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### Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1)

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**Time and Date**

2.00 pm on Thursday, 8th February, 2024

**Place**

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2 - Council House

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**Public Business****1. Apologies and Substitutions****2. Declarations of Interest****3. Minutes**

(a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2024 (Pages 3 - 6)

(b) Matters Arising

**4. Artificial Intelligence and Automation (Pages 7 - 30)**

Briefing note

**5. Work Programme and Outstanding Issues (Pages 31 - 34)**

Report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator

**6. Any other items of Public Business**

Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

**Private Business**

Nil

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Julie Newman, Chief Legal Officer, Council House, Coventry

Wednesday, 31 January 2024

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Carolyn Sinclair [carolyn.sinclair@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:carolyn.sinclair@coventry.gov.uk)

Membership: Councillors J Blundell, R Brown (By Invitation), P Hetheron (By

Invitation), J Innes, L Kelly, R Lakha, J Lepoidevin, P Male, K Maton, J McNicholas and E Ruane (Chair)

**Public Access**

Any member of the public who would like to attend the meeting in person is encouraged to contact the officer below in advance of the meeting regarding arrangements for public attendance. A guide to attending public meeting can be found here: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/publicAttendanceMeetings>

**Carolyn Sinclair**  
**carolyn.sinclair@coventry.gov.uk**

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held**  
**at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 11 January 2024**

Present:

Members: Councillor E Ruane (Chair)  
Councillor J Blundell  
Councillor J Innes  
Councillor R Lakha  
Councillor J Lepoidevin  
Councillor P Male  
Councillor K Maton  
Councillor J McNicholas

Other Members: Councillor R Brown, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

Employees:

Business Systems and Improvement:

M Greenwood

Finance:

B Hastie (Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer)),  
E Dewar, T Pinks

Law and Governance:

E Jones, C Sinclair, A West

Legal and Procurement:

O Aremu (Head of Legal and Procurement), R Amor

Apologies:

None

## **Public Business**

### **18. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **19. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

### **20. Consultation on Spending, Saving and Council Tax Proposals for 2024/25**

The Board considered a briefing note in respect of the City Council's public consultation on revenue spending and savings proposals for 2024/25 and future financial years together with the approach in relation to Council Tax and the Adult Social Care precept. The note provided the Board with information about the

proposals to enable them to make any comments as part of the consultation process. The report considered by Cabinet with the relevant appendices were attached as an appendix to the briefing note.

In noting the content of the briefing note and following discussion, the Board identified the following issues to be considered as part of the consultation:

- Standardisation of residents' parking permit fees across the city.
- The impact of the removal of free parking at the War Memorial Park and the anticipated resulting parking behaviour in neighbouring streets.
- The consultation should include a note to give clarity and context in the narrative around inflation.
- The proposal for an overnight streetlight switch-off should be preceded by an analysis of the current impact of reduced street lighting to assess the possible impact of the proposal.

Officers agreed to look at any outstanding requests for residents parking schemes with a view to clearing any backlog and to provide Members with a response to the points raised above.

**RESOLVED that the comments listed above be reported to the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources in relation to the budget consultation.**

## 21. **Delivering Value for Money in Placement Costs**

The Board considered a briefing note outlining the corporate controls in place to secure value for money when providing support to vulnerable residents. The report outlines the experience of several services in meeting demand and cost of support, describing how value for money is managed.

A private briefing note was also submitted in the private part of the agenda in respect of this item, as it contained details required to be kept private in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The briefing note provided details of the corporate controls in place to secure best value in securing support for vulnerable residents and highlighted the issues faced across the services listed below in securing placements.

- Adult Social Care
- Housing
- Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Home to School Travel Assistance

Following discussion, the Board asked for further information on the following:

Adult Social Care Package Funding:

- Number of Adult Social Care service users and total cost

- Percentage markup of profit for providers
- Reasons for the increase in demand
- Location of providers (in or out of City)

Housing Package Funding:

- City Council engagement with highest cost housing placements
- Average length of stay for an individual.

SEND Package Funding:

- Checks to ensure annual reviews take place

In respect of the home to school travel assistance package funding, concerns were raised regarding costs and providers' contractual obligations, for instance, the costs incurred when a child is absent from school and the service not used. It was noted that a review was currently underway on this funding and the Board requested that a further report on this matter be brought back to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) **The corporate approach utilised by the Council to deliver value for money and quality assurance through commissioning and procurement be noted.**
- 2) **The current position in relation to the costs of securing support for vulnerable residents within the areas highlighted in this report and the issues experienced by those service areas be noted.**
- 3) **The Board receive further information in respect of the package funding areas as indicated above.**
- 4) **That the Board receive a further report on the home to school travel assistance package funding at the earliest opportunity.**

22. **Work Programme and Outstanding Issues**

The Work Programme was noted.

There were no outstanding issues.

23. **Any other items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

24. **Delivering Value for Money in Placement Costs**

Further to Minute 21 above, the Board considered a private briefing note which included confidential matters relating to delivering value for money in placement costs.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) The corporate approach utilised by the Council to deliver value for money and quality assurance through commissioning and procurement be noted.**
- 2) The current position in relation to the costs of securing support for vulnerable residents within the areas highlighted in this report and the issues experienced by those service areas be noted.**
- 3) The Board receive further information in respect of the package funding areas as indicated in Minute 21 above.**
- 4) That the Board receive a further report on the home to school travel assistance package funding at the earliest opportunity.**

(Meeting closed at 4.25 pm)



Coventry City Council

## Briefing note

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**To: Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board**

**Date: 08 February 2024**

**Subject: Artificial Intelligence and Automation**

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### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To provide Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board with an update with regards to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the implications and possibilities for Coventry City Council.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board

- 1) Note the details in the presentation (Appendix 1) regarding the topics covered.
- 2) Make any relevant recommendations to the Cabinet Member.

### **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 Outline information is provided in the appended slides (Appendix 1) and the Board will receive a presentation from officers at the meeting which will contain more detail and context on these topics.

Appendix 1 - Presentation

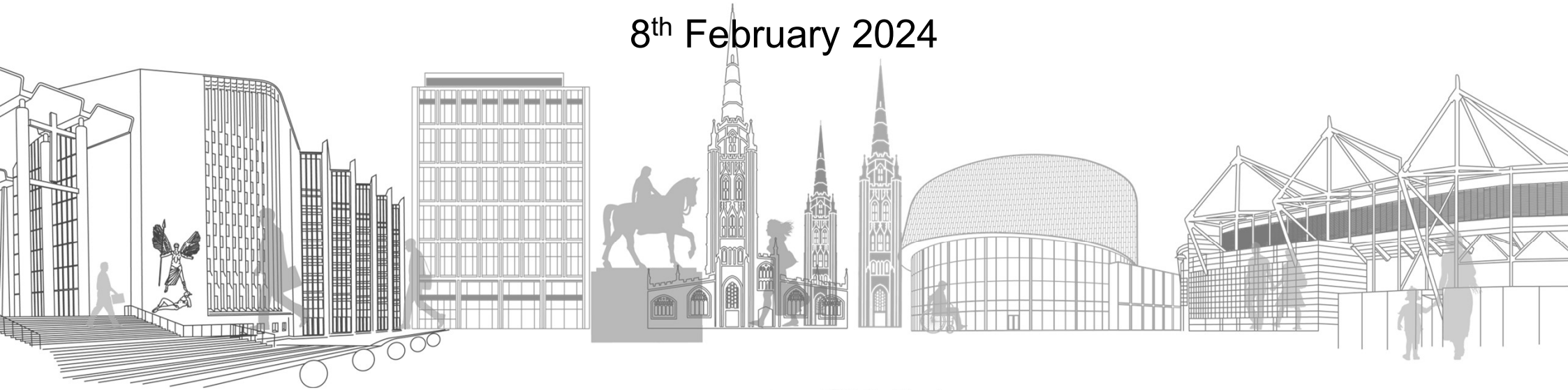
**Paul Ward, Head of Digital Services, 024 7697 1381**

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# Artificial Intelligence & Automation

An update for Scrutiny Board 1  
8<sup>th</sup> February 2024



## Things we will cover...

- Our current “mission statement” for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation
- Some examples of AI
- An overview of AI pilot activity underway
- Our approach to a policy position for AI



# Recap and our mission statement

- AI is not new, it has been around since the 1950's
- The last 12 months has seen an explosion of AI toolsets largely due to how accessible and cheap large scale compute resource has become and large technology companies creating AI products push directly to consumers
- We will cover more about what AI is and what it might be for the City Council throughout this presentation but it is clear that AI will play a transformative role in most organisations and we are viewing it as a key part of our transformation activity.
- Our current mission statement is to **explore the potential of AI in the context of cross organisation service improvement and efficiency, proceeding with interest, but caution.**
- There are several things we need to think about on this journey, including; data protection, data quality, ethics, cost etc.

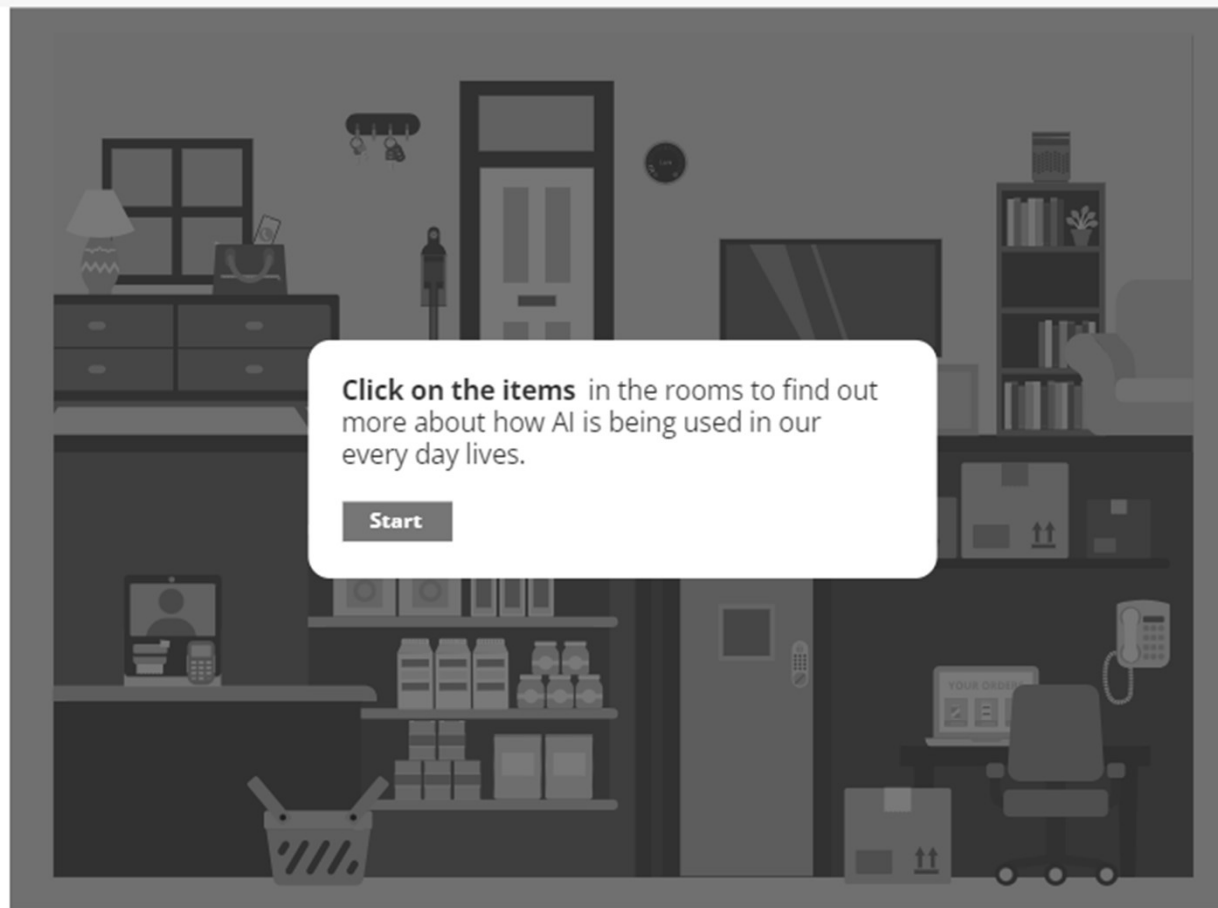


# What do we mean when we say AI?

- Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence that can create new content, such as music, images, or text, without being programmed to do so. It does this by learning from vast amounts of data and then creating new content based on that learning. Examples of generative AI include chatbots, image generators, and music composers.
- In the last 12 months, AI has become increasingly popular due to advancements in technology and increased accessibility to data. This has made it possible for AI to be used in a wider range of applications, leading to its growing popularity.
- We must be absolutely clear that, at the moment, **we are not using AI for any automated decision making**.
- All of our investigations into AI are looking for where technology can **improve productivity and efficiency** – aiding, but in no way replacing existing governance and decision-making processes
- If you are interested in learning more about AI concepts, this year's Royal Institute Christmas Lectures were on the subject of AI ([BBC 4 – iPlayer](#))



# Some examples of AI – in everyday life

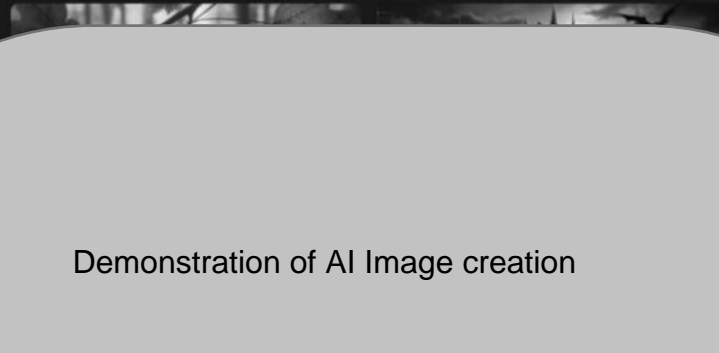


Want to see how Image Creator works? Select Surprise Me, then Create

8 Join & Create

Help

Explore Ideas



Demonstration of AI Image creation

# Some incredibly important considerations in the use of AI

- **Bias**

AI's "knowledge" is based on the data it has been trained on and what it has learnt from. If that data contains a bias, either intentionally or unintentionally, then it will influence the output that AI provides

- **Ethics**

Beyond bias, there are a wider set of ethical considerations that need to be made in the use of AI. The Turing Institute describes these as a *"set of values, principles, and techniques that employ widely accepted standards of right and wrong to guide moral conduct in the development and use of AI technologies."*

- **Accuracy**

The technology is very impressive – but the accuracy of content that is created does need to be checked – in the same way you might when working with new colleagues in training

- **Security / Privacy**

AI relies on access to large amounts of data to learn from. We need to be very careful and clear about what data can be processed and how and where it is processed. Data protection and processing transparency are fundamental.

- **Cost and Scalability**

The computer power required, particularly by Generative AI systems, is significant and therefore there is a cost associated. We need to be mindful of the full costs of AI solutions, and how scalable this might, or might not make them

It is for these reasons we are exploring with **interest**, but **caution** at this stage



# Microsoft Copilot

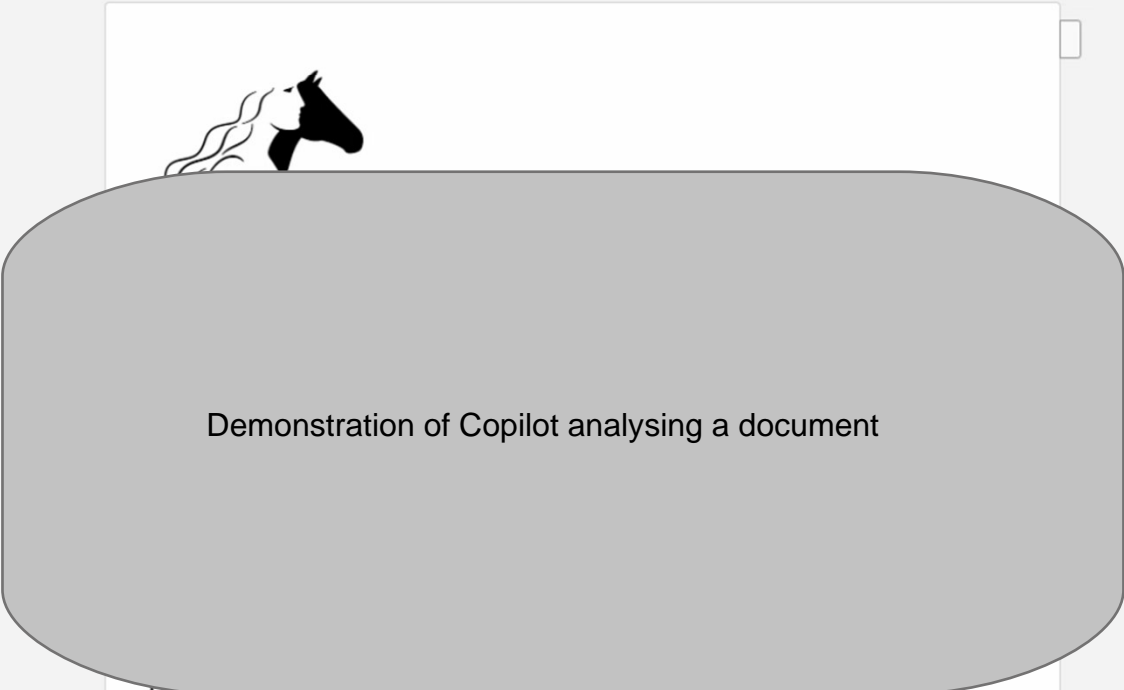
- Copilot is, as described by Microsoft...

*“Microsoft Copilot is an AI-powered assistant that can help you navigate tasks more efficiently. It is designed to incorporate the context and intelligence of the web, your work data, and what you are doing in the moment on your PC to provide better assistance.”*

- We will see what that actually means in a moment!
- Copilot is available through an additional license, per user, on our Microsoft estate. At the moment we are running a pilot for 300 users until the end of March to help us:
  - Develop our wider understanding and thinking about AI in the workplace
  - Develop a policy position regarding the use of AI
  - Define further use cases for where Copilot might provide benefit
  - Build a business case for any longer-term investment/deployment of Copilot







91%  
See 16 Editor suggestions

Coventry City Council has been awarded £5 million by the NIHR to create a pioneering research platform: the HDRC. This is part of a wider £50 million investment from the NIHR for a selected number of local authorities across the country to build capacity and capability to conduct high-quality research to address health inequalities and improve health outcomes. The HDRC will substantially increase the City Council's monitoring and evaluation capacity, enabling us to measure what works in addressing the wider determinants of health. The new HDRC will enable a culture change whereby our departments and staff are aware of the importance of the wider determinants of health and are confident in using, sharing and creating new research evidence. As a result of the HDRC, staff will be equipped and inspired to be innovative in their thinking, to develop research questions and seek support from the HDRC for research grant applications. Finally, the HDRC will engage communities.

Page 7


Send From: Paul.Ward@coventry.gov.uk

To

Cc

Bcc

Add a subject Draft saved at 14:52

 Draft with Copilot Preview

What do you want this email to say?

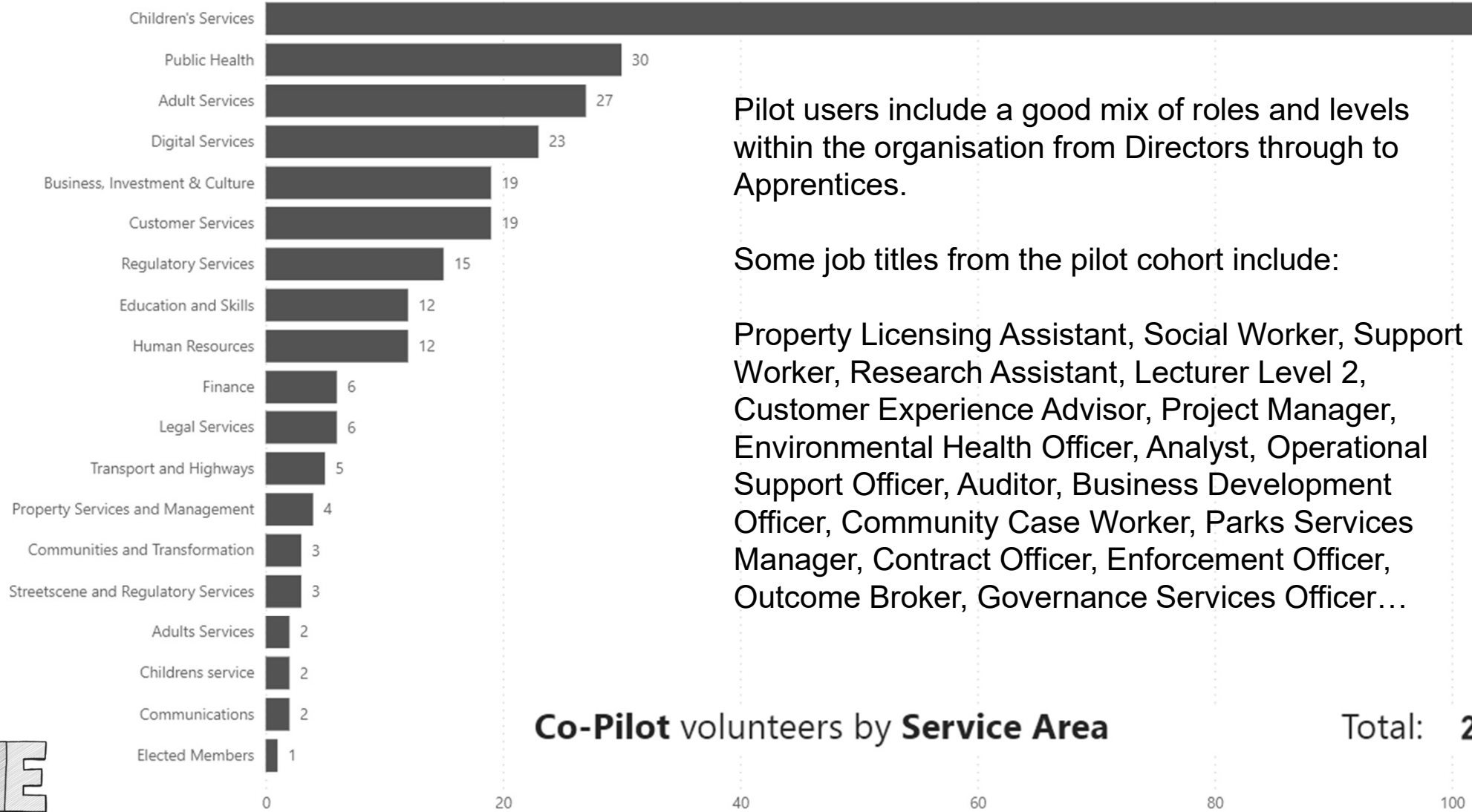
Generate →

Select an item to read (No subject) ×

Demonstration of Copilot authoring an email



Demonstration of Copilot creating a presentation



**Co-Pilot** volunteers by **Service Area**

Total: **299**

Pilot users include a good mix of roles and levels within the organisation from Directors through to Apprentices.

Some job titles from the pilot cohort include:

Property Licensing Assistant, Social Worker, Support Worker, Research Assistant, Lecturer Level 2, Customer Experience Advisor, Project Manager, Environmental Health Officer, Analyst, Operational Support Officer, Auditor, Business Development Officer, Community Case Worker, Parks Services Manager, Contract Officer, Enforcement Officer, Outcome Broker, Governance Services Officer...

# Microsoft Copilot

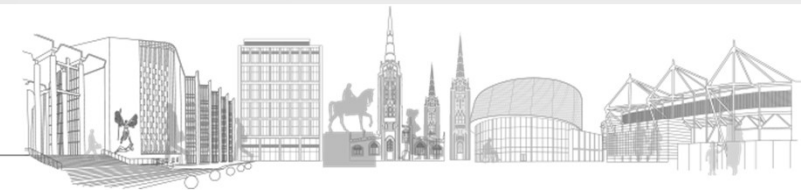
How have you found using Copilot in the last two weeks?

50%  
Somewhat easy

22%  
Neutral

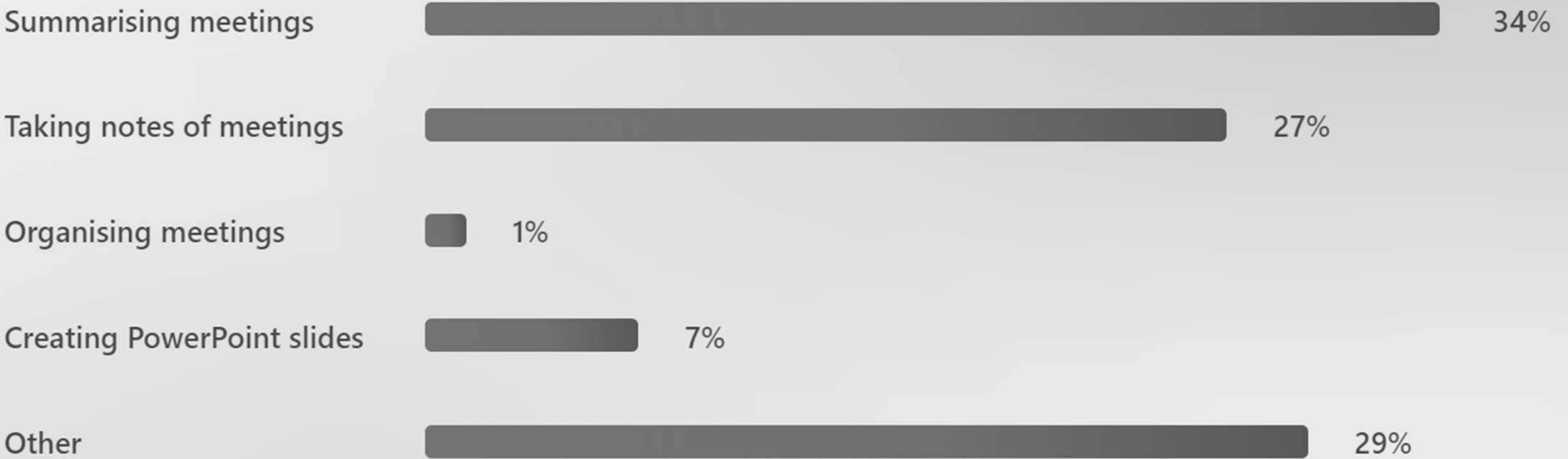
14%  
Extremely easy

12%  
Difficult



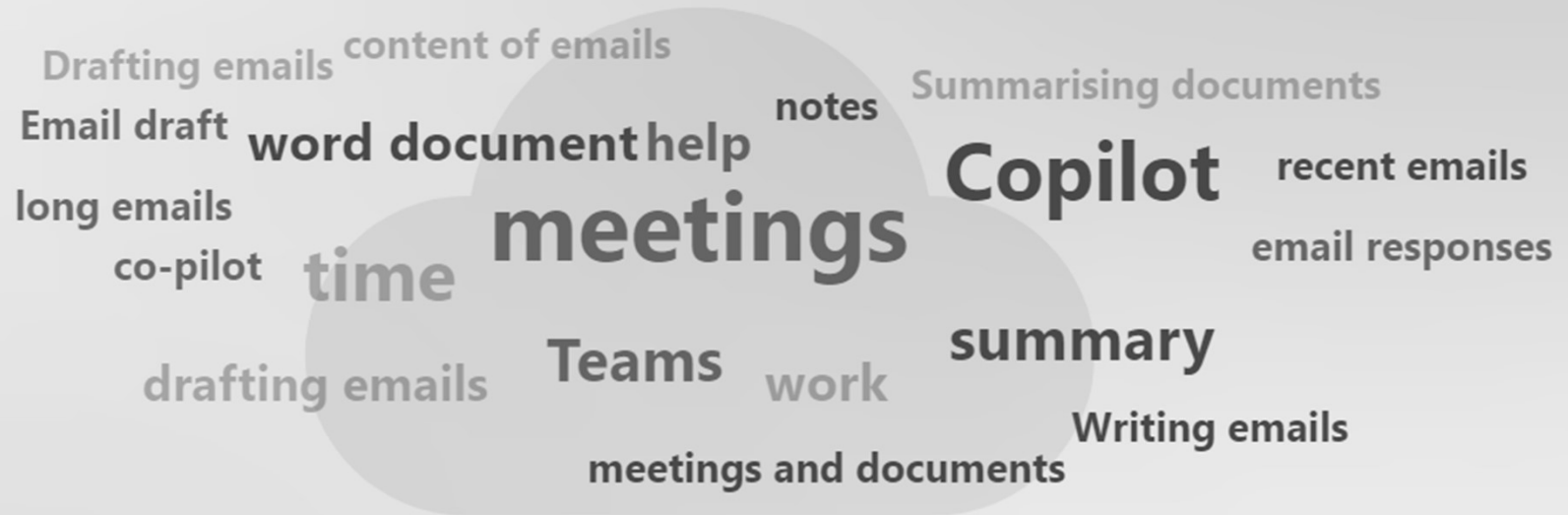
# Microsoft Copilot

Has using Copilot helped to save you time when completing any of the following tasks?  
Please tick the other option and tell us if there are other tasks that Copilot has helped...



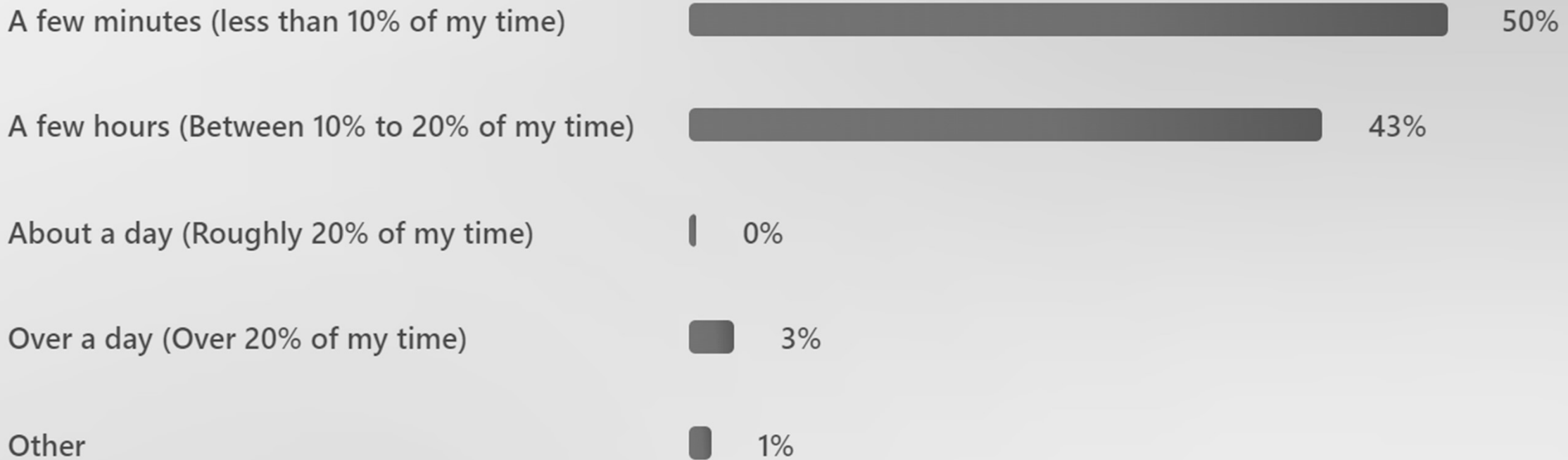
# Microsoft Copilot

If you answered other, please tell us more below?



# Microsoft Copilot

## How much time has Copilot saved you in the last two weeks?





# Wider organisational AI use-cases

- Areas that currently need a large amount of administrative effort
- Areas that require linking lots of bits of data together
- Areas that would benefit from being able to analyse and summarise large amounts of data
- Areas where data input / manipulation into a line of business system is time intensive
- Areas that could benefit from “chatbot” type functionality
- Generic, repeatable tasks where there is similar activity undertaken irrespective of service area

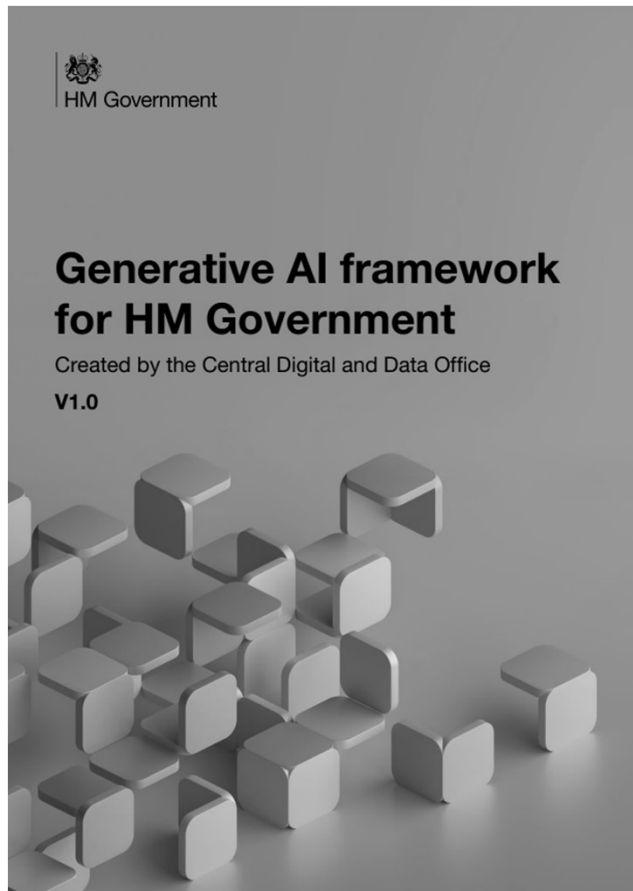


# Our approach to a policy position for AI

- Alongside reviewing and piloting technology we are also building a policy position for the use of AI
- We are currently drafting, in conjunction with Information Governance colleagues
  - **A corporate policy regarding the use of Generative AI.** This is building on a framework that has been developed by SOCITM and we are adapting for the City Council. The policy outlines the guidelines for governance, vendor practices, confidentiality, accuracy, ethical use, disclosure, and integration with other tools.
  - **AI Do's and Don't guidance** for colleagues designed as a brief guide to help employees use AI responsibly and effectively
  - **An AI code of practice** position that, at an appropriate time, we can publish which seeks to provide assurances that any use Coventry City Council makes of Artificial Intelligence will prioritise ethical considerations, fostering a positive impact on citizens and society.
- All of the above will include input from across the organisation including Unions, Employee Networks etc.
- We are engaged on the LGA Local Government AI Network



# The wider governance position for AI



- As this is a rapidly developing area, the wider governance position and frameworks are also rapidly developing
- Generative AI framework for HM Government published 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024
- This sets out the following principles for the use of Generative AI for government departments/organisations:

**Principle 1: You know what generative AI is and what its limitations are**

**Principle 2: You use generative AI lawfully, ethically and responsibly**

**Principle 3: You know how to keep generative AI tools secure**

**Principle 4: You have meaningful human control at the right stage**

**Principle 5: You understand how to manage the full generative AI lifecycle**

**Principle 6: You use the right tool for the job**

**Principle 7: You are open and collaborative**

**Principle 8: You work with commercial colleagues from the start**

**Principle 9: You have the skills and expertise that you need to build and use generative AI**

**Principle 10: You use these principles alongside your organisation's policies and have the right assurance in place**



## Next steps

- To better align resources and coordinate activity. All AI exploration and projects are being managed and delivered through the Coventry Connects, One Coventry Transformation programme. This programme is jointly led by our Head of Customer Services and Head of Digital Services.
- Copilot pilot is running until the end of March, work is underway on developing a business case
- Continuing to develop our policy position
- Keeping track and pace with wider governance positions and frameworks from government and industry
- Exploring wider organisational use-cases and potential pilot areas where AI would support process improvement, deliver efficiency and savings
- AI will form a key part of our consolidated Digital Strategy being created over the next 12 months
- Keeping track of AI use cases across local government – looking for areas of best practice or innovation – also feeding our findings into wider cross organizational forums to share what we are finding



## In summary...

- AI tools will inevitably play a key role in how the organisation and our colleagues operate.
- There is a significant amount of “hype” regarding AI – we need to be mindful of that and continue to look for strong, evidence backed use cases before we assign specific savings targets to AI.
- There are no silver bullets – the success of AI tooling will be dependent on our adoption of new technology, changing working practices and our approach to data quality and information management.
- We need to continue to promote our upskilling initiatives regarding data (Data Academy apprenticeships)
- We need to continue to progress our work on our policy positions and thinking about the safe and ethical use of AI
- Reminder of our mission statement which is to **explore the potential of AI in the context of cross organisation service improvement and efficiency, proceeding with interest, but caution.**



# Thank you

# Any questions?



**ONE**  
COVENTRY

# Agenda Item 5

SB1 Work Programme 2023/24

Last updated 29 January 2024

Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

<b>6<sup>th</sup> July 2023</b>
Corporate Learning and Development Report 2022 - 2023 Workforce Metrics
<b>21<sup>st</sup> September 2023</b>
Apprenticeships Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23 to include Commercial Investments/ Income Generation
<b>7<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b>
Agency and consultancy spending
<b>11<sup>th</sup> January 2024</b>
2024/25 Budget Consultation Value for Money
<b>8<sup>th</sup> February 2024</b>
Artificial Intelligence
<b>21<sup>st</sup> March 2024</b>
Speak up and speak out Staff Survey Coventry Connects
<b>2023/24</b>
Council Office Accommodation Medium Term Financial Strategy Equality and Diversity – Interview Panels Equal Pay Claim Procurement and Social Value Home to School Travel Assistance Package

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> July 2023</b>	Corporate Learning and Development Report 2022 - 2023	To scrutinise training opportunities and use of the training budget.	Cllr Brown Grace Haynes
	Workforce Metrics	To scrutinise the workforce data.	Cllr Brown Susanna Newing
<b>21<sup>st</sup> September 2023</b>	Apprenticeships	To receive an update on apprenticeships within CCC including use of the levy.	Cllr Brown Grace Haynes Andy Hyland
	Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23 to include Commercial Investments/ Income Generation	To scrutinise the Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23 report. To include Commercial Investments/ Income Generation and the Council's approach to Commercial Investments, income generation and traded services.	Cllr Brown Barry Hastie
<b>7<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b> (moved from 16 November)	Agency and consultancy spending	To review agency and consultancy spend and the length of contracts.	Cllr Brown Susanna Newing
<b>11<sup>th</sup> January 2024</b>	2024/25 Budget Consultation	To review the budget proposals and consider initial responses from the consultation process prior to Council setting the budget in February	Cllr Brown Barry Hastie Tina Pinks
	Value for Money	To review value for money though the Council's procurement arrangements	Cllr Brown Oluremi Aremu Rob Amor
<b>8<sup>th</sup> February 2024</b>	Artificial Intelligence	To review the Council's approach to AI	Cllr Brown Paul Ward Cllr Hetherton
<b>21<sup>st</sup> March 2024</b>	Speak up and speak out Staff Survey	To consider the findings from the recent staff survey	Cllr Brown Sue Newing



Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Coventry Connects	To include Customer Service channels including the feedback loop for customers and councillors and continuous improvement. To include performance indicators from OCP for Digital Inclusion	Cllr Brown/ Cllr Hetherton Adrienne Bellingeri/ Paul Ward
<b>2023/24</b>	Council Office Accommodation	Review the usage of Council office space within the context of making savings.	Cllr O'Boyle Cllr Brown Richard Moon
	Medium Term Financial Strategy	To discuss the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy prior to its approval through the political process. This is an annual item.	Cllr Brown /Barry Hastie/ Tina Pinks
	Equality and Diversity – Interview Panels	As a follow up to the item on Recruitment & Selection and Tribepad the Council's Applicant Tracking System, to review the analysis of the outcome of increasing the diversity of interview panels.	Cllr Brown Susanna Newing Grace Haynes
	Equal Pay Claim	To consider the financial impact of the equal pay claim.	Cllr Brown Susana Newing
	Procurement and Social Value		
	Home to School Travel Assistance Package	A further report on the home to school travel assistance package funding at the earliest opportunity following on from SB1 on 11/01/2024	

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