



## **ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC SERVICE EXCELLENCE**

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### **Ground Force**

Michael Heseltine's calls to merge the roles of Chief Executive and Council Leader to allow great cities to "elect great leaders" speaks little about the future structure of local government but volumes about the perception of local government leadership.

The delivery of massive and rapid urban regeneration projects, that shame the turgid pace of change of national government initiatives, highlights the fact that actually local government has some tremendous examples of leadership amongst our peers. It is local government that the electorate look to for cleaner streets, greener open spaces and safer communities.

The electorate cares little about structure and 'who is in charge'. What they will judge local government on is what is delivered on the ground. The local leadership's ability to deliver measurable improvements to local government services is what matters to the community. Whether this is done as a combined effort under current structures or a merged 'Superchief' under Heseltine's proposals will matter little if streets are dirty, housing is in decline and crime is left to grow unfettered on our urban estates.

Paul O'Brien

Chief Executive, APSE

