



## Local councils urged to act on avian flu threat

APSE the Association for Public Service Excellence today issued advice to over 300 local authorities within England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland on the issue of Avian Flu. Paul O'Brien Chief Executive of APSE said **"Whilst we must avoid causing unnecessary alarm to the public or council employees we must recognise that many council services place employees and the public in situations where they regularly come into contact with fowl. For some services this can put employees in contact with carcasses. The best policy has to be one of open communication so that council staff can be ambassadors in getting across the safety messages to the public and in raising awareness of the need to be vigilant and take appropriate action in reporting incidences."** Adding **"Many councils will have already invoked their civil contingency and emergency planning teams to respond to public concerns over Avian Flu. It is important that this process is in place to safeguard the public using parks and outdoor public spaces, particularly those containing natural water features such as streams and ponds. It is unnecessary for the public to stay away from such facilities at this stage and councils must do what they can to reassure communities."**

**Ends**

### Notes to Editor

1. APSE is The Association for Public Service Excellence
2. APSE is a not for profit organisation working with over 300 local authorities throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
3. APSE issues advice on a range of council services to its member authorities including the fields of employee relations, parks, leisure, refuse collection and grounds maintenance service areas
4. APSE's advisory briefing to member authorities is attached to this press release.
5. Media interviews by arrangements with Mark Roden or Mo Baines on 0161 772 1810 / 07971 843515