



Association for Public Service Excellence

Annual Report 2026



The BIG Picture



97.5%

Customer satisfaction
rating



13,416

Delegates at APSE
seminars, networks
and training courses



36

Seminars



273

Network query
reports



63

APSE briefings



7

APSE research
publications



12

APSE networks

2025-2026

Preface



APSE Northern was delighted to take the reins of APSE during the Annual General Meeting 2025 in the vibrant city of Glasgow, receiving the opportunity to elect the National Chair following on from Cllr Archie Dryburgh, MBE, who served the preceding term as National Chair on behalf of APSE Scotland. A very hard act to follow but ably filled by Cllr Tracey Dixon, elected as National Chair for 2025-2026. Cllr Dixon pledged to continue her work supporting the skills agenda in local government as a means to sustain local services and to support local growth, with a very specific commitment to skills development in younger people. Cllr Dixon was unable to fulfil her year in office, but I was honoured to be elected by APSE Northern colleagues to takeover the role as National Chair.

Like my predecessor Cllr Dixon I am committed to skills development and local economies and within my own area of Knowsley I have witnessed first hand the positive difference that can be made within local communities when local people are supported. My commitment to deliver jobs, business space, and social value across communities is aligned to APSE's own values of inclusive economic growth where local government exercises its stewardship over local places, convening anchor institutions, grounded in local places, with opportunities for new business, new jobs and skills. It is in this context that I was delighted to oversee further work by APSE on economic growth.

Economic growth is not measured by citizens or residents based on remote treasury indicators but is felt by the availability of decent paid work, access to a good place to live with good local transport and new businesses, and the quality of local neighbourhoods and public realm. Throughout my term of office this relatable interpretation of economic growth has been at the fore of APSE's research.

During the year, the value of devolution, to support growth, has once again been a feature of government announcements with promises of the transfer of powers to local areas and most recently further fiscal devolution. I am confident that APSE's work in this area, looking at the ways in which we can ensure good systems of governance and accountability, have acted as a timely reminder that new institutional models of strategic or combined authorities, Mayoral or otherwise, must remain accountable to local people, with measurable outcomes, and delivering best value for the public purse. It is also imperative that devolution does not stop within English local government but is a viable consideration across Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland as well.

Throughout the year APSE has reaffirmed its commitment to the quality of the local neighbourhood services. By supporting member councils, as they have delivered new systems and requirements in the collection of waste and recycling, campaigning on the value of local parks, including ongoing campaigns to fund green public realm, and making great strides to improve housing quality as well as the availability of affordable homes, and access to sports and leisure opportunities. Local government must remain at the heart of better neighbourhoods.

It would be remiss of me however not to mention another passion of mine which is the delivery of high-quality nutritious school meals. Sadly, the past year has seen a further decline in school meals with the cost of food, and pressure to deliver budget reductions, yet again resulting in the loss of local authority school food providers. This is not sustainable if we are committed, as a society, to the future health and wellbeing of our children. Whilst the introduction of breakfast clubs, and additional funding for them is to be welcomed, it comes at the expense of a fully funded schools meals service, meaning the unique offering of the local authority provider is in a constant battle for survival. I am grateful to my National Secretary who has been a tireless campaigner for school food and the value of the not-for-profit local authority providers.

Whilst I have not met as many of you in person as I would have liked during my time in office, due to the constraints of taking on the role part way through the year, I am nevertheless delighted to have met many of you online at various APSE networks, seminars and events. It has been an absolute privilege to share your enthusiasm for frontline services and your commitment to local government and indeed to APSE.

My National Council colleagues have been a huge source of support to me, and I remain deeply indebted to them for their wisdom and dedication. I would also like to thank Anita Brown for her advice guidance and support, not only to me but to my predecessor Cllr Dixon, during her term of office as APSE National Secretary. Finally, I would like to thank the APSE Chief Executive and her Secretariat team who deliver the services to APSE members which they so value. In supporting them APSE is supporting the delivery of excellence in local services to our communities.

I will be handing over the reins to our new National Chair Elect as this role rotates this year to APSE Central, at the Annual General Meeting 2026. As I leave this role, I hope that you will agree that the Association remains strong and determined in its support to local government and local councils, with a team in place that will continue to deliver for our members into the future. It has been my absolute honour to serve as your National Chair, and I wish the new Chair and Secretary every success for 2026-2027.

Cllr Shelley Powell, APSE National Chair 2025 - 2026

Foreword



Throughout 2025-2026 a flurry of new policies, legislation and announcements flowed from Westminster, Holyrood, Stormont and the Senedd. The extent of devolved powers and fiscal devolution remains an issue across all UK administrative areas; the issue of how to ensure adequate funding for local government remains challenging.

For many councils within England the impact of local government reorganisation will be keenly felt as district and county councils will effectively be abolished and replaced by new unitary councils. APSE has been supporting its member councils with an online network to share best practice, new data insights to support reorganising frontline public services, and support from the association's not-for-profit consultancy, supporting preparation for services that may be merged with neighbouring councils or conversely disaggregated to new authorities.

Housing policy has once again dominated the agenda across the UK with changes to planning, renter rights, building safety and the delivery of affordable homes emerging through new legislation and policy development. The delivery of new homes remains constrained by construction costs and supplies alongside skills shortages in some areas.

Growth had been a central plank of the now former Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer's government throughout 2025-2026, and with the recent appointment of the new Prime

Minister, Right Honourable, Andy Burnham, MP, it is unlikely to change. However, the prospect of further fiscal devolution is very much now at the centre of the strategy. APSE, with colleagues from the University of Staffordshire has continued to work on local growth issues throughout the year, arguing that inclusive growth will only be realised if local government is a partner, not just a delivery agent for local public services, within that growth agenda.

An under-reported but substantial change to Social Care policy in Wales was presented by the Health and Social Care (Wales) Act 2025. As concerns grow across the UK, on the use of for-profit providers in the care of children the Act seeks to stop the generation of profit by legislating for providers to be sourced from the public, non-profit and charitable sector. The Welsh Government provided £68M to support local authorities rebuild capacity in the direct care of children. Social care was also a policy focus within Scotland with the Care Reform (Scotland) Act 2025; controversial proposals for a national care service were dropped but measures within the Act provide for new rights for carers, digital records and information sharing with integrated boards and new standards.

In Northern Ireland the Environmental Principles Policy Statement (EPPS) was agreed in March 2026 following a period of consultation. In effect it subscribes to existing principals of environmental protections, including for the natural environment. This is augmented by the ongoing consultation on the Nature Recovery Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2032: A proposed strategy for halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity has been consulted upon with announcements now expected this year.

Neighbourhood service delivery continues to be a focus for APSE's advocacy work. There remains a real risk that services including waste and recycling, sports and leisure services, school meals, and parks and public realm, are squeezed when it comes to funding due to the overwhelming costs of social care and homelessness services. APSE continues to advocate for fair funding for all frontline services and, whilst some funding improvements have materialised, many councils still face the risk of financial collapse and recent changes to the funding formulae has inevitably produced winners and losers. New policies in waste collection and recycling, whilst welcome, add to the financial constraints.

Organisationally APSE emerges from the final year of its 2023-2026 business plan in a stronger position albeit some challenges remain. The successful first year of trading of APSE Synergy Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary, provides greater assurance on APSE's operations. The development of the company included a root and branch review of processes, legal issues and governance. The APSE Synergy Limited Board provides oversight of the company and it in turn reports to APSE's National Council. The further development of the company will be a core component of the coming year alongside a resource review. This will ensure the right skills mix are available across APSE's internal staff team and the cohort of APSE Associates in meeting the needs of APSE members.

The Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) policy adopted by APSE continues to support activity with a strong commitment to the ethical delivery of the association's services. APSE continues to support apprenticeship and graduate trainees as part of the association's workforce strategy and commitment to social issues. Procurement and supplier issues are viewed through the prism of the ESG policy sourcing public providers wherever possible (such as the premises cleaning contract provided by Trafford Council and payroll services provided by Manchester City Council) and use of municipal venues, wherever possible, in the delivery of events. Preferential rates for services apply to APSE member councils reflecting the benefits of membership and the collective endeavour to support excellence in frontline service delivery. APSE members continue to support the association in their willingness to share best practice, respond to surveys and research work, and through speaking and presenting at APSE seminars and networks.

It would be remiss of me not to pay tribute to APSE's National Council. As ever the support they provide to APSE members, to the APSE Secretariat Team and to me personally has been outstanding. Cllr Shelley Powell took over as National Chair partway through the year and offered her unstinting support to the association. Cllr Powell follows on from the outstanding support provided by Cllr Tracey Dixon, who was initially elected as Chair in September 2025. Anita Brown who has acted as the National Secretary has provided advice support and guidance

throughout the year and National Council and the Secretariat team are indebted to her. Thank you also to Cllr Archie Dryburgh, MBE, who as immediate past chair kindly took on the role of inaugural chair of the board of APSE Synergy Limited. I would like also to like to thank our secretariat staff team; from senior managers to our apprentices, I am enormously privileged to work with such a dedicated and professional cohort of people that truly care about APSE and our member councils.

Finally, the ongoing support of our member councils makes the work of the association all the more worthwhile. APSE at its heart exists for the benefit of all our member councils across the UK and we are all proud to support the frontline of local government. Though many challenges remain for local government its best asset as a sector is the dedicated people who innovate and transform local services for the better. APSE remains steadfast as an association in supporting the many sectors in local government and across both officers and elected members, and collaborative working with trade unions to secure the skills necessary for the future workforce.

We remain true to our values in the delivery of excellence in frontline local government services. Thank you for your support.

Mo Baines, Chief Executive, APSE



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A spiral-bound notebook with a calendar grid is shown at an angle. The calendar grid includes dates from 1 to 31, with the word 'SUN' visible above the 3rd. A black pen with a silver tip and clip is positioned diagonally across the right side of the notebook. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent magenta filter.

Section 1

The Year in Profile

Local Government Finance

Over the past year, promised changes to local government finance in England began to take effect. While the settlement created both winners and losers, it increased overall funding for local government. A key feature was the move to a multi-year settlement totalling £69 billion, alongside a further £600 million through the Recovery Grant, targeted at areas with higher service need and demand but lower local income-raising capacity. Core spending power was reported to have increased by 4.1% in real terms; however, once compensation for higher National Insurance contributions is considered, the increase falls to 3.3% for 2025-2026.

Statutory overrides were extended again to allow further structural reforms to SEND funding and to address Dedicated Schools Grant deficits. Homelessness, SEND and social care continue to be major pressure points in council budgets.

In the devolved administrations, funding is determined through the Barnett formula and allocated to the Scottish Government, the Senedd and the Northern Ireland Assembly rather than being passed directly to local government. Figures for APSE members in Scotland suggest increases are largely linked to changes in the treatment of some funding sources and are closer to 1.6% than the higher headline figures cited. In Wales, the 2025-26 settlement included a 3.8% funding floor ensuring no authority received less than that increase, although critics argue that the settlement relies on legacy datasets and should be revised. In Northern Ireland, the 2025-26 Rates Support Grant for councils remained at the same level as 2024-2025, meaning any additional funding had to be raised through district rates.

Whilst there have clearly been some improvements to the overall funding of local councils there are still many authorities that are facing the very real prospect of interventions and a need for exceptional financial support. The long-tail post austerity risk to the financial sustainability of local council continues given finances have been weakened over a sustained period.

Social care

APSE welcomes growing recognition of its long-standing call to rebuild local authority capacity in Adults' and Children's Services. Councils with social care responsibilities continue to report overspends, while market conditions have created a sellers' market that adds cost pressure. The settlement included £3.7 billion in additional funding for social care authorities, including an £880 million uplift through the Social Care Grant and a maximum 2% council tax social care precept, shifting some funding pressure from central to local government. In Wales, the Health and Social Care (Wales) Act 2025 sets out a process to remove private profit from children's social care. In Scotland, plans for a National Care Service were largely removed from legislation, though new duties on data sharing and standards remain.

Unresolved social care funding continues to threaten other council services, with non-statutory neighbourhood services especially vulnerable to cuts. In England, former Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, launched the Casey Commission on Adult Social Care, led by Baroness Louise Casey, to map a route towards a national care service. Following the July 2026 change of Prime Minister to the Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP, the commission is expected to deliver one accelerated report in 2027.

Housing and homelessness

The commitment to build 1.5 million new homes, alongside planning reform and homelessness action, should reduce housing costs over time. APSE has long called for social housing investment to cut the public cost of poor housing and housing benefit. However, savings will take a long time to be realised given existing high demand for temporary accommodation, affordable housing shortages, homelessness pressures, rising build costs and skills gaps, as well as slow build out rates, and in some cases, developer resistance.

Building and home safety initiatives include England's Building Safety Levy, effective from 1 October 2026, and Scotland's equivalent levy from 1 April 2028. Wales is developing its own framework, while Northern Ireland's regulatory and funding position remains under review.

APSE has supported councils through safety-focused networks covering damp and mould, including new duties arising from Awaab's Law and the impact of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) on building and housing safety.

A changing climate and protecting nature

Councils continue to face climate pressures, including flood risk, coastal erosion and high energy costs. APSE Energy supports members to improve energy efficiency in council buildings and assets, from swimming pools to schools, helping reduce fuel costs.

The Great British Energy Act 2025 created Great British Energy to invest in low-carbon energy but does not operate in the retail energy market. In March, it awarded £180 million for rooftop solar on schools and NHS sites, with potential savings of up to £400 million over 30 years. It also provided £10 million to mayoral authorities for clean energy projects in community buildings, plus around £9.3 million for devolved governments. Despite these long-term savings, immediate energy cost pressures remain, so APSE Energy continues to

focus on practical efficiency measures.

Recent heatwaves have reinforced the importance of green space and tree cover. APSE continues to support councils on grassland management, rewilding public spaces and managing coastal erosion. Parks remain central to community access to nature and biodiversity innovation.

APSE supports UK-wide climate and nature recovery ambitions through its services, including operating network in climate and renewables, waste and street scene, and parks and public realm networks. APSE Training also provides courses and Master Classes to help councils respond effectively.

Local Structures; Local Economies; Local Growth

The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act received Royal Assent on 29 April 2026, following its July 2025 introduction. Local government reorganisation (LGR) will create new unitary councils across England, reflecting existing models in Scotland and Wales and earlier restructuring in Northern Ireland.

LGR is disruptive for district and county areas, and APSE responded to its members' needs with the creation of a web hub and network to support affected members. APSE remains concerned about service delivery, especially if social care pressures continue to squeeze other budgets. However, reorganisation also offers opportunities to redesign services using AI, digital platforms and insourcing, provided councils have sufficient resources.

The Act also establishes new strategic authorities, with powers transferred to the sub-regional level, with a broader aim of shifting power from Westminster to local areas. Fiscal devolution, promised by former the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, in her 2026 Mais Lecture, has been reaffirmed by the new Prime Minister.

APSE research in 2025-2026 argues that local government needs fair, sustainable funding to support public services and contribute to growth. Fiscal devolution should also include redistributive mechanisms that reflect challenges such as inner-city needs and rural poverty.

Although powers have long been devolved to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, sub-regional devolution in those areas has not naturally developed to a more local level.

Insourcing, Service Delivery and Procurement

APSE continues to promote directly delivered services where they offer best value for councils and taxpayers. Insourcing is growing, and member councils increasingly prioritise social value through local supply chains, fair wages, greener services and stronger community engagement. Cabinet Office guidance has strengthened APSE's public-interest procurement campaign by requiring central government departments to apply a Public Interest Test before renewing contracts over £1 million and to develop longer-term insourcing strategies where annual contract spend exceeds £100 million.

Although this guidance is only considered as 'best practice' for local government, it usefully sets out public-interest considerations before outsourcing decisions and supports direct provision of public services, including fair consideration of opportunities to insource contracts. Wales and Scotland already have some related procurement guidance on social value issues. APSE, in response to these policy changes, has launched social value and insourcing training for member councils.

Council mergers in England bring risks and opportunities. APSE encourages new councils to set ambitious social value objectives and use genuine options appraisals before procurement decisions. However, contracts may be renewed without rigorous assessment because of the scale of LGR merger work. APSE Synergy has supported members on post-LGR operating models through workshops and online events and consultancy projects.

APSE Scotland continued to argue for greater freedoms and flexibilities in response to the Scottish Government consultation on a Power of General Competence, which exists in England, Wales and Northern Ireland but not so far in Scotland. Whilst the power has not yet been confirmed consultation ministerial consideration of the issue is ongoing.

Neighbourhood services remain central to councils and communities, from waste and recycling to parks, leisure and local roads. APSE continues to share best practice across services including cemeteries, crematoria, highways and street lighting. New waste and recycling policies, including food waste collections, deposit return schemes and the emissions trading scheme, have shaped network discussions, while fly-tipping and waste crime remain growing concerns across street scene services.

Across Frontline Services

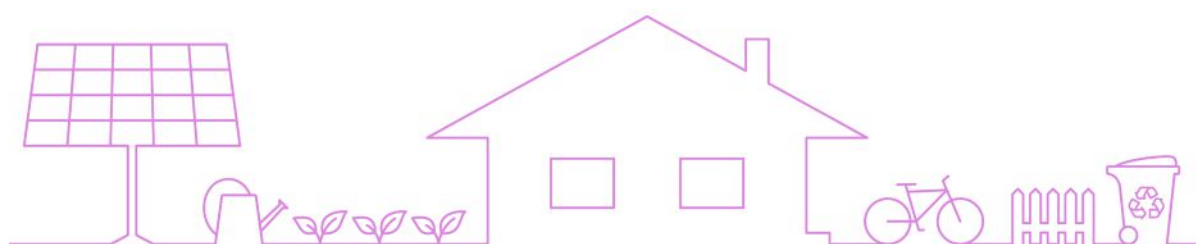
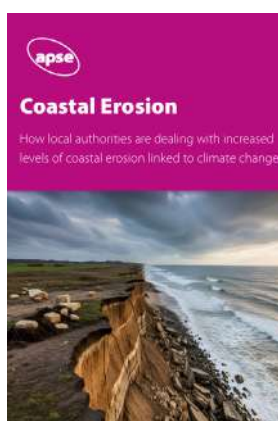
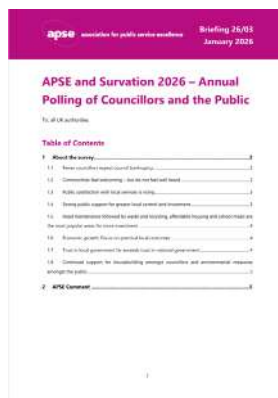
APSE's network events, especially for newly elected councillors, have covered a wide range of topics and attracted record online attendance. Online briefings included preparing councils for Martyn's Law and integrating the Counter Terrorism Policing "ACT for Local Authorities" initiative. Work also continued with the Ministry of Defence through the APSE Military Champions and Veterans network.

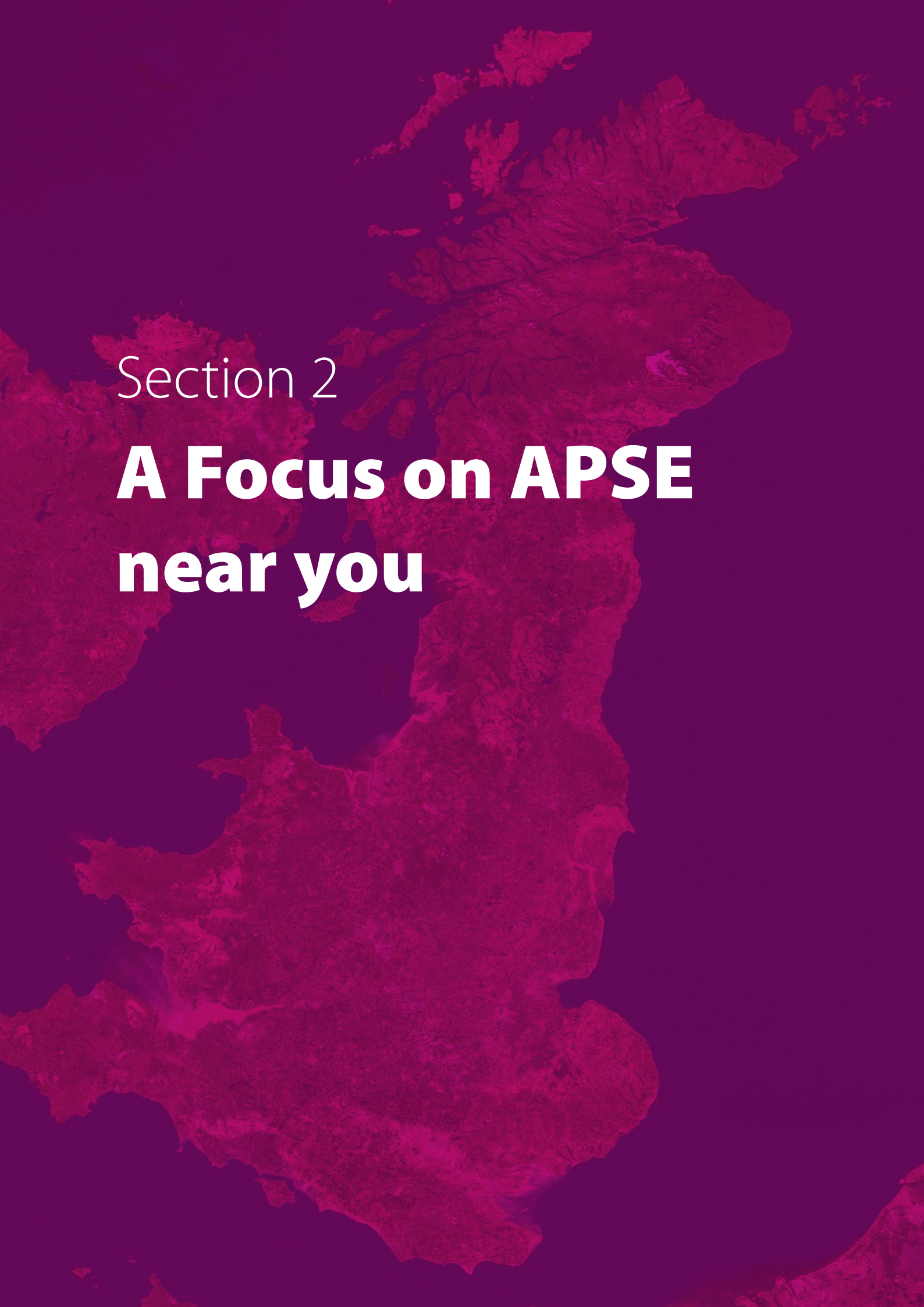
Highways services remain focused on managed maintenance, but road assets continue to deteriorate despite higher pothole funding. LED street lighting has not delivered expected savings because of rising energy prices, though smarter lighting and renewables are now common across the sector. Fleet services are central to climate responses, but greener options remain less viable in some areas, especially rural locations. Nature protection also highlights the importance of parks, public realm and greenspace, and APSE remains active in the MHCLG Parks Working Group.

APSE continues to call for stronger regulation of the funeral and cremation industry after a recent exceptional, but nonetheless distressing case, highlighted the risks rogue operators pose to communities.

The NHS ten-year plan has prompted local authority leisure services to revisit their role in prevention, but their traded-service model remains challenging because long-term health savings do not directly benefit councils as operators. School meals also support prevention on child obesity, health and nutrition, with English breakfast club expansion helping but funding disparities remaining across England, London, Scotland and Wales. APSE continues to provide the secretariat services to the All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food.

APSE Publications 2025-2026



An aerial photograph of the United Kingdom, including Great Britain and Ireland, is shown in a dark, muted color palette. A small red dot is placed on the southern coast of England, indicating a specific location. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Section 2

A Focus on APSE near you

33

**Member Councils
Scotland**

54

**Member Councils
Northern Region**

81

**Member Councils
Southern Region**

16

**Member Councils
Wales**

38

**Member Councils
Central Region**

12

**Member Councils
Northern Ireland**



APSE Wales

APSE Wales membership for 2025–2026 stands at 16 Welsh authorities.

During the year, APSE Wales delivered six events—four webinars and two in-person meetings—helping members share learning, address emerging challenges and showcase good practice across local government.

The programme began in May 2025 with ‘Active Communities – How Can Councils Help Sustain Active Lifestyles?’, exploring how councils and partners can sustain participation in sport, leisure and wellbeing to support healthier, more active lives. This was followed by an event in June hosted by Swansea Council ‘Building a Resilient Workforce’ covering workforce resilience, recruitment and retention, skills development, succession planning and regional activity alongside APSE Wales AGM business.

The Autumn programme was themed on ‘Unpacking Waste and Resources’ with a webinar event focused on waste and recycling challenges and Wales’ move towards a circular economy. This was followed in October 2025, with APSE Wales members attending an in-person event in Newport ‘Taking Ownership of Your Improvement’ highlighting how data, benchmarking and performance management can drive transformation, improve outcomes and support continuous improvement.

The online Housing, Sustainability and Community Support Group met in 25 November 2025 to discuss housing, financial inclusion, sustainability and support for communities facing economic challenges.

The programme concluded in March 2026 with ‘The Future of Local Government Services in Wales’, exploring funding pressures, workforce issues, rising demand and the long-term sustainability of local government in Wales.

The APSE Wales Chair is Cllr Dave Hughes of Flintshire Council with Cllr Mark Wilson as Vice Chair and throughout the year Chris Cutforth of Swansea Council served as APSE Wales Secretary.

APSE Northern

Cllr Tracey Dixon, Leader of South Tyneside Council, was elected as Chair of APSE Northern for 2025–2026 and APSE National Chair. Anita Brown of Stockton-on-Tees Council was re-elected as Northern Secretary for 2025–2026 and will continue in her role as APSE National Secretary. Cllr John Kerr-Brown was elected as Vice Chair, further strengthening the region’s leadership team for the year ahead.

A programme of regional forums has been delivered throughout 2025–2026, providing members with opportunities to share learning, discuss key service challenges and showcase local innovation. This included an in-person event at Shakespeare North, which focused on regeneration and local economies and gave delegates the opportunity to take part in a behind-the-scenes guided tour of the venue. The Annual General Meeting was held in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and was accompanied by a forum exploring how councils can protect and enhance neighbourhoods. In addition, an online forum examined practical approaches to building more resilient communities.

APSE Northern members have continued to play an active role in APSE’s national seminar programme, contributing to discussions across a wide range of frontline service areas. These have included street cleansing, waste and recycling, parks and greenspaces, cemeteries and crematoria, transport and sports and leisure.

The profile of APSE Northern members remained strong throughout 2025–2026, with the region achieving notable recognition at national level. Northern authorities secured three awards at the APSE Annual Service Awards and six awards at the APSE Performance Networks Awards 2025. These achievements demonstrate the depth of expertise, innovation and best practice across the region, as well as the continued commitment of member authorities to delivering high-quality public services.

APSE Southern

The role of Chair for APSE Southern 2025–2026 was held by Chair Cllr Jacqui Burnett, Luton Borough Council, the role of Vice Chair being held by Cllr Simon Letts, Southampton City Council. The role of Secretary was once again undertaken by Colin Rowland, Strategic Director of Community Services, Isle of Wight Council.

There was vast engagement with members within the region with over 2270 colleagues engaging with APSE Southern

through networking events, webinars and forums alongside training and national seminar attendance. APSE Southern members utilised other core services, including Performance Networks, Solutions and Energy. Events for members included an online Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion seminar, and an in-person Street Cleansing seminar as well as a major seminar on Regeneration and Local Economies, exploring the future shape of councils, including regeneration, community wealth building, social value, commercial innovation and the impact of English Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.

The Parks and Space Green seminar shared practical examples of innovation, community engagement and environmental stewardship and this was followed by a sports and leisure seminar which showcased innovative approaches to increasing physical activity, supporting underrepresented groups, managing operational challenges and delivering sustainable, high-quality facilities.

Online networks were held covering parks and greenspace; sports and leisure services; innovation, digital transformation and Artificial Intelligence; renewables and energy efficiency; vehicle maintenance and transport; street cleansing and commercialisation; and Social Value, Procurement and Commercialisation Network.

Over the course of the financial year, we were delighted to welcome Uttlesford District Council into membership.

APSE Scotland

Following APSE Scotland's AGM in 2025, Cllr Judy Hamilton of Fife Council, Cllr Lynne Short of Dundee City Council and Andrew Kennedy from East Ayrshire Council were all elected to the roles of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary of APSE Scotland for the next two years (2025 – 2027).

Throughout the year continuous engagement with a number of organisations benefitted APSE Scotland member councils. This has included ongoing collaborations with the Scottish Government; Transport Scotland; Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency; Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain; CoSLA; Logistics UK, Keep Scotland Beautiful; SEPA; Improvement Service; Zero Waste Scotland; SOLACE; Energy Saving Trust; Skills Development Scotland; Brodies LLP and the Scottish Housing Regulator. Issues raised include the Household Waste Recycling Code of Practice, transport and fleet responsibilities and compliance requirements, National Litter and Flytipping Strategy and the upcoming Awaab's Law for social landlords.

Throughout the year member councils within APSE Scotland have participated in working groups including the Scottish Waste Industry Training, Competency and Health and Safety Forum (SWITCH) and the SOLACE / Improvement Service Transformation Programme. APSE Scotland also continues to respond to consultations and give evidence to Scottish Parliament, Scottish Government and Cross Parliamentary Groups on behalf of our members. APSE has submitted responses to a number of consultations including Scottish Government's Local Authority General Power of Competence.

In 2025–2026, APSE Scotland held several in-person, service-specific events. In March 2026, APSE hosted the National Building and Housing Seminar at the Glasgow Hilton, featuring speakers from the Scottish Housing Regulator, Skills Development Scotland and Brodies LLP, plus case studies from East Ayrshire, Highland, Renfrewshire and South Ayrshire Councils on housing-led regeneration, multiskilled building services workforces and local heat decarbonisation.

Network meetings continued to thrive, with growing engagement from officers and elected members through in-person and online sessions. These groups remain a key membership resource, enabling members to share knowledge and discuss issues with peers, including asbestos procedures, good food nation plans, Scotland's Waste Route Map to 2030 and allotments.

APSE Northern Ireland

In 2025–26, membership included all 12 Northern Ireland local authorities and the Education Authority NI. APSE Northern Ireland delivered six events—four webinars and two in-person meetings—giving members opportunities to share learning, discuss emerging challenges and showcase good practice.

The programme opened on 4 April 2025 with "Having a Well-Defined AI Policy", covering governance, risks and opportunities in the responsible use of AI in council services.

On 10 June 2025, members attended "Cleaner Councils / Greener Future" and the APSE Northern Ireland AGM at the Galgorm Hotel, Co. Antrim. The event covered decarbonisation, renewable energy, biodiversity, circular economy initiatives and climate action, with practical case studies from councils and partners.

“Building a Resilient Workforce” followed online on 16 September 2025, exploring workforce development, youth recruitment, resilient member-officer relations and mentoring.

A second in-person event, “Taking Ownership of Your Improvement”, took place on 7 October 2025 at Theatre at the Mill, Newtownabbey, focusing on performance improvement and using data and technology to transform services.

On 16 December 2025, “Making Space for Nature” highlighted practical approaches to biodiversity, rewilding, sustainable greenspace management and pollinator-friendly initiatives in local authority services.

The final meeting, “Active Communities”, on 19 March 2026 explored how councils can promote physical activity, wellbeing and social participation, including support for residents with long-term health conditions.

Alderman Alan MaDowell of Ards and North Down Borough Council was elected as APSE Northern Ireland Chair with Cllr Terry Andrews of Newry Mourne and Down elected as Vice Chair. Ellen Cavanagh of Derry City and Strabane was elected as Northern Ireland Secretary.

APSE Central

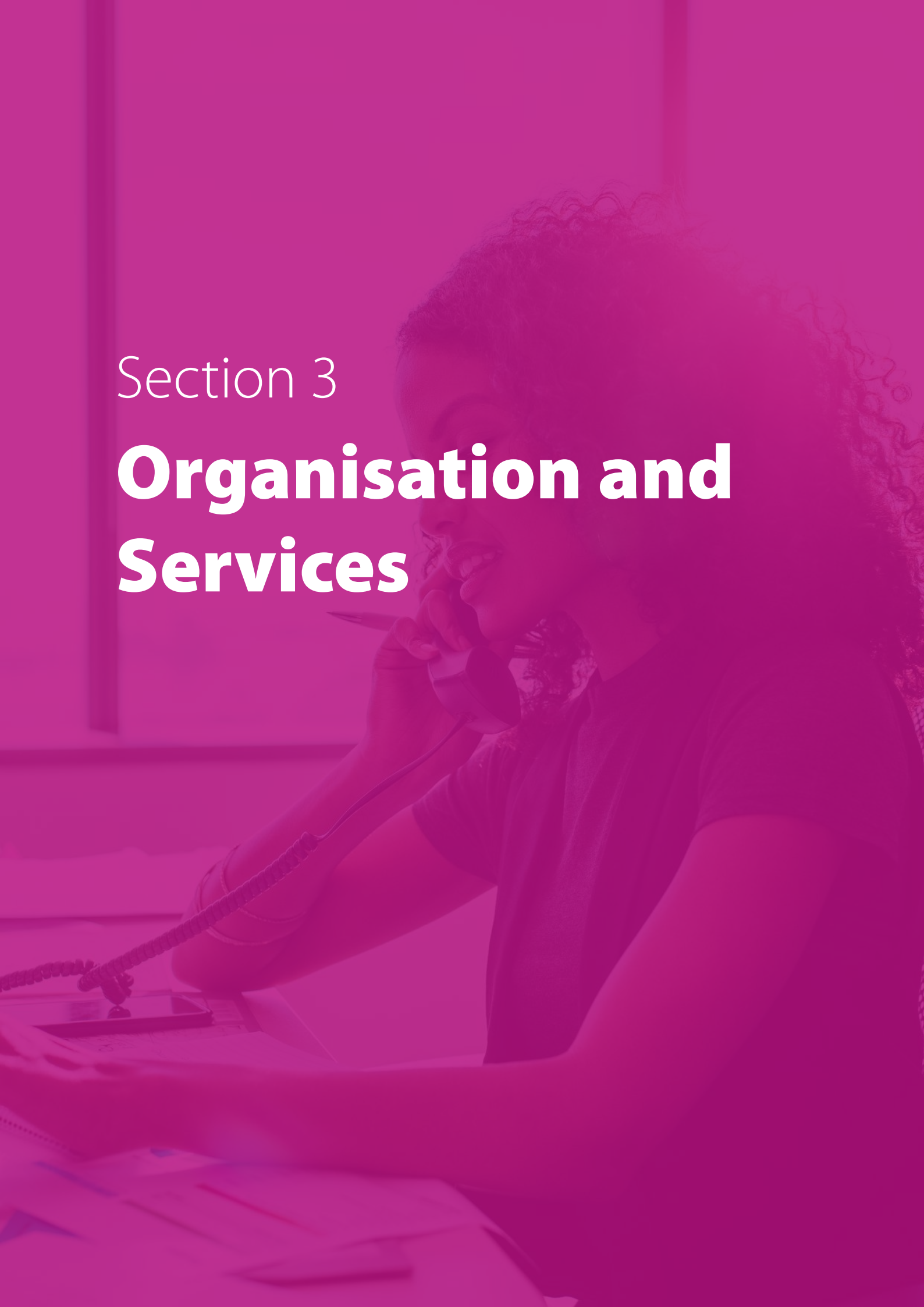
APSE Central membership grew during the year, with new members and increased regional activity. Events across the East and West Midlands included online and in-person sessions such as a webinar on protecting and enhancing urban green spaces, featuring the National Federation of Parks and Greenspaces and presentations from Stoke-on-Trent and Leicester.

The APSE Central AGM 2025 was held at Coventry’s historic St Mary’s Guildhall, alongside a member forum on “What’s next for Net Zero?” featuring Margot James, Chair of the Coventry Independent Climate Change Board, and Cllr Jim O’Boyle of Coventry City Council.

“Efficiency and Transformation” highlighted APSE Associate and Training Services and North Northamptonshire’s Waste Transformation journey through LGR, completing the summer events programme.

The autumn programme featured a visit to Derby’s award-winning School Safe Havens scheme, digital enforcement discussions, and member input on liveable, healthier neighbourhoods. A November Communities and Neighbourhoods event included Wyre Forest and Lincolnshire, while APSE also worked with partner organisations speaking on waste issues and providing further opportunities for member networking.

Cllr Mark Pengelly of North Northamptonshire Council was re-elected APSE Central Chair. With APSE Central holding the National Chair role for 2026–2027, Cllr John Clarke, Leader of Gedling Council, was elected regional Vice-Chair and prospective National Chair. Cllr Ndukwe Onuoha of Derby City Council replaced Baggy Shanker, who was elected as the MP for Derby South in July 2024, as a National Council member.

A woman with curly hair is shown in profile, smiling while talking on a telephone. She is holding a pen in her left hand. The background is a blurred office environment. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent pink overlay.

Section 3

Organisation and Services



165

**APSE Performance
Networks Members**



144

**APSE Energy
Members**

45

Awards Issued

148

**Training Courses
Delivered**



APSE's Organisational Form and Structure

Whilst APSE remains a not-for-profit organisation made up of predominantly local councils across the UK, as agreed with the APSE membership, 2025-2026 saw the launch of the APSE Synergy, a company limited by shares, and effectively a trading subsidiary to APSE. Most traded work is now carried out through APSE Synergy. The APSE Synergy Board is made up of nominees from APSE's National Council and the Association's Chief Executive.

The remainder of APSE's work and services is retained under the Association. For transparency alongside the regular annual report and accounts to the AGM the work of APSE Synergy and its finances will be reported through the annual report, the annual financial report and through consolidated group accounts. National Council continues to oversee the work of the Association.

The APSE Policy Framework

APSE is a campaigning organisation working across the many political allegiances. The Association nevertheless reflects the views of members in supporting and advancing the interests of excellence in frontline services. The policy framework, supporting this aim, is set by National Council, who in turn are the representatives of our local council members. The policy framework is dynamic and is reviewed each year by National Council at its policy away day. The policy framework takes cognisance of views emerging from the APSE networks, which are facilitated by elected network and forum chairs, through member engagement in sector network meetings, seminars and events, roundtables and through research and survey findings. The APSE Membership Resources service is critical to policy development and works symbiotically with APSE's traded services of APSE Training, APSE Energy, APSE Solutions and APSE Performance Networks and now with the new subsidiary company APSE Synergy.

The policy framework informs APSE's advocacy across the UK administrations. Thematic policy issues developed through APSE's strategic forum events, are utilised across party political and sector conferences, in evidence sessions to parliamentary committees and in response to government consultations across the UK.

Research

Throughout the past year, APSE, in collaboration with research partners and academics, has produced a number of research reports, covering a range of topics from coastal erosion and education catering to public and councillor attitude surveys. This has allowed the association to continue to contribute towards national policy debates, whilst also providing support and insight into the challenges and opportunities facing local government frontline services.

Following a survey of local authority catering services across the UK, APSE published 'The future of local authority education catering services'. This report examined the financial constraints, operational pressures and policy challenges affecting the sustainability of school meal provision. It highlighted the increasing demands placed on catering teams, the impact of rising costs and workforce challenges, and the importance of ensuring that services remain capable of delivering affordable and nutritious meals to pupils.

APSE Performance Networks also published the 'Local government frontline data roundup 2025', bringing together a range of performance, financial and service delivery data from local authorities across the UK. The report provided a snapshot of the challenges facing frontline services, highlighting emerging trends, benchmarking information, and key performance indicators across a range of service areas. In presenting this comparative data, the publication helped councils place their own performance within a wider local government context.

A research paper by APSE Associate Wayne Priestley explored climate change and its implications for local authority services. It examined the growing pressure on coastal communities and the services that support them. A complementary webinar gave members the opportunity to discuss the research findings and their implications in more detail.

APSE Executive Consultant, Matt Miller, authored a report exploring the vital role local authorities can play in revitalising their high streets and town centres. Drawing on examples of strategic regeneration efforts driven by housing, culture and environmental design, the report highlighted how councils are using place-based approaches to support local economies, strengthen communities and create more attractive and resilient town centres.

A range of additional research collaborations have supported APSE's advocacy work including the now annual APSE / Survation Public Opinion poll published in December 2026, with the field work taking place over October and November. Findings include widespread public support for more taxes to be spent in local areas, which is now supported through promises of greater fiscal devolution and trust in local councillors and local councils is significantly higher than central

institutions of government.

APSE research work continues to be in high demand with external commissions on financial interventions in local councils and the impact of Best Value, housing need, and social care, including detailed explorations of emerging models of delivery in Scotland and Wales. Research studies also commenced in the year explore economic growth in islands economies, and a follow up research paper on economic growth and devolution.

APSE in the Media

APSE continues to support its member councils through a focussed approach to its media activity. Once again, APSE's research papers formed a bedrock to many campaigning articles in both trade and national press outlets, supporting broader media messages including economic growth, biodiversity and school food funding.

LinkedIn, as a business-oriented platform, is APSE's premier social media channel. The APSE LinkedIn page continues to average over 100 new followers a month, including council officers, civil servants and individuals from the private sector. By the end of the APSE year, LinkedIn followers totalled 8,589 with a growth of over 1,705 in the past year. There have been significant spikes in followers that align with the 2025 Annual Seminar, the 2026 APSE Scotland Fleet, Waste and Grounds Seminar and the Big Energy Summit 2025 with related posts enjoying some of the highest engagement figures.

APSE is no longer active on X (formerly Twitter), following an organisational decision to withdraw from the platform for ethical reasons. We have also created a BluSky account – a 'twitter-style' platform that has gained in recent popularity. However, this account is not used on a regular basis and will be further reviewed. The APSE YouTube channel is maintained and utilised on a more bespoke basis for communications and anchors video content.

The APSE website continues to generate media leads for APSE comments, quotes and articles with the national press including: BBC News, The Guardian and Ireland Live. APSE has also featured in trade and industry titles such as the MJ, where APSE enjoys regular features and an editorial comment column, Local Government News, Horticulture Week, LAPV, Public Sector Catering, Landscape and Amenity, The Educator Magazine, Care Talk, CIWM Circular magazine, letsrecycle and Local Government Lawyer. Additionally, APSE has featured in a range of regional press outlets including Lincolnshire World, Rhyl Journal, Derbyshire Times, Antrim Guardian, The Northern Echo, Dorset Echo, Leicester Gazette, The York Press and The Pembrokeshire Herald. UK wide and regional coverage is monitored using the bespoke media software package Meltwater.

The introduction of our APSE Sector News Bulletins, distributed via email, provide members with service-specific updates relevant to their selected areas of interest. Each bulletin includes updates on APSE briefings, policy and research publications, news and best practice from member councils, and service-specific content from APSE Training, Performance Networks, Solutions and Network Queries. Members only receive bulletins for the service areas they have subscribed to, ensuring communications remain targeted and relevant. The bulletins also generate income through paid advertising opportunities.

APSE's Monthly Update is another key component to our communications. Around 5,000 contacts on the APSE database have opted to receive only a monthly email from us, making this a vital channel for promoting APSE's activities. The updates are tailored through conditional content, providing regional and service-specific information based on member's preferences. The Monthly Update is distributed to approximately 28,000 contacts and achieves an average open rate of around 20%.

APSE Direct

'APSE Direct' retained an online format across 2025-2026 but with exceptional print editions to support major events like the APSE Scotland Fleet, Waste and Grounds Seminar. Across the year five full online editions were produced, with pieces re-run on the APSE News pages of the website and with content reposted on APSE's LinkedIn channels.

Whilst the magazine remains popular and retains a balance of news content and features from member authorities, guest writers and features, and generates significant commercial advertising revenue, the end of the year focused on a review of the magazine format. This has resulted in segmented editions rebranded as 'Sector News' so that bespoke features and articles can best serve the members, for example in waste and recycling, soft FM services and parks and greenspace.

The full magazine limited editions will be retained to ensure maximum coverage of major topics and events, such as the annual seminar and awards, but the modernised platform and better links to the website, which of itself is being updated, should provide a better experience for APSE members and greater ease in navigating member services alongside APSE's traded services.

Spacehouse remains APSE's freelance agency for advertising sales with year-on-year increases in advertising revenue which

supports APSE's activities to the wider membership, complementing its core purpose of sharing best practice across the sector.

Seminars and awards

APSE continues to support its member's need for networking opportunities through a busy schedule of seminars, webinars, summits and forums. Utilising event spaces across the UK and attracting local government suppliers for internal and external trade shows, saw APSE a full seminar programme of 35 national, online and area-based seminars during the year. Civic and municipal buildings, hotels, conference centres, and sport stadiums have been used as venues for APSE conferences, trade exhibitions and awards evenings with a maintained focus on making events as sustainable as possible whilst retaining the needs of delegates and exhibitors.

2025-26 saw APSE continue to provide online roundtable webinars, focusing on requested crucial issues in local government, including Awaab's Law, Rewilding, and restricting the appeal of junk food webinars, along with the annual service specific conferences. Satisfaction levels amongst delegates remains high with 97.5% of attendees rating APSE seminars and events as excellent or good. APSE seminars and events continue to attract high-profile speakers alongside local authority leaders and academics.

The data speaks to the value of these events with 9784 delegates attending a seminar or training course, representing 411 different local government organisations, during the year.

APSE exhibitions remain popular, with over 200 local government suppliers marketing their products to APSE delegates this year. APSE, however, retains its credibility, and that of its member councils, by ensuring transparency at its events, with clear lines of separation between suppliers and procurement matters.

The APSE Service Awards 2025, held at The Glasgow Marriott, was hosted by Presenter and Broadcaster, Gina McKie, and was attended by over 350 guests. Renfrewshire Council took home the Overall Council of the Year award. Cllr Archie Dryburgh, MBE was awarded the Van Coulter Lifetime Achievement Award.

APSE continues to focus on venues and suppliers that align with its Environmental, Social and Governance framework, ensuring each hotel, conference centre or event space, are a living wage employer, have close public transport links, avoid wherever possible single use items and have a food waste procedure in place.

Mike Egerton, as programme manager, continues to work to align APSE's events with the priorities and needs of member councils and local government suppliers, including developing policies in response to APSE Environmental, Social and Governance framework, working on sustainable venues, and ethical employers in the events sector, and ensuring that the Approved Partner Scheme, and advanced seminar schedule, further align to APSE's business plan and ESG outcomes.

APSE Networks and strategic forums

APSE Networks and Strategic Forums continue to provide a valuable and accessible resource for APSE members, offering a dedicated platform through which local authorities can share knowledge, exchange best practice and discuss emerging challenges across a broad range of frontline local government services.

In addition to supporting professional dialogue and sector-led improvement, through regular engagement with members, these forums help to strengthen relationships, promote practical support and ensure that APSE services remain closely aligned with the needs of councils.

In 2025, the Armed Forces and Veterans Network was established to complement the existing service areas. This addition broadened the scope of the network programme and provided a further opportunity for councils to share approaches. In response to the continued strain of local government reorganisation on members the LGR network has also gone from strength to strength with expert speakers sharing insights into organisational culture, communications, change management as well as practical issues for frontline service mergers.

During 2025–2026, a total of 78 network meetings were held, attracting more than 5,452 delegates. This level of participation demonstrates the continued value placed on APSE Networks and Strategic Forums by member authorities.

Website, briefings and network query service

The APSE website remains as a resource hub for APSE members supporting a myriad of information across APSE's main membership services, including briefings and hosting post-event presentations and research papers. It also plays a



significant role in supporting APSE traded services in Training, Solutions, Performance Networks and Energy, allowing self-serve bookings and enquiries whilst also highlighting APSE's approved partners.

An upgrade to the website platform has embedded new site security measures, alongside more interactive content including an events calendar. The website remains an open access resource to all APSE members.

During 2025-2026, over 58 briefings were issued, alongside a number of bespoke e-publications. The network query service continues to be a popular and unique service for APSE member councils as part of APSE's peer-to-peer trusted network. A total of 284 network queries were issued on behalf of members in 2025 - 2026 with 2,077 network query responses.

APSE Solutions

2025-2026, as reported in this annual report and accounts, represented the first year of trading of APSE Synergy limited. The start of the year focused the team's efforts on transition systems and processes to the new subsidiary company, with some minor work remaining within core APSE. This process was challenging but it is timely to thank the loyal client base who have supported the move to the new company and the many APSE Associates who have come on the journey with the Solutions team who have worked meticulously to ensure the same high level of service was delivered to local council clients, offering high volumes of consultancy reviews, transformation support and interim management.

The nature of work demanded from the client base reflects some core service offers such as support in managing industrial conflicts, service assessments and quality improvement, fees and charges work and operational support on waste and resources, fleet reviews and vehicle maintenance, education catering, leisure services, highways, parks and ground maintenance and delivery model options appraisals including service insourcing.

The interim management side of the business, after an initial slow start, regained momentum in the third and fourth quarter of the year strengthening its financial position. The interim management service remains in high demand whilst satisfaction levels on both the quality of the interims placed and the value for money for the local councils, continues to generate even greater demand for the service. This demand leads to one of the biggest challenges faced by the Solutions team, which is ensuring a supply of experienced and professional interims are available to APSE members. As noted in the financial report the financial recovery of the service from 2024-2025 when compared with 2025-2026 is a real success story.

Changes to legislation and ongoing plans surrounding Local Government Reorganisation have contributed to the pressure on frontline services but also opened new opportunities for APSE Solutions to support the APSE network. The Solutions team supported by APSE Associates hosted a number of online roundtables, with sector experts and launched a fixed fee support package for diagnostic workshops, between councils facing reorganisation and across frontline services. This product provides a very practical operational support on merging service delivery models and operational platforms, reviewing assets such as depots, and ensuring day one delivery for newly formed councils services.

After great success with the launch of the mentoring and coaching programmes in 2024-2025 demand has continued to rise in 2025-2026. These programmes have primarily focused on senior management teams across Northern Ireland authorities. However, APSE Solutions in conjunction with APSE Training are looking to expand this offering throughout the UK.

Recent work on support through industrial action disputes and mediation work has been an added benefit to the portfolio of services delivered through experienced and trusted APSE Associates. This work is in no small part due to the unique offering of APSE Solutions which is distinct from other market offers as it is able to draw upon the expertise of other APSE services such as Energy, Performance Networks and Training, alongside aligning with membership resources; this adds extra value to our member councils and reinforces our USP in this ever-growing competitive market.

APSE Training

2025 – 2026 was the most challenging year yet for APSE Training. A drop in Carbon Literacy in-house courses led to our training course Project Management in Local Government (CPD) becoming the most popular course of the year, narrowly followed by the masterclass Health and Safety on Highways and Verges (CPD).

The team delivered 146 courses attracting 1671 learners across both open and In-house training courses and Masterclasses. All open courses were delivered via Microsoft Teams, however 60% of In-house courses were held onsite, at venues arranged by the commissioning authorities, in Scotland, England and Northern Ireland.

In response to increased interest in climate adaptation, two new courses were developed. Climate Adaptation: Advanced Soil Management and Climate Adaptation: Urban Green Spaces, these are the first in a series to support councils to build resilience through their climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Partnerships continued to flourish with Pinsent Masons delivering Health and Safety in Waste and Environmental Services and Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 Refresher; and the Institute of Cemeteries and Crematoria (ICCM) in delivering Understanding bereavement Services (formerly The Bereavement Journey) and Legal and Practical Management of Cemeteries.

Feedback helps the team to continuously improve the service. 76% of the 1671 learners responded to APSE's post-course training feedback survey. The quality of our training is vital and satisfaction scores, from feedback, improved this year, from 92% to 93%. Recommendation score remained at 89%

The team also builds on the overwhelmingly positive comments made about the ways in which training has helped learners, and their services, to develop.

The core team comprises two full-time staff members: Head of Service and Training Coordinator, and a two-day Business Support Assistant (Finance). This core group supports a growing number of 20 Associate trainers, who are experts in their field, which supports APSE Training in developing courses which are responses to the needs of the local government sector.

APSE Energy

Looking back at 2025-2026 geo-political events and the wider global issues, including changes within industries, have continued to effect energy and renewables. An example of this was Shell which abandoned its key climate target for 2035 and weakened another goal for 2030. Existing and new global hostilities, continue to force up the price of energy, and many other goods. As big energy users, local authorities are affected in much the same way as other businesses and citizens, who face ongoing cost pressures.

There have been mixed messages (before and since our new Prime Minister was announced post this report's scope in July 2026) particularly around North Sea licences but there will be no quick end to the use of fossil fuels. It takes time to invest in the infrastructure to reduce the dependence on gas and oil. Although the work at a national level impacts on what councils can do, they do have leeway to make a difference. Each has assets it can utilise – either looking for energy efficiencies or generation and income stream opportunities. Local authorities like Nottingham are utilising batteries to trade in energy, Bristol and Coventry are working with partners to attract investment, Flintshire, amongst many others have a solar farm, Fife are investing in energy efficient new homes and Swansea are installing on-street EV chargers, they are all investing in their assets.

All of these councils, and many more who have worked with APSE Energy over the year, are local projects benefitting local people. But the impact goes further. Using less energy and generating it from renewables reduces the overall strain on the national grid, helps to keep prices down and means that the UK is less reliant on imports.

The members of APSE Energy are at different stages of their energy journey. Whilst some at the vanguard of action across the energy and changing climate agenda, with large capacity and capability to take projects forward, other smaller councils are looking to learn to achieve their own targets. Therein lies another important factor – many local authorities set themselves extremely ambitious targets in the form of net zero dates. Everyone realises the benefit of a tough target to mobilise activity and focus the mind but a little pragmatism is also needed. Decarbonising a large organisation, like a local authority, is a mammoth task and many will not meet their targets. That may not be a setback because there are lessons to be learnt. APSE Energy has found that those most likely to achieve will be those who had serious discussions between officers and councillors about what their ambitions meant, identified budgets and had a long-term plan.

It is notable to APSE Energy that the narrative is changing within the sector from a focus on emissions and carbon reduction to efficiencies from cost savings, reduced energy prices, income streams, jobs, health benefits and local investment now.

The need to reduce emissions is as vital as ever but in terms of making a business case, there is more than one way to justify an investment and local authorities need to take advantage of all their options.

APSE Energy has continued to support its members through these challenging times through briefings, newsletters and publications on a variety of topics. The Big Energy Summit in Birmingham attracted 320 delegates and partners and was once again supported by DESNZ whilst the Glasgow Summit attracted over 100 delegates. These, along with regional in-person events, provided opportunities to engage with and learn from colleagues, alongside promoting the work of councils such as Sheffield's heat network and Nottingham's EV fleet. The APSE Energy webinar series remains very popular informing on issues such as biodiversity net gain, engaging residents in domestic energy efficiency programmes and decarbonising heritage buildings.

The APSE Energy awards were expanded from three to six in 2025 and attracted 67 submissions reflecting the innovative work within local councils across but also their willingness to share best practice. The winners included Highland Council, Westminster City Council, Suffolk County Council, Westmorland and Furness Council, Dorset Council and Hackney Council with a range of projects and approaches in vastly differing circumstances.

APSE Energy consultancy support to councils continues although now trading as APSE Synergy, supporting a range of projects from the basics of energy management to leisure centre heating replacement schemes. Energy audits continue to be in demand as councils realise the importance of up-to-date asset management data when justifying investment.

Looking to future service demand in APSE Energy issues focussing on energy, cost and infrastructure will continue and grow, making demand for APSE Energy support to member councils all the more important. Rising summer temperatures across the UK and Europe demonstrate how demands can impact on local council services; for example increased demand for cooling systems not just in residential buildings and offices but in critical frontline services such as residential care homes. APSE Energy continues to monitor developments globally and within the UK to be able to best support its members.

APSE Performance Networks

APSE Performance Networks membership now stands at 165 authorities, with 47 local authorities using the Land Audit Management System (LAMS) App.

Benchmarking against comparable authorities assists APSE member councils to understand how they are performing within the evolving local government landscape. The ability to navigate through financial constraints, energy costs, increasing demands, high public expectations as well as difficulties recruiting and retaining staff, puts the need for accurate data insight at the helm of decision making. APSE Performance Networks review groups have incorporated measures into the models to monitor these issues and identify authorities who are effectively tackling these matters to enable the sharing of best practice.

Another major challenge for some local authorities in England is Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the need to monitor and manage performance pre, during and post transition. APSE Performance Networks has launched a new benchmarking model for LGR. This streamlined module enables councils to track a focused set of key performance indicators across corporate services and neighbourhood services, reducing the time and effort required for data collection. It draws on our established measures, providing a high-level framework that can be tailored to local priorities.

The APSE Northern Ireland project has seen developments around the development of a Core PI set of indicators which draws on key performance indicators required for early reporting. This complements the 12 service-based modules which are now timetabled for later in the benchmarking year.

An online library of support and training videos assists our local council members to complete their data submissions and enables them to join a live online training session, should they prefer. Digitalisation of the service has included rolling out some of the new Power BI reports which are available on the secure web portal. These reports are interactive, and members can drill down the data and create their own 'family group' filters. These complement the existing report set and further Power BI based reports which will be tested and rolled out during 2026. The next stage in the digitalisation journey for the service is to develop on-line data collection which will be rolled out during 2026-27.

Four inspection Apps; LAMS for monitoring parks, streets and cemetery land; CLAMS for inspecting building cleaning; PIMS for monitoring play provision and MIST for inspecting memorial safety continue to provide an innovative digital tool for member councils.

APSE Performance Networks continues to collaborate with Defra and SEPA on Waste Dataflow to obtain recycling tonnage data directly and reduce the data input for members. The collaborative arrangement with Sport England has been a success, allowing participation and financial data for leisure centres to be shared across the Moving Communities and APSE

Performance Networks platforms reducing duplication for local authorities. Similar collaborative arrangements have been set up with Power Data Associates (PDA) on lighting stock and energy consumption data.

Work continues with DESNZ (The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero) on climate change benchmarking models. APSE have been liaising with The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in relation to the new Local Outcomes Framework for England.

Staffing and Business Resources

As set out in the Business Plan APSE continued to invest in digital and new operating platforms. Significant developments have taken place to automate new business intelligence information, including automated webforms, booking systems, remote access to data on mobile devices and new data dashboards. This data has also been used to proactively respond to member engagements and tackle low interacting authorities.

The business resources team has been critical in supporting APSE Synergy through new systems and procedures, financial compliance and operating systems.

APSE once again maintained its gold Investors in People status, with a three day onsite external assessment, conducted by an independent IIP assessor. Every member of staff was engaged with, including a visit to an APSE seminar to see the staff in action as a 'secret shopper'!

Internal business processes continue to be developed including improvements in governance and compliance measures to support APSE Synergy whilst it remains in relative infancy. Debts continue to be reduced through better monitoring and improved processes. Procedures continue to be reviewed and improved as part of APSE's commitment to continuous improvement, as demonstrated through the retention of APSE's ISO systems (ISO9001 / 14001 / 27001).

APSE's staffing complement remains at 35 with various staff changes occurring throughout the year. Following the retirement of Rob Bailey, Bonni Jee joined the Principal Advisor team having previously worked as 'Waste and Resource Management Consultant' at Mott McDonald. Helen Reed joined APSE's Training team in August 2025 to take up the role of Training Coordinator, Amy Caldwell, Senior Training Officer, departed the team in December 2025 to take up the role of Learning and Development Lead at The Regatta Group.

As part of APSE's Business Plan objective to strengthen the Association's communications offering, two new members of staff joined as 'Communications officers', Beatrice McKenzie and Hannah Morgan-Cocker, who have already made a significant impact in the Association's communications with its membership.

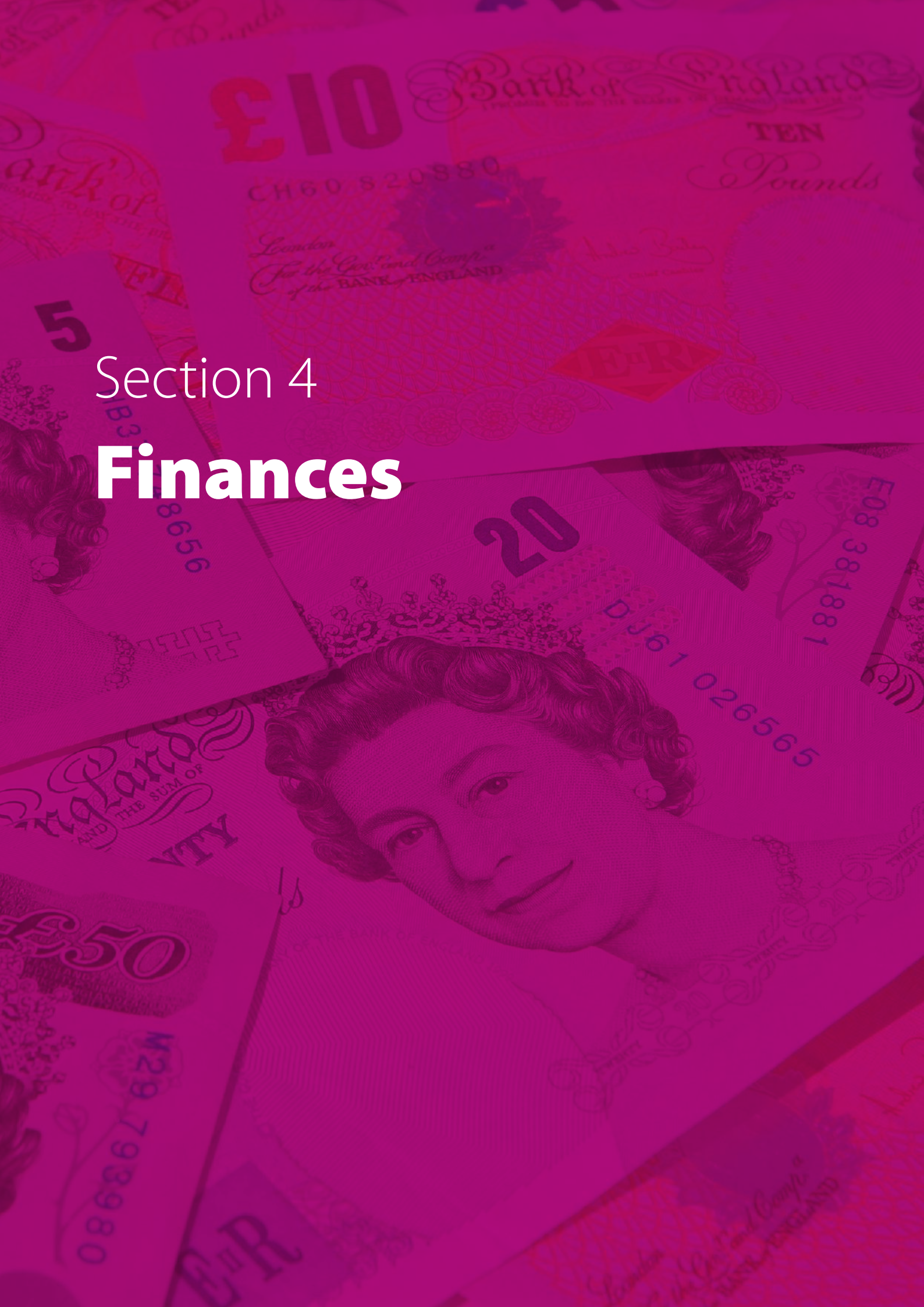
Sophie Boyle, Research and Information Officer, took up an exciting new role at Scottish Renewables and was replaced by David Hinds who recently completed his Masters degree in MSc Sustainability and Environmental Studies.

Julie Cook's role of Data Analyst in the performance networks team was temporarily covered by Chris Chapman during her maternity leave. Following her return, Chris commenced a one year fixed term contract, to support improvements to the performance networks technical systems.

Megan Butterworth returned to her role of Business Support Officer, ending Adam Evans' maternity cover role. Adam has since moved to ICMIF to take up the role of Events Manager.

Following feedback received from the staff away day, four Town Hall briefing sessions have taken place, which have provided an excellent opportunity to share information and knowledge across the organisation. In addition, a staff team development event took place over two days in January 2026. All service areas contributed to sharing service developments and the teams worked together to problem solve and seek improvements to membership services.

Investment continues to be made in APSE's staffing resource, with various members of staff undertaking significant courses ranging from degree courses to technical qualifications.



Section 4

Finances

Finance Report Preface

This year the APSE Annual Finance Report marks a significant departure from previous years. This is the first year that APSE members are asked to consider the finance report as APSE Group Accounts. This reflects the development of APSE Synergy Ltd. A wholly owned trading company, limited by shares. The development of APSE Synergy was first agreed by APSE members as part of the AGM in 2024. The new company went live on the 1 April 2025, following a year of development, and supports the delivery of APSE consultancy and interim management work; these services now trade as APSE Synergy with APSE Energy membership remaining with core APSE services. The use of group accounts provides transparency in terms of service performance which can be compared against the previous operating model, complying with the constitutional amendment, agreed in 2024, where National Council have oversight on the operation of any company.

Turning to APSE's overall performance as an unincorporated association providing services to its members, National Council once again set a below inflation annual membership subscription increase. Whilst this pattern has continued for many years this practise has now been reviewed to create a fairer and more sustainable approach.

In 2026-2027, a new, fairer fee structure was launched, to reflect the larger population sizes of emerging new unitary councils, as a result of local government reorganisation in England, and the existing unitary structures in Scotland and Wales.

Overall costs have nevertheless increased in areas such as venue hire and food costs and employer costs, including the National Insurance increase which are reflected in this set of accounts. Investment has also continued in improved cyber security and future-proofing IT platforms.

Whilst 2024-2025 was a difficult year for some traded services, the focus on recovery, in 2025-2026 was cemented with the development of APSE Synergy. Significant improvements are reported in the performance of interim management services, which remains a high-demand service, and overall consultancy remains buoyant. Similarly, activity across all services has remained healthy including membership services, seminars, training and events. APSE Energy and APSE Performance Networks subscriptions remain sustainable with, however, the necessary ongoing analysis of the impact of local government reorganisation; all APSE services have developed new ways to support APSE members who face the challenge of reorganisation.

APSE members will also note from this year's accounts that for the third year in succession considerable expenditure was made on professional fees predominantly concerning the litigation risk which was highlighted to members in 2023. Ongoing satellite matters, related to the initial risk, has created further strains on the budget. This year we report a further **£302,166** against **£207,325** in last years report. Which was necessitated to protect APSE and its members.

This financial report relates to the final third year of the APSE Business Plan for 2023-2026. That business plan was of course set before the turbulent matters that arose in 2023 and National Council have carefully reviewed performance on a dynamic basis, adjusting for both income and expenditure, alongside market conditions, as necessary. This included a review of APSE's reserves policy in 2024-2025 which continued in 2025-2026 and has been adopted for the current 2026-2029 business plan. This approach to reserves sensibly reflects the necessary consideration of APSE as a going concern in the use of its reserves and offers greater protection to member councils.

Actual income achieved sat at **£5,190,020** and this reaches **£5,281,781** when bank interest is considered. It should be noted however that despite the excessive pressure income has increased by near to **4%** compared to 2024-2025 where year-end income reached £5,090,556. The business plan set a planned deficit of **-£87,000**. The reported deficit is less at **-£57,314** representing a marginal over-performance. Had professional fees come in at normal levels the accounts would have presented a significant surplus (of around £190,000) though it should be noted that the designation fund as referenced below has been used to offset **£50,000** of those excessive costs.

Bank interest remained buoyant across the year with APSE receiving a yield of **£91,761** and whilst this represents a decrease of £11,325 on last year's performance it is positive outcome from APSE's investment approach to its reserves. APSE has benefitted from a sustained period of higher interest rates over the term of the previous business plan. National Council agreed that the Designation fund of £200,000 should be drawn upon to cover some of the exceptional professional fees of **£302,166** and the accounts accordingly reflect the use of £50,000 of the allocated designation fund.

Subsidiaries: APSE Synergy Limited

APSE owns the whole of the issued ordinary share capital of APSE Synergy Limited, a company registered in England, with company number 16283438. The subsidiary is used for some trading activities including consultancy and interim management work. A summary of results for its first period of trading reflects that some of the traded work continued under APSE, outside of the trading company, due to the run-off period on existing work.

The company activities commenced on the 1 April 2025. For the twelve months to 31 March 2026 the company turnover was **£1,587,080**, cost of sales **£1,192,731** and administrative expenses of **£388,830**. The tax due on profit, for the year is **£1,103**.

The company reports to the Synergy Board which is made up of nominated members from APSE National Council and APSE's Chief Executive, who also holds the company shares on a Deed of Trust. The company's finances are included within the APSE Group Accounts and Report.

Assets and Reserves

The Association's Assets remain strong at **£2,643,781** which is a decrease from the £2,705,511 reported last year. The sum is made up of **£2,497,594** and a designation fund of **£146,187**. This year **£50,000** was used from the designation fund of £200,000 to support the ongoing exceptional professional fees which as reported for 2025-2026 reached **£302,166**.

APSE's reserves policy remains as 30% of reserves to expenditure or £1m of available financial reserves, whichever is the greater. In these financial statements 30% of expenditure is **£1.6M**. APSE's reserves remain compliant with this policy and in fact represent just near to 50% this year. This policy enables APSE's National Council to consider its response should any catastrophic event occur, including the costs of dissolution of APSE as a going concern. As previously reported last year this includes, though not exclusively, the cost of redundancy or other employment liabilities, including pensions, lease liabilities and property reinstatement, refunds to member councils and insurances, taxes, and contracts with third parties. It is estimated that such costs could exceed **£2.5M**. Therefore, the revised reserves policy ensures that the use of reserves must now consider such considerations.

The association calculates its general reserve at net assets less the value of functional fixed assets used by the association (**£11,730**) and the special purpose designation fund, which is assessed as **£146,187** (with funds earmarked for other purposes) and as such the general reserve is **£2,497,594**. This is considered adequate with a General Reserve total of **£2,643,781**.

The accounts form the final year of the business plan for 2023-2026, and APSE has now moved to a new business plan to cover 2026-2029. The last three years of the preceding business plan have been the most challenging of the Association's history due to the need to fund excessive professional fees. Whilst some of this expenditure has been utilised to decrease risk to the Association, with the setting up of a wholly owned trading company, the ongoing costs have hindered growth. However careful cost controls, management of vacancies, new operating platforms and operational efficiencies, have all supported a year end outcome that exceeded anticipated performance recovering from a forecast deficit of **-87,000** to a final outturn of **-57,314**. Overall membership levels will remain challenging as a result of local government reorganisation in England which will require future coordination and monitoring however the fee review set out in the Business Plan 2023-2026 has now been delivered placing the fee structure on a fairer and more sustainable footing and supporting future financial sustainability.

Mo Baines, Chief Executive, APSE

Association for Public Service Excellence
Group Revenue Account for the year ended 31 March 2026

Income	APSE	APSE	APSE	APSE	Performance	Total	Total
	APSE	Energy	Solutions	Training	Networks	2026	2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
National membership fees	798,209	326,004	-	-	880,020	2,004,233	2,101,156
Approved partners	79,397	26,077	-	-	-	105,474	105,474
Seminar income	314,239	78,710	-	-	43,300	436,249	452,464
Consultancy and training income	-	385,078	1,787,674	362,277	53,476	2,588,505	2,259,289
Special projects income	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Publication sales	25,051	-	-	-	-	25,051	29,603
Miscellaneous income	30,508	-	-	-	-	30,508	39,484
Bank interest	91,761	-	-	-	-	91,761	103,086
Total income	1,339,165	815,869	1,787,674	362,277	976,796	5,281,781	5,090,556
Expenditure							
Establishment	1,032,997	223,296	238,899	212,616	474,509	2,182,317	2,155,377
Associates	5,669	286,149	1,377,446	76,626	17,624	1,763,514	1,529,209
Seminar costs	221,086	129,737	4,941	-	117,290	473,054	480,904
Meetings	24,190	7,195	8	3,031	2,166	36,590	32,906
Fringe meetings	20,135	-	-	-	-	20,135	17,233
Premises costs	84,923	16,645	24,810	16,157	47,390	189,925	177,313
Office costs	53,756	4,097	6,541	6,068	36,201	106,663	164,815
Printing and photocopying	49,869	604	1,197	351	3,934	55,955	63,393
Professional fees	51,303	153,912	-	25,652	71,299	302,166	207,325
Promotional/advertising	51,235	750	1,516	7,114	53,728	114,343	119,832
Bad debts	7,065	1,108	-	-	-3,654	4,519	14,349
Depreciation	15,059	1,889	1,889	1,889	3,778	24,504	9,175
Miscellaneous	13,859	218	48	92	90	14,307	8,000
Corporation tax	-	-	1,103	-	-	1,103	-
Designation fund	50,000	-	-	-	-	50,000	105,500
Total expenditure	1,681,146	825,600	1,658,398	349,596	824,355	5,339,095	5,085,331
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	(£341,981)	(£9,731)	£129,276	£12,681	£152,441	(£57,314)	£5,225
Net income/(expenditure) before designation fund expense	(£291,981)	(£9,731)	£129,276	£12,681	£152,441	(£7,314)	

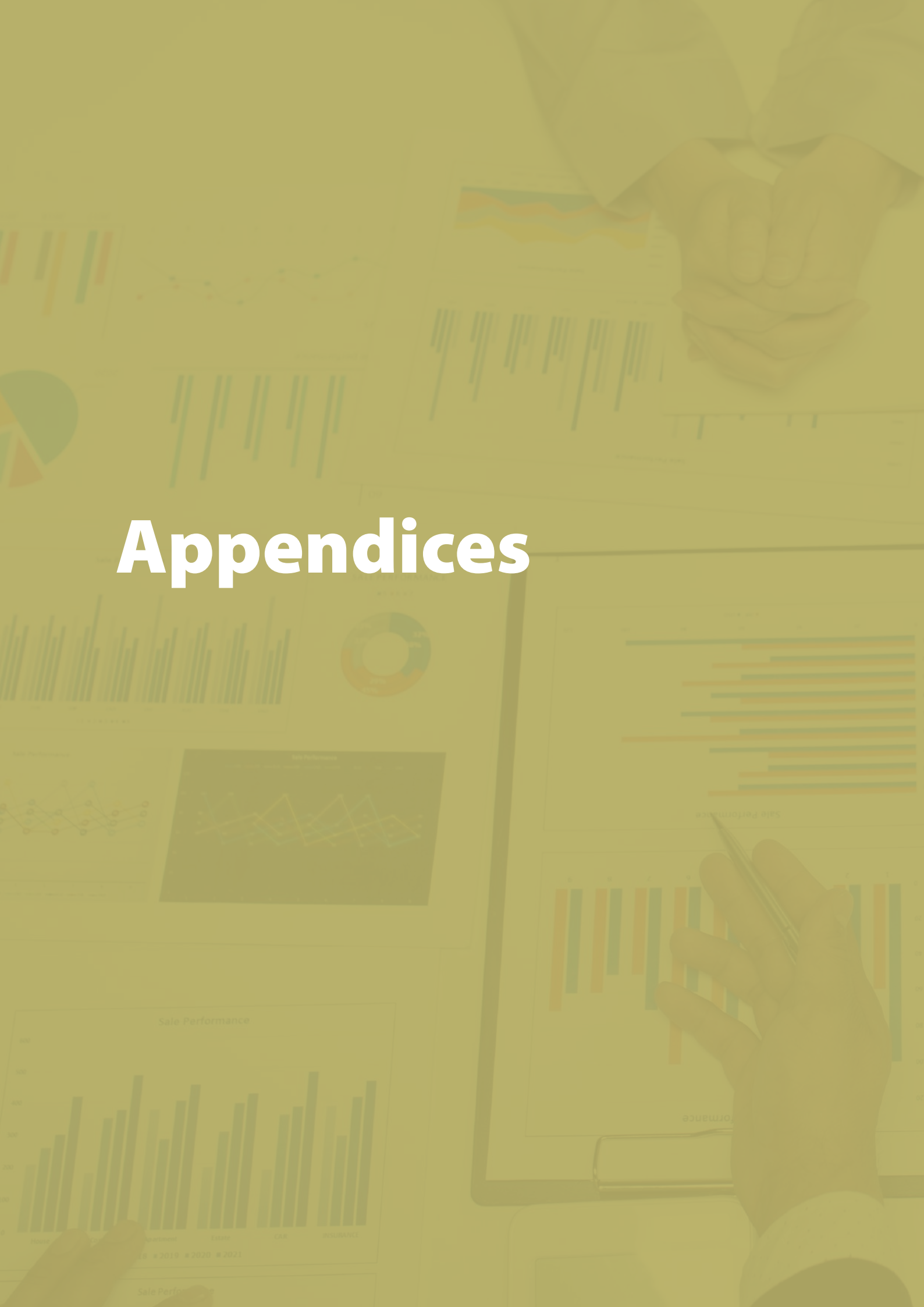
Association Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2026

	Notes	2026 £	2025 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	6	21,725	2,779
Investments	7	<u>100</u>	<u>-</u>
		21,825	2,779
Current assets			
Debtors	8	1,017,964	915,607
Investments held as current assets		1,840,911	1,763,528
Cash at bank and in hand		361,101	734,471
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
		2,621,956	2,702,732
		<u>2,643,781</u>	<u>2,705,511</u>
		3,219,976	3,413,606
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	(598,020)	(710,874)
Net current assets			
Reserves			
Profit and loss account	10	2,497,594	2,509,324
Designated funds	10	146,187	196,187
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Funds of the association		<u>2,643,781</u>	<u>2,705,511</u>

Subsidiaries

The Association owns the whole of the issued ordinary share capital of APSE Synergy Limited, a company registered in England, company number 16283438. The subsidiary is used for some trading activities. A summary of results for its first period of trading are shown below:

Profit and loss account	2026	2025
	£	£
Turnover	1,587,080	-
Cost of sales	(1,192,731)	-
Administrative expenses	(388,830)	-
Tax on profit	(1,103)	-
Profit for the period	<u>4,416</u>	<u>-</u>

The background is a collage of business-related images with a light beige overlay. It includes various charts such as bar graphs, line graphs, and a donut chart. There are also images of hands: one pair is clasped together in the upper right, and another is holding a pen over a document in the lower right. The word 'Appendices' is centered in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Appendices



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Appendix 1: APSE members 2025-2026

Approved Partners: 27

AFLSP Ltd (Space & Place), Alliance Leisure, Brightly Software, Bucher Municipal, The CDS Group, Contenur UK Ltd, DAF Trucks Limited, Edge IT Systems Ltd, Enterprise Mobility, Faun Zoeller (UK) Ltd, Finders International, Fraser & Fraser, Green Pigeon Consulting Ltd, Green-tech Ltd, IQSS, JC Bamford Excavators Ltd (JCB), JPP Geotechnical & Environmental Ltd, MOBA UK Ltd, Mould Growth Consultants Ltd, Phrenetech Ltd (Funeral Experts), The Procurement Partnership Ltd, REEN, Roadvert Limited, Switch Venue Management & Booking Platform (Dispace Technology Limited), Tarmac Trading Limited, Velocity UK Ltd, WM Hamilton and Sons Ltd.

Associate Members: 13

GMB Union, Isle of Man Government – Department of Infrastructure, Keep Britain Tidy, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, LGIU, NILGA, NIPSA, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales, SIPS Education Ltd, UNISON, UNITE the Union, Vision Redbridge Culture and Leisure, YPO.

APSE Central: 38

Ashfield District Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Blaby District Council, Bolsover District Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Gedling Borough Council, Herefordshire Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, Leicester City Council, Mansfield District Council, Newark & Sherwood District Council, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, North Northamptonshire County Council, North East Derbyshire District Council, North Warwickshire Borough Council, Nottingham City Council, Redditch Borough Council, Rugby Borough Council, Rutland County Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council, Sandwell Council, Shropshire Council, South Derbyshire District Council, South Staffordshire Council, Stafford Borough Council, Tamworth Borough Council, Telford and Wrekin Council, Walsall Council, Warwick District Council, West Northamptonshire Council, Worcester City Council, Wychavon District Council, Wyre Forest District Council.

APSE Northern: 54

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Blackpool Council, Bolton Council, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, Calderdale Council, Cheshire East Council, City of Lincoln Council, City of York Council, Cumberland Council, Darlington Borough Council, City of Doncaster Council, Douglas City Council, Durham County Council, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Gateshead Council, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, Halton Borough Council, Hull City Council,

Kirklees Council, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council, Leeds City Council, Liverpool City Council, Manchester City Council, Middlesbrough Council, Newcastle City Council, Northumberland Council, North Kesteven District Council, North Lincolnshire Council, North Yorkshire Council, Preston City Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Rochdale Borough Council, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Salford City Council, Sefton Council, Sheffield City Council, South Holland District Council, South Kesteven District Council, South Tyneside Council, St Helens Borough Council, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Sunderland City Council, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, Trafford Council, Wakefield Council, Warrington Borough Council, Westmorland & Furness Council, West Lindsey District Council, Wigan Council, Wirral Council, Wyre Council.

APSE Northern Ireland: 12

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council, Belfast City Council, Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council, Derry City & Strabane District Council, Education Authority, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Mid and East Antrim District Council, Mid Ulster District Council, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council.

APSE Scotland: 33

Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Angus Council, Argyll and Bute Council, Clackmannanshire Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Dundee City Council, East Ayrshire Council, East Dunbartonshire Council, East Lothian Council, East Renfrewshire Council, The City of Edinburgh Council, Falkirk Council, Fife Council, Glasgow City Council, The Highland Council, Inverclyde Council, Midlothian Council, Moray Council, North Ayrshire Council, Orkney Islands Council, Perth & Kinross Council, Renfrewshire Council, Scotland Excel, Scottish Borders Council, Shetland Islands Council, South Ayrshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council, Stirling Council, Tayside Contracts, West Dunbartonshire Council, West Lothian Council.

APSE Southern: 81 Ashford Borough Council, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bedford Borough Council, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, Buckinghamshire Council, Cambridge City Council, Chelmsford City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council (part of Ubico), Cherwell District Council, Chichester District Council, Colchester City Council, Cornwall Council, Cotswold District Council (part of Ubico), Dacorum Borough Council, Dorset Council, Dover District

Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, East Herts Council, Exeter City Council, Forest of Dean District Council (Publica Group Ltd), Guildford Borough Council, Hackney Council, Harlow Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Hillingdon Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Isle of Wight Council, Islington Council, Kent County Council, London Borough of Havering, London Borough of Hounslow, Lewisham Council, London Borough of Lambeth, London Borough of Newham, Tower Hamlets Council, Luton Borough Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Merton Council, Mid Sussex District Council, Milton Keynes Council, New Forest District Council, North Herts Council, North Norfolk District Council, Norse Commercial Services, Norwich City Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Plymouth City Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Sevenoaks District Council, Slough Borough Council, Southampton City Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council, Southwark Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, South Gloucestershire Council, South Hams District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Spelthorne Borough Council, St Albans City & District Council, Stevenage Borough Council, Stroud District Council, Swindon Borough Council, SWISCo Ltd, Tendring District Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council, Thurrock Council, Uttlesford District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, Waverley Borough Council, Watford Borough Council, Wealden District Council, West Berkshire Council, West Devon Borough Council, West Oxfordshire District Council (Publica Group Ltd), Winchester City Council, Wokingham Borough Council.

APSE Wales: 16

Bridgend County Borough Council, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Cardiff Council, Carmarthenshire County Borough Council, Ceredigion County Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council, Neath Port Talbot Council, Newport City Council, Pembrokeshire County Council, Powys County Council, Swansea Council, Torfaen County Borough Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Wrexham County Borough Council.

Total: 274 members

Appendix 2: APSE Performance Networks members 2025-2026

APSE Central: 24

Bolsover District Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Cherwell District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Gedling Borough Council, Herefordshire Council, Leicestershire County Council, Mansfield District Council, Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council, North East Derbyshire District Council, North Northamptonshire Council, North Warwickshire Borough Council, Nottingham City Council, Redditch Borough Council, Shropshire Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, South Derbyshire District Council, South Staffordshire Council, Stafford Borough Council, Telford and Wrekin Council, Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, Warwickshire County Council, Worcester City District Council

APSE Northern: 43

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Blackpool Council, Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council, Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Cheshire East Council, City of Doncaster Council, City of Lincoln Council, City of York Council, Department of Infrastructure, Durham County Council, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council, Halton Borough Council, Hull City Council, Kirklees Council, Knowsley MBC, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council, Liverpool City Council, Manchester City Council, Middlesbrough Council, North Lincolnshire Council, North Yorkshire Council, Northumberland County Council, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Preston City Council, Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Rotherham MBC, Salford City Council, Sheffield City Council, South Holland District Council, South Kesteven District Council, South Tyneside MBC, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Sunderland City Council, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, Wakefield MDC, Warrington Borough Council, West Lindsey District Council, Westmorland and Furness Council, Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, Wyre Borough Council

APSE Northern Ireland: 9

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Council, Belfast City Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Education Authority NI, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Newry Mourne and Down District Council

APSE Scotland: 32

Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Angus Council, Argyll and Bute Council, City of Edinburgh Council,

Clackmannanshire Council, Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Dundee City Council, East Ayrshire Council, East Dunbartonshire Council, East Lothian Council, East Renfrewshire Council, Falkirk Council, Fife Council, Glasgow City Council, Highland Council, Inverclyde Council, Midlothian Council, Moray Council, North Ayrshire Council, Orkney Islands Council, Perth and Kinross Council, Renfrewshire Council, Scottish Borders Council, Shetland Islands Council, South Ayrshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council, Stirling Council, Tayside Contracts, West Dunbartonshire Council, West Lothian Council

APSE Southern: 42

Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council, Cambridge City Council, Chelmsford City Council, Colchester City Council, Cornwall Council, Cotswold District Council, Dacorum Borough Council, Dorset Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Enfield London Borough, Exeter City Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Guildford Borough Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, Islington Borough Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Kent County Council, Lewisham London Borough, London Borough of Hounslow, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Milton Keynes Council, Norfolk County Council, North Somerset District Council, Norwich City Council, Oxford Direct Services Ltd, Oxfordshire County Council, Plymouth City Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Greenwich, Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Sevenoaks District Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, South Hams District Council, Southwark London Borough, Stevenage Borough Council, Stroud District Council, Spelthorne Borough Council, Suffolk County Council, Thurrock Council, Uttlesford District Council, Vision Redbridge Culture and Leisure, Wokingham Borough Council

APSE Wales: 15

Bridgend County Borough Council, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Cardiff Council, Carmarthenshire County Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Neath Port Talbot County BC, Newport City Council, Pembrokeshire County Council, Swansea City and County, Torfaen County Borough Council, Vale of Glamorgan County BC, Wrexham County Borough Council

Total: 165 members



APSE's Performance Networks Seminar 2025, Blackpool

Appendix 3: APSE Energy Members 2025-2026

Approved Partners: 7

Sharpe Pritchard, Eddisons, Equity Energies, Dynamon, Lendology, YES Energy Solutions, LASER Energy

Central: 19

Ashfield District Council, Blaby District Council, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Coventry City Metropolitan Borough Council, Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Gedling Borough Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, North Northamptonshire Council, North Hertfordshire Council, Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Rutland County Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Walsall Council, Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County Council.

Northern: 36

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Barnsley Premier Leisure, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Blackpool Council, Bradford Metropolitan District Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, City of York Council, Darlington Borough Council, Doncaster Council, Durham County Council, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Hartlepool Council, Kirklees Council, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council, Middlesbrough Borough Council, Newcastle City Council, North Kesteven District Council, North Yorkshire Council, Northumberland County Council, Preston City Council, Salford City Council, Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, Sheffield City Council, South Kesteven District Council, South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council, St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council, Wakefield Metropolitan Council, Warrington Borough Council, West Lancashire Borough Council, West Lindsey District Council, Westmorland and Furness Council, Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, Wyre Borough Council.

Northern Ireland: 5

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Belfast City Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

Scotland: 22

Angus Council, Argyll and Bute Council, Clackmannanshire Council, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Dundee City Council, East Ayrshire Council, East Dunbartonshire Council, East Lothian Council, East Renfrewshire Council, Falkirk Council, Fife Council, Glasgow City Council, Highland Council, Midlothian Council, Moray Council, North Ayrshire Council, North Lanarkshire Council, Renfrewshire Council, Scottish Borders, Shetland Islands Council, South Ayrshire Council, West Lothian Council.

Southern: 47

Ashford Borough Council, Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bedford Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Bristol City Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, Chelmsford City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Cherwell District Council, Cornwall Council, Dacorum Borough Council, Dorset Council, East Hertfordshire District Council, Guildford Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, Isle of Wight Council, Islington London Borough, Kent County Council, Lee Valley Regional Park, London Borough of Hackney, London Borough of Havering, London Borough of Hounslow, Luton Borough Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Maldon District Council, New Forest District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Reading Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse Councils, Southampton City Council, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, Spelthorne Borough Council, Stevenage Borough Council, Surrey Heath Borough Council, Tendring District Council, Three Rivers District Council, Torridge District Council, Uttlesford District Council, Watford Borough Council, Waverley Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, Wiltshire Council, Winchester City Council.

Wales: 8

Cardiff City Council, Carmarthenshire County Council, Ceredigion County Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Flintshire County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council, Swansea City and County Council, Wrexham Council.

Total: 144 members

Appendix 4: APSE National Council Members 2025-2026

Current National Chair:

Cllr Shelley Powell, Knowsley Council

Part-Term Office as Chair:

Cllr Tracey Dixon, South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council.

Current National Secretary:

Anita Brown, Stockton-on-Tees Council

Past National Chair:

Cllr Archie Dryburgh MBE, Dumfries & Galloway Council

Past National Secretary:

Andrew Kennedy, East Ayrshire Council

National Chair Elect:

Cllr John Clarke, MBE, Gelding Borough Council

National Secretary Elect:

Mike Hill, Gediing Borough Council

APSE Central

Central Chair: Cllr Mark Pengelly, North Northamptonshire Council

Secretary: Sam Dennis, Derby City Council

Vice Chair: Cllr John Clarke, MBE, Gedling Borough Council

Additional Members:

Cllr Ndukwe Onuoha, Derby City Council

Cllr Bhupinder Gahkal, Wolverhampton City Council

APSE Wales

Chair: Cllr David Hughes, Flintshire Council

Secretary: Chris Cutforth, Swansea Council

Vice Chair: Cllr Mark Wilson, Vale of Glamorgan Council

Additional Members:

Matt Wakelam, Cardiff City Council

APSE Northern Ireland

Chair: Alderman Alan McDowell, Ards and North Down District Council

Secretary: Ellen Cavanagh, Derry City and Strabane District Council

Vice Chair: Cllr Terry Andrews, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Additional Members:

Cllr Martin Reilly, Derry City and Strabane District Council

APSE Southern

APSE Southern Chair: Cllr Jacqueline Burnett, Luton Borough Council

Secretary: Colin Rowland, Isle of Wight Council

Vice Chair: Cllr Simon Letts, Southampton City Council

Additional Members:

Cllr Chewe Munkonge, Oxford City Council

Cllr Joseph Dumont, East Herts Council

David Allister, Eastleigh Council

Cllr Tonia Craig, Eastleigh Borough Council

Cllr Sue Cooper, South Oxfordshire District Council

APSE Scotland

Chair: Cllr Judy Hamilton, Fife Council

Secretary: Andrew Kennedy, East Ayrshire Council

Vice Chair: Cllr Lynne Short, Dundee City Council

Additional Members:

Cllr Tom Conn, West Lothian Council

Cllr George Paul, West Lothian Council

Scott Blyth, West Lothian Council

APSE Northern

Chair: Cllr Shelley Powell, Knowsley Council

Secretary: Anita Brown, Stockton-on-Tees Council

Vice Chair: Cllr John Kerr-Brown, Warrington Council

Additional Members:

Adrian Phillips, Preston City Council

Paul Belotti, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Cllr Richard Wright, North Kesteven District Council

*From time-to-time membership of National Council may change across the financial year and the above list should not be taken as a statement that all members have served the full twelve months of the financial year.

Appendix 5: APSE networks and strategic forum chairs 2025-2026

Networks

Building cleaning and facilities management

Chair: Cllr Shelley Powell, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Education catering

Chair: Cllr Norma Stephenson, Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council

Cemeteries and crematoria

Chair: Cllr Mark Wilson, Vale of Glamorgan Council

Climate change and renewables

Chair: Cllr Freddie Bailey, Preston City Council

Local government reorganisation and devolution

Chair: Cllr John Clark, Gedling Borough Council

Housing, construction and building maintenance

Chair: Cllr Judy Hamilton, Fife Council

Procurement, social value and commercialisation

Chair: Cllr Tracey Dixon, South Tyneside Council

Parks, horticulture and grounds maintenance

Chair: Cllr Corall Jenkins, Nottingham City Council

Highways and street lighting

Chair: Cllr Simon Letts, Southampton City Council

Sports and leisure management

Chair: Cllr Paul Gittings, Reading Borough Council

Fleet, transport and vehicle maintenance

Chair: Cllr Lynne Short, Dundee City Council

Waste management, recycling and street cleansing

Chair: Cllr Martin Reilly, Derry City and Strabane District Council

Strategic forums

Citizen engagement and participation

Cllr John Kerr Brown, Warrington Borough Council

Local government finance and resources

Cllr Joseph Dumont, East Herts District Council

Armed forces and Veterans Champions

Cllr Archie Dryburgh, Dumfries and Galloway Council

Communities and neighbourhoods

Cllr Lisa Hinton, Cumberland Council

Neighbourhood environmental quality and sustainability

Cllr Jacqui Burnett, Luton Borough Council

Healthy communities

Cllr Terry Andrews, Newry, Mourne and Down Council

Housing Social justice and welfare reform

Cllr Mark Pengelly, North Northamptonshire Council

Local economic growth and regeneration

Cllr Richard Wright, North Kesteven District Council

Service transformation and innovation

Cllr David Hughes, Flintshire County Council

Appendix 6: Training, seminars, meetings and promotional activity 2025-2026

Training courses	Courses	Learners
Advanced Contract Management	4	30
Advanced Parks Management: Sustainable Finance	1	9
Biodiversity Net Gain: Preparing Parks Professionals	2	26
Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016	2	31
Business Analysis in Council Services	1	12
Carbon Literacy	8	120
Carbon Literacy Trainer	2	12
Climate Adaptation: Advanced Soil Management	1	10
Climate Adaptation: Urban Green Spaces	1	11
Conducting an Equality Impact Assessment	1	15
Construction Design and Management Regulations Refresher	4	47
Developing and Managing Service Level Agreements	4	43
Enhancing Customer Experience on the Frontline	4	67
Health and Safety in Waste and Environmental Services	4	40
Health and Safety on Highways and Verges	10	144
Insourcing Public Contracts: Rebuilding Capacity	1	14
Introduction to Parks Management	4	49
Introduction to Waste Collection and Street Cleansing	2	28
Leadership and Management Skills	4	38
Leading a Customer Focused Culture	4	37
Legal and Practical Management of Cemeteries	3	24
Making Space for Nature in Burial Grounds	3	24
Managing Allotments in Local Authorities	3	28
Managing Catering Costs for Councils	2	20
Managing Conflict in Local Government	1	16
Managing Change in Local Government	3	25
Managing Programmes in Local Government	3	23
Non-Executive Director	3	30
Plant Biosecurity for Local Authorities	2	23
Presentation Skills	2	17
Principles of Contract Management	5	68
Principles of Fleet Management	3	35
Principles of Managing Abandoned and Nuisance Vehicles for Councils	2	25
Project Management in Local Government	16	223

Psychometric Testing	2	5
Social Media and Digital Communications for UK Councils	2	13
Social Value and the Public Interest Test: Procurement Act 2023	1	6
Supervisory Skills for Team Leaders in Frontline Services	5	58
Time Management	4	38
Train the Trainer	6	56
Turning Complaints into Compliments	2	11
Understanding Bereavement Services	2	40
Wildflower Meadow Management in Parks	4	55
Working with Volunteers and the Voluntary Sector	2	21
Working with Elected Members	2	27
TOTAL TRAINING	145	1671

Total courses:

Courses	Training	Masterclasses	Total
Open	50	60	110
In House	22	13	35
TOTAL	72	73	145

Total learners:

	Training	Masterclass	Total
Open	533	567	1100
In House	386	185	571
Total	919	752	1671

Regional Learners	
Southern	483
Northern	371
Central	241
Welsh	91
Scottish	232
Northern Ireland	204
National	49
Total	1671

Feedback	
Satisfaction	93%
Recommended	89%
Completion	76%
Total	91%

Service specific national seminars

Regeneration and Local Economies

Wednesday 9 April 2025, Shakespeare North Playhouse

Cemeteries and Crematoria Seminar

1 May 2025, National Memorial Arboretum

Building Safety Seminar

Tuesday 4 June 2025, Online

Restricting the appeal and availability of junk food in England

Tuesday 3 June 2025, Online

Transport Seminar

Thursday 19 June 2025, Crewe Hall

APSE Health and Safety Webinar

Wednesday 6 August 2025, Online

The Really Rewild Show

Wednesday 3 September 2025, Online

Annual Seminar

10-11 September 2025, Glasgow Marriott

APSE Waste and Recycling Seminar

Thursday 23 October 2025, Nottingham Racecourse

Active Futures: From Facilities to Wellbeing - Sports and Leisure Seminar

Thursday 13 November 2025, Loughborough

APSE Southern Region Parks and Green Spaces Seminar

Tuesday 18 November 2025, Oxford

Cemeteries and Crematorium Seminar

Thursday 20 November 2025, Sheffield

APSE Performance Networks Seminar

4 – 5 December 2025, Blackpool

Facilities, Catering and Cleaning Management Seminar

5-6 February 2026, Stratford-upon-Avon

National Street Cleansing Seminar

Thursday 5 February 2026, Birmingham

The BIG Energy Summit 2026

Tuesday 24 -25 February 2025, Birmingham

Building and Housing seminar

Thursday 5 and Friday 6 March 2026, Glasgow

Parks Seminar

Thursday 12 March 2026, Manchester

Highways, Street Lighting and Winter Maintenance Seminar

Thursday 19 March 2026, St James' Park, Newcastle

Artificial Intelligence: Are you ready?

Tuesday 24 March 2026, Online

Regional seminars

Central

Central Region Webinar

Wednesday 2 April 2025, Online

AGM

Wednesday 4 June 2025, Coventry

Central Region Event: Active Living

Tuesday 14 October 2025, Derby

Central Online Seminar

Tuesday 18 November 2025, Online

Northern

AGM

Tuesday 22 July 2025, Maldron Hotel Newcastle

Northern Region - Building Resilient Communities

Tuesday 16 December 2025, Online

Northern Ireland

Enviro NI and AGM,

Tuesday 10 June 2025, Antrim

Data-led intelligence,

7-10 October 2025, Northern Ireland

Scotland

Scotland Fleet, Waste and Grounds seminar

Tuesday 20- 23 May 2025, Aviemore

AGM

Tuesday 8 July 2025, Glasgow

Southern

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Seminar

Tuesday 13 May 2025, Online

Sports and Leisure Services Seminar

Thursday 5 June 2025, Reading Football Stadium

APSE Southern Region Seminar 2025

Wednesday 18 June 2025, Oxford

Wales

AGM

Wednesday 10 July, Llandrindod Wells

Data-led intelligence

Friday 10 October 2025, Newport

Housing, Sustainability and Community Support Group

Tuesday 25 November, Online

Appendix 7: Award Winners 2025-2026

APSE Service Awards 2025

Award	Winner
Overall council of the year	Renfrewshire Council
Best Workforce initiative	London Borough of Hackney
Best Building & Housing Initiative	Derby City Council
Best Efficiency and Transformation initiative	South Ayrshire Council
Best Health and Well-being initiative	Vision Redbridge Culture and Leisure
Best Public/Private Partnership Working initiative	Northern Ireland Education Authority
Best Collaborative Working initiative	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Best Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship initiative	Sherbourne Recycling
Best Community and Neighbourhood initiative	South and East Lincolnshire Councils
Best Innovation or Demand Management initiative	Neath Port Talbot Council
Best Climate Action and Decarbonisation Initiative	Torfaen County Borough Council
Best service team: Soft Facilities Management	East Renfrewshire Council
Best service team: Technical Services	Glasgow City Council
Best service team: Waste, Recycling and Streetscene	South Kesteven District Council
Best service team: Parks, Grounds and Horticultural service	Cardiff Council
Best service team: Cemetery and Crematorium service	Walsall Council
Best service team: Sports, Leisure and Cultural service	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

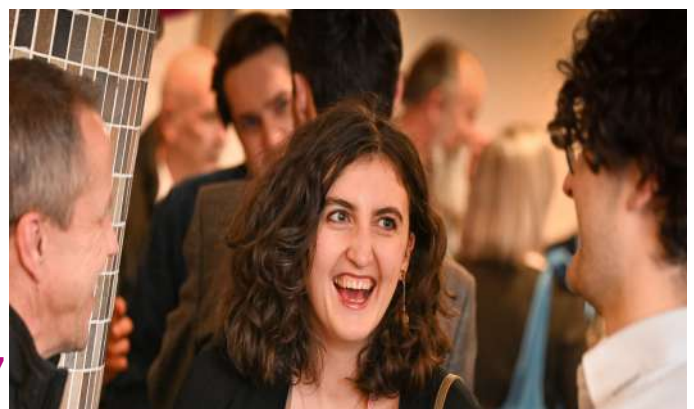
APSE Performance Networks Awards 2025

Service area	Best performer	Most improved performer
Building cleaning	East Renfrewshire Council	Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
Building maintenance	South Ayrshire Council	Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
Catering	Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council	Dumfries and Galloway Council
Cemeteries and crematoria	Flintshire County Council	South Lanarkshire Council
Parks, open spaces and horticultural services	Chelmsford City Council	West Lothian Council
Refuse collection	Huntingdonshire District Council	North Ayrshire Council
Roads, highways and winter maintenance	North Ayrshire Council	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Sports and leisure facility management	North Northamptonshire Council	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Street cleansing	Oxford Direct Services Ltd	Blackpool Council
Street lighting	Denbighshire County Council	East Ayrshire Council
Streetscene	Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council	
Transport Operations and Vehicle Maintenance	Plymouth City Council	Tayside Contracts

Appendix 8: Briefings and Research

2025-2026

- 26-21:** State of the Market Cemeteries and Crematoria 2026
- 26-20:** Dog Warden Services -Kennelling Costs, Service Provision and the impact of XL Bully Legislation
- 26-19:** School Food Standards - Updating the legislative framework
- 26-18:** Northern Ireland Third Climate Change Adaptation Programme Published
- 26-17:** Deposit Return Scheme Approved in Wales
- 26-16:** APSE Parks Seminar 2026 Report Back
- 26-15:** Draft Instructure Strategy SG consultation
- 26-14:** Accelerated home building in Scotland SG consultation
- 26-13:** Scottish building regulations - fire safety and compliance: call for evidence
- 26-12:** Reducing the Prevalence of Private Estate Management Arrangements - Response to Consultation
- 26-11:** State of the Market - Street Cleansing
- 26-10:** State of the Market 2026 - Parks and Greenspaces
- 26-09:** New Local Outcomes Framework for England
- 26-08:** Consultation on a reformed Decent Homes Standard for social and privately rented homes: government response
- 26-07:** State of the market 2026 - Local authority building cleaning services
- 26-06:** State of the market 2026 - Local authority catering services
- 26-05:** Grassroots Messaging - Visual Communication for Biodiversity Areas
- 26-04:** Consultation on reducing the prevalence of private estate management arrangements unadopted amenities
- 26-03:** APSE and Survation 2026: Annual Polling of Councillors and the Public
- 26-02:** Using performance networks in the national frameworks across the devolved governments
- 26-01:** Consultation on Enhanced protections for homeowners on freehold estates
- 25-48:** State of the Market 2025 - Local authority cleaning services
- 25-47:** APSE Local authority public convenience provision state of the market survey results
- 25-46:** Circular Economy in Scotland Draft Strategy
- 25-45:** Future of Council Tax in Scotland
- 25-44:** Tree planting schemes
- 25-43:** State of the Market in Sports and Leisure 25/26
- 25-42:** Public finances - Pre-budget analysis on investment and growth
- 25-41:** Compulsory Purchase Reform SG Consultation
- 25-4:** Play England Pay Sufficiency Analysis of Report
- 25-39:** Implementing "School Streets" -- Why, How and What the Pay-Off Is
- 25-38:** State of the Market on Cemeteries and Crematoria 2025
- 25-37:** Environmental principles oversight triggers review of Industrial Strategy
- 25-36:** Play England: Ten year national play strategy
- 25-35:** Amendments to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill.
- 25-33:** Permitted Development Rights SG consultation
- 25-34:** tRESP consultation
- 25-32:** Highway Authorities Responses to the Raise the Flag Campaign
- 25-30:** Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy to 2040 launched
- 25-31:** Visitor levy becomes law (Wales)
- 25-29:** ALARM survey 2025
- 25-28:** Flooding and Groundwater Guidance (Scottish Government consultation)
- 25-27:** APSE response to LGOF
- 25-26:** Draft Environment Strategy Scottish Government Consultation
- 25-25:** Heat and Energy Efficiency Technical Suitability Assessment (HEETSA) - Scottish Government scoping consultation
- 25-24:** 'Good Food Nation' Proposed National Plan - Scottish Parliament Call for Evidence
- 25-23:** Adapting parks
- 25-22:** APSE Health and Safety Webinar
- 25-21:** APSE State of the Market on Allotments
- 25-20:** Councils to seize and crush fly-tipping vehicles to clean up Britain
- 25-19:** Single use vapes ban
- 25-18:** Changing facilities and gender access policies survey
- 25-17:** Scottish Government Draft Energy Efficiency (Domestic Private Rented Property) (Scotland) Regulations Consultation
- 25-16:** Housing (Scotland) Bill Scottish Government Consultation
- 25-15:** Managing the inspection of trees
- 25-14:** National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides
- 25-13:** Welsh Government Consultation Healthy Eating in Schools
- 25-12:** Allergens and Allergen management roundtable follow up survey
- 25-11:** Planning and infrastructure bill impact assessment
- 25-09:** SG Consultation Changes to Waste Management Services
- 25-08:** Rewilding for the future: Insights and best practice from local councils
- 25-07:** APSE Response to A local authority General Power of Competence SG consultation
- 25-06:** State of the market 2025 - Local authority catering services
- 25-05:** The governments full responses to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry



Appendix 9: Staff and Resources



Mo Baines

Mo is the Chief Executive with overall strategic responsibility for the finance management and development of APSE's services across the United Kingdom. Mo reports to APSE's National Council.



Debbie Johns

Debbie is the Head of APSE Performance Networks. She is responsible for the growth and development of the service and its operational management.



Lindsay Airey

Lindsay is the Head of Business Resources and has responsibility for the organisation's infrastructure and resources. She also maintains the association's quality systems and manages the support services team.



Phil Brennan

Phil is the Head of APSE Energy; he is responsible for the day to day delivery of the service to members and business growth.



Fiona Sutton-Wilson

Fiona is the Head of APSE Training with strategic and operational responsibility for the learning, skills, and development arm of the association.



Louise Melville

Louise is the Principal Advisor for all local authorities in Scotland. She is responsible for overseeing the administrative function within the Scottish Office.



Vickie Hacking

Vickie is the Principal Advisor for APSE Northern. Responsible for the facility management portfolio including cleaning and catering, housing and building services, and cemeteries and crematoria.



Bonni Jee

Bonni is the Principal Advisor for APSE Central. He is the contact for waste and recycling, highways maintenance and transport.



Matt Ellis

Matt is the Principal Advisor for APSE Northern Ireland and Wales, covering parks and leisure, as well as taking a strategic lead on communications



Abi Ademiluyi

Abi is the Principal Advisor for APSE Southern, managing APSE's regional office in Oxford and has responsibility for all APSE activity in Southern England.



Emma Taylor

Emma is an Executive Consultant with APSE Solutions.



Mike Egerton

Mike is the Conference and Sponsorship Programme Manager.



James Jefferson

James is Principal Advisor for APSE Energy



Matt Miller

Matt is a Senior Consultant with APSE Solutions



Ryan McNally

Ryan is a Senior Data Analyst.

**Andy Derbyshire**

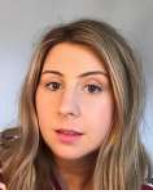
Andy is a Senior Data Analyst.

**Wai Lee**

Wai is the Finance Manager.

**Cheryl Walker**

Cheryl is a Data Analyst

**Jennifer Stanley**

Jenny is the Performance Networks Membership Engagement & Marketing Officer.

**Alistair Holcroft**

Alistair is an I.T. and Database Officer

**Shami Scholes**

Shami is the Research and Business Support Officer within the APSE Southern Office.

**Julie Cook**

Julie Cook is a Data Analyst

**Chris Chapman**

Chris is a Developer.

**Lucia Gervis**

Lucia is a Client Coordination Officer

**Olivia Giles**

Olivia is Executive Support and Governance Officer.

**Hannah Cocker**

Hannah is a Communications Officer.

**Beatrice McKenzie**

Beatrice is a Communications Officer

**David Hinds**

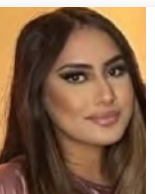
David is a Research and Information Officer within the APSE Scotland Office.

**Laura McNab**

Laura is a Finance and Business Support Officer within the APSE Scotland Office.

**Megan Butterworth**

Megan is a Business Support Assistant.

**Iqra Ali**

Iqra is a Business Support Assistant

**Maria Kenny**

Maria is a Business Support Assistant.

**Daniel Lee**

Daniel is a Business Support Assistant (Finance)

**Jay Jowitt**

Jay is a Finance Apprentice

**Owen Baker**

Owen is a Business Support Apprentice

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3rd Floor, Trafford House, Chester Road
Manchester M32 0RS

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Email: enquiries@apse.org.uk

Web: www.apse.org.uk

Twitter: [@apseevents](https://twitter.com/apseevents)