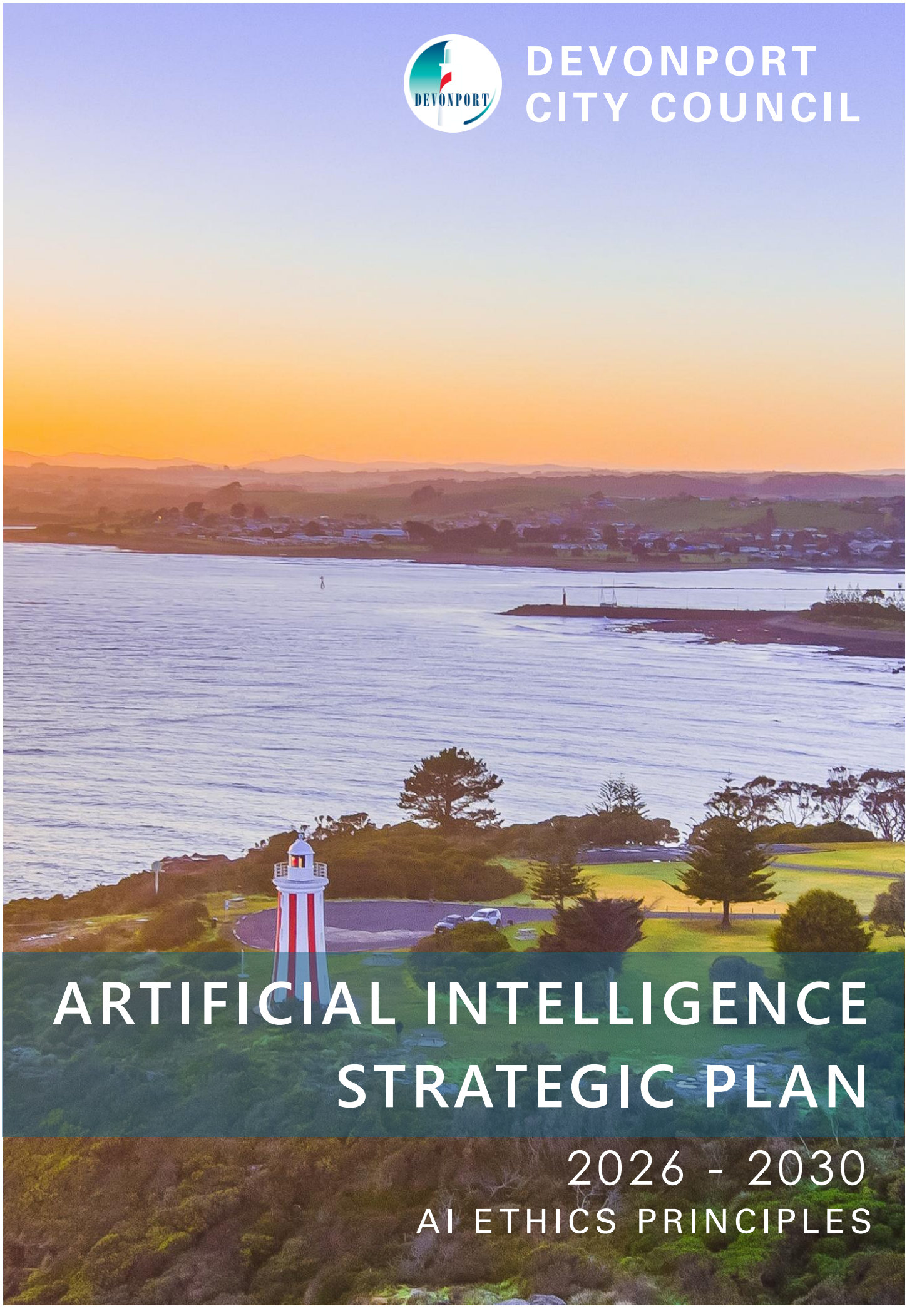
DEVONPORT CITY COUNCIL



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STRATEGIC PLAN

2026 - 2030

AI ETHICS PRINCIPLES

AI ETHICS PRINCIPLES 2026-2030

Devonport City Council leverages technology to enhance service delivery, enable informed decision making, and deliver better outcomes for our community. The responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) forms part of this approach and is aligned with Council's Annual Plan 2025/26, including the action to **"Develop an Artificial Intelligence Strategic Implementation Plan 2025-2030"**.

As AI can influence how decisions are made and how services are delivered, its use must be ethical, responsible, and consistent with community values and expectations. This document sets out the principles that guide all AI use at Devonport City Council, defining what responsible and Devonport-appropriate use of AI looks like for our community, Councillors, and staff.

WHAT IS "AI"?

In this document, Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to digital systems that assist with tasks such as:

- Analysing information and data
- Automating routine processes
- Supporting decision-making
- Generating text, summaries, or insight

This includes generative AI, decision-support tools, automation, and analytics.

COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT

Devonport City Council uses AI to support people, while remaining fully accountable for all decisions and maintaining human oversight. All AI use is guided by the Australian Government's eight AI Ethics Principles, applied in line with local values and community expectations.

Transparency and community trust underpin every use of AI by the Council.

WHY ETHICAL PRINCIPLES MATTER

Artificial intelligence can improve efficiency, consistency, and access to information, but it can also introduce risks if used without care or clear boundaries. Ethical principles provide a shared foundation for responsible AI use and help Devonport City Council to:

- Protect community trust
- Ensure people are treated fairly and respectfully
- Avoid unintended harm
- Clearly define responsibility and accountability for decisions
- Promote transparency and explainability in how AI is used

These principles set the boundaries for how AI may be used by the Council. Where there is uncertainty, risk, or disagreement about the appropriate use of AI, this framework is the reference point for decision-making.

OUR AI ETHICS PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLES EXPLAINED

This document presents Devonport City Council's locally adapted version of the Australian AI Ethics Principles, explaining each principle in plain language and providing practical examples to guide responsible AI use in a council context.

Human, social and environmental wellbeing

We will use AI to improve services and decisions in ways that support community wellbeing and positive environmental outcomes.

Example: AI is used to analyse service demand patterns to improve response times and resource allocation, while ensuring human support remains available.

Human-Centred Values

We will use AI to support people, not replace them, ensuring humans remain central to meaningful decisions.

Example: AI assists staff by drafting initial correspondence or summarising information, but Council officers review, refine, and approve all communications before sending.

Fairness

We will use AI in ways that are fair and inclusive, regularly checking for bias or unintended impacts.

Example: AI helps prioritise service requests, with regular reviews to ensure no community, cohort, or demographic group is unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged.

Privacy Protection and Security

We will use AI responsibly by protecting personal information and limiting access to appropriate data only.

Example: AI tools prioritise de-identified or aggregated data to protect privacy while still supporting analysis and reporting.

Reliability and Safety

We will use AI that is fit for purpose, tested, and always subject to human review where impacts are significant.

Example: AI-generated analysis or reports are reviewed and validated by staff before being used to inform operational or strategic decisions.

Transparency and Explainability

We ensure AI systems are fit for purpose and reliable. AI outputs will be tested, monitored, and reviewed, with additional safeguards applied to higher-risk or higher-impact uses.

Example: When AI is used to analyse community feedback or survey responses, this is clearly disclosed in reports and summaries.

Contestability

We will ensure people can question, review, and challenge AI-supported decisions. Clear pathways will exist for human review, reconsideration, or appeal where AI informs outcomes.

Example: If a resident disagrees with an AI-assisted assessment or recommendation, they can request a human review of the decision.

Accountability

We will remain fully accountable for all decisions supported by AI. Clear ownership and responsibility will be assigned, and humans will retain oversight.

Example: Even where AI supports analysis or recommendations, Council officers and elected members remain responsible and accountable for the final decision.

APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES & ACCOUNTABILITY

These principles guide how AI is used at Devonport City Council to improve services while protecting community wellbeing, human judgment, and public trust.

These principles guide how Devonport City Council uses AI across the organisation, including:

- Staff use of AI tools
- Public-facing services and systems
- Procurement and partnerships involving AI

They are applied whenever AI is considered, used, reviewed, or questioned.

Accountability

Devonport City Council remains responsible for all decisions supported by AI.

Humans remain responsible for higher-risk or higher-impact decisions, and ethical considerations apply wherever AI is used.

Raising Concerns

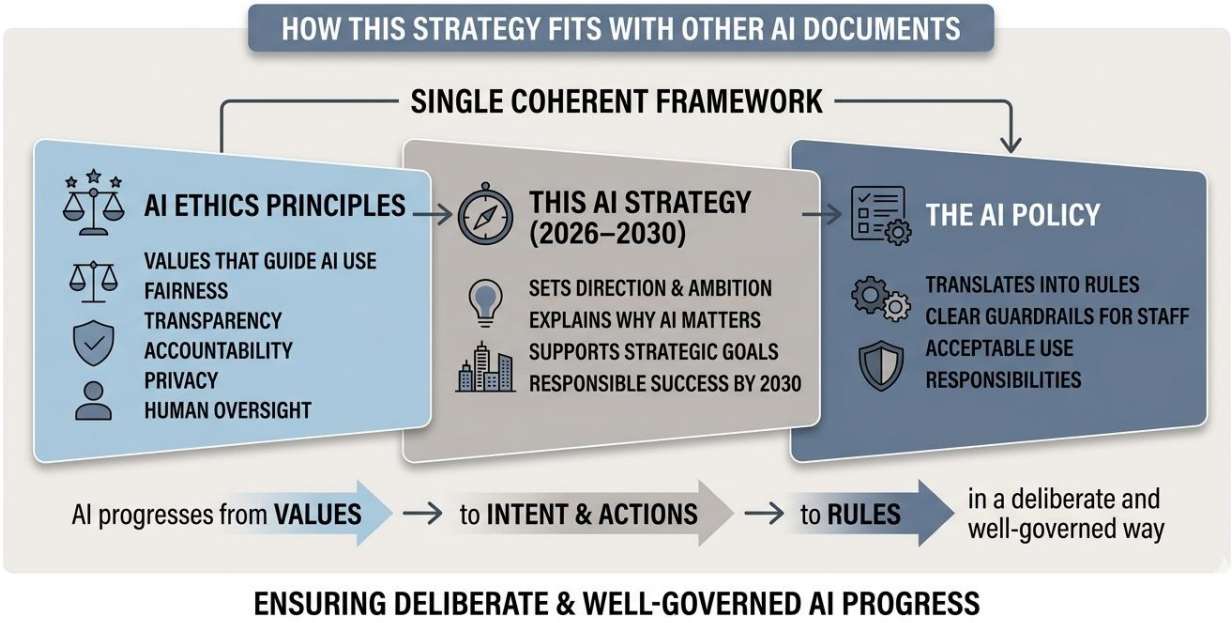
Staff and community members can ask questions or raise concerns about AI use through existing Council feedback and enquiry channels.

All feedback will be considered carefully and addressed in line with these principles.

AUSTRALIA'S AI ETHICS PRINCIPLES

The Australian Government uses a two-part approach to managing AI. First, it has a set of AI Ethics Principles that guide how AI should be used. These principles say AI should be safe, fair, and transparent, protect people's rights and privacy, and include ways for people to question decisions made by AI.

Second, the Government has a Policy for the Responsible Use of AI in Government, which turns these ideas into clear actions for agencies. This policy requires government organisations to be open about how they use AI, assign people who are responsible for it, assess risks before using it, and train staff to use AI safely.

https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/australias-ai-ethics-principles

OTHER RELATED AI STRATEGY DOCUMENTS