

Finance and Resources Committee Meeting 20th November 2012

Information Technology Strategy 2012

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

This paper sets out the Information Technology Strategy for the HCPC.

This is the third iteration of the IT Strategy since 2008. It builds on the previous versions incorporating a new section which attempts to describe more clearly the possible consequences of applying the strategy in the medium term.

Decision

The Committee is asked to discuss and agree the strategy.

Background information

This document is intended to support the HCPC strategy as defined in the Strategic Intent document, it informs the annual IT work plans and sits alongside other departmental strategy documents and work plans.

Resource implications

The resource implications of the IT strategy are detailed in the annual IT work plan. There is no change to the current IT work plan as a consequence of this document.

Financial implications

The attached paper's assumptions are all accounted for in the current version of the HCPC budget for 2012/2013

Appendices

None

Date of paper

6 November 2012

Information Technology Strategy

First published in November 2012

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1. Introduction to the HCPC IT Strategy

1.1. The provision of Information Technology (IT) and Information Systems (IS) are central to the success of a modern organisation. Investment in IT should drive the efficiency of the organisation and enable it to become more effective in achieving the corporate objectives.

1.2. The Health and Care Profession Council (HCPC) IT strategy supports the organisation strategy as detailed in the Strategic Intent document.

1.3. The IT strategy forms part of the HCPC planning documentation that includes:

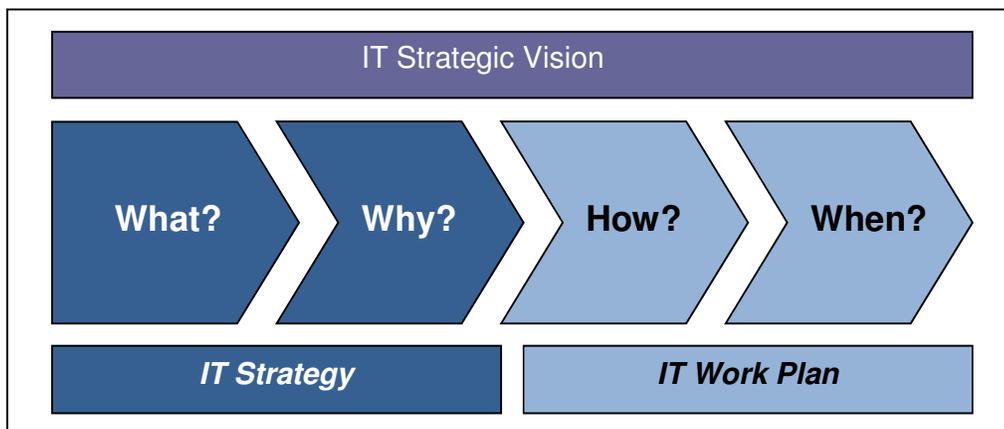
- 1.3.1. Annual report and accounts;
- 1.3.2. Annual business plan;
- 1.3.3. Departmental work plans;
- 1.3.4. Risk register;
- 1.3.5. Project plans;
- 1.3.6. Five year plan;
- 1.3.7. Departmental strategies;
- 1.3.8. Strategic intent.

See appendix A for a diagram showing the interrelation and relative detail of the substantive planning documentation of the HCPC.

1.4. The IT strategy identifies the overall IT vision for the medium term and a number of strategic objectives or themes.

1.5. The strategic objectives seek to group common challenges together which are addressed in the context of each of the different areas of the organisation.

1.6. The IT strategy identifies the ‘what’ and the ‘why’ for the technology direction of HCPC; the ‘how’ and the ‘when’ are addressed in the annual departmental Work Plan.



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- 1.7. The IT function supports a growing organisation based at a single site in London. The majority of employees are office based with a significant population of occasional roaming and remote users, notably within the Education and Fitness to Practice departments.
- 1.8. The IT strategy represents the medium term view; it will be kept under review and revised when there is a significant change to the internal or external environment.
- 1.9. This is the third iteration of the IT strategy since 2008.

2. HCPC Organisation Strategy

- 2.1. The main purpose of the HCPC as set out in Article 3 (4) of the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001 is:

‘To safeguard the health and well-being of the persons using or needing the services of registrants’.

- 2.2. To protect the public the HCPC:

- Set standards for entry to the Register and for continued registration;
- Approve education and training programmes that successfully deliver those standards;
- Maintain a register of individuals who successfully complete those programmes; and
- Take action if the standards may not have been met.

- 2.3. The HCPC does this by achieving the following six strategic objectives:

1. To maintain, review and develop good corporate governance;
2. To maintain, review and develop efficient business process throughout the organisation;
3. To increase understanding and awareness of regulation amongst all stakeholders;
4. To ensure that the organisation’s work is evidence based;
5. To be proactive in influencing the wider regulatory policy agenda; and
6. To ensure that our approach to regulation takes account of differences between the four countries.

- 2.4. The IT strategy supports all aspects of the organisation strategy but has particular relevance to driving efficiency through changes to, and supporting the, organisation’s business processes.

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2.5. The IT strategy further supports the organisation values which not only reflect the social context in which the organisation operates but also its aim to deliver effective and efficient regulation.

2.6. The values are:

- Transparency
- Collaboration
- Responsiveness
- Value for money
- High quality service

3. Drivers for change

3.1. One understanding of a strategy is that it should include:

“A rich and holistic understanding of causes, trends and possible futures”¹

3.2. The starting point is to understand the external drivers that require HCPC to adapt. The list of drivers can change frequently but they will contain a core that is relevant for the medium term.

3.3. This IT strategy is based upon a number of drivers listed below; each has an indicator to the expected trend:

- Political will for regulation:
remaining constant or increasing but with an increasing emphasis on cost effective and proportionate regulation as identified in the Command Paper ‘Enabling Excellence – Autonomy and Accountability for Healthcare Workers, Social Workers and Social Care Workers’ (2011).
- Customer service expectation:
higher service expectation from registrants, which are free to use.
- Economic:
external pressure to maintain a low fee level.
- Devolution:
an increasingly fragmented UK political environment, rather than one of unity.
- Regulation of new professions:
it is expected that HCPC will regulate more professions and that the type of profession will be more varied.

¹ Geoff Mulgan, Head of the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit 2002.

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- European Union (EU):
expect directives to originate from the EU.
- Models for Regulation:
introduction of alternative models including voluntary registers
- Litigious nature:
it is expected that HCPC will receive increasing complaints against registrants.
- Flexible working:
increasing remote access from employees performing core activities.
- Security standards:
increasing requirements to achieve recognised IT security standards.
- Alternative therapies:
changing attitudes becoming more inclusive.

3.4. The drivers can be used to determine a number of possible futures for HCPC. The IT strategy addresses the following possible future with increasing social and political expectations, and increasing and more varied professions:

- More and varied professions regulated by HCPC;
- Different models of regulation employed;
- Regulation of healthcare occupations;
- A reduction in the number of UK regulators of healthcare professions;
- An increasing number of registrants results in increasing revenue and resources;
- An external cost focus;
- Increasing influence in the global regulatory environment;
- Some anti-regulation pressure;
- Increasing complaints against registrants; and
- An increasing requirement to attain technical security standards within the IT infrastructure.

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4. IT Strategic Vision

4.1. The strategic vision describes from an Information Technology perspective the desired outcome for HCPC. The vision is:

To enable the continued improvement of the Health and Care Professions Council by exploiting Information Technology and Information Systems appropriately and proportionately to drive efficiency and effectiveness throughout the organisation.

5. IT Strategic Objectives

5.1. The achievement of the vision is through four IT strategic objectives which identify the key themes that link the strategic issues faced by the organisation. Each strategic issue is addressed by using a number of tactics which together support the strategic objective.

5.2. The four IT strategic objectives are:

- To drive efficiencies within the organisation by the use of Information Technology and Information Systems;
- To apply Information Technology within the organisation where it can create business advantage;
- To protect the data and services of HCPC from malicious damage and unexpected events; and
- To meet internal organisation expectations for the capability of the IT function.

5.3. Information Technology Objective 1:

To drive efficiencies within the organisation by the use of Information Technology and Information Systems.

5.3.1. This addresses the following strategic issues:

- 5.3.1.1. To maintain the employment costs at the current percentage of total operating expenditure;
- 5.3.1.2. The ability to meet the rising expectations from the public and registrants for HCPC to process Applications, Re-admissions and Renewals etc, ever more quickly;

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- 5.3.1.3. External pressures to reduce and maintain the time taken from an initial allegation to final disposal within the FTP function.
- 5.3.1.4. To reduce risk and improve accessibility for the core business processes;
- 5.3.1.5. To ensure that the organisation does not become dependent upon IT systems that are unsupported and not able to be maintained;
- 5.3.1.6. Requirements derived from external authorities such as the initiatives of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS); and
- 5.3.1.7. The growing usage of divergent technologies increasing the overhead and raising risks of business continuity and support.

5.3.2. This will be achieved by:

- 5.3.2.1. Exploiting the web by providing more interactive services online and driving a self-service culture with registrants and the public;
- 5.3.2.2. Applying technical architecture standards which new systems must adhere to;
- 5.3.2.3. Review the core business processes through Major projects and investigate the benefits for applying IT to better support and improve the function;
- 5.3.2.4. Identifying opportunities to consolidate systems to reduce the number of data silos; reduce the risks of integration and reduce the dependencies between systems.
- 5.3.2.5. Commoditise the IT infrastructure driving towards a homogeneous environment to allow greater flexibility:
 - Reduce the number of technologies deployed to increase the depth of the support for those that are used;
 - Standardise on Microsoft software unless there are specific technical or commercial reasons to use an alternative; and
 - Deploy proven commercial software and hardware to maximise interoperability between vendors and availability of third party support.
- 5.3.2.6. Adoption of virtualisation technology to enable improved service levels, enable a more resilient and flexible environment and to avoid the proliferation of hardware;

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- 5.3.2.7. Maintain a continuous cycle of updates and refreshes to technology to ensure external support availability;
- 5.3.2.8. To continually review and exploit public and private cloud technology where quality requirements of security and availability can be assured;
- 5.3.2.9. Review key contracts to identify resource savings and service improvements; and
- 5.3.2.10. Improve the IT control model to ensure that business changes are supported by a valid change process.

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5.4. Information Technology Objective 2:

To apply Information Technology within the organisation where it can create business advantage.

5.4.1. This addresses the following strategic issues:

- 5.4.1.1. The lost opportunity of using highly skilled employees with expertise specific to the HCPC to perform lower skilled bureaucratic and administrative tasks;
- 5.4.1.2. A trend towards more flexible working arrangements with a variety of alternative models to the traditional office based employee;
- 5.4.1.3. There is an over reliance on manual processes and basic databases to operate key business functions;
- 5.4.1.4. The expectation to quickly and effectively regulate new or transferred professions and non-professional groups without affecting services to existing regulated professions;
- 5.4.1.5. There is a reasonable expectation that business services will continue to improve and develop over time and with the advancement of technology;
- 5.4.1.6. In a growing organisation there is a need to ensure that the corporate knowledge gained in one area of the organisation maintains its integrity and where appropriate is available to other areas of the organisation; and
- 5.4.1.7. The rising expectations of the public to interact with HCPC electronically and to perform key processes immediately via the internet at any time, increasingly through mobile devices.

5.4.2. This will be achieved by:

- 5.4.2.1. Exploiting the internet by providing more interactive services on-line and driving a self-service culture with registrants and stakeholder groups;
- 5.4.2.2. Through the major project process review the core business processes and apply IT appropriately to better support and improve the function;
- 5.4.2.3. Identify opportunities to consolidate software and infrastructure building service capabilities that form a foundation that is exploited by many business systems;

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- 5.4.2.4. Continually review innovations in IT to assess potential benefit for the HCPC and where appropriate support the development of business cases;
- 5.4.2.5. Delivering flexible systems to enable the continued improvement of business services; and
- 5.4.2.6. Develop effective partnerships with key suppliers to support our development needs.

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5.5. Information Technology Objective 3:

To protect the data and services of HCPC from malicious damage and unexpected events.

5.5.1. This addresses the following strategic issues:

- 5.5.1.1. The need for the organisation to quickly become operational following a major disaster to the premises or services;
- 5.5.1.2. The need for the organisation to remain operational following an IT continuity event;
- 5.5.1.3. External organisations increasingly require adherence to recognised security standards to access their services;
- 5.5.1.4. The number and complexity of IT systems is appropriate and proportionate to the type and size of organisation the HCPC is without introducing risks of failing to maintain key systems;
- 5.5.1.5. To protect the information services from malicious damage; and
- 5.5.1.6. To secure the data collected and created by HCPC from loss or theft.

5.5.2. This will be achieved by:

- 5.5.2.1. Exploiting a remote, service managed hosting facility where the core services of HCPC can be replicated and accessed remotely in the event of a disaster;
- 5.5.2.2. Allocating resources based primarily on risk, ensuring that services are secure and available;
- 5.5.2.3. Architecting and delivering solutions that are both appropriate and proportionate to the type and size of the organisation;
- 5.5.2.4. Making systems secure by design;
- 5.5.2.5. Regularly test the integrity of our systems with external security specialist organisations;
- 5.5.2.6. Ensuring that we have active scanning of all personal computers, high risk servers, web and email traffic for malicious software;
- 5.5.2.7. Applying build standards for new services that are focused on security and service continuity;

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- 5.5.2.8. Instigating a rigorous patch management policy ensuring appropriate patching of servers and applications to address risk;
- 5.5.2.9. Adopting recognised industry standards for the delivery of IT services:
 - Adoption of the ITIL framework for Service Management;
 - Adoption of the ISO27001 standard for security; and
 - Application of SANS and Microsoft standards for secure server design.
- 5.5.2.10. Encrypting all laptop data to secure data from loss and theft and applying specific controls to the use of removable media; and
- 5.5.2.11. Applying technology where appropriate and proportionate to support the control of sensitive data when used with removable media, including backups and portable devices.

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5.6. Information Technology Objective 4:

To meet internal organisation expectations for the capability of the IT function.

5.6.1. This addresses the following strategic issues:

- 5.6.1.1. The need to continue to improve the method of prioritising resources to achieve business benefit;
- 5.6.1.2. The increasing expectation of HCPC for the IT department to meet larger change programmes whilst maintaining business services within agreed service levels;
- 5.6.1.3. The need to manage change events without impacting unduly the operation of live services;
- 5.6.1.4. The need to operate an affordable IT service that delivers and maintains services to an acceptable standard;
- 5.6.1.5. To provide an efficient service that the organisation can depend upon to support the organisation need;
- 5.6.1.6. There is an increasing reliance on technology to run business processes effectively; and
- 5.6.1.7. To have transparent internal IT processes and procedures minimising any impact on the business function.

5.6.2. This will be achieved by:

- 5.6.2.1. Structuring the IT team to provide separation of functions, improving specialisation and effectiveness;
- 5.6.2.2. Formalising the key processes that drive the IT services;
- 5.6.2.3. Defining the engagement model for third party support providers to improve the effectiveness of their services and forge closer relationships;
- 5.6.2.4. Adopting the key principles of the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) framework for Service Management;
- 5.6.2.5. Prioritising resources based primarily on risk;
- 5.6.2.6. Delivering services based on being appropriate and proportionate to the size and type of the organisation;

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- 5.6.2.7. Outsourcing or ensuring support arrangements with external support providers for key technologies and services that underpin core business services; and
- 5.6.2.8. Identifying and implement key tools to support the Service Management processes and PC support.

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6. Consequences of the IT Strategy

- 6.1. The strategic objectives are used to validate that the resources of the IT department are being allocated appropriately. When consideration is made to assigning resource to a new task or initiative then it must fall within one of the existing strategic objectives. If it does not then either the initiative is not part of the core objectives of the HCPC or a new IT strategic objective needs to be considered.
- 6.2. The application of the IT strategic objectives creates a direction of travel that defines the IT landscape of the HCPC. This direction is determined to achieve a particular outcome for the organisation that supports the 'possible future' as identified in the organisational drivers.
- 6.3. When the organisational drivers change, so should the strategic objectives in order to change the direction of travel to a new future.
- 6.4. The current drivers and strategic objectives will inexorably lead HCPC to a future that will have the following implications for the IT stakeholders.

6.5. Stakeholder experience

This section highlights the more significant touch points between the key stakeholder groups and the IT services with which they interact. It is meant as an illustration only and will inevitably be reshaped and altered by the existing change processes where resources are allocated through the annual budget setting process, major project prioritisation process and through strategic decisions by Council.

6.5.1. HCPC Employee experience

- 6.5.1.1. Access to IT services will be available through a more flexible range of devices i.e. locally using a corporate PC; remotely using a corporate or private laptop or through mobile devices such as tablets and smart phones. The access will be simple and secure.
- 6.5.1.2. The PC will be phased out with the introduction of a virtual desktop deployed using a device called a zero client. This will allow a fully flexible working environment with the ability to hot desk transparently. It will provide a stronger disaster recovery position as well as creating opportunities for more flexible working.

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- 6.5.1.3. The availability of corporate IT services will be extended outside of the normal working day supporting more flexible working.
- 6.5.1.4. The finance suite of technologies will be reviewed for their effectiveness and for the potential benefit of consolidating into a unified platform.
- 6.5.1.5. Changes to the business applications will increasingly drive efficiencies in the administration of the core operational processes allowing the skilled employees to increasingly focus on adding value.
- 6.5.1.6. There will be a review of the registration operational processes and supporting systems to determine whether they remain fit for purpose. Any changes would be delivered through a subsequent and separate implementation project.
- 6.5.1.7. Telephony services will be more tightly integrated into the registration system allowing improved management of call flows.
- 6.5.1.8. Lotus Notes will be replaced with Microsoft Outlook and the fourteen small domino applications e.g. Starters and Leavers database, will be moved into existing line of business applications. This will allow more interoperability between key systems for example allowing some functions of key applications to be run through Outlook in a single interface.
- 6.5.1.9. Corporate business intelligence will technically be delivered centrally using the Microsoft business information stack of technologies. This will allow immediate access to operational data through a series of dashboards, reports and tables across the breadth of the HCPC.

6.5.2. HCPC Service Users (general public, registrants, committee and council members, programme providers etc.)

- 6.5.2.1. A self-service culture will continue to be extended with the addition of new online services targeting key registration, education and fitness to practice processes;
- 6.5.2.2. The web strategy will extend beyond the corporate website into providing a true internet experience where information and services will be customised to stakeholder communities as well as being made available across a much wider breadth of technologies and devices.

This will change the emphasis from 'pulling' information to one

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where stakeholders actively engage and identify interests that result in information and services being 'pushed' to the user on any number of devices freeing up the user from the desktop PC.

This will lead to a more inclusive and collaborative internet experience for our stakeholders placing social media at the centre of the experience.

- 6.5.2.3. Stakeholders engaging with the HCPC across different models of regulation will receive a differentiated experience at the point of contact ensuring that there is no misrepresentation of the specific services being offered.

This is only relevant if the concept of alternative models of regulation including negative registers is progressed.

- 6.5.2.4. There will be more technically managed sharing of information across borders and with UK bodies to support the objectives of public regulation;
- 6.5.2.5. Mobile applications such as the iPhone HCPC app will be extended with more mobile applications delivered across more platforms performing targeted functions.
- 6.5.2.6. Wi-Fi will be introduced for the public areas of the HCPC buildings as part of the refurbishment of the Whitefield house building.
- 6.5.2.7. Dedicated multi-media suits and interactive presentation boards will be delivered as part of the refurbishment of the Whitefield house building.

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6.6. Schedule

6.6.1. This is an illustrative schedule that shows the likely order and length of the projects that would deliver the changes described within the IT Strategy. The schedule will inevitably be reshaped and altered by the existing change processes where resources are allocated through the annual budget setting process, major project prioritisation process and through strategic decisions by Council.

Initiative	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																
Whitfield house refurbishment	█																			
Review of Registration system																				
Implementation of the review																				
HR and Partner system implementation																				
Internet redesign																				
Stakeholder web portal																				
Education system																				
Finance system consolidation review																				
Implementation of Finance review																				
Lotus Notes to Outlook																				
Virtualised desktop																				
Remote access through any device																				

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7. IT Core Approach

7.1. Resource

7.1.1. The IT function is delivered through a small dynamic and flexible team which provides on-site support and manages the outsourced services from a number of key technology providers. They fulfil a role that lies between the business and the external technical service provider; interpreting business needs to technology suppliers ensuring expert technical oversight.

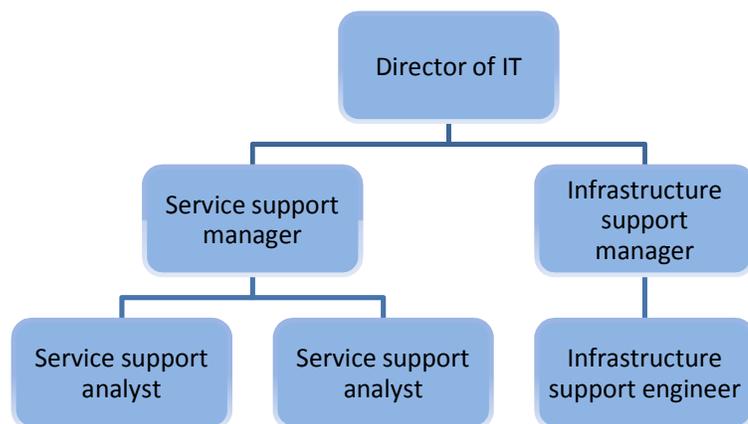


Figure 1 – IT organisation structure

7.1.2. The IT function uses a mixed model of outsourced services combined with internal business and technical expertise; this allows the team to maintain high levels of flexibility and control, and to more ably manage costs incurred through change.

7.1.3. Each member of the IT team is responsible for specific areas of the IT infrastructure and receives appropriate specialist training. To maximise the effectiveness of the team all members have a broad knowledge of the technologies deployed.

7.1.4. The IT team is structured against four principles:

- **Ownership:** to utilise the IT resource effectively there is clear ownership and separation of responsibilities;
- **Expertise:** to increase the depth of the IT team skills and knowledge we create functional specialists that excel at their core specialism;

- **Coverage:** to retain a breadth of understanding albeit at a higher level across the team to ensure services can always be supported; and
- **Proactive:** allocate resource to proactively manage the IT infrastructure.

7.1.5. HCPC creates long term partnerships with external vendors where there is a need to provide recurrent specialist services that cannot be delivered internally.

7.1.6. The IT function accounts for approximately 6% of total annual expenditure by the HCPC excluding depreciation and capital expenditure by major project.

Budget (,000)	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 (forecast)
Operating expenditure (excluding depreciation)	820	944	938	984	1,236
Capital expenditure	83	76	105	65	191

Figure 2 - historic IT expenditure summary

7.2. IT Continuity

7.2.1. To maximise service and performance and minimise cost the majority of the IT infrastructure is located at the HCPC office premises in dedicated facilities addressing cooling, power and physical security needs. As an exception the web services and disaster recovery provision are hosted and managed remotely at a dedicated data centre by a managed service provider.

7.3. Application Development

7.3.1. The development of business critical applications that support the core business processes of the organisation is supported either:

- through bespoke development outsourced to a specialist company where there does not exist a commercial product that can be efficiently applied against our substantive requirement; or

- by purchasing a Commercial Off The Shelf (COTS) package.

7.3.2. It is more desirable and advantageous to purchase a COTS solution and leverage the increased investment in the development of the software and to receive a higher level of technical support.

In house development will continue where:

- a viable commercial software solution does not exist;
- to prevent the proliferation of small technically diverse software with specialist support requirements; and
- there is a need to deploy a low risk solution quickly and economically.

8. Glossary

COTS.....	Commercial Off The Shelf package.
CPD.....	Continuing Professional Development.
Customer.....	The person who purchases an IT service.
Drivers.....	External influences that require an adaptation by the organisation.
FTE.....	Full Time Equivalent.
FTP.....	Fitness to Practice.
HCPD.....	Health and Care Professions Council.
ISA.....	Independent Safeguarding Authority.
IS.....	Information Systems. The combination of business software applications, procedures and activities that utilise IT components to deliver an information service.
IT.....	Information Technology. The underlying hardware, software and communication infrastructure which is used to create information services.
ITIL.....	Information Technology Infrastructure Library.
OGC.....	Office of Government Commerce.
PC.....	Personal Computer i.e. desktop or laptop computer.
Service Delivery	ITIL category for service management encompassing: service level management, IT continuity management, financial management, capacity management and availability management.
Service Support	ITIL category for service management encompassing: service desk, incident management, problem management, configuration management, change management and release management.
User.....	The person who consumes an IT service.
Virtual desktop...	A method of accessing the services and functions traditionally offered by a PC from a centrally delivered server infrastructure.
Zero client.....	A device that performs minimal processing but is used to access and present IT services run centrally on server infrastructure.

9. Appendix A – Planning Documentation of HCPC

