

# Best Value Review of ICT

## Hypothesis 6 Report

### Summary sheet

#### Hypothesis

If we introduce an alternative training model (e.g. centralise ICT training and purchasing and / or integrate ICT and mainstream training) that takes into account the competency framework and the integration of ICT, information and business roles as far as possible, we would realise efficiencies and ensure a consistent quality of training.

#### Summary of recommendations

- Pilot CBT.
- Corporate Personnel to lead corporately on ICT training, working with departments.
- Identify additional training accommodation.
- Move away from departmental ownership of meeting/training rooms.
- Agree, corporately, the extent of funds desirable and available for ICT training, ensure their availability. Transfer a proportion of departmental training budgets to Corporate Personnel.
- Clarify expenditure information on ICT training, Corporate Personnel to lead on budget monitoring.
- Performance Mgt process to provide training needs and results information locally. Results to be fed-back to, and collated by, Corporate Personnel.
- Corporate Personnel to ensure that as new managers are appointed information management responsibilities are written into job descriptions.
- Impact on departmental trainers and administrators to be ascertained and resolved.
- Training on departmental bespoke systems to remain with departments.
- Training for IT professionals should be managed centrally to an agreed competency framework.
- Increase training levels (additional 3,000 staff x 3 day course)

#### Service Benefits

- All staff will have at least a base ICT knowledge.
- More effective training.
- Constant access to training.
- More cost effective basis for training.
- Reduced administration input to training.
- Clearer view of what training costs.
- Wider access to training rooms and facilities.
- Clearer administration of meeting/training rooms.
- Cost-effective use of meeting/training rooms

<p><b>Estimated future costs / efficiencies</b></p>	<p>Introduction of ECDL will significantly increase costs, with the requirement to provide a base level of competency to a projected 3000 people. Efficiency savings should be achievable by the centralisation of training management and administration, and the introduction of a computerised booking system. Centralisation will also enable costs to be known and monitored.</p>
<p><b>Current costs</b></p>	<p>ICT external training expenditure on both users and technical staff is extremely low when related to service pay budgets; Corporate Services being 0.22% (£20,532) for users; and Social Services 0.06% (£41,393) for 1999/00. Figures for 1999, published by the authoritative 'Industrial Society' in 'Training Trends,' reflect average Public Sector expenditure on ALL training to be 3.3% of the total pay bill. HCC's comparative figure was 1.25% (some £5.7m). Even allowing for variations in costing practices our research does indicate a significant general under funding of training, and of ICT training in particular.</p> <p>Days training provided, in relation to departmental head counts, are also very low at between ¼ to ½ day per Annum. These figures are significantly inflated by Lotus Mail training, so a normal year is likely to be less. The overall picture is therefore one of low training provision and low-levels of expenditure.</p> <p>Identifying and extracting training costs and provisions was a time consuming manual process, which no corporate financial or personnel system could contribute to.</p> <p>The variety of training practices and local agreements on accommodation result in limited opportunities for meaningful comparisons across departments.</p>
<p><b>Risks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> CBT pilot not successful.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> CBT training at too low a level.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lack of support from departments.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation unavailable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Costs not supportable.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Personnel unable to lead.</li> </ul>

<b>Volumes</b>	Extrapolations used to assess extent of corporate ICT Training.
<b>Ease of Implementation</b>	Implementation is not likely to be difficult, needing buy-in from departments and funding.
<b>Further information / work required</b>	Further work required following the results of the CBT pilot study.

**Report Author...Jim Ewers**

# **Report**

## **Summary of Hypothesis**

If we introduce an alternative training model (e.g. centralise ICT training and purchasing and / or integrate ICT and mainstream training), we would realise efficiencies and ensure a consistent quality of training.

## **Approach taken**

We agreed on a cross-section of services for determining ICT training costs and arrangements: Corporate Services; Environment; Social Services. Details sought were for accommodation facilities and training provided internally and externally for the years 1999/2000 and 2000/2001 to date (August). These included costs, days, and course subjects. We also sought to identify suitable accommodation available corporately for in-house ICT training, a key criteria being connection to the corporate data network.

Information was provided via telephone, Email and at meetings from responsible departmental staff and data was obtained electronically and on hardcopy. This was analysed to provide meaningful analysis and comparison.

## **Observations on current system**

ICT training is currently administered locally within departments, with little, if any centralised administration, control or monitoring. Practices vary between, and sometimes within, departments in their methods of provision and recording. Delivery of training is difficult to determine as information is held locally within a variety of departmental computer and manual personnel systems. Costs also cannot be easily or reliably identified from the corporate financial or Human Resources systems, as information is only, realistically, available locally. Information on the extent of training received by individuals varies between departments and it would be necessary to access performance management agreements to assess views on the effectiveness of training received. These comments would also apply to most other areas of training received by officers.

ICT training is provided to users at varying levels, primarily in a limited range of office and Email software, which is common to all departments. It is arranged by departmental personnel sections, or even more locally, by users' sections, and provided mostly by outside training organisations. Payment is on a per capita fee or a daily fee agreed to provide training to a number of attendees at HCC sites. Most providers are specific to one department, but there is also some limited crossover.

Environment departs from this model and has recently appointed an internal trainer for the office software, in addition to specific in-house systems. Social Services use external providers but do use internal trainers for operational, and some other, systems.

County Supplies and Contract Services operates an alternative to these models in using computer based training (CBT) based on users working through exercises on PC's attached to a CD ROM. Sessions are ad-hoc, in a room with dedicated PC's, and are of short but intensive duration. The training software is purchased on an annual licence fee basis, this permits unlimited access by users. Social Services have similar training software but this is viewed as for refresher rather than first line training.

External courses are provided at the sites of suppliers' or within HCC. The latter accommodation is substantially dedicated to the services running the courses and cannot, currently, be regarded as a corporate training resource. If network points are regarded as prerequisites for ICT training rooms, a number of rooms with potential exist within County Hall and at other HCC sites. However, these are 'owned' and managed by a wide variety of departments, most of whom have a low level of awareness of network connections available. Property-related systems, also, do not provide this information. Many rooms, particularly the largest and those with most potential in County Hall, already experience high occupancy rates and may not have capacity to consistently accommodate high volumes of internal training courses, or the necessary equipment. However, the Technology Awareness room is fully equipped and would be a key resource if made available for training. Further opportunities will exist from network cabling work to provide stand-by accommodation as part of the County Hall Business Continuity Plan, although much of this is still at the planning stage. A further strong element is that many rooms are dedicated to members or specific services and opening them up to corporate training would require strong persuasion.

### **Potential changes / proposals**

Related Hypotheses 5 and 7 both recommend moves towards Computer Based Training (CBT) and opportunities here are considered in this context. Adopting the widespread use of CBT should reduce costs per user, particularly if the most advantageous licensing arrangements are used and there is a full take-up. Due to technology constraints, this is currently only feasible via CD-ROM, but more flexibility on training locations will occur when this can be supplied across a number of sites, via the corporate data network.

Management of ICT training, if performed on a corporate basis, possibly by Corporate Personnel, would include provision of an agreed product and training accommodation. Products will need to be selected on quality and close alignment with HCC configuration preferences (with input from receiving departments), in addition to costs, as it is on these grounds that the business case is most critical. Training sessions bookings processes will need to minimise effort, preferably directly by users via a computerised system.

CBT will require more availability of constantly usable training accommodation within HCC, particularly at County Hall where demand for meeting rooms is already high. The TA room has been suggested in Hypotheses 7 as a suitable venue for a pilot study. This will require an agreed change to its current use, but if a training bottleneck

is to be avoided, more accommodation and equipment will be required for corporate provision. In connection with this, a move towards a corporate attitude towards meeting / training room ownership and management would free-up accommodation, achieve more effective use of resources, simplify bookings and clarify responsibilities and facilities available.

If the CBT trial is unsuccessful, and the retention of formal training agreed, from the models reviewed where there is past experience, we consider the Social Services style offers the most advantages (trainers on a daily fee basis, providing training in HCC centres).

Training for IT professionals is currently ad-hoc, low volume, administered locally, and has no competency framework links. We believe that this should also be managed centrally to an agreed competency framework.

### **Service benefits**

Implementation will need to ensure that the training product and resources are closely aligned to the needs of services and the organisation as a whole. Depending on the model adopted, benefits should be:

- ❑ **All staff will have at least a base ICT knowledge** – will increase their efficiency and effectiveness, with probable reduction in Help requirements
- ❑ **More effective training** – aligned to individuals' needs and availability
- ❑ **Constant access to training** – facilities can be accessed at all times
- ❑ **More cost effective basis for training** – constant availability and low per capita costs
- ❑ **Reduced administration input to training** – reduced departmental administration in course research and booking
- ❑ **Clearer view of what training costs** – central provision of CBT software and training facilities will clarify costs
- ❑ **Wider access to training rooms and facilities** – moves away from departmental ownership will widen availability
- ❑ **Clearer administration of meeting / training rooms** – one point of access to all rooms has benefits extending to all areas
- ❑ **Cost-effective use of meeting / training rooms** – wider availability should lead to more intensive use of all facilities

### **Current costs (see Appendix A for detail)**

ICT external training expenditure on both users and technical staff (excludes bespoke departmental systems) is extremely low when related to service pay budgets; Corporate Services being 0.22% (£20,532) for users and 0.16% (£14,513) for ICT professionals; and Social Services 0.06% (£41,393) and 0.008% (£5580) respectively for 1999/00. Extrapolating for the ranges reflected by these percentages, indicates a wide range of approximation of between £309k and £1.75m being spent corporately on external ICT training, although this is misleading due to the inclusion of pay -groups not within the

scope of this review. Figures for 1999, published by the authoritative 'Industrial Society' in 'Training Trends,' reflect average Public Sector expenditure on ALL training to be 3.3% of the total pay bill. HCC's comparative figure was 1.25% (some £5.7m). Even allowing for variations in costing practices (e.g. some organisations apportion salaries costs) our research does indicate a significant general under-funding of training, and of ICT training in particular.

Days training provided, in relation to departmental head counts, are also very low at between ¼ to ½ day per annum. These figures are significantly inflated by Lotus Mail training, so a normal year is likely to be less. The overall picture is therefore one of low training provision and low-levels of expenditure. Even if the most cost-effective methods of provision are used, additional resources will be necessary to bring all staff up to, even as a minimum, the ECDL standards.

Of the alternative models of provision considered, detailed in Appendix A, traditional courses on a charge per head are very significantly the highest. Courses run in-house using contracted trainers (the current Social Services model) have the next closest cost similarity and CBT is lowest (although costs will vary according to how resources are provided around the County). However, all need to be judged on quality, improved staff efficiency, effectiveness and satisfaction, together with administrative overheads.

Identifying and extracting training costs and provisions was a time consuming manual process, which no corporate financial or personnel system could contribute to. This was in line with the proposals for accounting, arising from the ICT MSR, which recognised difficulties in identifying ICT training expenditure due to extensive devolution of budgets. They concluded that recording expenditure would require end-of-period analysis from the review of Training & Development plans. We obtained costs direct from a variety of departmental systems (manual or computer). This was viewed as the best source to identify expenditure charged to both training and project budgets.

The variety of training practices and local agreements on accommodation result in limited opportunities for meaningful comparisons across departments, but figures are provided in Appendix A with costs per day and per head.

### **Estimated future costs / efficiencies**

The adoption of ECDL to provide base ICT knowledge to all staff will require significant expenditure, which existing training budgets will be unable to fund. Alternative resources will be necessary. Appendix A indicates expected costs for various training models, CBT, based on CD-ROM's, being the basis being preferred by related Hypotheses and showing the lowest cost. The recommended pilot for Corporate Services, using the TA room as a base, and electronic booking, is a low cost solution, projected by Hypothesis 7 at £40k. Extending this corporately will require further accommodation, equipment and personnel resources, the extent of which will only be known after analysis of the results of the skills audit. To provide comparative cost estimates, we have anticipated a three year rollout to some 3k staff, excluding administration costs. CBT is the lowest cost basis, estimated at £160,334. The use of

trainers on a daily fee rate is estimated second highest at £270k. The likely model adopted is likely to combine both styles, as CBT is not suitable for all occasions or people, and will not be based solely on County Hall. More work will be required to refine these figures, to reflect the demand patterns indicated from the outcome of the skills audit and training accommodation availability.

One point of central management and administration for ICT training, within Corporate Personnel and including meeting / training rooms, coupled with a computerised booking system is the preferred, lowest cost, option. This will reduce the current fragmentation and duplication of arrangements and allow for a clearer system of costing. Placement within Corporate Personnel will ensure that ICT training is fully integrated with other areas of competency and also that links are made with Performance Management. This will require further resources within Corporate Personnel, possibly achieved by the transfer of those currently administering departmental arrangements.

### **Implementation issues**

Implementation of a centralised CBT-based system of ICT training will require a corporate initiative, with buy-in from all departments, and ownership of responsibility by Corporate Personnel. Specific issues identified are:

- Ensuring availability of TA Room and subsequent success of proposed pilot trial.
- CBT quality and level to match departments' requirements.
- Determine which departments will be covered by the proposals (CI are already going-ahead with their own CBT project for Libraries and CSCS already have CBT).
- Agreement on a standard corporate CBT product (likely to be led by CI).
- Willingness of departments to embrace the proposed CBT plans, particularly those which have dedicated in-house providers (issues will need to be addressed on the placement of these staff).
- Implement an on-line booking system for training centres.
- Willingness of departments to action a centralised training infrastructure.
- Willingness of departments to pass control of their dedicated meeting / training rooms to the centre.
- Provision and funding of ICT training accommodation and equipment (especially in County Hall), probably by budget transfer from departments.
- Devise an accounting structure which provides clear reporting ICT training.
- Aligning ICT training processes and provision with other training.

### **Potential risks**

A number of risks accompany implementation of the recommendations, some of which the pilot will provide an early indication of:

- CBT training pilot not successful.

- ❑ CBT training at too low level (basic to expert is required).
- ❑ Lack of support from departments for the recommendations on centralisation.
- ❑ High time overhead in undertaking the ECDL skills assessment.
- ❑ Accommodation for ICT training is not available.
- ❑ Lack of budget to support CBT.
- ❑ Corporate Personnel unwilling to lead on ICT training.

### **Volume information used**

Extrapolations used to assess extent of corporate ICT training

### **Extra skills / training required**

- ❑ CBT support skills will be necessary
- ❑ Otherwise no special competencies are required

### **IT development / investment**

- ❑ Limited software investment required for the pilot
- ❑ Further CBT investment and hardware / software investment required for wider rollout
- ❑ Networked room booking software (already being developed for general booking use)
- ❑ Additional network investment in the future (to facilitate CBT on-line)
- ❑ Laptop soundcards (already actioned within this review)

### **Further information / work required**

Further work required following the results of the CBT pilot study

### **Recommendations**

- ❑ Pilot CBT as recommended by Hypotheses 5 and 7.
- ❑ Corporate Personnel to lead on ICT training corporately, but must work closely with departments to ensure quality and their needs are being met, especially on the choice of CBT product.
- ❑ Identify additional accommodation for permanent training facilities (link to be made to general accommodation review currently in progress).
- ❑ Designate training and meeting rooms as corporate facilities with centralised responsibility for management (as above).
- ❑ Agree, corporately, the extent of funds desirable and available for ICT training and ensure their availability. Move an agreed proportion of departmental training budgets to Corporate Personnel towards financing CBT.

- ❑ Clarify expenditure information on ICT training, and Corporate Personnel to perform budget monitoring.
- ❑ Needs for and success of training should be managed within divisions, as part of the Performance Management process. Results should be fed-back to Corporate Personnel as part of overall performance monitoring.
- ❑ Corporate Personnel to ensure that as new managers are appointed information management responsibilities are written into job descriptions.
- ❑ The impact on departmental trainers and administrators will need to be ascertained and resolved.
- ❑ Training for IT professionals should be managed centrally to an agreed competency framework.
- ❑ Increase training levels (additional 3,000 staff x 3 day course)

## Appendix A (Current Costs & Projections)

ICT Training as a percentage Of service budgets 1999/00:	User Training % service budget	Technical Training % service budget
Corporate Services	0.20	0.14
Social Services	0.03	0.003

Users – training externally provided	Days 2000/01	Cost £ 2000/01	Days 1999/2000	Cost £ 1999/00
Corporate Services (Main)	172	14928	104	8684
CSCS	*0	**7970	*0	**7970
Strategy & Consultancy	2	411	16	3688
Social Services	405	29647	894	41393
<b>Totals</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>52956</b>	<b>1014</b>	<b>61735</b>

\* Information not available

\*\* CBT annual licence fee

Users – training internally provided	Days 2000/01	Cost £ 2000/01	Days 1999/2000	Cost £ 1999/00
Corporate Services (Main)	11	418	5	190
CSCS	0	0	0	0
Strategy & Consultancy	0	0	0	0
Social Services	94	*0	174	*0
Environment				**8248
<b>Totals</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>8438</b>

\* trainers and accommodation costs not costed

\*\* training all provided internally

Technical – training externally provided	Days 2000/01	Cost £ 2000/01	Days 1999/2000	Cost £ 1999/00
Corporate Services (Main)	1	0	83.5	14513
CSCS	9	3700	0	0
Strategy & Consultancy	0	0	0	0
Social Services	0	0	28	5580
Environment	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3700</b>	<b>111.5</b>	<b>20093</b>

Due to differing practices, comparisons are difficult, but these have been produced below:

<b><u>Externally provided User training – detail</u></b>	<b>Days 2000/01</b>	<b>Cost £ 2000/01</b>	<b>Days 1999/2000</b>	<b>Cost £ 1999/00</b>
<b><u>Total Days/Costs per day - paid training days:</u></b>				
Corporate services (excluding S&C)	168	89	89	98
Strategy & Consultancy	2	205	16	230
County Supplies & Contract Services	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Social Services	405	73	894	46
<b><u>Training days provided &amp; spend per department staff headcount</u></b>				
Corporate services (excluding S&C)	0.54	47	0.33	27
Strategy & Consultancy	0.125	26	0.56	230
Social Services	0.12	7.4	0.27	10.3
County Supplies & Contract Services	N/a	27	N/a	27

- ❑ Social Services show the lowest cost per training day, but this will be partly off-set by a local agreement for free accommodation not being costed.
- ❑ Environment cannot be compared due to lack of historical data for their training method.
- ❑ Actual take-up data of CBT training not available from CSCS system, cost based on annual licence fee, excludes accommodation and equipment.

## Appendix B

### ECDL TRAINING COST SCENARIOS BASED ON 3000 USER TRAINING REQUIREMENT OVER 3 YRS

#### **1 SOCIAL SERVICES MODEL – trainers hired on daily fee rate to provide training on HCC sites**

<u>Detail</u>	<u>Cost £</u>
3000 staff @ 3 training day requirement each (9000) training say 20 per day session = 450 day sessions @ £300 rate per day	135,000
Accommodation, £300 per day (Wheathampstead rate) for 20 PC suite	135,000
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>270,000</u></b>

#### **2 TRADITIONAL COURSE – course booked via training company**

<u>Detail</u>	<u>Cost £</u>
3000 staff @ say 3 training days requirement each (9000), say cost per head per day is £90	810,000
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>810,000</u></b>

#### **3 CBT MODEL – managed training programme if based fully at County Hall (4 rooms each housing 10 PC's)**

40 PC's @ £1200 each	48,000
4 County Hall training rooms - 3yr room charge	19,134
CBT software licence for 40 desktops (pro-rata'd from £3,500 for 10)	14,000
Assumed facilities management costs 3 years (H6 grade, £24k pa including on-cost).	72,000
Equipment – wiring, fileserver, CD jukebox, LAN	7,200
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>160,334</u></b>



## Appendix C

### Meeting Rooms potentially available for BCP purposes – translated to ICT Training purposes

**Note:**

Unless specified the outlet figures refer to category 5 outlets used for data & telephone services

<b>Area: Canteen block</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Number of outlets</b>	<b>Current Occupancy if known</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Canteen eating area		None	N/A	
Canteen foyer		none	N/A	
End of Canteen Bean (also for members dining)	11 x 10.5m	80 (Callcentre BCP)		
Mimram room	8.2 x 7m	36 (Callcentre BCP)		
Chairman's office	6.1 x 4.3	3		
Bar room	6.2 x 5.5m 3.2 x 2.7m	3 none		
Ashbourne room	10.5 x 7m	4		
<b>Area: Old Block</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Number of outlets</b>		
Attic meeting rooms	5.9 x 3.8m	419a 6	73%	
	2.8 x 3.8	lobby none	2%	
	2.8 x 3.8m	419c 1	72%	
	2.9 x 3.8 m	417a 1	59%	
	2.9 x 3.8	lobby none	29%	

Committee room A	9.6 x 6.6m	None		
Committee room B	13m x 6.6m	None		
Committee room C	9.6m x 6.6m	None		
Council Chamber		None		
Room 246 (SS Board/Conf Rm)	8.1 x 6.7	12	Rarely used	
Education room no 154	6.5 x 5	24 outlets (10 telephones)		
Room 7		24 outlets		
<b>Area: New Block</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Number of outlets</b>		
Environment: room 1		10 data / 10 telephone		
2		8 data		
3		???		
4		1 data		
5		1 data		
6				
ITnet Room 1 4 <sup>th</sup> floor		???	N/A	
Room 2 4 <sup>th</sup> floor		???	N/A	
Room 3 Gf		???	N/A	
Room 4 GF		???	N/A	
ITnet Pensions meeting room		???	N/A	
TA room 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor		39		
Bengeo room 2nd floor		1 telephone only		
Education personnel meeting		???		

<b>Area: Registration block</b>	<b>size</b>	<b>No of outlets</b>		
<b>Area: Leahoe</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Number of outlets</b>		
<b>New Barnfield</b>				
<i>Meeting Room</i>		<i>Meeting Room</i>		
<i>Training Centre? Emergency chall bcp</i>		<i>40 (subject to budget)</i>	<i>?</i>	<i>Day delegate £15.5?</i>
<i>TC13SSD use 3 days per wk</i>	<i>Capacity 6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>80% approx(redu ction post Notes)</i>	<i>£165 day, £116 ½ day</i>
<i>TC14 was Computer Training Room – decommissioned</i>	<i>Capacity 8</i>	<i>8-10 (but not currently active)</i>	<i>?still has net points and furniture</i>	<i>£60 day, £44 ½ day</i>
<i>Room8</i>				
<i>Room 9</i>				
<b><i>Letchworth – Old Grammar</i></b>		<i>Ebenezer Howard Room</i>		

<i>School</i>				
<b>Mount Pleasant</b>				
<i>Meeting Room</i>		<i>Meeting Room</i>		
<i>Wheathampstead</i>				