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1. Statement

Artificial intelligence (**AI**) technology presents an opportunity for Ipswich City Council (**Council**) to enhance its service delivery to the Ipswich community. Whilst AI can create efficiencies which improve service outcomes, Council recognises that it must develop an ethical AI framework to prevent outcomes that negatively affect individuals, communities, groups, or the environment.

To ensure that AI is used ethically and in accordance with human rights, Council will apply Australia's [AI Ethics Principles¹](#) (the **Principles**) to maintain public trust and confidence that Council's use of AI is safe, secure and reliable.

2. Purpose and Principles

Council has established an AI framework to apply Australia's AI Ethics Principles. The AI framework will consist of this policy and other documents that set out council requirements for:

- safeguarding personal information, data, and abide by other applicable laws when using approved AI technology
- evaluating AI technology prior to acquisition or approval for use, and
- managing quality control of the AI technology through the AI Lifecycle.

Section 10 sets out the Principles and section 11 explains how they will be applied in the AI framework.

3. Strategic Plan Links

This policy aligns with the following iFuture 2021-2026 Corporate Plan theme, "A Trusted and Leading Organisation".

4. Regulatory Authority

Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)

Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)

Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)

¹ A voluntary framework published by the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science and Resources.

5. Human Rights Commitment

Ipswich City Council (Council) has considered the human rights protected under the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)* (the Act) when adopting and/or amending this policy. When applying this policy, Council will act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and give proper consideration to a human right relevant to the decision in accordance with the Act.

6. Scope

This policy applies to all undertakings by Council in relation to AI technology, which includes activities undertaken within the AI framework.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Corporate Services Department	Strategic planning, due diligence, approval, implementation, and governance of AI technology.
General Managers, Branch Managers, and Section Managers	Responsible for ensuring AI solutions being deployed in their Departments / Branches / Section have been vetted in accordance with this policy, and its supporting governance framework.

8. Key Stakeholders

The following will be consulted during the review process:

- Legal and Governance Branch
- ICT Branch
- People & Culture Branch

9. What is AI?

The term ‘AI’ is often used interchangeably to describe several technologies within AI that are used in machine-assisted decision-making applications including machine learning, robotic process automation (RPA), natural language programming, deep learning (neural networks), computer vision and robotics.

AI systems embrace a family of technologies that can bring together computing power, scalability, networking, connected devices and interfaces, and data.

These systems can be programmed to perform specific tasks such as reasoning, planning, natural language processing, computer vision, audio processing, interaction, prediction and more. With machine learning, AI systems can improve on tasks over time according to a set of human-defined objectives and can operate with varying levels of autonomy.²

10. AI Ethics Principles

- a. **Human, societal, and environmental wellbeing:** AI systems should benefit individuals, society, and the environment.

² Australian Government: Digital Transformation Agency [18 July 2023] “Adoption of AI in the Public Sector [STA13]”, <https://architecture.digital.gov.au/adoption-ai-public-sector>

- b. **Human-centred values:** AI systems should respect human rights, diversity, and the autonomy of individuals.
- c. **Fairness:** AI systems should be inclusive and accessible and should not involve or result in unfair discrimination against individuals, communities, or groups.
- d. **Privacy protection and security:** AI systems should respect and uphold privacy rights and data protection and ensure the security of data.
- e. **Reliability and safety:** AI systems should reliably operate in accordance with their intended purpose.
- f. **Transparency and explainability:** There should be transparency and responsible disclosure so people can understand when they are being significantly impacted by AI and can find out when an AI system is engaging with them.
- g. **Contestability:** When an AI system significantly impacts a person, community, group or environment, there should be a timely process to allow people to challenge the use or outcomes of the AI system.
- h. **Accountability:** People responsible for the different phases of the AI system lifecycle should be identifiable and accountable for the outcomes of the AI systems, and human oversight of AI systems should be enabled.

11. Applying the Ethics Principles

11.1 Implementing new technology comprising or incorporating AI

When considering implementing new technology (either by acquisition or internal development), or approving freeware applications for use, that comprises or incorporates AI, Council will conduct an AI impact assessment against the:

- the Principles
- Information Privacy Policy (and supporting documents); and
- Record Keeping Policy (and supporting documents)

as part of the Information and Communications Technology governance processes. The Information and Communications Technology branch will consult with Council staff with relevant subject matter expertise as necessitated by the specifics of how the technology will be applied.

11.2 Creating an AI system

In circumstances where Council engineers an AI system, Council will maintain a standard which applies relevant Principles to the AI system throughout the AI Lifecycle.

11.3 Decision Making

Council will not use AI to make decisions that are excluded by law or have the potential to:

- contravene administrative law requirements of legality, reasonableness, rationality, and transparency
- contravene privacy, data security or other legal requirements (including human rights obligations)
- compromise accuracy in decision-making
- compromise the exercise of decision-making discretion or judgement, or
- significantly undermine public confidence in government administration.

AI may be used as a tool to assist in the decision-making processes. However, human oversight of the process, particularly the exercise of discretion or judgement, must be preserved.

Where decisions can be made using AI safely, accurately, and free from bias, council will be open and transparent about its use and clearly explain a person's right to challenge the use or outcomes of the AI system (see Section 12).

12. Disputes regarding the use of AI by council

Council will publish a register of its AI systems that have the potential to impact a person, community, group, or environment. A person will be able to challenge the use of an AI system, or the outcome from the AI system, by submitting a complaint as outlined in Council's Complaints Management Framework and [Customer Charter](#). Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints Management Policy and Procedure.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

Council will evaluate any complaints received under Section 12 to determine whether amendments to this Policy and supporting operational documents are required. Otherwise, this Policy will be reviewed in accordance with Council's four (4) year review cycle.

14. Definitions

AI Lifecycle means the following stages:

- a. design, data, and modelling (such as planning, data collection and model building)
- b. development and validation (such as training and testing)
- c. deployment
- d. monitoring and refinement (including fixing any problems that occur)

Complainant means an individual person, or representative for a community, group or environment who seeks to, or has lodged a complaint.

15. Related Documents

[Complaints Management Policy](#)

[Human Rights Policy](#)

[Information Privacy Policy](#)

[Record Keeping Policy](#)

16. Policy Owner

The General Manager, Corporate Services is the policy owner and the Corporate Governance Manager is responsible for authoring and reviewing this policy.