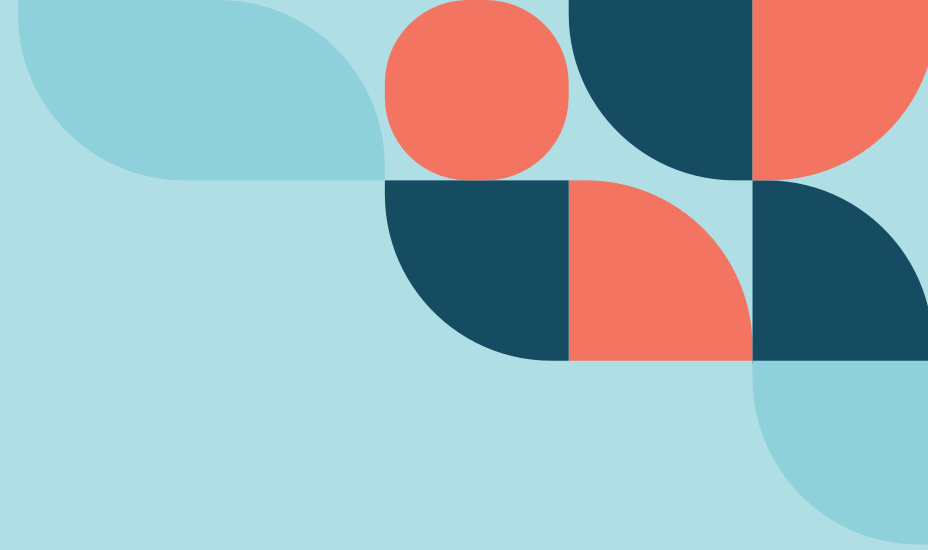




Writing in Local Government

Reluctant writer seeks like minded professionals

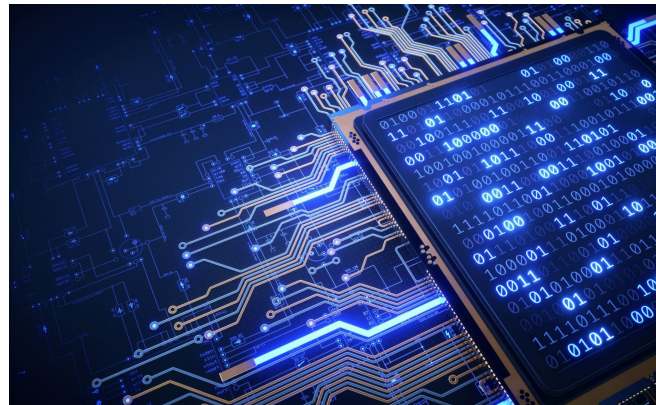
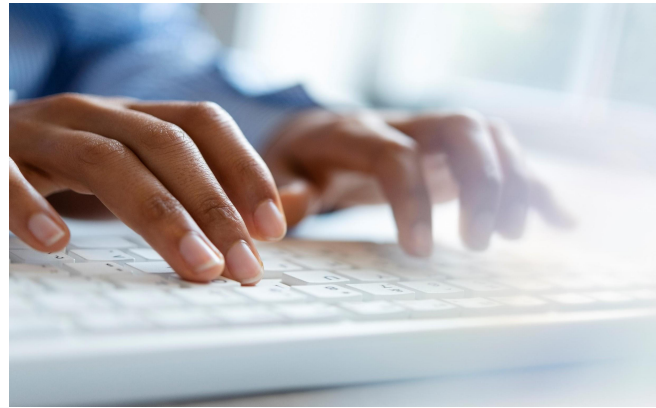
Elyse Senior Wadsworth
– Sheffield City Council



How is writing in government changing?

What is expanding

- Elected member briefings
- Capital funding decisions
- Planning decisions
- Assessment outcomes
- Funding Bids
- Award submissions
- Certification scheme submissions
- Customer information and instruction
- Recruitment
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Statutory notifications and notices
- Litigation and legal submissions



Outputs are much more static

- Test yourselves when you go back today, look at a key document in your organisation and see how its changed in the last 3 years.
- In the last 3 years, what we read is now across a much wider range of platforms and channels, yet we communicate in a single way often.
- The next big shift is changing our outputs and communication.
- Using behavioural science is one area we have transformed our writing.



Before you write a single word

Who - Know your audience – every time

How - Standardise anything you can, format templates, clauses, FAQs

Why – The outcome you are trying to achieve, start with the end in mind

Timeline – what is the submission deadline, sign off process etc and work back



Drafting

Write an outline first so you know the key points or headings you need to use.

What was the last thing your audience read or were told on this subject ?

Gather resources, references, data and evidence

Consider dictation if like me you speak better than you write



Editing

Write or dictate your content quickly, don't over think get things down

Get MS word to read it back to you – Read aloud has changed my life.

If your stuck use AI to give you something to use or ignore – both unblock you

In fact use AI anyway, reduce word count, increase formality, reduce the reading age, summarise references and resources for you.....but check it - twice



Day to Day in Local Government

Use different channels appropriately, don't have informal chats over email – that's what teams is for. Even better invest in organisational standards.

Write as though you are typing into the front page of your local newspaper, it may be confidential but if it was public would you stand by the tone and professionalism

Use email well, don't use cc needlessly, always apply your signature, check your writing, consider your tone and temper

Share tips and hacks for using AI and technology across you team and community