



Association for Public Service Excellence

# APSE Local Government Commission 2030

Paul O'Brien,  
Chief Executive, APSE

### *Meet our Commissioners*

- Paul O'Brien, Commission Chair
- Lord Gary Porter, CBE
- Elma Murray, OBE
- Heather Wakefield
- Jon Collins
- Neil Schneider





# The final report: Local by default

[Local by default – APSE’s Local Government Commission Report 2030](#)

# 50 years of contraction

- Reducing role, powers and resources
- Uneasy relationship
- Less legitimacy

# Pressure building

- Growing public policy crises
- Austerity
- System under huge strain
- Then Covid
- System overload
- Central / local

# Clarity of role

- National, regional, local by default
- Realignment of responsibilities
- Create synergy not bureaucracy
- Spheres of governance
- Constitutional enshrinement
- Devolution framework

# Roles and responsibility

- Tackling multiple crises
- Reshape, regenerate, repurpose
- Creating healthy places to live and work
- Building skills and knowledge
- Tomorrows world

Local democracy,  
representation and  
accountability:  
What we heard?

- Models of political leadership and decision-making should be a matter for local choice.
- Councillors are under pressure - the image of the local councillor needs to be improved and the pool of people standing for election to local government broadened.
- Demographic profile of councillors needs to be more diversify and barriers to election and standing as a candidate removed for all social groups.
- Institutional complexity and churn, particularly in England, has confused lines of accountability.
- Calls for councils to be recognised as the 'democratic anchor' in a place, with its powers of scrutiny extended to cover all local services.



# Reinvigorate the system

- Valuing local democracy
- Reconnecting decision making
- Area wide accountability and scrutiny
- Integrate health, education and housing
- Valuing elected representatives
- System redesign and remuneration

## Local democracy, representation and accountability

16. Models of political leadership and organisation should remain a matter for local discretion. There should be no 'top down' imposition of any particular form of organising.
17. Local scrutiny should be strengthened with formal recognition of local government, the locally elected body, as scrutineer of other agencies and services in a place, with formal rights to information and meaningful impact. This might take the form of Local Public Accounts Committees. In return, councils themselves should be open to independent scrutiny.

## Local democracy, representation and accountability

18. It is strongly recognised that communities are better served when the body of councillors reflects the diversity of their communities. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty to tackle discrimination, councils as public authorities should develop and report on local action plans to make strident and conscious efforts to ensure access to political office for people of all backgrounds. The development of local action plans should be supported by national local government bodies and associations.
19. There should be better remuneration, training, and support for local councillors, as well as the introduction of a national remuneration scheme for councillors in England. National bodies on remuneration should make recommendations on how councils can best support the work of local councillors and ensure access to political office to all.

# Workforce and services

- Well trained, highly motivated
- Reflective of the whole community
- Invest in leadership and career paths
- Organisational culture
- Integrated service delivery
- Supported and supplied locally
- Engaging with future generations

# Finance

- Guaranteed portion of GDP
- Locally raised taxes
- Links to spend
- Mid to long term financial settlement
- Revisit business rates, revalue council tax
- Address funding of social care

# How do we fix the system?

- Big bang or incremental
- Ministers as champions of change
- Royal commission or constitutional convention
- Subnational governance committee
- Devolution and subsidiarity
- Local by default

# **NEW MUNICIPALISM**

Delivering for local people and local economies



# Contact details

**Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive**

**Email: [po'brien@apse.org.uk](mailto:po'brien@apse.org.uk)**

**[@apsetweets](#)**



**Association for Public Service Excellence**  
3rd floor, Trafford House, Chester Road,  
Old Trafford, Manchester M32 0RS.  
**telephone:** 0161 772 1810  
**web:** [www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk)