



CASE STUDY



Workforce Priority Fund



AI From Fear to Fearless

People-powered transformation in Local Government

In the rapidly evolving landscape of generative AI, we recognised a critical truth: technological transformation is fundamentally about people, ways of working not just systems or tools. HR and OD professionals are the natural architects of this change – they are the guardians of organisational culture, the designers of workforce capabilities, and the strategic partners who understand that technology's true potential lies in human potential.

While IT departments may understand the technical intricacies of AI, HR and OD professionals bring something infinitely valuable: a holistic view of organisational dynamics, human capability, and strategic workforce development. They are uniquely equipped to:



Understand the human impact of technological change



Design learning and adaptation strategies



Align AI implementation with organisational values and mission



Shape and nurture the human elements of work



Navigate the complex intersection of technology, skills, and organisational culture

As age demographics of our citizens are shifting so too are their expectations. Councils must be equipped to deliver services that are not just efficient and effective, but truly responsive to the changing needs of their communities. WME believes that GenAI is part of the solution and a people transformation journey.

"Heather's sessions were fantastic - she is so knowledgeable, honest and down to Earth. She explained the different aspects of AI in a clear and easy to understand way. She has inspired us all to push for a clear corporate strategy about how we can all use AI"

Hannah Preece (HR & OD Service Delivery Manager-Telford & Wrekin Council)

Breaking down barriers, building confidence

WME was excited to find and onboard Heather Murray as a respected AI trainer and influencer. We co-created the AI From Fear to Fearless Programme just at the right time as she now is in great demand all around the world delivering AI training in a non techie way. Having participated in the training ourselves, positioned AI right at the heart of our #Buildawindmill thinking, it made sense to extend the invitation to our colleagues across the region supported by the Workforce Priority Fund.

This carefully crafted learning, designed to empower HR and OD professionals, supported 15 of our local authorities collectively see generative AI as a strategic enabler of human potential and a means to capacity and efficiency. While many councils explore Microsoft Copilot through their licensing, their real power now lies in understanding the broader AI ecosystem and potential “shadow AI” activity.

During January – March 2025, 76 colleagues across the region ranging from practitioners to Directors with a focus on everything from resourcing, Learning & Development, Inclusion and HR to OD, communication, payroll, talent and data analytics, took part in:

A myth-busting, art of the possible Webinar

Transforming uncertainty into excitement by showcasing real-world GenAI applications

57 of those participants then went on to attend:

Four in person training sessions:

- Prompting like a pro
- Creating and editing killer content
- Personal productivity
- Workflows and automation

“My team have been incredibly positive and I’ve joined more of Heather’s sessions since in my own time. It really has been a brilliant launch pad. Thank you again for putting these sessions on (gold dust!).”

Trish Williams, Dudley MBCI



“Mind blown. Just stepped out of a game-changing ‘Prompt like a pro’ workshop. This session was specifically designed for non-technical professionals who want to embrace AI in meaningful ways. As someone working in a local authority I was amazed to discover how AI can enhance our public service delivery without replacing the human touch. The workshop addressed those common anxieties we all share while providing hands on experience with various AI tools. What really clicked for me was seeing how these tools could help us create more inclusive and accessible services for our communities and workforce.”

Samreen Allam, Dudley MBC

And a final stay and play activity:

Taking the programme beyond theoretical discussions and challenging participants to explore and co-create scalable GenAI solutions to common HR and OD challenges such as:

1

Revolutionising induction & onboarding

Participants tackled the persistent challenge of inconsistent onboarding processes, exploring how AI could create more engaging, personalised employee experiences. The focus was on developing adaptive, intelligent onboarding solutions that guide new employees seamlessly.

2

Rethinking job design & employer branding

With workforce demographics rapidly changing, teams investigated AI-powered strategies to attract and retain talent across generations. The exploration centred on using AI to reimagine job design, recruitment techniques, and employer branding.

3

Workforce transformation & strategic planning

Facing financial constraints and shifting priorities, participants examined how AI could support sophisticated workforce restructuring. The goal was to develop intelligent approaches to role redesign and strategic workforce planning.

4

AI-driven learning & leadership development

Resource limitations often constrain training initiatives. Our program challenged participants to conceptualise scalable, accessible learning solutions leveraging AI's capabilities to personalise and enhance development pathways.

5

Embedding inclusion & accessibility

Beyond EDI commitments, teams explored how AI could practically embed inclusion and accessibility into HR processes, creating more equitable organisational environments.

Importantly, the design ensured participants could innovate confidently, responsibly, and with a deep commitment to public trust and safety. GenAI was explored thoughtfully including recognition of its risks and limitations. We made sure there was space for robust governance, ethical consideration, and risk management all whilst addressing critical safeguards as strategic enablers.

By focusing on people, skills, and meaningful application, we've laid a strong foundation for strategic GenAI consideration and purposeful adoption. We've equipped and inspired people professionals to drive intentional organisational conversations that puts human potential at its core.

The true power of AI isn't in the technology itself, but in the creative, strategic thinking of the professionals who learn to harness it.

We look forward to helping you do just that.

Contact us to discover the next wave of support we've got planned to help you lead with confidence in the age of GenAI.