

## Collaboration not reorganisation

APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien welcomed calls from John Swinney MSP, Finance Spokesperson and former SNP Party Leader, for the Scottish Executive to avoid "**imposing new structures on local government**". Mr O'Brien echoed the sentiments of John Swinney, which were made at a packed APSE fringe event at the SNP conference in Perth, when he himself called for "**collaboration not reorganisation**" when looking at public sector structures in Scotland.

Mr Swinney speaking to over 80 delegates called for:-

- the return of the majority of quango's to the democratic control of local authorities
- the simplification of public sector structures in Scotland through a more joined up approach on a voluntary basis without the need for a formal reorganisation process.

He also identified :-

- That the level of input from the public was vital to improvement in conjunction with a greater focus on user needs from delivery agents.
- That the important principles of Best Value, in place in local government, should be expanded along with the rest of the policy to all areas of the public sector and quango state in Scotland.

APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien welcomed Mr Swinney's observations around the joining up of public services and stated that "**Public services need to work collaboratively to achieve the shared aim of improving the lives of citizens through the services that are delivered within the public sector. This is the key to the transformation agenda and should be the driving force behind the reform process**". Mr O'Brien pointed to the clear improvements in local government as a result of Best Value, such as efficiencies and stressed the importance of not abandoning a policy that was paying dividends for the public already. In response Jim Mather MSP, SNP Economic Spokesperson told the fringe that the adoption of management principles such as those adopted by Deming could enable the public sector to be a key engine of Scotland's economy.

### Ends

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2. APSE is the foremost representative body of local service provision within the UK.
3. APSE provides a range of services to member authorities including, performance information, training and development, ethical consultancy support, advisory services, lobbying and seminars.
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