

## Board



**Cllr Merrick Cockell, Chairman**

Merrick Cockell has been the Chairman of Localis since October 2008. In addition, he was elected in 2006 as Chairman of London Councils, the voice for local authorities in the Capital. Merrick is also Leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, whose services are recognised by the Audit Commission as being amongst the very best in the country. His further responsibilities include being Chairman of the Conservative Councillors Association (CCA).



**Lord Hanningfield**

Lord Hanningfield has been an Essex County Councillor for over thirty years and has led the Council for most of the last ten. He played a key role in establishing the Local Government Association, becoming Vice-Chairman on its inception. He was ennobled in 1998 and in 2003 became an opposition whip in the House of Lords and Front Bench spokesperson on Local Government. He has also served as a Shadow Minister for Education. He is currently Shadow Minister for Transport in the House of Lords.



**Cllr Paul Carter**

Paul is the Leader of Kent County Council. From his election to the County Council in 1997 until he assumed the leadership, he held responsibility for the Education portfolio. In his current role Paul is also responsible for: Business solutions and policy, Legal and democratic services, Localism, Procurement and the South East Centre of Excellence. Paul's other roles include being the Chairman of the South East England Regional Assembly. Cllr Carter runs his own successful property, construction and retail businesses in central London.



**Cllr Paul Bettison**

Paul has been Leader of Bracknell Forest Council since 1997, and his remit includes Community Cohesion and Council Strategy. A firm believer in self-help for local government, Paul spent 18 months as a peer mentor to the Leader of the Conservative Group of Hackney LBC, and performed the same task at many other local authorities, including for the Leader of Walsall MBC for 5 years. He is the National Lead Conservative Member Peer at the Improvement & Development Agency (IDeA). Paul is also Chairman of the LGA Environment Board.



**Neil O'Brien**

Neil is Director of the cross party think tank Policy Exchange, which works on a range of national policy issues including health, crime, education, welfare, the environment and economic reform. He has a longstanding interest in the devolution of power. He was previously director of Open Europe, think tank working for free market reform in Europe. Neil grew up in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, and took a first in Politics, Philosophy and Economics, at Christ Church, Oxford. His research interests include planning, street homelessness, and social policy.



**James Morris**

James was educated at the University of Birmingham where he studied English Literature and then undertook postgraduate research at Oxford University. He also has an MBA from Cranfield School of Management where he won the Venture Capital Report prize for entrepreneurs. James has been a successful small businessman having established a number of software companies. He also has a strong track record as a policy maker and campaigner as the Director of the innovative campaign group Mind the Gap in 2003. He was appointed CEO of Localis in March 2008.

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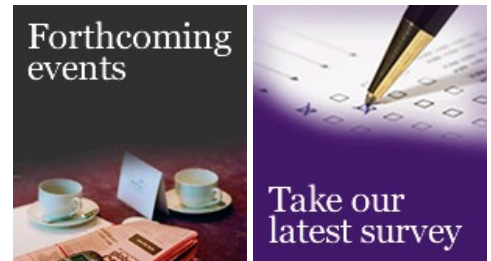
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