# AI tool Minute trials show promise in cutting local council admin time and boosting housing delivery



As local councils navigate the challenges of bureaucratic overhead and service delivery, a newly trialled AI tool called "Minute," part of the "Humphrey" suite, promises to alleviate some of these burdens. Developed under the auspices of the UK government and currently being tested in 25 councils, including West Berkshire and Stockton-on-Tees, "Minute" aims to streamline administrative processes, specifically in planning and social care sectors. The initiative aligns with the government’s broader ambition to enhance efficiency in public services and facilitate the construction of 1.5 million homes by 2030.

Preliminary results from the trials are encouraging. Officials report a remarkable saving of around one hour in administrative tasks for every hour spent in meetings, allowing them to devote more time to their core responsibilities. Almost half of the participants in the initial tests identified note-taking as one of the least enjoyable aspects of their roles. By automating this process, the AI not only lightens the administrative load but also empowers staff to make informed decisions faster, which is especially pertinent in the planning phases of housing developments.

The significance of this technology extends beyond mere administrative savings. During a recent meeting of the Prime Minister's Council of Nations and Regions, "Minute" demonstrated its capabilities by efficiently recording discussions on trade agreements and other pressing issues. This marked a notable first in UK governmental history, showcasing AI’s potential to modernise how public meetings are documented and decisions are communicated.

AI and Digital Government Minister Feryal Clark highlighted the importance of this initiative, asserting that local councils have often faced challenges in keeping pace with rapid technological advancements. By deploying "Humphrey," the government hopes to enhance decision-making capacities and overall service delivery across the UK. “For too long, they have been left to fend for themselves,” she stated, reinforcing the notion that innovative tools like "Minute" could drastically improve how local authorities manage essential services.

Furthering the government’s ambitions, there is a concerted effort to consolidate technology needs across local councils. With current estimates indicating that councils are spending approximately £5 billion annually on tech, the fragmentation of these purchases has made such expenditure inefficient. A collaborative approach towards technology acquisition and implementation, bolstered by tools like "Minute," could yield significant savings and lead to better public services.

The introduction of an AI Knowledge Hub alongside the trial is another step in this direction, aimed at sharing best practices and innovative uses of technology across various local councils. By pooling resources and experiences, councils can enhance their digital strategies and ultimately better serve their constituents.

As the trials continue, Baroness Taylor, the Minister for Housing and Local Government, emphasised the frontline role of local councils in housing delivery. She indicated that the deployment of cutting-edge technology such as "Minute" is pivotal in enabling officers to redirect their focus from administrative tasks to critical aspects of housing development, thereby fostering economic growth and helping families secure homes.

In conclusion, the initiative surrounding the "Humphrey" suite and its "Minute" tool signifies a noteworthy step in transforming local governance. As the trials progress, they may not only provide insights into the effectiveness of AI in improving administrative processes but also set a precedent for future technology integration within the public sector.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open), [[2]](https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open), [[3]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/shake-up-of-tech-and-ai-usage-across-nhs-and-other-public-services-to-deliver-plan-for-change)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open), [[2]](https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/peter-kyle-civil-service-whitehall-bbc-keir-starmer-b1206006.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open), [[4]](https://www.civilserviceworld.com/professions/article/dsit-humphrey-ai-package-civil-servants-45bn-productivity-drive)
* Paragraph 5 – [[6]](https://www.digitalhealth.net/2025/01/government-announces-tech-and-ai-plans-to-streamline-nhs/), [[3]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/shake-up-of-tech-and-ai-usage-across-nhs-and-other-public-services-to-deliver-plan-for-change)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open), [[7]](https://www.civilserviceworld.com/professions/article/dsit-humphrey-ai-package-civil-servants-45bn-productivity-drive)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open), [[4]](https://www.civilserviceworld.com/professions/article/dsit-humphrey-ai-package-civil-servants-45bn-productivity-drive)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/news.nsf/articles/AI+experiments+see+Humphrey+help+townhalls+cut+costs+and+improve+services+23052025171500?open> - The UK government is testing an AI tool named 'Minute' within the 'Humphrey' suite to streamline administrative tasks in local councils, aiming to save officials an hour of admin per hour-long meeting. This initiative supports the government's goal of building 1.5 million homes by 2030 by expediting planning processes and reducing bureaucratic burdens in social care meetings.
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/shake-up-of-tech-and-ai-usage-across-nhs-and-other-public-services-to-deliver-plan-for-change> - The UK government has announced a new plan to leverage technology and AI tools like 'Humphrey' to streamline public services, eliminate delays through improved data sharing, and reduce costs, including consultant spending. The 'Humphrey' suite includes tools such as 'Consult' for analyzing consultation responses and 'Minute' for transcribing meetings, aiming to modernize technology and deliver better public services.
4. <https://www.civilserviceworld.com/professions/article/dsit-humphrey-ai-package-civil-servants-45bn-productivity-drive> - The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) has unveiled 'Humphrey', a suite of AI tools designed to enhance civil service efficiency. Named after Sir Humphrey Appleby from 'Yes, Minister', the package includes 'Consult' for rapid analysis of consultation responses, 'Parlex' for analyzing parliamentary debates, 'Minute' for meeting transcriptions, 'Redbox' for policy briefings, and 'Lex' for legal research, aiming to boost productivity and reduce costs.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/peter-kyle-civil-service-whitehall-bbc-keir-starmer-b1206006.html> - The UK government is rolling out a package of AI tools named 'Humphrey' to the Civil Service to reduce consultant spending and accelerate work in Whitehall. The suite includes 'Consult' for analyzing consultation responses, 'Parlex' for examining parliamentary debates, 'Minute' for meeting transcriptions, 'Redbox' for preparing briefings, and 'Lex' for legal research, aiming to modernize digital services and improve public access.
6. <https://www.digitalhealth.net/2025/01/government-announces-tech-and-ai-plans-to-streamline-nhs/> - The UK government has announced a new package of AI tools, nicknamed 'Humphrey', to streamline the NHS and other public services. Developed by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, the suite includes 'Consult' for analyzing consultation responses, 'Minute' for meeting transcriptions, 'Redbox' for policy briefings, and 'Lex' for legal research, aiming to modernize technology and deliver better public services.
7. <https://www.civilserviceworld.com/professions/article/dsit-humphrey-ai-package-civil-servants-45bn-productivity-drive> - The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) has unveiled 'Humphrey', a suite of AI tools designed to enhance civil service efficiency. Named after Sir Humphrey Appleby from 'Yes, Minister', the package includes 'Consult' for rapid analysis of consultation responses, 'Parlex' for analyzing parliamentary debates, 'Minute' for meeting transcriptions, 'Redbox' for policy briefings, and 'Lex' for legal research, aiming to boost productivity and reduce costs.