



## **Ten Local Authorities Collaborate in a Pioneering Project to Share Sensitive Information More Easily and Securely**

*'World's First Large-Scale Use of Information Cards in the Public Sector'<sup>1</sup>*

*Eduserv to Streamline Access and Identity Management*

*Future Plans to Provide All Councils and Residents with Information Cards*

**Bath, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2008** – Eduserv, the not-for-profit IT services group, today announces the launch of a pioneering project to enable ten local authorities<sup>2</sup> to easily and securely access confidential information using Microsoft Windows CardSpace information cards.

The ten local authorities form part of the Shared Learning Group, which helps to share best practice and collaborate on innovative IT solutions in line with the aims set out in the Transformational Government strategy<sup>3</sup>. In the first instance, these local authorities will use their online IDs to share internal documents relating to the Shared Learning Group. There are also plans to extend the project, enabling all employees to use information cards to access confidential both internal and external documents.

In the longer term, residents and businesses may also be given their own online IDs. This will enable people to deal more easily and securely with their local authority, and to use their information cards for other web-services that require authentication as well, e.g. online banking and shopping.

Eduserv, the developer of the widely-used Athens and OpenAthens access and identity management (AIM) systems, will provide project members with CardSpace information cards and manage the authentication system. The Shared Learning

---

<sup>1</sup> Geoff Connell, CIO, London Borough of Newham

<sup>2</sup> London Borough of Newham, London Borough of Bromley, Derby City Council, the Isle of Man, Kent County Council, London Borough of Lewisham, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Sunderland City Council, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council and Warwick District Council

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.cio.gov.uk/transformational\\_government/index.asp](http://www.cio.gov.uk/transformational_government/index.asp)

eduserv



Group will be able to access and share documents securely, as well as take part in discussions relating to the group on a dedicated portal.

As the authentication process occurs in a secure local environment rather than in the Web browser, information cards offer greater security than traditional log-in systems. By employing CardSpace, users are less likely to fall victim of a phishing attack, whereby an unauthorised entity attempts to acquire sensitive information by masquerading as a trustworthy website.

Geoff Connell, CIO, London Borough of Newham and Chairman of the Shared Learning Group, comments: “To our knowledge, this is the world’s first information card implementation in the public sector. However, recent security breaches have highlighted the need to enhance IT security in governmental organisations. Using information cards makes it easier for the group to share information in a secure manner. In addition to extra security, Eduserv’s technology saves us valuable time and administrative resources.”

Ed Zedlewski, CIO and deputy CEO of Eduserv, says: “Local authorities hold ever increasing volumes of electronic data, which need to be accessed in a timely and secure manner. Eduserv’s expertise in integrating technologies and in service delivery has demonstrated that combining information cards with OpenAthens can deliver the efficiencies that allow organisations to safely collaborate and share important information. Combining these technologies will provide a convenient way for users to manage their online identity in their own environment, enabling the individual to control where they store and how they release the credentials by which they are recognised.”

Geoff Connell adds: “We decided to work with Eduserv on this pioneering project because of the organisation’s expertise in creating and managing large scale AIM solutions. Over 4 million students and researchers in UK colleges and universities, the NHS and organisations worldwide use Athens and OpenAthens, Eduserv’s AIM systems, to access online information resources. The goal of the Shared Learning Group is to help UK local authorities to improve the efficiency and security of their AIM processes – we’re confident that with Eduserv we’ll achieve this.”

eduserv



In addition to access and identity management, the Shared Learning Group focuses on employee productivity, flexible and collaborative working, business integration, child protection solutions, performance management, and maximising ICT support for council members.

###

## Notes to Editors

### About Eduserv

Eduserv is a **not-for-profit**, professional IT services group with the mission to realise the benefits of IT for learners, researchers and the institutions that serve them. Eduserv achieves its charitable mission through the provision of sustainable services and funding research and development. Services include:

- Secure access to online resources (Athens and OpenAthens)
- Licence Negotiation & Management – (Chest)
- Managed web hosting
- Content management (CMS) and web development.

Trading surpluses are used to support work across the education sector.

**For more information about Eduserv please visit [www.eduserv.org.uk](http://www.eduserv.org.uk) or contact:**

Katy Askew / Kersti Klami

Racepoint Group, formerly Fuse PR

Tel: 020 8752 3207 / 3216

Email: [katy.askew@racepointgroup.com](mailto:katy.askew@racepointgroup.com) / [kersti.klami@racepointgroup.com](mailto:kersti.klami@racepointgroup.com)