## INDUCTION TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS

## MAY-JUNE 2007

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|---|---|
| Module 1 | Introduction to Local Government - 0.5 days |
| Module 2 | Overview and Scrutiny for New Councillors – 0.5 days (NWEO) |
| Module 3 | Govern IT Learning Simulation Workshop – full day (Pixel Fountain) |
| Module 4 | Front Line Services for Councillors - 0.5 days |
| Module 5 | Representing the Community – Ward & Casework (NWEO) - 0.5 days |
| Module 6 | Code of Conduct & Freedom of Information - 0.5 days |

# pixelfountain
performance *through* learning
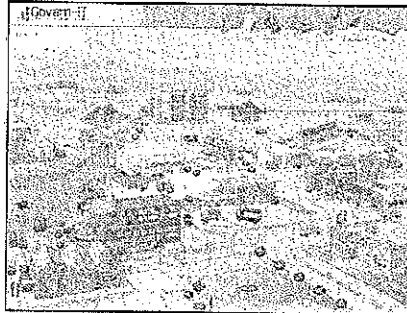
## Govern-IT

## Induction Training
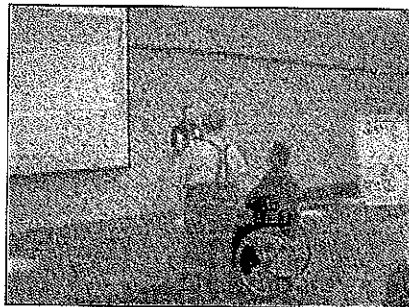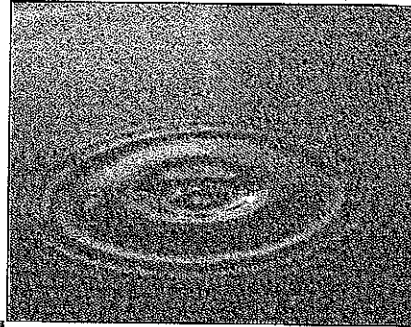
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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# Contents

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# Govern-IT

**pixelfountain**
performance through learning

## The Need

"[Local Authorities] have a key role in leading their communities as well as ensuring the delivery of high quality services to them. Good governance enables an authority to pursue its vision effectively as well as underpinning that vision with mechanisms for control and management of risk... Significant governance failings attract immense attention ... and one significant failing can taint a whole sector." Good Governance In Local Government: A Framework. CIPFA And SOLACE

## The Challenge

Cheshire County Council was keen to tackle governance in an innovative way and has developed a partnership with **pixelfountain** to raise awareness of the issue and develop training materials. The solution needed to place governance within a "whole council" approach and show how good governance equals good decision-making.

*The workshops will be challenging and fun, and most importantly memorable.*

## The Solution

**pixelfountain** has developed Govern-IT - a computer based model (learningsimulation) of a local authority. Govern-IT is embedded with governance issues and will be used in workshops to improve understanding and develop capacity.

Using a learningsimulation within workshops is a proven yet innovative learning approach, which allows delegates to experience issues and work together to solve problems within the virtual model. The approach offers the best of traditional and electronic methods. **pixelfountain** has delivered around 200 workshops and successfully trained over 3,000 people using this approach.

## The Audience

- Local Authority Officers
- Local Authority Members
- Managers and Decision Makers
- Individuals involved in procurement
- Individuals involved in partnerships
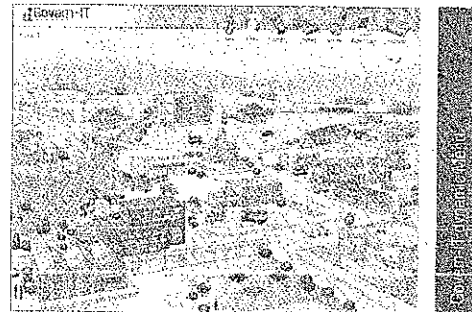
*"Direct relevance to area of work, Interactive learning rather than lecture style."*

## The Workshop

The workshop is anchored around Govern-IT, a computer based resource management model (learningsimulation).

All aspects of governance are explained using a range of non-computer activities alongside the learningsimulation.

Delegates experience a virtual world where they have to negotiate, work together and think strategically. They realise how decisions they make will affect the whole organisation and wider community.

The interconnectedness of the problem is explained in a way not possible with traditional learning approaches.

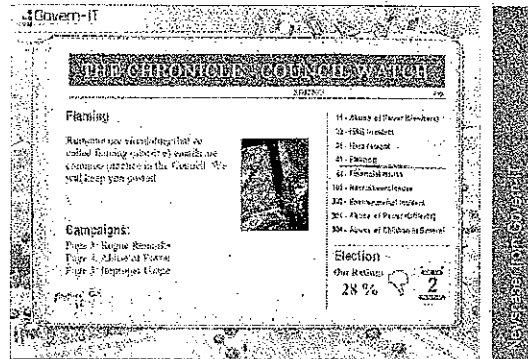*"I will have a more holistic approach to my work."*

## The Partnership Story

Cheshire County Council wanted to improve awareness and understanding of governance.

An innovative approach was sought. One that would put governance in a wider context and would engage and immerse delegates in this difficult subject.

**pixel**fountain are an innovative company that takes tough subjects and problems, and creates transformational experiences. Govern-IT is the company's 9th learning**simulation** and is the most ambitious to date.

*"Highlighted the interrelated nature of activity and the need to work in an integrated way"*

### Are you interested in an innovative approach to governance?

# 1.0 The Workshop

The member induction workshop is a 4 - 5 hour event anchored around Govern-IT, a computer based model of a Local Authority.

The workshop is aimed at giving new members a good understanding of how a Local Authority works but also confidence and enthusiasm for decision-making. It does this by using an interactive learning-simulation that allows all delegates to make decisions and solve problems within a virtual world.

The workshop starts with an introduction to Local Authorities to set the scene for the workshop. The first exercise is an interactive pub quiz which gets delegates working together and introduces Local Authority Governance and its terminology.

The second exercise is the core of the workshop where delegates take up the task of running a virtual Local Authority using the learning-simulation Govern-IT. The delegates will experience a virtual world where they have to solve problems, work together and think strategically.

Finally the workshop is concluded with a look at the current strategy and vision for the Local Authority and signposting to other sources of information and help.

The **pixel**fountain approach places people at the centre of the experience enabling them to construct understanding and create solutions. Learning-simulations allow the delegates to actively participate in the learning. They foster a spirit of collaboration.

## 1.1 Induction Agenda (4-5 hours)

10.0    Introduction to Local Authorities
        (including the role/importance of members, key
        documents and pressures)

10.20   Exercise 1: Pub Quiz (15 questions on
        Local Authority Goverance)

10.50   Exercise 2: Play Govern-IT

02.0    Local Authority Vision – including current
        strategy and signposting

02.30   Close



Introduction –
Local Authorities

Ice Breaker
Pub Quiz

GovernIT

Vision
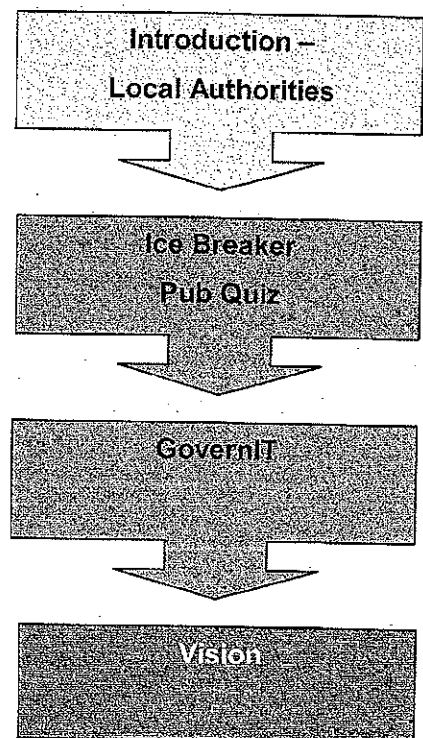
## 1.2 Logistics

The workshop is for between 10- 25 delegates.

The attendance list will be intelligently divided before the workshop to ensure the most effective team is organised for undertaking the interactive exercise. This will include giving people a different perspective from their day to day lives and pairing individuals who can benefit by working closely together.

### 1.2.1 Time/Venue

The workshop takes 4 to 5 hours. The format is flexible with teas and coffees available throughout and possibly a work through lunch/ evening meal. The workshop needs a decent sized training room set out in a horseshoe style or cabaret with tables and chairs and plenty of room for moving around. It also needs a projector screen, extension cable and flip chart.

# 2.0 The Exercises
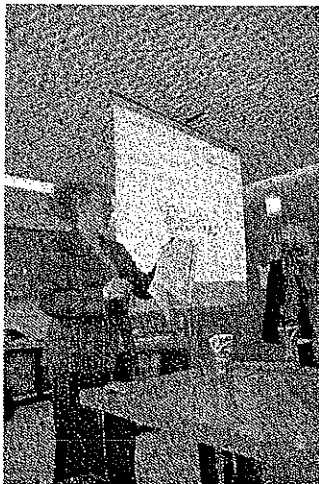


## 2.1 Pub Quiz

The first exercise is an interactive pub quiz with prizes! There are 15 questions on Local Authority Governance and its terminology. The delegates get to know their team mates and have their first chance to work together. The quiz will get them up to speed on key issues and make sure they have a basic understanding of Goverance before being asked to make decisions.

## 2.2 Govern-IT

### 2.2.1 Overview

Govern-IT is a resource management game that simulates the workings of a Local Authority. The simulation is played in a workshop by a number of delegates who are split into sub-teams. Govern-IT raises awareness and understanding of governance issues, which emerge during the running of the Local Authority. The delegates run the Local Authority by considering reports and then making purchase decisions. Purchases are how the delegates change the simulation.

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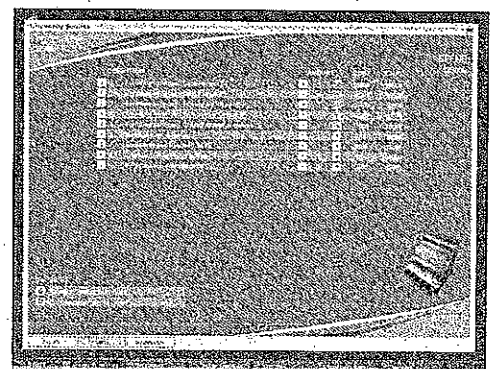
The delegates are split into six teams:

Community Team - Frontline services for community wellbeing

Environment Team - Frontline services for sustainable development

Children Team - Frontline services for children wellbeing

Corporate Team – Corporate services e.g HR, finance, performance management

External Partners – Outsourcing and localising of services

Members – Policy setting, scrutiny and fiscal (budgets and taxation)

The Members team do not directly make purchases they have to influence other teams by setting policy and providing a scrutiny
function.

### 2.2.2 Reports

**Frontline Service Reports**

Each of the Service Teams (Community, Environment, and Children) has a pictorial report. The report shows some of the cause and effect relationships that exist in the underlying algorithm.

The icons fill up with colours. Red equals bad and needs emptying and green is good so the fuller the better. Performance is displayed as stars. A change in performance vs. money (Efficiency) is shown as a percentage.
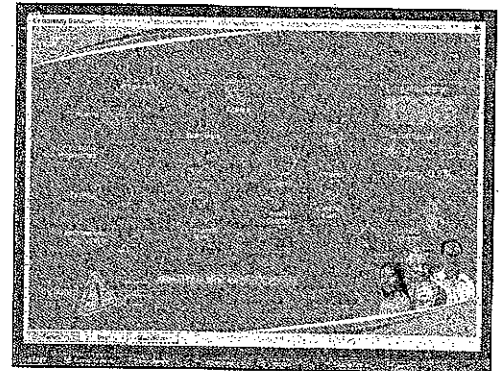


Public Opinion (displayed bottom right) is derived from performance, the number of incidents, positive and negative purchases. The team with the highest public opinion will be awarded a cup. This adds a bit of extra spice to each round.

**Corporate Report**

The Corporate Report is presented as a scorecard. A financial statement is shown on the left. In the middle is a Social Measure and to the right is an Environmental Measure. The non-financial measures are calculated as the difference between a basket of good and bad indicators.

**Members Report**

The Member's Report has 3 components:

o Scrutiny – A list of all the major incidents

o Opinion Poll – A quantitative judgment

o Focus Groups – A qualitative judgment (5 individuals making 5 statements each):

    o Old Person
    o Young Person
    o Business Person
    o Family Person / Social Worker
    o Activist

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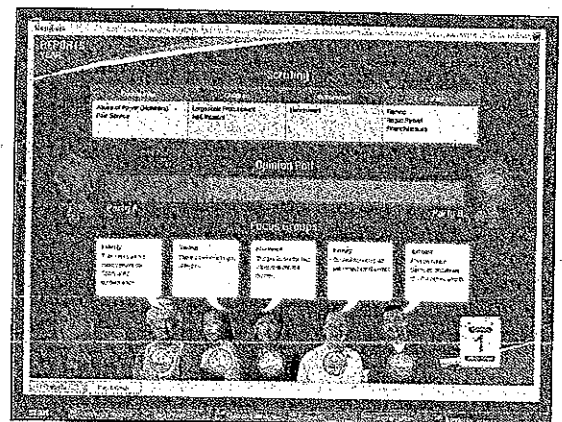
### 2.2.3 Incidents

These will have to be dealt with during the course of the simulation. These may trigger as a result of the purchase decisions undertaken by the teams and / or randomly. The Incident is dealt with during the course of the round - before the standard purchases are made. This will steal time from the team and put them under pressure and will mean that when all the teams input the standard purchases the 'incident' team can explain what happened and how they have dealt with it.

The newspaper provides a full list of the incidents that have occurred in the round.

The newspaper also contains campaigns. Certain incidents trigger campaigns, which have a greater impact on public opinion and therefore the overall score.

The newspaper rates the council and puts forward the percentage chance of winning the election. The rating impacts on public opinion and voting intentions.
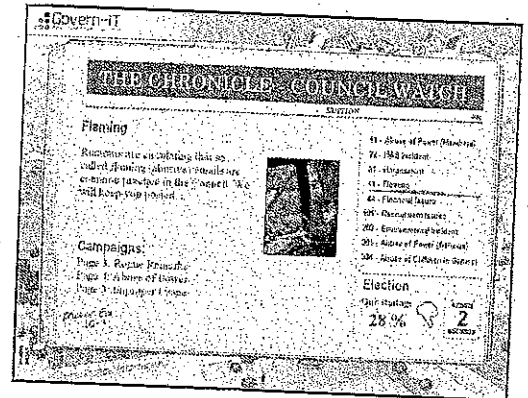
### 2.2.4 Score Overview

The Govern-IT score has 4 parts as shown below in rationale and breakdown. Individual scores are shown in coloured bar graphs (0-3 = Red, Orange = 3-7, and > 7 =Green. Extra information is provided for the CPA and Governance score.

Some of the Governance score relates to the working relationships and roles of the teams. These are manually judged by the facilitator and entered using the dashboard.
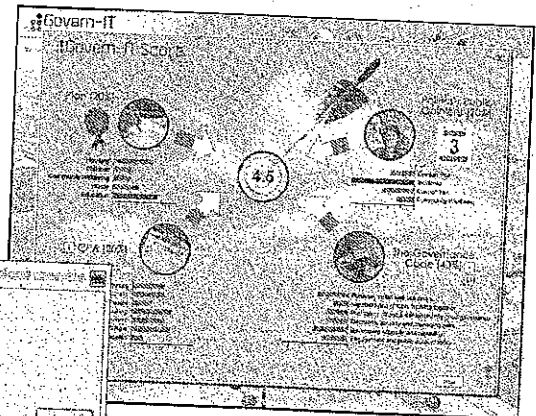
### 2.2.5 The Election

There are 3 rounds in total (i.e. 3 Round updates), starting in 2006. The learning-simulation ends in 2009 with an election. The election offers a backdrop to the game and provides the Member Team with an agenda.

## 2.3 Local Authority Vision

The final part of the day looks at the current strategy and vision for the Local Authority and signposting for members to other sources of information and help. The final exercise is flexible and can be changed to fit into an overall induction programme so it could for example include more hands on action planning, brainstorming or team building.