

# West Herts Further Education gets an IT health check

> ERA Success Story

West Herts College is a large further education college with three campuses located in Watford, Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley. The College has established a strong reputation as a provider of high-quality education and training, with the quality of teaching and levels of learner success consistently high.

As part of its commitment to ensuring sound Governance, maximum operational efficiency and the achievement of best value in the supply of goods and services, the Principal requests periodic external audits of different elements of college operation. These audits check operational responsibilities and objectives, strategies, structures, processes, controls and costs.

To review the area of Information Technology the Principal, Gill Worgan turned to Expense Reduction Analysts IT Solutions and Services (ITSS)

“Michael Hully and Chris Brown, the partners in ITSS impressed us with their strategic thinking in the area of IT. They offered significant insights” said Gill “During discussions with the Director of Finance and myself they demonstrated that they had a deep understanding of how our college functions needed to effectively interact to identify, prioritise, deliver and support the IT solutions, infrastructures and IT services that the college requires.”

The ITSS proposal was to firstly deliver a Strategic IT Health check on how IT Governance was effected covering topics such as visibility and control of IT investment, IT delivery and IT related risk management. Following the Health Check ITSS offered to help improve and optimise our IT strategies, IT delivery and IT support functions.

The college has a substantive Technical Services Department



and a budget of in excess of £2 million per annum. The ITSS Health Check evaluated the department’s objectives and responsibilities, focus, structures, processes, controls and costs with a view to identifying any changes or improvements that should be considered to make sure that the department is best placed to support the college in the future. Finally, as a second phase of work ITSS proposed to work with the college to better optimise IT to realise efficiencies, cost reductions and improve IT risk management.

The review took place over a two month period, and included a broad range of consultations with senior staff from across the college. During the process ITSS were also able to

offer support to the Principal to help identify the organisational risks associated with the departure of a key member of IT staff and with a compliance issue.

“The Health Check from ITSS got to a much greater depth of understanding and insight than I had initially anticipated in the time they had available” said Gill “It identified a number of very important issues of which we would otherwise not have been aware and Chris and Michael’s guidance on how they should be resolved was invaluable. Given how IT now underpins almost all functions I believe that the type of independent Health Check provided by ITSS is an essential part of good Governance for a Further Education College.”

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***Gill Worgan, Principal and Chief Executive, West Herts FEC***

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