

## **Case Study**

### **Education Maintenance Allowance**

#### **Trevor Fellowes, Director – Learning and Skills Council**

Education Maintenance Allowance was introduced because the staying-on rate, post 16 amongst poorer young people was significantly less than that from people from better off backgrounds. There was quite a lot of anxiety about bringing in another big IT based system. We were listed as being a mission critical – obviously with a major factor in designing a system in which you are going to be paying half a million people £1000 or so into their bank account, is you have got to make sure that there are good fraud controls to make sure you don't pay the wrong people. We were questioned by the Gateway team that recommended a number of experts that we might go to and they cross referred to similar exercises that some of the review team had been involved with.

We had identified obviously that we needed to bring a whole raft of stakeholders with us, people in every college, every school with a sixth form, connexions services, local authorities, a range of externals, but we'd rather parked this further down the track. The Gateway team persuaded us that we needed to bring that forward. We decided also to double our efforts which was not a Gateway recommendation, but the timing of bringing it forward and doubling efforts putting those two together just illustrates that we were going in the wrong direction until we were brought up by Gateway.