

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

[REDACTED]  
(By email)

Our Ref: MGLA280119-4305

20 February 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information about the use of any algorithms or machine-learning systems, which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 28 January 2019. Your request has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Because your request focuses on the delivery of public services, I should clarify that the GLA is London's strategic government and does not operate in the same way as local councils, which are responsible for the majority of public services. London's Borough Councils are listed here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/in-my-area>.

Please find attached the information that the GLA holds within the scope of your request:

1. *Is your organisation using any algorithms and/or artificial intelligence software in the process of delivering public services?*

The Digital Team, within the Greater London Authority, are currently trialling a chat bot on the London.Gov contact us page and on the contact us web form page on an A/B test.

2. *If Yes, please provide details:*  
*(i) Of the algorithms or artificial intelligence software you use;*

We are using Intercom's Custom Bot functionality on the London.Gov page previously specified above.

- (ii) Of whether you use a commercial product or whether you have developed your own system;*

It is a commercial product provided by Intercom.

- (iii) Of the purpose for which the algorithm and/or artificial intelligence software operates;*

The chat bot is being used to provide customer service/support to those visiting the contact us page or using the contact us web form.

*(iv) Of the decisions the algorithm and/or artificial intelligence software is asked to make or assist*

The chat bot is used to signpost users to relevant areas of the London.Gov website or to external websites that best meet their stated need.

*(v) Of the type, classification and amount of data that the algorithm and/or artificial intelligence software uses in the decision-making process;*

The content for the chat bot is entered manually based on existing Frequently Asked Questions material developed by the Public Liaison Unit.

*(vi) Of the process by which the decision made or assisted by the algorithm is subject to human review;*

The chat bot does not make decisions and the way it assists users is predetermined by human entry. Humans also review the chat bot's activity to continuously improve the service offering.

*(vii) Of the process by which you inform an individual that they have been subject to a decision made or aided by an algorithm and/or artificial intelligence software?*

The Welcome Message for the chat bot makes it clear that it is not a human and we make provision for users to get in touch with a human via a link to the web form.

*(viii) Of the process by which a member of the public can challenge a decision that has been made or aided by an algorithm and/or artificial intelligence software;*

The chat bot does not make decisions as it only provides options for further assistance or signposting to external guidance. The user can still access the contact us web form to seek assistance on topics not offered by the chat bot or to submit complaints.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference MGLA280119-4305.

Yours sincerely

**Ruth Phillips**  
**Information Governance Officer**

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>