healthcare platform that integrates smart IoT sensors and Bluetooth medical devices to support elderly and vulnerable people in their own homes. Behavioural insights are picked up by the small, discrete sensors that are located around the home collecting activity data (i.e. on a kettle, in a fridge). Their data is sent back to the <*organisation name*> secure servers. This information is shared with family, caregivers, professionals and call centres to alert changes in daily routine in real time. This promotes early intervention, which in turn leads to higher standards of proactive care and cost savings.
13. <*Perceptive AI product*> is a non-wearable fall detector that learns the users behaviour and gait. It's machine learning identifies insights about their health and identifies risk of the user falling. This is perfect for social care referrals. The integrated machine learning platform captures, reconstructs and shares incidents and living activities to provide 24/7 reassurance. Built on thermal sensing data and integrating 3rd party health and activity data sources, the system monitors remotely behaviours.
14. <*Perceptive AI product*> is a non-wearable device, used during physiotherapy sessions for people with neurological disorders (i.e. Parkinson's Disease) that are at high risk of falls. <*Organisation name*> software is the world's first, patented augmented reality (AR) solution for cueing therapy and gamified exercise to improve gait, balance and reduce fall risk for people living with neurological disorders.

Aside from AI used in cyber our Cyber Security defences predominant use case currently being trialled is Generative AI through <*Generative AI product*> across the Office suite and <*Generative AI product*> for internal and external chatbots

At a high level we are focusing on AI use cases in three main areas. Firstly improving productivity within admin/business support roles by using <*Generative AI product*>. Secondly automating processes within Social Care utilising <*Generative AI product*>, <*Generative AI product*>, <*Product name*>, <*Product name*> and 3rd party connectors into line of business applications from <*organisation name*>, <*organisation name*> and <*organisation name*>. Finally creating data insights from Health and Social Care data to identify future risks -

falls, hospitalisation, family support again using the same <*organisation name*> products as the second and associated AI products e.g. <*Predictive AI product* >
<*Product name*> AI models in <*Generative AI product* > <*Generative AI product*> for document summary and creation capability <*Generative AI product*> and <*Generative AI product*> for social media post ideas

Table A3: Details on how AI has been used to support functions

Corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance, cyber security
Generative AI tools/apps (x 12)
Meeting notes (x 12)
Automation of tasks (x 8)
Creation of job descriptions (x 3)
Document summaries (x 3)
Cyber (x 2)
Exploration of potential benefits (x 2)
Compile activity around HR cases; compile case evidence; analysis to determine risk of retirement/turnover
Councillors writing speeches
Deflection
HR Chatbot: Handle common questions on employment enquiries, reducing demand on the HR helpdesk
Looking at RPA for in a range of things including absence management, expenses input. Further as a front door for Payroll, Pensions and HR queries from our employees.
Piloted generating presentations from documents
Policy Creation

Production of standard business cases
Writing reports, creating images.
Use of <*Generative AI product*> in research. We use an AI based Cyber Analysis and protection system
We are exploring the options within chatbots provided by our communications provider and cyber security tools.
Health and social care (adults)
Generative AI tools/apps (x 4)
Fall prediction (x 2)
Analysis
As part of our Care Planning linked to sensor data gathered over the IoT for early intervention and prevention, this will be part of our TECM programme.
Blue badge chatbot
Creating data insights from Health and Social Care data to identify future risks - falls, hospitalisation, family support
Document Translation, summarising notes
Exploratory at this stage
Notetaking and actions (Generative AI). Easy Read
Online Financial Assessment Chatbot: Support ASC service users with online financial assessments, answering common questions.
Pilot for running meetings
Predictive models - i.e. risk of escalating care needs, AT, forecasting,
SARIMA algorithm to inform budget and sufficiency planning and RPA to pull data out of a legacy application
Speech2text

Summarise accommodation panel meetings; commissioning team tender marking activities; project management; Day Opportunities Service Managers care planning; capturing internal customer requirements in meetings
Use of sensors in care
Health and social care (children's)
Generative AI tools/apps (x 2)
Analysis
data mining pilot
Document Translation, summarising notes
Exploratory at this stage
Notetaking and actions (Generative AI). Exploring EHCP's, Children at Risk
Pilot for running meetings
PoC for transcribing of meetings
Predictive models, risk of children entering care, targeted endings, forecasting demand, cost of living
Production of caseworker notes
Summary care record, court document collation - using dummy data only at this stage
Unsupervised methods
Writing reports; create promotional pieces e.g. press releases
Transport and highways
Generative AI tools/apps (x 2)
Pothole detection (x 2)
Asset management
Exploratory at this stage

Image recognition
Traffic awareness
Starting to look at traffic insight using IoT
Environmental Protection
Generative AI tools/apps (x 2)
Air quality
Exploratory at this stage
Flytipping cameras, will switch on and record if movement
Flytipping identification from drone shots
Proof of Concept - using image and text analysis to review graffiti and triage for removal based on content
Sensors, Data - Air Quality
Summarise reports; create presentations; meeting summaries; find information; quickly get up to date using disparate information
Unsupervised methods
Use of graph data to plot Covid outbreaks
Housing
Generative AI tools/apps (x 2)
Analysis of Rent and Repairs
Damp sensors
Deflection and Automation
Exploratory at this stage
HMO Fraud Analysis
PoC to respond to housing complaints.
Predictive homelessness

Schools and education
Generative AI tools/apps (x 4)
SEND demand prediction (x 2)
Data AI libraries and matching across all sets in <*Council name*> for intention to build preventative models.
Exploratory at this stage
Free School Meals Automation Processing
Reports
School Admission Chatbot: Handle FAQs on school admissions, reducing demand on the contact centre.
Speech2text
Business and employment
Generative AI tools/apps (x 5)
Create training slides; compile documents in order for SAR and FOI requests;
Exploratory at this stage
Sentiment Analysis - Complaints, Service Needs from Communities
Unsupervised methods, generative AI (llm)
Advice and benefits
Generative AI tools/apps (x 1)
Chatbot in contact centre (x 3)
A pilot in the Registrations service using AI to extract information from handwritten registration certificates.
Call routing into the call centre
Deflection
Exploratory at this stage

Risked based verification
Planning and building control
Generative AI tools/apps (x 3)
Exploratory at this stage
Roof Inspections. Potential HMO's
Used it to analyses survey data
Validation tool
Democratic services
Generative AI tools/apps (x 2)
Exploratory at this stage
Summarising Outputs
Pilot for running meetings
Text Analytics on community consultations
Unsupervised methods on surveys
Licences, permits and permissions
Generative AI tools/apps (x 2)
AI Chatbot - Surfacing Licensing Policy Information / Applying For Licenses etc
Exploratory at this stage
Starting exploration for use cases.
Leisure and culture
Generative AI tools/apps (x 2)
Exploratory at this stage
Looking at AI based drowning monitor to aid lifeguards

Community Safety
Generative AI tools/apps (x 2)
Exploratory at this stage
live labs initiative, DfE funding purchasing AI CCTV feeds and record transport, vehicle count, vehicle speed, erratic driving behaviour, will be deployed.

Table A4: Details of AI tools being developed in-house

As part of digital transformation work we are developing with our technical partner bespoke solutions for council services.
Classification tools, chatbots using open LLM models, unsupervised/supervised models drafting emails, drafting responses, survey analysis.
Data connectors, data lake and virtual assistants.
Exploring the potential of <*Generative AI product*>.
Focus is on using in-house data science and data engineering skills to leverage the technology stack that we have licenced from <*Organisation name*>.
Looking to create a public facing Chat Bot, using <*Generative AI product*> or <*Generative AI product*> or <*Generative AI product*>.
Looking to develop our own <*Generative AI product*> based chatbot.
Machine learning models.
Machine Translation, 'Report It' patterned services, Easy Read (Simply Readable), Predictive Analytics.
My data team is working with machine learning and predictive algorithms and we will continue to deliver that work in-house. We're not intending to develop processes based on LLM models internally though and are planning to engage a third party to support us.
Piloting use of <*Generative AI product*> capabilities for AI based forecasting, but only exploration phase.

Python libraries and process automation in <*Generative AI product*>.
Via <*Generative AI product*>. Early days but used tools to integrate website and other Apps into <*Generative AI product*>. Current work to build own LLMs around key datasets.
We are using existing <*Organisation name*> tools e.g. <*Generative AI product*> to develop generative AI chat bots.
We are working on our <*Organisation name*> capabilities in house and with the support of consultants.

Table A5: Explanations of respondents' state of readiness for adopting or continuing to adopt AI

Respondents who are mostly very or fairly ready
At a senior level AI are on board with the use of AI to improve productivity and create a more sustainable Council. Policies are being created and implemented this week to lockdown non <*Organisation name*> Gen AI tools and around 300 staff are trialling <*Generative AI product*> and others. We are also creating awareness training and comms for our workforce to help with the understanding of the risks associated with "Free" AI services.
Emerging approach being defined and deployed to support the organisation to adopt with care. this is informed by sector wide learning on AI and builds on a existing mature model for transformation and IT management.
I've been working and developing AI tools since about 2018 for the council. However I am the only individual at the council with the skillset. Very little understanding of the impacts, and current a lot of plugging of holes with people procuring systems in social care for instance, having to actively block inappropriate systems across multiple areas of the business is hard work!
Meetings with Cllrs, Corporate management team and some services have been held. Meetings are organised with our <*Organisation name*> solutions provider. Policies are being drafted and same are already updated. Training and rollout

programmes are planned but not completed yet. Paid for <*Generative AI product*> licences are going to be focused based on proof of concept rollouts focused in certain areas.
Organisation has agreed overall approach at Executive level with full support. Approach is a combination of 3 parallel workstreams...1; Increasing AI awareness, knowledge and understanding at all levels, 2; Establishing overall strategy, right sized governance, principles, policies, guidance and risk position, 3; Learning by doing, active case by case approach to real life deployment of AI solutions commensurate to current maturity level and guiding policy and governance requirements. Iterative approaches across all three themes ensure rightsizing and proportionate responses.
Our ICT team are actively exploring options and involving our CMT. We have a digital strategy we are about to publish that includes our AI approach. We do not yet have a policy to support that strategy.
Still at early stages with a lot of this so not undertaking any discovery on the workforce readiness, but the direction of travel towards AI is clear and the council are open to the potential and have started putting the frameworks and governance in place.
Strong sponsorship for use of data for evidence based decisions from the top and use of predictive analytics to get upstream widespread and understood by many. Process and governance are not in place for mainstream use and no policy or guidance been developed. use of predictive analytics and ML models with in house capability. Now moved to cloud with azure analytics in place but not turned on many features yet.
There is a willingness to investigate how AI could bring efficiencies and savings to the council and some of the ground work in terms of policies and procedures for its eventual use are in place and being monitored as requests are made. Data and technology is constantly evolving but we would be in a position to be able to start making use of AI if there is a supportive business case for its introduction.
There is strong leadership support for the adoption of AI and in some cases we are fairly ready from a technology perspective. There is a wide range of knowledge

and skills in the organisation from people who don't know what AI is, to using it as part of their job. We have existing governance and risk management frameworks which consider individual applications of AI through DPIAs for example.
Usage policy is in the process of being approved, this will be accompanied with an awareness campaign to upskill. Foundational work on the data architecture is needed ahead of being able to maximise the potential of AI.
We are just starting to talk to our existing suppliers about how they can support AI with tools we already use.
We are open and have understood the boundaries of <*Generative AI product*> to contain the data in our remit and not in the public domain. We are getting interest and have started to explore some of the tools. The key is completing the data platform as this should be the engine that ignites the passion, readiness and validity for adopting AI and realising its true benefits.
We have invested in our infrastructure to have good foundations for further development of AI technology however work will need to be completed on the digital workplace to ensure that AI is used effectively across the organisation.
We have just developed an AI usage strategy and are looking at tools to capture meeting notes and actions also using sensors for damp, smart tech such as boilers but is just in pilot, proof of concept stage.
We have limited use of AI currently so are ready with what we are already using or have tried in the past, more work is needed if we want to explore further use of AI in the future.
We have started engaging with our Management Board on a Council-wide programme of AI deployment to improve and streamline customer-facing and internal processes. The organisation can see the benefits of this new technology and implementation plans are progressing but we are not in the right place yet around the policies and governance needed to support and underpin this change.
We've started the AI journey. Have an AI Board in place from governance perspective but as we're all learning something new and still comprehending full impact no more than Fairly ready. Massive jump to very ready. Technology wise we're there (Cloud etc) but mark reflects only 300 <*Generative AI product*> users

and scaling up to more will be big challenge. Data wise we have too much of it and AI lifted lid on need to enforce retention, classification, access rules. We have started 90 day retention recordings and <*Generative AI product*> transcripts but lot of work to do. Data issue all the more complex by being a new unitary so inherited data baggage from legacy councils. That one remains, as ever, a journey.
Respondents who are mostly not very or not at all ready
AI is new to us and we aren't mature in use of any of the tools. Currently drafting some guidance and reviewing and looking at Technology foundations and Data.
AI solutions are still seen as an exploratory "gamble" versus other traditional methods in the bid for limited budgets.
Although there is broadly an appetite and recognition that there is a compelling reason for us to adopt AI - we have yet to implement policies and guidance on its use. Nor do we have a strategy for how we might incorporate in future design and delivery of our services.
Currently the Council has no AI usage policy. A couple of existing cloud IT systems have AI built in and used, but there has not yet been a planned approach to its usage.
Developed a data ethics policy that contains guidance on use of AI tools and provides a governance structure for eventual use, but generally low awareness of AI beyond the theory and roll out of <*Generative AI product*>. Not currently part of any digital transformation activity or roadmaps due to low levels of digital maturity in the organisation.
Discussed at senior level, messages out to staff, AI policy in place, pilots underway with some simpler tools.
Exploration.
Generative AI working group has been setup and meets bi-weekly, the agenda includes Governance, use case review and approval, prototyping, broad business representation within the working group. Skills building through envisioning sessions with vendors and strategic partners.

Fairly Ready means that we have a good grasp of what is required and the relevant resources are in place, but that some additional work is required to maintain a level that is fit-for purpose. Not very ready means reflects that lack of resources (people, funding) rather than culture and mindset. Also reflects the fact that organisation-wide, there are other priorities that reduced the time that can be spent on this area. Not ready at all reflects that fact that whilst we have started to address this area, limited resources including projected access to resources over the next 6 months is likely to slow down the ability to move quickly.
I think generally, use of AI (especially generative) and attendant risks is not well understood.
It is early stages of assessment.
just looking at AI for our website (bot) and voice automation so far, for 2025+.
Led by IT&D officers have developed the AI Strategic Framework that defines the council's approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) aligned with priorities of the council. An excitement in the leadership team was created with this approach which starts with a 'learning and trialling' phase to understand and manage the risks and challenges before the council moves to the 'deliver and scale' phase in an iterative approach. As part of the trialling phase, the council has initiated several initiatives to understand more on benefits vs risks but overall we are in the early stages of AI adoption.
Lots of interest in the trend of AI but little to no knowledge of how it operates, its application, usage with existing systems and tech. No CRM or data management systems in place to ensure data is suitable for AI and no sandbox in place. However, as its the latest conversational piece and an expectation it will reduce overheads most employees are keen to lead programmes on AI but not suitably equipped or experienced.
Members and Snr Management fully supporting and encouraging use of AI. Wider organisation in the main open to AI and change, however, are mostly not skilled to use it independently (aside from developed solutions with good user interfaces). AI

skills and expertise is predominately within a small, dedicated technology team. Infrastructure, is still mixed, meaning there will need to be ongoing future cloud investment. However, where we are using AI, we're often leading in the space. We have a large programme of data work underway, which will place us in a very good position ahead, there's great ambition, though we're not in the advanced space currently. Our governance is mature, though there will be more to do as our data work advances.
Staff resources and finance are limited.
The authority has taken the approach of maintaining a watching brief, and developing its learning around the potential application of these tools whilst understanding the risks and mitigations needed.
There is a strong interest in the use of AI from some leaders - however this is driven by aggressive marketing by vendors - in particular <*Generative AI product*>, however this is without and understanding of the underlying data, skills and policy implications associated with managing AI solutions.
There is no one state of readiness across a large organisation, however we do have around 10% of the workforce using or exploring the use of <*Generative AI product*>, very active sharing of learning, and a move from basic admin tasks (notes from meetings) through to customer facing work (redrafting responses to complaints) and as an assistive tool for staff with specific needs. We have deliberately gone ahead known our technology, data and policies lag noted practice as we can't spend all our time "fixing the plumbing".
We are at the initial stages with more to consider.
We are at the research and development stage for all AI.
we are only just exploring chat-bots and virtual agents. We are looking at <*Generative AI product*>.
We are refreshing our Information Strategy this year in which we will revise our position on AI use to set out how it will be considered and developed in controlled circumstances to ensure compliance with GDPR.

We are still in the informational stages of our AI project to see where AI can be used to deflect queries made by residents. Currently mapping out business processes to understand customer journey. AI Policy in place and staff awareness and training provided on usage, risks, and benefits.
We are very early in exploring what AI means to us. We are finalising our policies on responsible and ethical use of AI.
We have concerns around data security with regards to the usage of AI tools. Any requests to use AI will be evaluated on the impact of data security and information governance.
We have started to develop some policies and process controls, but yet have not looked use cases or business cases for AI.
We have taken a watching position as others develop the knowledge
We have yet to create an AI policy or usage guidelines. We do not have any AI Governance boards. I do not believe SNR management has or is considering the risks associated with uncontrolled AI proliferation within the organisation. Furthermore AI appears to be seen as an "IT" thing, and not a "Business" tool.
We need to focus on what the organisation might need before then proceeding to investigate real usages for AI.
We understand we need to tag our data, generate policies and bring our organisation on a journey to transform the way we think about and utilise AI.

Table A6: Any other significant benefits realised by respondents from using AI

Benefits identified
A few less tangible things, firstly a sense of excitement the council is in the first wave of GenAI experimenters whereas we would probably usually see ourselves as followers, secondly a democratisation in that tools like <*Generative AI product*> allow anyone to be experiment, thirdly an increase in cross-departmental learning in sharing knowledge.

Greater intelligence has been delivered, and generated new insights, for instance we've generated new data sets. For instance estimation of EPC data, or processing text data and categorising and quantifying that data.
Individual efficiencies in day to day work.
It also depends if you include RPA in this category which is sometimes married with AI.
Mainly around Chatbot for contact centre - <*Generative AI product*>.
Positive reputational benefit (communities, organisation, supplier/partners).
So far from trials the benefits realisation is there and can be seen. It can make huge changes and deliver amazing benefits to staff, org, residents but the biggest battle is the culture and finding the correct adoption method. Service redesign and working a different way. Biggest barrier is understanding the as-is and for that BA's need to be key.
We do use RPA which has resulted in improved productivity and allowing staff to concentrate of complex tasks.
Too early to identify benefits
A note to say that as per the questions already answered, we are about to deploy AI across the Council and are looking at multiple scenarios including those already mentioned, so as above we have deployed limited capabilities thus far, but will over the next twelve months. The answers above reflect the use of RPA in Social Care.
As a <*Generative AI product*> we can see benefits across the board BUT we're at the stage of quantifying these into a firm ROI model to justify both the £80k <*Generative AI product*> licence cost and more licences. Challenge is we can see staff are more efficient which frees up their time but that isn't a financial saving (still good as enables to so more and meet increased demand etc). Hard £ focussed on areas like contact centre reducing call times, key exec support staff getting back 90 mins a day etc So benefits are there and across all depts. Next few months will identify ££s.

The council has initiated several initiatives in the trialling phase but these have not delivered significant benefits as we are in the early stages of AI adoption.
This question is slightly unfair - I don’t agree with the don't know option - it should be not yet.
Too early to know at this stage of our project
We are just starting on this journey.
We can see benefits and savings in all those categories, but it’s too early to talk about Realised benefits.
We have a number of projects in the pipeline that will likely deliver benefits but nothing we can quantify today.
We have recently commenced a pilot of AI so not in a position to confirm benefits have been achieved at this point but will be over the next three months.
We haven't realised any benefits yet as we are on the start of our journey.

Table A7: Details on how AI has been used to support specific functions

Corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance, cyber security
Automation of tasks (x 13)
Meeting notes (x 12)
Cyber (x 6)
Document/content creation (x 5)
Information/data searches (x 4)
Chatbots (x 3)
Summarising documents (x 2)
Exploring uses (x 2)
Decision making (x 2)

Increasing effective capacity and new capabilities
Reduction in staff, resulting in savings. Suspect HR ultimately will be a highly reduced function going forward.
Health and social care (adults)
Automation of tasks to increase productivity (x 4)
Case management (x 4)
Technology enabled care (x 3)
Personalisation of care (x 3)
Prediction/prevention (x 2)
Assessments (x 2)
Integration with social care systems (x 2)
Reduce costs heavily and gives capacity to teams struggling to recruit and cuts back waste and better supports the people in need.
Release time for specialist work.
Advice and benefits
Chatbot (x 4)
Customer services (x 3)
Assessing and processing claims (x 4)
As more customer products become available, we may wish to use these
Self-serve
Health and social care (children's)
Automation of tasks to increase productivity (x 4)
Case management (x 3)
Assessments (x 3)
Prediction/prevention (x 2)

Integration with social care systems (x 2)
Better personalisation of services
Reduce costs heavily and gives capacity to teams struggling to recruit and cuts back waste and better supports the people in need.
Release time for specialist work.
Planning and building control
Validating planning applications (x 2)
AI internal tool - giving greater speed, higher quality output Staff doing more productive work
Evaluating plans, auto-advising on compliance issues
Housing
Self-serve
Smart sensors
Licences, permits and permissions
Deflection
Transport and highways
Predictive
Smart street lights, roads etc
Democratic services
Efficiencies in meeting documentation. Research
Leisure and culture
Chatbot to answer event or leisure centre queries.
Schools and education

In the SEND to summarise and query on the cases
Streamline and standardise customer engagement and assessments
Environmental Protection
Deflection

Table A8: Further information provided in relation to how AI has been used to support functions

Opportunities and benefits
Adults is c.50% of our budget and largely unexplored with regard to AI, we are just starting a large programme of work in this space. Similarly, Children's is c.30% of budget; similar position, though requests from Children's is still in small pockets. Organisationally there's an opportunity and this is currently in planning stages.
Area of greatest spend is social care and business value realisation will be in this area and for better service and resident engagement. Housing is a core area for developing AI capabilities, especially complaints.
Clearly, there are identifiable benefits across all of these areas especially as there is a wide pool of AI technologies to choose from.
My response is somewhat disingenuous, given that any saving made in ASC or CSC will realise a greater benefit than in any other service as their spending is so much greater!
Reducing worker time on collecting and recording data, searching and reading through case notes, more accessible and timely insights, flags and alerts to manage and triage cases
Significant opportunities within the field of data analytics and intelligence and customer services
Thinking about themes / work functions rather than business areas, we see opportunities with:

- Administration - Automating processes, freeing up humans for higher value work. - First line contact with the public. - Data insight - Spotting patterns that humans cannot see, whether on business or social care.
We are looking to use AI to deflect queries made to the customer services team on chat, emails, and telephone initially.
We see all areas benefitting from AI, mainly through freeing up staff time to do the thing that really need humans, plus allowing better decisions at all levels to help us move from respond to anticipate
We see the benefits ranging from supporting staff, to helping services make decisions to interacting with the public across all departments and services
Issues and strategies
Our focus is improving on the personalisation to the individuals so that they have overall better personalisation to help improve their circumstances. It's doubtful it will lead to cost reductions in social care in any form, unless operational efficiencies for writing notes etc on cases, or summarisation. HR function, however, is likely to reduce overall, as is general business admin, for staffing anyway.
The council is actively exploring opportunities where AI can have the most significant impact, leveraging the established governance groups.
The organisations digital and data maturity levels currently make benefits difficult to articulate or realise.
There are multiple opportunities to benefit from AI but the conversation needs to extend beyond <*Generative AI product*> and <*Generative AI product*>. Councils also need to understand the management of data and the underpinning technology and infrastructure required to deploy responsibly.

There will be lots of possible opportunities for us to utilise this technology across all areas of the council. We will need to focus on the areas of greatest value first to help tackle budget pressures and limited resources / recruitment and retention challenges.
Other comments
Difficult to expand further as we're building business cases which are yet to be agreed.

Table A9: What, if anything, do you see as the biggest potential benefits to your council of adopting or further adopting AI? Other answers provided.

Allowing skilled professionals such as teachers and social workers to get back to their core responsibilities and values e.g. talking and supporting rather than data management
Service design and processes
Staff wellbeing

Table A10: How are you seeking to mitigate AI risks?

Creation of AI policy and governance boards to control how and when AI tools are procured and deployed.
Development of workforce, internal governance controls and deeper understanding how AI technology operates.
Following government guidance - GOV.UK <*Generative AI product*> is likely to make it easier to access files with incorrect permissions, exposing existing data breaches. Many believe data permissions are not managed well by business admins currently with delegated responsibility, i.e., if someone moves with the authority they are not always updated. This responsibility will be regularly re-

enforced through communication to increase compliance. Also, <*Product name*> sensitivity labelling is being introduced on the authorities data.
In principle these should policy but at the moment we do not have active mitigation in place - however in policy we will make an AI impact assessment a requirement and implement standards such as the governments transparency recording standard
Still reviewing options, would depend on individual circumstance
Too early to say
Upskilling staff in digital and data literacy. Introducing clear policies on the use of AI, openness and transparency with residents on the use of data and AI and ensuring staff follow data protection requirements. We are engaging with residents to understand how they view our use of data and AI. Disproportionality and data quality are considered in every piece of data analysis and we are developing our IT infrastructure to handle big data and AI.
With AI Usage Policy drafted for staff, we are defining guidelines for the safe and ethical use of AI tools aligned with national guidelines and standards. We have also conducted preliminary user research on residents' perception of using AI-based products and captured their views on risks and opportunities. Data ethics workshops have also been run to create principles and guidance for the ethical use of data and AI

Table A11: Existing boards being used to manage AI risks

AI Steering Group
Cyber Security Board
In terms of existing Boards we have an AI steering group which sits under our Assessment Programme Board gateway
IT Steering Group
Our Head of IT chairs our AI Governance Board attended by HR, IG and Directors.

This area is currently reported through the Council's Compliance Assurance and Risk Board
We have an existing Cyber and Info Security group where AI has been discussed

Table A12: Answers provided for any other support that might be useful when considering the use of AI in respondent's organisations

Guidance
Best practice guides and examples of use in LAs
Good practice policy frameworks for AI
Possibly guidance or similar on engaging with residents on how AI is being used based on building trust and working with transparency.
Skill and training for staff. Sharing of use cases and policies. Standard models of how to use AI to assist universal council processes. Such as a taxi license
Support including best practices
When and how to use AI safely. How to vet suppliers offering AI services
Access to funding
A funding pool for collaboration. Each council does not have to repeat what other councils are doing. We will go further if we work more collaboratively.
Funding for AI initiatives
Funding from central government
Funding!
Local Digital funding focused on AI that has a longer time frame to enable results to be and shared well
Knowledge sharing
A list of people in other district councils implementing AI so we have someone to reach out to

A local authority community where feedback on the impact and use of AI as it develops could be shared and feedback on AI provided by suppliers.
Knowledge Sharing: Access best practices and learn from successful AI implementations in other local authorities. High-value use cases can inspire our own AI initiatives.
More information from the LGA
There is a lot of collaboration and sharing already happening within a lot of areas yourselves included it just needs to be joined up
Other comments
A pan public sector arrangement with companies such as <*Organisation name*> to ensure we are all not doing individual agreements, negotiating and buying on different terms and arrangements.
A set of standards for suppliers
Anything that can support and help in the adoption. We have a duty to provide the best care and support to our residents and we should use this opportunity in AI to do just that.
Community Participation: Engage residents through broader community forums or consultations specifically focused on AI-related services. Their insights would be invaluable. Safe Experimentation: Establish approved testbeds or sandboxes for experimenting with AI solutions. These controlled environments can allow us to test and refine AI applications before full deployment.
Data ethics training.
Data readiness exercise
e-learning package - an introduction to AI
I think it's useful to have academic experts as well as other industry experts in safety environments, as to how they deal with the technical challenges they face.
Specialist sessions expanding on deep AI systems for technically trained attendees. Provision group on service design and AI incorporation in OS systems

either embedded or complimentary. Raising the bar rather than everyone seems to be working with AI when they are not, they simply using OS macros.

Table A13: Comments on the use of AI in respondents' council or in local government more generally

Local circumstances
A large volume of priorities and lack of resources means that there is little time to explore and develop AI.
As exciting as AI becomes, we should maintain a delicate balance between its opportunities and the associated risks and ethical considerations. Our data ethics workshops have defined three guiding principles: Transparency, fairness, and accountability. These principles should serve as guidance for local government AI strategies. It is also important to understand AI risks—both technical and legal aspects—and proactively develop risk frameworks and contingency plans. Additionally, prioritising secure, high-quality data management is essential for effective AI solutions.
As with many organisations in our sectors, we are at the beginning of the journey around the disruptive technology of Generative AI, as a local authority we recognise the impact on the corporate entity of <*Council name*> and the impact on our residents. The work so far is to setup the relevant governance framework, educate, and prototype.
Funding is the main issue, there is very little for innovative technology, we are funded and resourced "to keep the lights on" not for service transformation programmes and projects. Pilots have not been successful due to resource issues, trying to undertake pilots as well as doing day job, even if have secured grants to fund them. Funding for technology (licences) not for resources to implement and embed culture change needed to ensure successful adoption.
It has the capacity to change how we do business and drive efficiency but needs careful oversight. We are early in the process and developing policy.

At my council it's massively underfunded staff wise, and we've got suppliers claiming to be able to achieve all sorts with significant price tags, and even advertised the tools before I'm even notified. We've had to investigate and rollback the tool because it's just <*Generative AI tool*> and the tools do not do anything they claim to do that isn't contained within the basic <*Generative AI tool*> models. For a basic <*Generative AI tool*> model, these figures have gone to discussions of £200,000 contracts, for emotional support tools in social care - a completely inappropriate use case.
Very early days
We are beyond the start of our journey with AI and will see real momentum over the next year with deployment of standalone AI tools to assist officers and embedded AI as part of our core services, two key ones mentioned in the answers to questions here being Customer Experience (One Digital Front Door), and Technology Enabled Care. We are committed to using AI as a Council, but will ensure all possible steps are taken to minimise any risks by ensuring proper governance, usage policies, and testing are in place wherever it is used.
We primarily use packaged SaaS solutions from our suppliers. We are therefore in their hands when it comes to adding AI capabilities. The larger suppliers should be encouraged to introduce AI to areas such as Housing Benefit, Council Tax, and Homelessness to speed up assessments and improve efficiency and reliability.
Need for guidance
Due to the complexity and risks of AI a body of experienced professional such as Academics, Private Sector and useful, verifiable bodies such as <*Name*> meeting quarterly to discuss topics with key experts from LAs to inform, comprehend and agree on funded programmes of AI in pan <*region name*> programmes to provide beneficial programmes for the residents and business LAs serve. Currently it appears everyone wants to be involved with AI as its trending without any knowledge of the damage it can do, to organisations and individuals privacy particularly if it's able to access sensitive data abusing the purpose/reason given for gathering/holding the data.

It would be useful to start deeper considerations on job displacement; not only reskilling the current workforce but importantly setting up Local Government for success with future AI-skilled workforce succession.
One of the issues with a community of practice in local government, is there's more people coming forward with bad practice examples then good examples. Critical friends and encouraging appropriate questioning around challenging the assumptions or how people have thought, doesn't appear to be welcomed by some of the councils that have discussed their work. I don't think hearing from suppliers at this stage is useful, we have examples of suppliers that are doing seriously inappropriate things with data because they can make money quickly. It would be really helpful if the LGA framed conversations around how to assess competent suppliers rather than what local authority staff typically want which is "who do you have doing this so we can use them too". I don't think it's helpful having suppliers such as <*Organisation name*> in the room when those discussions go on. A community of practice would be useful as long as it's not "we implemented <*Generative AI tool*> to do this".
We seem to have two approaches the risk adverse and the more relaxed, we need to ensure risk is managed appropriately across the sector. Use of AI internally is a lot less risky than with the public. We should encourage organisations not to block AI but issue proper guidance to staff for both in and out of work
Other comments
I think councils are in a difficult situation - there is huge pressure from suppliers trying to sell AI into organisations, AI is here but there has been little time for councils to get to grip with it and little national guidance
Would be great to be part of any trial, collaborate, be part of or see use cases, repeatable solutions are great to get started and adopt.

Annex B

Questionnaire

Local Government: State of the Sector: AI

Welcome

This survey explores Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English councils. It provides a chance for councils to highlight where they are realising benefits from using AI, and also where they see risks and challenges. The survey asks about:

- AI readiness, including consideration of governance arrangements, policies in place and other approaches to ensure responsible deployment
- AI adoption
- AI supply chain
- AI benefits and opportunities
- AI barriers and risks
- AI support requirements.

All responses will be treated confidentially. Information will be aggregated, and no individual or authority will be identified in any publications without your consent. Identifiable information may be used internally within the LGA (with personal information removed) and will be held and processed in accordance with our privacy statement. We are undertaking this survey to aid the legitimate interests of the LGA in supporting and representing authorities.

Completing the survey

You can navigate through the questions using the buttons at the bottom of each page. Use the ‘previous’ button at the bottom of the page if you wish to amend your response to an earlier question.

If you stop before completing the return, you can come back to this page using the link supplied in the email and you will be able to continue where you left off. To ensure your answers have been saved, click on the ‘next’ button at the bottom of the page that you were working on before exiting.

We are asking for one response per council, however, AI is an issue that cuts across many council functions and services. We understand that you may not know the answers to all questions, so please answer to the best of your knowledge and use the ‘don’t know options’ if necessary. You may also need to consult with colleagues before responding, and a PDF of the questions is provided below to help with this.

If you would like to see an overview of the questions, or to share them with colleagues before completing the survey online, you can access a PDF here:<link>

Please complete or update the details below.

If you are responding on behalf of more than one authority please note this in the 'authority' box below, but please check with us first whether a separate return is needed for each authority.

Name _____

Authority _____

Job title _____

Email address _____

Definition of AI

The Government defines AI as: '*The theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages. Modern AI is usually built using machine learning algorithms. The algorithms find complex patterns in data which can be used to form rules*.' (November 2023, Introducing the AI Safety Institute.)

Examples of AI deployed include: perceptive AI such as such as systems that recognise faces and fingerprints, or try and analyse images, audio or video; predictive AI, such as systems that try and make a prediction about an outcome for an individual, or try and assign people to appropriate service or system; generative AI such as systems that generate text or images, such as ChatGPT and DALL:E; or simulation AI, such as digital twins and agent based modelling.

SECTION 1: AI Adoption

Corporate usage (defined as the adoption of AI enabled technologies by the council either in business function or in service delivery, for example Microsoft 365 co-pilot or AI-powered chatbots in call centres)

1. Which of the following statements best describes your council's current use of AI capabilities?

- ❍ Level 1: The council is not currently using or exploring AI capabilities
- ❍ Level 2: The council is at the beginning of its journey in terms of working with AI
- ❍ Level 3: The council is developing its capacity and capabilities around of AI
- ❍ Level 4: The council is making some use of AI, exhibiting good practice and incorporating guidance from expert organisations
- ❍ Level 5: The council is innovative in its use of AI and is considered a leader among its peers
- ❍ Don't know

If you answered 'Level 2' or above go to Q1a, otherwise go to Q1b

1a. In what year did your council first deploy AI?

Please select an approximate year

- ❍ 2024
- ❍ 2023
- ❍ 2022
- ❍ 2021
- ❍ 2020
- ❍ 2019
- ❍ 2018
- ❍ 2017
- ❍ Pre-2017
- ❍ Other (please specify below)

_____

1b. In what year do you anticipate that your council will start to deploy AI?

Please select an approximate year

- ❍ 2024
- ❍ 2025
- ❍ 2026
- ❍ 2027
- ❍ 2028
- ❍ 2029
- ❍ 2030
- ❍ Post-2030
- ❍ Other (please specify below)

_____

- ❍ No plans currently in place

If you answered 'Level 1' to Q1 please go to Q5, otherwise go to Q2.

2. Which of the following types of AI, if any, has your council adopted?

Please select all that apply

- ❑ Perceptive AI, such as systems that recognise faces and fingerprints, or try and analyse images, audio or video, for example in the analysis of consultation responses or identifying car registration plates in the prevention of fly tipping. This includes sensing AI such as remote or continuous sensing through smart sensors.
- ❑ Predictive AI, such as systems that try and make a prediction about an outcome for an individual, or try and assign people to appropriate service or system, for example predicting an outcome in services or assigning an adult social care treatment pathway.
- ❑ Generative AI, such as systems that generate text or images, such as ChatGPT and DALL:E
- ❑ Simulation AI, such as digital twins and agent based modelling.
- ❑ None of the above

2a. Please provide more detail on any tool/s utilised

_____

_____

3. In what functions, if any, has your council utilised AI capabilities, even in an exploratory capacity?

Function *(Please note: only functions provided by your type of council will appear on the online list)*	**Please select all that apply**	**Please provide more details on how it has been used to support the function**
Democratic services	○	
Advice and benefits	○	
Business and employment	○	
Community Safety	○	
Environmental Protection	○	
Health and social care (children's)	○	
Health and social care (adults)	○	
Housing	○	
Leisure and culture	○	
Licences, permits and permissions	○	
Planning and building control	○	
Schools and education	○	
Transport and highways	○	
Corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance, cyber security	○	

4. Is your council developing AI tools in-house?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Don't know

4a. Please provide more details:

_____

_____

Individual usage of AI

5. Which of the following most closely reflects your council's AI usage policy for corporate devices? (For example, generative tools such as Chat GPT etc.)

- ❍ AI tools are banned on corporate devices
- ❍ AI tools are permitted on corporate devices
- ❍ AI tools are permitted on corporate devices depending on service need
- ❍ Council does not have an AI usage policy for corporate devices
- ❍ Other (please specify below)

  _____
- ❍ Don't know

5a. Which of the following AI tools are blocked and which are permitted?

Please select one option per row

AI tool	**Blocked**	**Permitted without conditions**	**Permitted with conditions**	**Don't know**
Text generation tools (like large language models such as Chat GPT)	○	○	○	○
Image generative tools (such as StyleGAN)	○	○	○	○
Audio generation tools (such as WaveNet)	○	○	○	○
Video generation tools (such as Synthesia)	○	○	○	○
Open source coding generation tools (such as Vertex AI)	○	○	○	○
Open source data analysis tools – such as Python, PyTorch and R.	○	○	○	○

SECTION 2: AI Readiness

6. Overall, how ready, if at all, is your council for adopting or continuing to adopt AI? (*By this we mean the extent to which your council's culture, workforce, technology, data, and policies and procedures are ready to support the safe and secure deployment of AI.*)

	Very ready	**Fairly ready**	**Not very ready**	**Not at all ready**	**Not considering AI**	**Don't know**
Institutional culture (e.g. leadership, receptivity to change)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Workforce (e.g., skills, knowledge, expertise)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Technology (e.g., infrastructure, software, cloud)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Data (e.g., availability quality, storage)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Policies and procedures (e.g. governance frameworks and risk management)	○	○	○	○	○	○

6a. Please use the box below to explain more about your state of readiness.

_____

_____

SECTION 3: AI Investment and Spending

7. Thinking about your council's investment in AI, how has spending changed in the last five years?

Please select one option per row

Area	Increased	Decreased	Unchanged	Don't know
Infrastructure	○	○	○	○
Applications	○	○	○	○
Capabilities (staff or contractor)	○	○	○	○
Training	○	○	○	○
Data foundations	○	○	○	○
Frameworks, guidance and governance	○	○	○	○

If you answered 'Level 1' to Q1 please go to Q9, otherwise go to Q8.

8. Is your council currently paying external suppliers for the provision of AI tools or technologies, or in the process of procuring this?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Don't know

8a. To what extent, if at all, do you see the following issues as barriers or potential barriers when it comes to the procurement of AI tools or technologies?

Please select one option per row

	To a great extent	**To a moderate extent**	**To a small extent**	**Not at all**	**Don't know**
Project scoping *Understanding where AI can add value.*	○	○	○	○	○
Market intelligence *Understanding who is a trusted partner.*	○	○	○	○	○
Scoping requirements *Understanding how AI is embedded in a product.*	○	○	○	○	○
Evaluation *Understanding how to evaluate solutions.*	○	○	○	○	○
Other	○	○	○	○	○

9. Which of the following most closely reflects your council’s AI supplier policy?

- ❍ Suppliers are required to declare if they are using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents.
- ❍ Suppliers are not required to declare if they are using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents, but it is informally discussed.
- ❍ Suppliers are not required to declare if they are using AI in the delivery of goods/services to the council or residents.
- ❍ Don’t know.

9a. Thinking about all of your council's current contracts, approximately what proportion would you say are using AI to deliver goods/services to the council or residents?

- ❍ All/almost all
- ❍ Most
- ❍ Some
- ❍ A few
- ❍ None
- ❍ Don’t know

If you answered ‘Level 1’ to Q1 please go to Q11, otherwise go to Q10.

SECTION 4: AI Benefits and Opportunities

10. Please tell us where, if at all, your council has realised benefits from using AI and where benefits have been negligible (if applicable):

Please select one option per row

	Realised benefits	**Negligible benefits**	**Don't know**
Managing demand/backlogs	○	○	○
Staff productivity	○	○	○
Service efficiencies	○	○	○
Service user outcomes	○	○	○
Cost savings	○	○	○
Income generation	○	○	○
Recruitment	○	○	○
Resident engagement	○	○	○
Product and/or service development	○	○	○
Decision-making	○	○	○

10a. If your council has realised any other significant benefits from using AI, please briefly describe this in the box below.

_____

_____

SECTION 5: AI Benefits and Opportunities

11. Please select the three functions where you see the greatest AI opportunities for your council

Function	Please select three functions	Please provide more details on how you think it could be used to support this function.
Democratic services	○	
Advice and benefits	○	
Business and employment	○	
Community Safety	○	
Environmental Protection	○	
Health and social care (children's)	○	
Health and social care (adults)	○	
Housing	○	
Leisure and culture	○	
Licences, permits and permissions	○	
Planning and building control	○	
Schools and education	○	
Transport and highways	○	
Corporate council use: HR, administration (meeting minutes), procurement, finance,	○	
No potential opportunities	○	

11a. If you would like to provide further information you may do so here:

_____

_____

12. What, if anything, do you see as the biggest potential benefits to your council of adopting or further adopting AI?

Please choose the top three

- ❍ Managing demand/backlogs
- ❍ Staff productivity
- ❍ Service efficiencies
- ❍ Service user outcomes
- ❍ Cost savings
- ❍ Recruitment
- ❍ Resident engagement
- ❍ Product and/or service development
- ❍ Decision-making
- ❍ Other (please specify below)

  _____
- ❍ No potential benefits

13. To what extent, if at all, would testbeds and examples of use cases be helpful in understanding the potential benefits and opportunities of AI in a local government context?

	To a great extent	**To a moderate extent**	**To a small extent**	**Not at all**	**Don't know**
Testbeds*	○	○	○	○	○
Use cases	○	○	○	○	○

*Testbeds provide environments to support development of real-world applications of AI that are robust and trustworthy

14. Would you be willing to develop a use case for sharing publicly and/or with other councils?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Don’t know

SECTION 6: AI Barriers and Risks

15. In your view, what are the biggest barriers to your council in deploying AI?

Please select the five biggest barriers

- ❑ Lack of staff capacity
- ❑ Lack of staff capabilities
- ❑ Lack of senior leadership buy in
- ❑ Lack of political leadership buy in
- ❑ Lack of data infrastructure
- ❑ Lack of digital infrastructure
- ❑ Lack of testbeds and sandbox initiatives
- ❑ Fears of cyber threats
- ❑ Tracking its impacts
- ❑ Lack of clear standards/regulation
- ❑ Lack of sufficient governance (including AI policy)
- ❑ Lack of funding
- ❑ Lack of clear use cases
- ❑ Lack of suitable suppliers
- ❑ Lack of supplier transparency
- ❑ Concerns regarding resident trust
- ❑ Don't know

16. To what extent, if at all, do you consider each of the following to be an AI risk? Which AI risks, if any, are you actively seeking to mitigate?

	To a great extent	**To a moderate extent**	**To a small extent**	**Not at all**	**Don't know**	**Seeking to mitigate**
Cyber security	○	○	○	○	○	○
Regulatory compliance	○	○	○	○	○	○

Personal/individual privacy	○	○	○	○	○	○
Explainability of how AI technologies work	○	○	○	○	○	○
Transparency of suppliers	○	○	○	○	○	○
Organisational reputation and resident trust	○	○	○	○	○	○
Equity and fairness	○	○	○	○	○	○
Workforce displacement	○	○	○	○	○	○
Physical safety	○	○	○	○	○	○
Contestability and redress from residents	○	○	○	○	○	○
Contestability and redress from suppliers	○	○	○	○	○	○
National security	○	○	○	○	○	○
Electoral stability: security and integrity	○	○	○	○	○	○
Lack of IT capabilities	○	○	○	○	○	○

Low level of broader workforce skills	○	○	○	○	○	○

16a. How are you seeking to mitigate?

_____

_____

17. Which policies and processes, if any, do you have to manage AI risks?
Please select all that apply

- ❑ A specific AI policy (if yes, please share the link)
  _____
- ❑ A specific AI ethics board
- ❑ A data ethics board
- ❑ Existing boards (please give details)
- ❑ Existing policies (including information governance, data protection etc.)
- ❑ A Senior Responsible Owner
- ❑ Resident engagement
- ❑ Additional AI powered cyber security monitoring
- ❑ Councillor training and skills development
- ❑ Staff training and skills development (information governance, legal teams etc.)
- ❑ Quality Assurance processes
- ❑ Other (please specify below)
  _____
- ❑ None of the above
- ❑ Don’t know

SECTION 7: AI Support

18. Thinking about possible AI support, which of the following, if any, would you or your council find helpful?

    Please select all that apply

    - ❑ A ‘useability framework’ focused on identifying AI risks and opportunities and opportunities and supporting the identification of appropriate governance approaches.
    - ❑ A maturity self assessment tool
    - ❑ Training support offer for officers and members
    - ❑ A community of practice on the development of AI tools in-house
    - ❑ A set of use cases specific to local government
    - ❑ A set of explanatory guides on different types and applications
    - ❑ A local government AI conference

19. Please use the box below to indicate any other support that might be useful when considering the use of AI in your organisation.

    _____

    _____

20. If you have any final comments on the use of AI in your council or in local government more generally, please use the space below:

    _____

    _____

Once you press the 'Submit' button below, you will have completed the survey.

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey. You are in control of any personal data that you have provided to us in your response. You can contact us at all times to have your information changed or deleted. You can find our full privacy policy here: click here to see our privacy policy

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