As we begin a momentous year in UK politics, civil service chief exec John Manzoni and BT managing director of major and public sector Colm O’Neill got together to discuss the future of public services. CSW reports. Photography by Baldo Sciacca

**“We need to blend real experience as well as intellect. That means changing career paths and remuneration structures” John Manzoni**

Reflecting on capabilities, Manzoni said that in the last few years government has not only started to introduce new skills but has “started to change the plumbing and the wiring which builds those skills from within, as opposed to just hiring from without.” For the next generation of leaders, he said: “We need to blend what I would call real experience as well as intellectual. That means changing career paths, changing remuneration structures.”

He added that he has a “secret mission,” which are now getting into the implementation of “to end up with no choice but to pay civil servants a more sensible wage and to do that through the professional axis.” The most obvious structural change Manzoni has been driving to bring in these skills and capabilities is the introduction of functions in key areas such as: HR, commercial and digital.

His passion for functions is not because of some technocratic enjoyment, he said, but because of their impact on people. Changing structures helps the “massively intelligent and massively dedicated” people in the civil service to achieve outcomes for the people who use public services.

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