



### Press Release

LGC Business Partnership Awards

13 December 2011

For immediate release

### The Grey Matter Group and Bracknell Forest Council Win LGC Award for “Innovative Partnering Solutions”

At a prestigious awards lunch held at The Grange St Paul’s, London, on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011, the inaugural [Local Government Chronical Business Partnership Awards 2011](#) rewarded those who have demonstrated outstanding joint working between councils and the private sector. The event brought together the industries’ key players to highlight and recognise the most innovative initiatives and deserving individuals in this competitive and challenging arena. The Innovative Partnering Solutions award was collected by Directors of The Grey Matter Group.

#### Emma Maier, LGC’s editor, said:

*“I am proud to launch the first awards to recognise the important role of the private sector in modern local government. I was struck by the quality and diversity of many of the entries, and the passion you displayed during your presentation to the judges. Congratulations to the finalists and winners.”*



Leading Business Analyst and Futurologist, James Bellini, hosted the awards ceremony pictured above far right. Pictured from left to right are: Jane Lubbock, Head of Business Improvement, Oxford City Council presenting the award to Alex Knapp, Managing Director, Sarah Knapp, HR & Operations Director and Piers Storey, Technical Director from TGM Group.

#### Sarah Knapp, TGM Group’s HR and Operations Director, said:

*“Our online assessment system, [www.cis-assessment.co.uk](http://www.cis-assessment.co.uk), has delivered cost and time savings to lots of organisations at a time when financial savings have to be achieved. We are always looking for development*

partners to create new online assessment subjects and in return we provide free access to our assessment system. After 10 years working at a local authority, I have personally experienced decreasing budgets and the difficult challenges that local authorities are facing. We are so proud to be supporting organisations to strengthen the quality of their services and to have found ways of giving organisations free and funded resources.

*I realised several years ago that an investment in technology was needed in order to support workers to quickly and easily evidence their knowledge and practice instead of unnecessarily repeating training courses that are admin resource intensive, expensive to provide and expensive to cover in staff backfill, particularly when they don't result in any evidence of workers' knowledge and practice. We have proven that there are different methods to train people that not only save money but strengthen the evidence of knowledge and practice which improves the outcomes and services provided."*

**Bracknell Forest Council** have made significant cost and time savings by reducing the need for classroom based training courses and by reducing staff turnover by almost 50% using [www.cis-assessment.co.uk](http://www.cis-assessment.co.uk). They were also the first local authority in the South East to win the Charter Plus Award for member development, including the use of feedback system [www.three60degree.co.uk](http://www.three60degree.co.uk). The online workforce development resources, together with [www.e-tna.co.uk](http://www.e-tna.co.uk) were created by TGM Group in partnership with Bracknell Forest Council. Today, 33 local authorities and over 3,500 other organisations are benefitting from using [www.cis-assessment.co.uk](http://www.cis-assessment.co.uk); some of their case studies can be viewed and read on the CIS website under "resources".

**Ann Moore, Bracknell Forest Council's Head of Democratic & Registration Services, said:**

*"We have been delighted to work with Alex and his team to develop an innovative tool which assists the training needs analysis process by helping Councillors identify their skills and development needs through self-assessment and three60 feedback against a set of statements appropriate to their role. We have successfully run two pilots and are now working towards making this tool available to all our Councillors as part of our on-going commitment to excellent Member development."*

**Leah Thompson, Bracknell Forest Council's Learning and Development Manager said:**

*"The partnership we have with TGM Group has provided a number of opportunities for the Council to deliver learning and development to both employees and elected members cost effectively."*



Celebrating being short listed for the Award pictured above from left to right: Charmaine Jenking-Rees, Learning and Development Co-ordinator for Bracknell Forest Council, Leah Thompson, Learning and Development Manager for Bracknell Forest Council, Sarah Knapp, HR & Operations Director for The Grey Matter and Alex Knapp, Managing Director for The Grey Matter.

## Notes for Editors:

- **The Grey Matter's** assessments at [www.cis-assessment.co.uk](http://www.cis-assessment.co.uk) measure people's knowledge against national training standards to help organisations gather evidence of competence so they can focus their limited learning resources in the areas of identified need. There are lots of benefits to using the assessments instead of asking people to repeat expensive training courses which has been the traditional approach in the past. Assessments can be used as part of the interview process, for induction planning, to provide employees with specific learning targets and to evaluate the impact of the investment of time and money on learning activities. The assessment system gives managers information and a structured process to check knowledge and competence and is being used to evidence the effectiveness of learning programmes. People using the assessments include local authorities, care associations, training providers, colleges, NHS, Personal Budget Holders, Personal Assistants and care providers. The system can be used for any sector where knowledge can be measured against a set of standards or competencies.

**The Grey Matter** also provide three60 feedback and customer surveys to find out if people are satisfied with the services they receive at [www.three60degree.co.uk](http://www.three60degree.co.uk). People in public sector roles are accountable for the quality of their work and whilst it may be a difficult time for performance management to be under the microscope, local authorities will always have a duty to make sure they are managing staff performance. Three60 can be applied to any organisation and any sector to support workforce development and their pricing model makes this type of technology affordable to local government.

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- **The LGC Business Partnership Awards** are organised by leading weekly magazine Local Government Chronicle (LGC). For more information on The LGC Business Partnership Awards go to [www.businesspartnershipawards.com](http://www.businesspartnershipawards.com). With an exceptional level of entries the competition was stiff. The eventual winners of the awards showed excellence in their proactive approach to drive best practice forward within their partnership, as well as demonstrating ways in which they have achieved excellence and greater efficiency over the past year.

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