

# apse direct news

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# **The atomic winners 2013**



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## Editorial

### **This is not the Autumn for local government**

In recent weeks we have seen numerous announcements around the conference circuit. The pending round of further cuts have brought yet further talk of doom and gloom for local councils. Most of the national party conferences have talked of little else than the likely continuation of the age of austerity. George Osborne confirmed that even in a growing economy cuts will be continued to stabilise debt levels.

It is easy in this climate to see local government as having had its day. Its role as arbiter of local resilience, ensuring local economic prosperity, of good quality local public services and champion of the local area has been diminished. Local government is past its days of planting and of breathing new life into local areas. Its destiny now is not of new growth but of managing a withering institutional model no longer relevant to local communities and without sufficient finance to sustain even basic services. But I would strongly argue that local government is not in the Autumn of its years.

In spite of the current economic climate speaker after speaker at the APSE annual seminar lined up to demonstrate how they are rising to the challenges of the bleak finances that they face. Yes they would all like more money to do a better job but in the meantime they are building homes, investing in green energy and green infrastructure schemes, developing apprenticeship programmes and taking pragmatic approaches to tackling unemployment within their local area. They are committed to innovation programmes, raising new income streams through commercialisation strategies and challenging behaviour change to reduce avoidable service demands. It is hard work and it is not the full answer to the economic crisis which many councils now face. However this fighting approach is not the response you would expect to see from a fading branch of government. It is evidence of a thriving body that has the capacity and the will to survive.

Local councils are not talking, as Mr Pickles described 'absolute tosh' when they warn of the crisis faced through lack of funding but equally they could amply demonstrate to other areas of the public sector how to manage scarce local resources. Reimagining local government on the road to 2020 – the overarching theme of the APSE seminar would of course be a much rosier picture if councils were given adequate finance to do a decent job, but, in the meantime, we should celebrate the new life that councils are bringing to local communities in spite of their financial hardship.

Best wishes

*Paul O'Brien, APSE Chief Executive*

# Ensuring the future on the frontline

**Paul O'Brien launched APSE's new report 'The Road to 2020: A Manifesto for the Ensuring Council', at the annual seminar in Liverpool.**

Councils up and down the country are considering what their fundamental role for the next decade will be and what services will look like in 2020 and beyond; our new report sets out what APSE members think that role should be.

Publication of this report, *The Road to 2020: A Manifesto for the Ensuring Council*, follows our 2020 Commission, which tested and honed the principles of the Ensuring Council model with councillors, MPs, local government officers and policy analysts. This was undertaken through an Economic and Social Research Council Knowledge Transfer partnership with the Local Governance Research Unit at De Montfort University.

Reducing local government's role to that of a commissioner rather than a provider of services can contribute to problems we currently face by fragmenting services and leaving 'hollowed out' authorities lacking the capacity to respond coherently, efficiently and effectively to citizens' needs. Instead, local government must be able to maintain the ability to 'ensure' that political, economic and social policy objectives are met within their communities. We therefore decided it was time to explore an alternative ethos that gives local authorities the resources and capacities they need to tackle the challenges they face. Based on responses to the 2020 Commission, APSE has developed a positive vision in which local democracy, strategic decision-making and delivery of services to local residents are clearly connected.

## So, what is the Ensuring council ethos?

- The Ensuring Council offers a positive vision for taking local government into the next decade and beyond.
- The principal role of the Ensuring Council is active stewardship to ensure the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the local area.
- Core capacity is also important, so

that the Ensuring Council maintains the strategic advantages of in-house services to meet local needs.

- The spirit of Municipal Entrepreneurship, which is central to the ensuring model, captures opportunities for collaborative innovation and income generation.
- The Ensuring Council foregrounds the democratic legitimacy of local authorities, placing politics and public value before reliance on markets.
- It endorses collaboration with citizens and stakeholders rather than competition and contractual relations.
- It acknowledges the responsibilities of local government for advancing social justice through its strategic mobilisation of public employment and civic entrepreneurship.

What does the Ensuring Council look like in practice? The Ensuring Council is not prescriptive; it's a flexible model that can be applied to suit specific local circumstances. Aspects of the 'Ensuring Council' vision can already be found within local authorities across the United Kingdom (see box). In each of these examples, the local authority has joined up its stewardship role with its capacity to deliver in order to achieve results that will have a positive impact into the next decade and beyond.

We are not claiming that the Ensuring Council has all the answers at present, but it's about challenging the narrative that we should always look outward for answers and continually erode the capacity to deliver in local government. It's about developing a new confidence that recognises that local government is actually best placed to develop efficient and effective solutions to the problems its communities face.

Based upon the 2020 Commission and previous stages of APSE's project to consider what a positive future of local government could look like, we have developed a ten step guide to becoming an Ensuring Council.

In these tough times, local communities need local government more than ever. It's time to recognise that local government is the key local

agent to seek solutions to the challenges and crises we face. It's time for the 'Ensuring Council'. We believe local authorities will be better equipped to meet challenges in the next five years, the next decade and beyond if they adopt the 'ensuring' ethos.'

## Ensuring in action

The Road to 2020 report includes case studies of authorities operating in an 'ensuring' way across a range of services, including:

- Nottingham City Council is ensuring a low carbon future by expanding the city district heating system.
- Midlothian Council is ensuring the problem of 3,000 people on its waiting list is directly addressed by building its own homes.
- Stockton is ensuring public health improvements by training all frontline staff to deliver lifestyle related health interventions.
- Kingstown Works Limited, a local authority company delivering building maintenance and repairs, has ensured financial sustainability by trading with other organisations and generating £3m surplus.
- Cheshire East Council is using its position as a large local employer to ensure youth employment.
- Bolton Council is ensuring children have access to nutritious food by subsidising primary school meals.
- Ashfield District Council ensures its staff receive a living wage, which sets an example to local employers.



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# A message from APSE National Chair Councillor Leon Unczur

***Councillor Leon Unczur was elected as the APSE National Chair for 2013 -2014 at the APSE Annual General Meeting held in Liverpool. Here Leon outlines his vision for APSE during his term of office.***

I am personally delighted to have been chosen by APSE members to serve as the Association's National Chair for the coming year and of course thank my colleagues within APSE's Central Region and National Council for their support. I am very grateful to Alistair Merrick from Wolverhampton City Council for agreeing to act as my National Secretary. I know I shall deeply value Alistair's judgement and commitment.

APSE's former chair and secretary Cllr John Kerr-Brown of Warrington Borough Council, and his National Secretary, John Coates from North Lincolnshire Council remained focussed on delivering APSE's core priorities. Under their careful stewardship, the Association remains strong and financially sound and I am pleased to inherit as chair a very successful organisation. But I have no intention of taking that success for granted and therefore it is vital that APSE remains a dynamic, vibrant and sustainable organisation.

During my year in office I will be delivering a new business plan for the Association which will take us through to 2017 so getting the business plan right will be my number one priority.

A few years ago APSE started a modest research programme that has grown into a highly regarded set of individual projects that on their own are useful tools but collectively are changing the way local government provides its services. Through that research APSE and its partners are proving that you can provide local services that are cost effective, that employ local people and are environmentally sustainable. Indeed the APSE research programme receiving the 'outstanding' accreditation, alongside De Montfort University, from the pan-European Knowledge Transfer Programme assessors, was a testament to our success.

We now need to ensure that the future APSE research programme delivers on the priorities set by our National Council. I want to see the wide ranging programme of research continue to build on our concept of an 'ensuring council'; this research stream looks at the future role for elected members; the impact of Welfare Reform on communities, services and staff; the role of local government in addressing public health challenges; addressing the housing challenges, financial sustainability for local government and the green agenda - by that of course I mean addressing the challenge of climate change.

APSE is a leading light on the National stage and I want to ensure that we continue to influence local government locally, regionally and nationally.

I want to see APSE build on the success of its pioneering work on energy efficiency and renewable energy and take forward the work of APSE's local authority energy collaboration which involves councils from across the U.K. working on exciting opportunities for local government.

Working with my colleagues on the National Council I will strive to place APSE's values at the very heart of a positive agenda for local government. We want to make the case for local councils to have the capacity and leadership to meet the many challenges facing our local communities in a very difficult economic and financial climate.

Local government is a significant part of the solution to many of the problems which we face as a society and I know that during my term of office as National Chair APSE will continue to be a strong and authoritative voice for frontline services.





# What will the Waste Scotland Regulations mean to a zero waste future?

*Iain Gulland from Zero Waste Scotland explains the significant benefits that the Waste (Scotland) Regulations will bring to Scotland as they come into effect on 1 January, 2014*

**A**s you will be aware, Scotland is leading the way with ambitious targets of 70% recycling and sending just 5% of waste to landfill by 2025. Achieving the Scottish Government's 70% recycling target by 2025 has the potential to create green jobs for Scotland, and boost the economy by around £175 million. Zero Waste Scotland is working hard with stakeholders to ensure that we can all capitalise on these opportunities.

Since May 2012, Zero Waste Scotland has been working with householders, businesses, public sector organisations and waste and resource management companies across the country to help them prepare for the implementation of ground-breaking Waste (Scotland) Regulations. The regulations will mark the biggest change in a generation in how we manage our resources and whilst potentially creating some challenges, there are significant opportunities and benefits available to those who embrace the regulations, and use them as a catalyst to promote resource efficiency.

Under the new regulations, all businesses in Scotland will be required to separate key recyclable materials - paper and card, plastic, metals and glass - for recycling. For businesses in food production, preparation or retail a separate food collection will also be required.

The Waste (Scotland) Regulations coming into effect on 1 January 2014, will help organisations focus on becoming more resource efficient. Businesses from all sectors are currently responsible for generating millions of tonnes of waste each year, the majority of all the waste that is created in Scotland. Reducing this figure will have significant economic and environmental benefits for Scotland, and the regulations will help drive this necessary change.

Not only will the regulations lead to businesses being more resource efficient, but they will also create benefits for local authorities and resource management organisations as the regulations should increase the quality and the quantity of material being recycled. With more businesses segregating their waste, and with more materials being recycled, this will

help create additional income streams and markets for those looking to help to turn waste into a resource. Since 2012 Zero Waste Scotland invested over £750,000 to help increase the availability of collection services to SMEs, and over the course of this year 2013/14 Zero Waste Scotland will provide over £10 million of grant support to local authorities, businesses and third sector organisations, helping them to develop infrastructure and capacity to contribute towards the delivery of the Scottish Government's Zero Waste Plan and associated policy areas in Scotland. The Waste (Scotland) Regulations will of course have a key part to play in helping deliver the Zero Waste ambitions for Scotland. Zero Waste Scotland's business support programme provides information, guidance and training to businesses, third sector and public sector organisations, to help them on their journey towards resource efficiency. Launched in April 2013, Resource Efficient Scotland focuses on the efficient use of energy, water and raw materials and will support businesses needing to do more to comply with the new regulations. By making more efficient use of resources, Scottish organisations can deliver over £2 billion of potential savings to the Scottish economy.

There are a number of steps that organisations can take now, to ensure that they are ready for January. Local authorities and resource management organisations are likely to be the

first port of call for customers seeking advice about the Waste (Scotland) Regulations, consequently, it is important to ensure that all your staff are kept up to date with the changes. We have a variety of information available about the Regulations on our website [www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/regulations](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/regulations) including a section dedicated to frequently asked questions. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has information on compliance.

We know that communications has a key role to play in preparing for the Regulations, and how important it is for you to engage with your customers, and ensure that they are aware of what the Waste (Scotland) Regulations will mean for them, and what their responsibilities will be.

A campaign with press, radio and online advertising is due to start in September to further raise the profile of the Regulations. Now is a great time to get 'regs ready'.

We all have a key part to play in helping promote a resource efficient Scotland and the new regulations offer a once in a lifetime opportunity for us to really make a difference. For further information about how you can make the most of this opportunity, please visit our website ([www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/regulations](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/regulations)), or call our helpline on 0808 100 2040.

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# Time to innovate in Municipal Energy

*David Kilduff is head of the renewables, energy and resources group at Walker Morris and here David explains why now is the time to innovate in Municipal Energy*



St Georges Hall Liverpool was an excellent venue for APSE members attending the annual seminar 2013 to contemplate the challenges of local authority involvement in energy. Testament to the power of judicious public sector intervention what is described as the finest neo-grecian building in the country was completed under the wing of the corporation surveyor. One of the good news messages on this topic was the progress being made by local authorities collaborating at a number of different levels nationwide under the APSE banner of the 'Oxford Group' to identify feasible, deliverable projects that will create jobs, inward investment, boost skills and tackle fuel poverty. Some will also provide a platform for local authorities to work together with other parts of the public sector and registered providers and to create substantial value in power sales, power savings or the release of land for valuable energy uses.

Innovation in this context is not a byword for untried and untested technologies or complex delivery structures which in retrospect were doomed to fail. It simply means combining resources to deliver a new local government led or facilitated solution to a present and increasing energy problem which has its outlet in high costs, economic uncompetitiveness, social poverty and ultimately long term environmental harm. Add this to the cocktail of funding and budget shortfall and spending reductions surely every authority should be finding a way of giving this urgent attention?

In times of low economic growth if not recession it is not uncommon for the public sector to be the one that is expected to kick start the road to recovery through targeted investment usually in infrastructure projects. Examples include energy from waste, combined heat and power plants, anaerobic digesters, solar and wind farms together

with heat pumps. Local Authorities can also get involved by facilitating investment in infrastructure using their financial strength as a contracting counterparty to the production and use of heat, electricity, gas, bio-fuels, waste derived fuels and cooling.

Another avenue that is fertile territory to capture the benefits is the sphere of energy services – getting involved in facilitating Eco and Green Deal solutions to enhance the fabric and heating controls of domestic and non domestic property; operating buildings more efficiently through 'energy performance contracting' – a type of hyped up FM which builds on some of the benefits learned from capital projects in recent years in areas such as whole life costings, payment by results and incentives to outperform. Another aspect would be maximising procurement efficiencies by bulk purchasing at authority level (something that is quite common) and for consumers through one of the increasing number of collective switching schemes.

There was a time that novel would equate to high risk or lack of suitable legal powers to get involved. Whilst the importance of timely and experienced advice is critical to the success of any project however big or small its rarely what authorities do that gets them into hot water but the way that they do it. A quarter century of major projects experience, business case development, feasibility studies and early due diligence, options review (including funding options), gateway reviews, risk logs, peer group reviews and many more examples ought to mean that Local Authorities have the confidence and the mindset to understand how to resource, prepare for and deliver a scheme. In doing so they will capture if not enhance the benefits identified whatever the delivery solution and identify the appropriate powers, development and procurement route to minimise the risk of successful challenge whether to key consents, the procurement exercise or some other aspect.

Whatever the view of PFI/PPP schemes they allowed authorities to understand the role of a special purpose vehicle to discharge a particular scope of work or services. In the world of energy, not just municipal energy, we don't have SPV's but ESCO's – Energy Service Companies whose role is to deliver their mission whether it be energy production, transmission, energy contracting services or any other aspect. Whether an ESCO is privately owned, publicly owned or a mix is of course down to the 'what works' of the particular circumstances. There is no magic to an ESCO, it is no panacea but it can create focus, identity and momentum in the right circumstances.

As with many other aspects affecting this sector, there are lessons to be learned from others but be wary of off the shelf solutions and find the balance between tailoring to the needs of your area whilst avoiding the cost and delay of reinventing the wheel. Roll on municipal energy!

Contact: David Kilduff at Walker Morris email [david.kilduff@walkermorris.co.uk](mailto:david.kilduff@walkermorris.co.uk) or Visit: <http://www.walkermorris.co.uk>

# APSE Annual Seminar 2013

## The Road to 2020:

### Moving forward on frontline services

The seminar was opened with a warm welcome to Liverpool by Deputy Mayor of Liverpool Councillor Paul Brant who is also the cabinet member for finance. Deputy Mayor Brant warned that whilst regeneration was not a statutory core service, in these difficult economic times most councils would regard regeneration as a cornerstone of 'what they're there to do'. Explaining that Liverpool's approach would mean investment to generate new jobs within the City and draw in investment to help create construction jobs and apprenticeships.

The opening plenary followed which was led by Heather Wheeler MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Local Government exploring the role of localism and its impact during a time of squeezed council budgets. Ms Wheeler also outlined the role of her committee in exploring and working with local government to develop better and effective local services. Daniel Goodwin of the LGA spoke about the now predicted £15.6bn budget gap by 2019-20 facing local authorities and the impact of the 44% reduction in Government grants. Mr Goodwin warned that these figures would necessitate a fundamental rewiring of local government services in the future.

Launching APSE's latest research report 'The Road to 2020' Paul O'Brien APSE's chief executive outlined an alternative vision for local authorities which shows that both senior council officers and managers alongside elected members in fact reject a 'hollowed out' future for local authorities and support local councils retaining an ensuring role in the local area. You can read more about this research on page 4 of this edition of **direct news**.

Exploring the future dynamics of local authorities, was a theme in a key note plenary on 'Shaping the Future with contributions from Colin Everett, Chief Executive of Flintshire Council, Heather Wakefield, Head of Local Government for UNISON and Professor Steve Fothergill of Sheffield Hallam University. Professor Fothergill warned that the benefit reforms almost exclusively impact on working age claimants and in particular, he warned that there should

be no assumption that lower benefits lead to higher employment rates in communities. The impact on councils of welfare reform appears to increase demand on local services at a time of budget cuts.

#### Frontline foot forward!

With innovation an underlying theme to developing future public services the seminar received a wealth of presentations from local councils who have risen to the dual challenges of falling budgets cuts and rising customer expectations. In a session chaired by Anita Brown of Stockton Council, Glynn Humphries, Director of Environment and Streetscene at Wakefield Council explored partnership working with the police and using a more integrated approach to delivering local environmental services. Kevin Redmore of Kingston Works Ltd ( a Hull City Council company) explained the company model that has been adopted and is now delivering tangible benefits for both the local council and local residents including winning new contracts for work.

A contribution on insourcing from Andrew Moss of Cumbria County Council looked at the practical and operational considerations open to local authorities who go down the insourcing route and in particular Andrew highlighted the ability to optimise service improvements and efficiencies from insourcing. Debbie Clarke of Wigan Council explored innovative approaches to developing a more commercial outlook to attract new clients and retain existing business within a traded services context. Ms Clarke also highlighted the use of franchise operations to bolster income in education catering services and using local authority powers to provide services to other local authority clients.

#### Mind Zones

Day one of the seminar also hosted a series of innovation zones discovering new routes to the delivery of excellence in the local environment; in highways and street lighting; in soft FM services and in sports leisure and public health; alongside building maintenance and housing services.



Deputy Mayor Paul Brant



Heather Wheeler MP



Daniel Goodwin



Paul O'Brien



Colin Everett



Heather Wakefield



Professor Steve Fothergill



Glynn Humphries



Anita Brown



John Flaherty

As well as examples of innovation delegates were also able to use the zones as a great networking opportunity and of course to take on-board ideas from their APSE member colleagues from across the UK.

### **Transformation. Transformation. Transformation.**

Day two of the seminar focussed on management tools and techniques to deliver transformational public services. The opening plenary received excellent contributions from Nottingham City Councils' Director of Neighbourhoods Andy Vaughan who shared with delegates their approach to generating new income streams and driving through performance improvements. Managing demand is a vexed question for many authorities facing reduced resources just as demand for service is rising through the impact of the recession. This subject formed an outstanding assessment of delivering on demand management and in particular influencing behaviour change from Robin Tuddenham, Director of Communities at Calderdale Council. Richard Crouch, president of the public sector people managers association looked at the dynamic of managing the workforce in a changing environment including productivity, working time and absence management.

### **Innovation and service delivery**

In a session chaired by Cllr Sonja Crisp, John

Flaherty, Director of Neighbourhoods at Knowsley Council highlighted the dilemma facing many managers to either reduce services or grow new business. Knowsley has successfully managed to traverse the changes highlighted by John in his amusing presentation albeit through a serious example of change management. Taking an ensuring and cooperative approach to services demonstrated how Telford and Wrekin Council has been able to support regeneration of the local area and Managing Director Richard Partington, explained their investment strategy in the local area.

APSE new approved partners Walker Morris Solicitors, emphasised the opportunities for developing Municipal Energy strategies with a detailed tour of the legal issues and considerations provided by their head of commercial projects and infrastructure David Kilduff. This was followed by an example of technological innovation with Peter Atkinson of U6 media describing how the use of social media and new apps. could assist local authorities manage demands on services; this was particularly effective in providing a channel shift route for student populations.

### **The elephants in the room**

The final plenary session sought to explore how councils are dealing with the big issues of local economic growth, welfare reform, youth unemployment, housing and fuel poverty. The purpose of the session was not



Kriss Akabusi



John Harrison



Ted Czerniak



Ken Gourlay



Kevin Redmore



Andrew Moss



Debbie Clarke



Andy Vaughan

to just analyse the well-documented issues but to discover how local authorities are taking positive action to tackle 'the elephants in the room'.

Michael Ward, Chair of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, looked at the need to boost local and national economic performance and the role of the public sector as a positive vehicle for change. Ken Gourley, Head of Asset and Facilities Management at Fife Council presented on how the council has developed apprenticeship schemes as well as skills and training in the local area in response to the private sector downturn. Ted Czerniak, Director of Housing at Broxtowe Council explained that in order to tackle housing shortages they have invested in building new homes for rent and how this has been linked to local anti-poverty strategies. John Harrison a Peterborough Council Director shared Peterborough's experience of

developing an energy switching scheme to tackle fuel poverty and generation of new energy from waste.

### Olympian goals

In a final motivational session for public sector leaders, Olympic, European and World champion athlete Kriss Akabusi provided an inspiring end to the seminar. Drawing upon his own life experiences, and his transition from a difficult childhood to an army career, through to a world class athlete, and latterly as a lead motivational speaker and skilled coach, Kriss urged delegates to draw on their own inner strength to get through tough times using 'passion, pride and self-belief'.

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Robin Tuddenham



Richard Crouch

### Special thanks....

To the Lord Mayor of Liverpool Councillor Gary Miller who welcomed APSE delegates to Liverpool in a pre-seminar welcome evening. Showing both a passion for Liverpool and for the role of the Lord Mayor, delegates were left in no doubt that Liverpool is truly a warm and welcoming city! So special thanks to you Lord Mayor for your hospitality and the friendly welcome for APSE guests to your city.



Cllr Sonja Crisp



Michael Ward



Peter Atkinson



David Kilduff



Richard Partington

# Service Awards 2013



**“A glorious venue and a glorious night for the best in local government”**

**Clr John Kerr Brown, APSE national chair 2013-14**



Chesterfield Borough Council



Derry City Council



South Tyneside Homes

### **Best Employment & Equality initiative** Kindly sponsored by Unison

- Chesterfield Borough Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
- Lisburn City Council
- South Ayrshire Council
- Staffordshire County Council
- Wolverhampton Homes

#### **Winner: Chesterfield Borough Council**

#### **Growing Our Own – the Project Academy Team**

*Project Academy is a simple but effective idea to address a shortage of skilled project managers within Chesterfield Borough Council needed to deliver corporate projects designed to make efficiency savings.*

*Rather than pay consultants the council decided to 'grow its own'. It recruited talented staff from any job or grade, gave them specialist training and asked them to deliver projects, working across departments.*

*It has resulted in more Corporate Plan projects being delivered, making financial savings and customer service improvements.*

### **Best Local Democracy** Kindly sponsored by Toltec

- Derry City Council
- Staffordshire County Council
- Stockton on Tees Borough Council

#### **Winner: Derry City Council**

#### **Y H.I.D.E? (Youth, History, Identity, Democracy, Equality)**

*'Y HIDE?' (Youth - History - Identity - Democracy - Equality) is a youth/community democracy initiative developed by Derry City Council (N.Ireland) within a process including schools, education authorities and politicians. Council officers wrote and published a magazine on voting and politics with an accompanying website and teachers/facilitators resource pack. Despite this being a contentious area of work given past 'Troubles,' this project gained broad party political*

*support and is used by Catholic, Protestant and Integrated schools and local reconciliation facilitators.*

### **Best Housing & Regeneration initiative** Kindly sponsored by Multihog

- Conwy County Borough Council
- Cornwall Council
- Dundee City Council
- Fife Council
- London Borough of Brent
- South Tyneside Homes

#### **Winner: South Tyneside Homes**

#### **Biddick Hall Non-trads**

*The Biddick Hall Non-traditional project transformed 357 homes from poorly insulated houses with excessive fuel costs, into fully refurbished modern homes. The project has completely regenerated the Biddick Hall estate. The works have reduced carbon emissions by 1,821 tons per year and has saved each household £1160.00 per year in heating bills. The project has received awards, local and national positive press coverage, as well as being held up as a benchmark amongst our competitors.*

### **Best Efficiency initiative** Kindly sponsored by British Gas

- Aberdeen City Council
- Bradford Metropolitan District Council
- Cheshire West & Chester Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- Fife Council
- Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Authority
- North Ayrshire Council
- Tayside Contracts
- West London Alliance

#### **Winner: City of Edinburgh Council**

#### **Foster Me Foster Us**

*'Foster Me Foster Us' recruits foster carers to care for Edinburgh's most vulnerable children. This partnership project saw foster care recruitment team working with*



City of Edinburgh Council

Aberdeen City Council

Staffordshire County Council

two communications officers to create a wide-reaching and engaging recruitment campaign with a recognisable brand to increase the number of approved foster carers in the city. The campaign was so successful for 2012/13 that it recorded a 55% increase in registering new carers and saved the Council £800,000.

### **Best Health & Wellbeing initiative** Kindly sponsored by Unison

- Aberdeen City Council
- Ballymena Borough Council
- Blackpool Council
- Broxtowe Borough Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- East Dunbartonshire Council
- East Renfrewshire Council
- Walsall Council

### **Winner: Aberdeen City Council**

#### **The Aberdeen Golden Games**

In recognition of an ever growing older population the Aberdeen City Community Health and Social Care Partnership devised a packed programme of sporting activities suitable for people over 65 living in Aberdeen known as the Golden Games.

The Golden Games is about being physically active and encouraging residents to continue participating in social, economic, cultural and civic affairs.

The Golden Games are now a key part the Partnership commitment to Reshaping Care for Older People and in particular Active Ageing.

### **Best Public/ Private Partnership Working** Kindly sponsored by Luton Traded Services

- Bedford Borough Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- North Tyneside Council
- Nottingham City Council
- Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
- South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse District Councils
- Staffordshire County Council
- West Lindsey District Council

### **Winner: Staffordshire County Council**

### **Delivering Safer Roads through Public Private Partnership**

Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) aims to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on the county's roads. It also works to raise awareness about road safety, vehicle safety issues and to encourage safe and responsible road use. The Partnership delivers projects which meet these objectives through a coordinated approach involving a variety of public and private sector organisations. Public and private sector skills, expertise and resources are combined effectively, creating an array of Public Private Partnerships.

### **Best Public/ Public Partnership Working** Kindly sponsored by DAC Beachcroft

- Blackpool Council
- Bridgend County Borough Council
- East Renfrewshire Council
- Gedling Borough Council
- Hull City Council
- Inverclyde Council
- Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Authority
- Renfrewshire Council
- South Tyneside Council

### **Winner: Inverclyde Council**

#### **Positive School Leaver Destinations – Getting it Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community in Inverclyde**

In 2003, Inverclyde had 2nd highest levels (14.7%) of negative post-school destinations in Scotland.

By 2006, Inverclyde no longer one of 7 identified "NEET Hotspots".

By 2009, Inverclyde's SLDR's were 0.2% shy of the Scottish average.

By 2010, Inverclyde's SLDR's were 2.3% better than the Scottish average.

In 2012 – Inverclyde is ranked 3rd best in Scotland. Only 5.2% of school leavers were not in positive destinations.

We celebrate the success of partnership working and sustainability in achieving these milestones.



Inverclyde Council

Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

Calderdale Council

### **Best Public / Voluntary Partnership Working** Kindly sponsored by De Montfort University

- Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council
- Broxtowe Borough Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Gedling Borough Council
- Preston City Council
- Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Wiltshire Council

### **Winner: Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council**

#### **“Triumph Over Adversity” - Halal Accreditation**

Since the 1980s Bolton Council has been proud of its well-integrated approach to Halal school meals provision. In 2007 Bolton's Race Advisory Group requested that Halal meals should be authenticated by a more stringent Muslim monitoring body. This heralded 6 years of sensitive partnership working and community communications, scrutiny of all practices, and a revisit of Council policy. The outcomes led to a rise in Halal meals uptake, a modernised corporate policy and a new perspective on partnership working.

### **Best Community & Neighbourhood initiative** Kindly sponsored by The Trolley Collection Service

- Ballymena Borough Council
- Broxtowe Borough Council
- Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
- East Dunbartonshire Council
- Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
- Lisburn City Council
- South Tyneside Council
- Stockport Homes

### **Winner: Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council**

#### **The Valley of Lights – A community and Neighborhood Initiative**

The three towns of the Upper Calder Valley were repeatedly devastated by floods in the Summer of 2012.

Town centre shops, the heartbeat of the communities, faced closure for several months; 900 homes were affected and many lost their entire contents.

Calderdale Council faced the challenge of reinvigorating the local economies and demonstrating to the outside world the areas were making a full recovery. The Valley of Lights was created and delivered in a challenging timeframe – six weeks.

### **Best Information Technology & Communication initiative** Kindly sponsored by IQSS

- Broxtowe Borough Council
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Carmarthenshire County Council
- City & County of Swansea
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Preston City Council
- South Lanarkshire Council
- Wiltshire Council

### **Winner: South Lanarkshire Council**

#### **Creating Clarity: Using Clear Information to Deliver Good Asset Management**

South Lanarkshire Council for 14 years has successfully developed and managed an overall asset management communication system.

There are currently over 400 direct users of this single information source.

The key principal activities are:

- consideration, evaluation and management of property information
- development of integrated information framework
- allow strategic property overview
- providing customers with solutions to key property information objectives



South Lanarkshire Council

Preston City Council

City and County of Swansea

### Best Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency initiative

Kindly sponsored by Walker Morris

- Bedford Borough Council
- Birmingham City Council
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- Hampshire County Council
- Manchester City Council
- Preston City Council
- South Tyneside Homes
- Stockport Homes

#### Winner: Preston City Council

### Green Retrofit Scheme – High Rise Style

Sandown Court, comprising of two tower blocks, has been a landmark in Preston since the early 1960's. Since that time they have remained relatively untouched but the combination of single glazing, solid concrete walls and electric storage heaters were having a negative impact on the living conditions of the residents. For this reason the Council sought CESP funding which has now transformed the blocks making them virtually zero carbon, fuel efficient and attractively modern.

### Best Service Team Construction & Building

Kindly sponsored by Geason

- City & County of Swansea
- Fife Council
- Kingstown Works Limited (KWL)
- Lisburn City Council
- London Borough of Brent
- Powys County Council
- Renfrewshire Council

#### Winner: City & County of Swansea

### Corporate Building & Property Services

Swansea Council's Corporate Building & Property Services (CB&PS) is an all encompassing operation which has significantly improved customer satisfaction and employee engagement resulting in:

- Improved satisfaction levels,
- Investors in People (IIP) & International Standardisation Organisation (ISO 9002) accreditation
- Significant reduction in sickness levels

- Over 100 apprentices recruited
- 77% of waste diverted from landfill
- Short listed in 2008/2009 and 2010 for APSE "Most Improved Building Maintenance Provider"
- Won a prestigious National Constructing Excellence award for its Leadership and People Development

### Best Service Team Catering

Kindly sponsored by Theos Food Company

- Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
- Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- North Lanarkshire Council
- North Tyneside Council
- Renfrewshire Council
- Tayside Contracts
- Wrexham County Council

#### Winner: Renfrewshire Council

### Renfrewshire Council's Schools Catering Service

Over the last 2 years, Renfrewshire Council's School Catering Service has undergone a rigorous review of their service, challenging existing methods of service delivery and provision of Best Value.

The review objectives were to:

1. Identify £950,000 of efficiencies to contribute to the Council's overall efficiency targets.
2. Introduce innovative alternative catering service delivery models in primary and secondary schools.

The achievement of objectives is mainly based on the continued efforts of our knowledgeable, dedicated, and enthusiastic School Catering Teams.

### Best Service Team Building Facilities Management & Cleaning

Kindly sponsored by Numatic International

- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
- Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- Liverpool City Council
- Stockton on Tees Borough Council
- Tayside Contracts
- Warwickshire County Council

#### Winner: Warwickshire County Council



Renfrewshire Council



Warwickshire County Council



Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

### **Going for Growth" – A Peripatetic Team's journey**

Due to declining market share in services to schools, schools converting to Academies and the counties Property Rationalisation Programme (PRP) reducing its building stock, we became in danger of becoming non-financially viable.

In order to address this we diversified into the development of additional services.

By multi-skilling our peripatetic team we used existing resources to enable us to develop more services to offer to the market and remain financially viable as a result.

Our "Going for growth" initiative was born.

### **Best Service Team Highways, Winter Maintenance & Street Lighting**

Kindly sponsored by Nu-Phalt and Jetpatcher

- East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- Hull City Council
- London Borough of Waltham Forest
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Staffordshire County Council
- Vale of Glamorgan Council
- Wigan Council

### **Winner: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council**

### **Best Service – Highways, Winter Maintenance and Street Lighting**

Streetpride is driven to achieve high quality service delivery and customer satisfaction, changing times has meant the need for careful service development.

As local authority austerity cuts have been implemented, budgets have reduced and many areas have come under pressure. It has been imperative that work areas become streamlined but are still able to deliver programmed works and services, whilst maintaining the ability to be responsive. This has been achieved through partnership working, sharing best practice and invest-to-save initiatives.

### **Best Service Team Transport & Fleet** Kindly sponsored by SMA Vehicle Remarketing

- City of York Council
- Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
- Inverclyde Council
- Luton Borough Council
- Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council
- South Tyneside Council
- Thurrock Council
- Wakefield Council

### **Winner: City of York Council**

### **York Independent Living & Travel Skills (YILTS) Service**

The York Independent Living & Travel Skills (YILTS) Service supports students with a full range of special educational needs & disabilities aged 11 to 19, who are currently provided with council-funded taxi transportation but who, with an individually-tailored risk assessment and independent travel plan; are trained to become independent travelers.

### **Best Service Team Waste Management & Recycling**

Kindly sponsored by U6 Media

- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- City & County of Swansea
- Conwy County Borough Council
- East Renfrewshire Council
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- London Borough of Merton
- Stockton on Tees Borough Council
- West Lindsey District Council

### **Winner: Caerphilly County Borough Council**

### **Caerphilly's Waste Management Team of 2013**

Year on year Caerphilly County Borough Council are found at the top of the recycling tables for outstanding recycling and composting rates. Increasing customer satisfaction levels compliment our efficient and effective services. Our success is no doubt a result of the first class service provided by our "pleasant, helpful and polite"



City of York Council

Caerphilly County Borough Council

Cardiff Council

*Waste Strategy and Operations team who possess a "fantastic spirit" and deliver an excellent service in best value. Continuous improvements will ensure Caerphilly remains a top performing Welsh authority.*

### **Best Service Team Street Cleansing & Streetscene**

Kindly sponsored by Love Clean Streets

- Broxtowe Borough Council
- Cardiff Council
- Gedling Borough Council
- Halton Borough Council
- Hull City Council

### **Winner: Cardiff Council**

#### **Cardiff Council's Waste Street Cleansing Team**

*A submission which champions Cardiff Council's Street Cleansing team. They 'Olympic' efforts during the summer of 2012 helped to showcase the capital of Wales at its very best, presenting a city centre that was, and remains clean, and free from litter and graffiti.*

### **Best Service Team Parks, Grounds & Horticultural**

Kindly sponsored by Nordic Poineer

- Bedford Borough Council
- Birmingham City Council
- Douglas Borough Council
- Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- Nottingham City Council
- Oxford City Council
- Stockton on Tees Borough Council

### **Winner: Nottingham City Council**

***A positive mixed economy package delivers a £21.5million investment programme, strong partnerships and a high profile service.***

*This ambitious, creative and proactive team has secured £21.5million investment over the past five years for a programme of high-profile improvements. The team continues to forge ahead - with plans for £10million investment in the next two years. The ongoing drive*

*towards income generation and efficiencies has resulted in a successful mixed economy approach, with progressive new partnerships producing extra capacity and a programme of profitable and popular fringe activities. Political support is buoyant, and public satisfaction has reached 85%.*

### **Best Service Team Sports, Leisure & Cultural**

Kindly sponsored by APSE Solutions

- Broxtowe Borough Council
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- Gedling Borough Council
- Oxford City Council

### **Winner: East Riding of Yorkshire Council**

***"Continually going beyond what the customer expects"***

*The East Riding Leisure Team has nationally recognised, innovative customer relationship management processes. Over the last year the Team has taken the service to a new level through a process of demand lead transformation encompassing lean system thinking. This has ensured that the customer is at the heart of every process.*

*Being close to our customers and continually going beyond what they expect has substantially reduced the cost of the service whilst increasing income, customers and addressing social needs.*



Nottingham City Council



East Riding of Yorkshire Council

**Overall Council of the Year in Service Delivery**

Kindly sponsored by Big Belly Solar

- Bedford Borough Council
- Broxtowe Borough Council
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- Conwy County Borough Council
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- Preston City Council
- Renfrewshire Council
- South Tyneside Council
- Stockton on Tees Borough Council



**Winner: South Tyneside Council**

**Overall Council of the Year:**

South Tyneside Council

**APSE would like to thank all sponsors of the Service Awards 2013 for their support**





# Trying your hand on construction

***Young people hoping to join the next generation of plumbers, carpenters and bricklayers have been able to get on the first rung of the ladder at a series of special events set up by Swansea Council's Corporate Building and Property Services Department.***

**T**he Council joined forces with the Construction Youth Trust charity to complete a series of try-your-hand days from March to May to help young people get a taste of what a career in construction looks like.

This led to 24 local students attending the courses and learning the tricks of the trade. Swansea Council is now evaluating the success of the scheme and could be running further sessions later this year.

All the young people who completed the Introduction to Building and Construction course also had the chance to apply for one of 17 Swansea Council apprenticeships starting in September, with recruitment currently underway from the 800 applicants.

The community-based course was made possible thanks to the Construction Youth Trust's mobile classroom - a specially-converted van kitted out with tools and training materials.

Swansea Council's apprentice programme has received local and national recognition in the past, including securing a previous APSE National Award for its workforce

development strategy and the Welsh and National award for the People Development Category from Constructing Excellence.

But the council's building division is not resting on its laurels.

Martin Nicholls, Head of Corporate Building and Property Services, said: "This pilot formed part of our apprentice strategy and also helped the council maximise the opportunities for young people in some of our most disadvantaged communities to secure work experience and potential future sustainable employment opportunities. It was intended to support the work the council is doing in some of our target areas - the city's most disadvantaged communities - and helped encourage local young people to try out the trade opportunities with the hope that they will apply for our apprentice vacancies.

"We have a history of working with the Construction Youth Trust, which includes receiving valuable advice when it first set up its apprentice programme some seven years ago on how to ensure that more females were applying for craft apprenticeships. I'm pleased to say this investment seems to be paying off as we're getting greater numbers of females applying and securing apprenticeships. The hope now is

that the same partnership can lead to even greater success in our target areas. This scheme also gave the young people valuable work experience and, with some of the practical training taking place on local schemes within their neighbourhoods, it helped youngsters take some ownership in their community too. The hope is that we can widen the scheme and create more opportunities going forward."

Christine Townley, Executive Director at the Construction Youth Trust, said: "Our partnership with Swansea Council has been a great way of supporting people across local communities in a very planned and engaging way. It means we're giving a helping hand to young people to give them real opportunities. The Trust would welcome conversations with other local authorities on how we can support more young people elsewhere get an insight into the construction industry."

Cllr Mitch Theaker, Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Opportunities for Young People, said: "This was a really great opportunity for young people to find out more about the world of construction."

"They had the chance to try out basic skills and those who completed the course even got an Open College Network qualification that will stand them in good stead when applying for jobs or apprenticeships in the future."

Cllr Ryland Doyle, Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Target Areas, said: "These events illustrate our commitment to encouraging young people from the city's most disadvantaged communities to get access to work opportunities more easily. We're delighted to work with the Construction Youth Trust and use their experience in working with hard to reach groups."

## Stay in touch Where ever you are, what ever you are doing.



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# Report back

## *A round up of APSE advocacy and events on behalf of our members*

Another busy few months for APSE as we report back on recent events and activity across the UK

## England

### APSE AGM, Annual Seminar and Service Awards 2013

As you will see from this edition of direct news APSE once again hosted a highly successful seminar in Liverpool on the 4-5 September at the prestigious St George's Hall Liverpool.

### Urban crisis

APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien spoke at De Montfort University's international conference on 'Urban Crisis' held at Leicester City Football Club.

### Dinner time...

APSE was in attendance as a guest to the National Association of Care Caterers conference held in Blackpool – a great conference exploring the needs of this vital area of public services.

And...a great night at Nottingham with the 719th Goose Fair Dinner! Which will take some beating as far as traditional civic events go!

### To the Capital

APSE's South and South West region will hold a series of advisory groups in London this October and November including: Waste Management, Refuse Collection and Street Cleansing; Vehicle Maintenance and Transport; and Catering. For details of APSE activity in the South and South West of England contact Helen Burkhalter, Principal Advisor on hburkhalter@apse.org.uk.

### To make money and save money...

...that is the aim of the APSE facilitated Local Authority Energy Collaboration that is being project managed by the APSE South and South West region. Over the summer representatives from a core group of local authorities along with APSE associate Stephen Cirell have been working up the detail into a business proposal document for the collaboration. This is to be made available at the end of September. For more information and/or to get involved please contact Helen Burkhalter, Principal Advisor on hburkhalter@apse.org.uk.

### Sunshine in the Park

Delegates of this years 'No going back: Creating self-sustaining and outcome generating parks and green spaces' seminar were treated to a glorious day in the sunshine to think, share and network within the inspirational space that was The Hub, Regents Park, London. Key issues were discussed including how to create revenue neutral and income generating open spaces, ways to safeguard parks for the benefit of wider social outcomes and the performance improvement agenda within the cemeteries and crematoria service. Photographers and journalists from Horticulture Week captured the days presentations and engaging question and answer sessions lead by delegates with a series of reports in the July edition of the print and online magazine.

### Building success

APSE hosted its annual housing and building seminar at Hinckley Island Leicestershire with a range of public sector lead authorities and organisations alongside the HSE and the Construction Youth Trust. The event also hosted the annual sector apprentice awards.

### Serving up school meals success

APSE continues to provide secretariat support to the All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food and welcomed recent announcements on funding for some free meals for primary children.

APSE is working with its member authorities on responding to the recent report 'The School Food Plan' written by John Vincent and Henry Dimbleby and launched by the Department for Education.

If you would like to be kept informed of APSE work in this area please contact Rob Bailey on rbailey@apse.org.uk

### Conference circuit

APSE attended the Conservative Party Conference in Manchester with an opportunity for Rob Bailey, APSE Principal Advisor on education catering to make the case for school meals directly to Michael Gove (pictured).

During Conservative Party Conference APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien participated in a strategic forum on public health organised by the Institute of Ideas.

At Labour Party Conference APSE participated in a housing fringe with the Shadow Housing Minister, Jack Dromey pressing the case of the role of local authorities in new build schemes for social housing.

The SIPTU conference in Dublin saw APSE provide a plenary address to delegates on the role and challenges of public procurement.

Meanwhile at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton APSE hosted a strategic forum on welfare reform, which is a new forum for APSE members and debated the impact of the reforms on housing policies and benefits.

## Wales

### Advertising your wares

APSE Wales catering collaboration group is meeting in October to discuss a new approach to promoting school meals including a possible joint advertising campaign. For details about this group contact Debbie Johns on [djohns@apse.org.uk](mailto:djohns@apse.org.uk)

## Scotland

### SNP conference

APSE will be attending the SNP conference in Perth where APSE will be promoting its latest research studies to delegates.

### Soft FM

The APSE Scotland Soft FM catering and cleaning seminar will take place on 14 November at Westerwood Hotel Cumbernauld . For details please contact Louise McMillan [lmcmillan@apse.org.uk](mailto:lmcmillan@apse.org.uk)

### Blooming marvellous....

APSE helped to judge the Glasgow International Rose Trials which were held at the Glasgow's Tollcross Park celebrating its 25th Year. Judges and contestants came from as far afield as Australia and the USA.

### Renewables and energy in Scottish local councils

APSE Scotland hosted its inaugural renewables and energy efficiency advisory group – a new group for APSE Scotland chaired by Councillor Ramsay Milne of Aberdeen City Council. For details about this new group get in touch with Louise McMillan on [lmcmillan@apse.org.uk](mailto:lmcmillan@apse.org.uk) . All APSE Scotland Advisory groups for Autumn / Winter will commence mid-November and again for details please contact Louise.

## Northern Ireland

### Community development and regeneration

APSE Northern Ireland is hosting an event in Strabane on the 18 October. The theme of the event is on community development and regeneration with examples of practical initiatives undertaken by local authorities. For details about the programme of APSE events in Northern Ireland contact Phil Brennan on [pbrennan@apse.org.uk](mailto:pbrennan@apse.org.uk)

## All change in NI

The Local Government Review Joint Forum, which is chaired by APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien, has reached a critical phase with the imminent appointment of Chief Executives within the new structures.

### #greatconferences

The Scottish Social Media conference was a huge success with delegates enthused by the opportunities presented by use of social media in frontline services. For details contact Louise McMillan on [lmcmillan@apse.org.uk](mailto:lmcmillan@apse.org.uk)

APSE Scotland Principal Advisor Louise McMillan and Chief Executive Paul O'Brien attended a very successful ASSIST conference in Glasgow meeting with public sector FM providers in Scotland.

### Young at Fife

Fife Council kindly invited APSE to present the winners of their Apprentice of the Year awards hosted by the Lord Provost of Fife.

### Legally wed

APSE is pleased to announce two exciting new legal partnerships as part of its approved partner scheme with well-regarded Law firms Walker Morris and DAC Beachcrofts.

### APSE goes global

APSE Solutions was commissioned to deliver a two-day workshop on Public Sector Service Delivery in Kuala Lumpur in October. The workshop days were delivered by Andy Mudd of APSE solutions using expertise developed in helping UK local authorities develop service delivery strategies applied in a Malaysian context.

Meanwhile APSE presented on service delivery options to a visiting delegation of Australian Trade Unionists from the Australian Public Service Union ASU. The delegation also made a visit to York Council to look at their collaborative work on its Fairness Commission meeting with representatives of the council including APSE northern deputy chair Cllr Sonya Crisp and representatives from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

APSE Principal Advisor Rob Bailey with Michael Gove at the Conservative Party Conference





# Focus on local energy schemes

## *Doncaster Council aims to insulate residents from high energy bills.*

**M**ore than 2,000 Doncaster homes in the last 12 months have received new insulation as part of a Council scheme to help residents save cash on energy bills. The works are set to cut the average annual gas bill for those homes by 30-40 per cent as a result, saving residents around £400 per year on average. This represents a total saving across Doncaster residents that have received the insulation of around £800,000 per year. The real impact of the initiative looks set to increase the disposable income of residents and alleviate fuel poverty.

Fuel poverty is where a household has to spend more than 10 per cent of its income on heating their property to an adequate temperature. It has a significant impact on both physical and mental health, as well as child development. The most effective way to reduce Fuel Poverty is by insulating homes to a good standard.

The works on privately owned and rented properties, funded by energy companies but orchestrated by Doncaster Council, are estimated to be worth £12 million to the town.

Councillor Glyn Jones, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing at Doncaster Council said: "We are constantly exploring new ways to help bring down residents' energy bills and help them keep their homes warm and cozy"

Councillor Jones explained that between June 2012 and July 2013 Doncaster started facilitating a scheme to install solid wall insulation in 2000 privately owned or rented Doncaster properties which included 200 boiler replacements. The scheme also helped to create 16 new jobs and safeguarded 43, however Doncaster Council did not have to spend its

own money on the works which have been fully funded by Energy Company Obligation Grants, using money that the Government has required energy companies to make available for energy efficient measures.

The insulation is being installed by a number of local contractors, most of which are based in Doncaster itself and in turn they have hired a number of local employees. In order to make the scheme easy for Doncaster residents to access the residents do not have to get in touch with the Council to apply. Instead when a scheme is coming to the local area, residents receive a letter from the council and a council officer will come to their own front door to sign them up. Councillor Jones believes this approach has simplified the scheme and helped to create the good take-up levels that have marked the schemes success.

The process sees solid wall insulation being installed on properties that are unable to have cavity wall insulation. At the moment funding is currently only available for semi-detached properties with solid walls, terraces cannot be fully funded at the moment although it is hoped this can be addressed in the future. Funding for individual properties is calculated on the basis of the Carbon Dioxide emissions that will be saved by conducting the works. So as well as saving residents money the scheme helps to tackle carbon reduction targets. The works also renovate the external appearance of a house, making them look as good as new which is another bonus to local areas.

Over the last ten years, Doncaster Council has brought in over £40m of external funding to assist residents and tenants with energy efficient housing improvements. Now

the council is developing further work-streams to tackle both fuel poverty and energy efficiency, which includes a scheme to ensure residents are on the cheapest energy tariffs on the market. Doncaster is also looking at opportunities for the Government's Green Deal program to help residents make their homes more energy efficient.

In tough times measures to tackle fuel poverty and energy efficiency are an essential part of the Council's role in reaching out to local communities. The success of the scheme in attracting external funding means that the will and determination of Doncaster's elected leadership and local officers can be matched by the funding needed to generate that critical local success!

*Contact:* Richard J Smith, Energy Manager - richardjsmith@doncaster.gov.uk



### **Glasgow City Council to Create Green Energy Company**

Glasgow City Council is proposing to create a "green" energy company in a move to tackle fuel poverty, cut carbon emissions and create new jobs.

Officers are investigating various models for the creation of a proposed Glasgow Energy Services Company (GLESCo). Sustainable Glasgow has already undertaken green energy projects in the city including the erection of a wind turbine at Cathkin Braes and the installation of solar panels at St Benedict's Primary School.

Studies have also been completed to assess the possibility of harnessing hydro power on the rivers Clyde and Kelvin and creating District Heating networks - similar to the one at the Athletes' Village for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. Work is also well underway to explore ways of using the residual heat / electricity from a new waste treatment facility.

The proposed new energy company has the potential to be one of the biggest in Europe. It could be set up in partnership with the private sector and could oversee a range of renewable energy initiatives across the city. Its contacts, expertise and financial clout would be used to help attract funding for new community based energy projects and it would also assist in the city's future economic growth and skills development.

The council could generate energy then use some to power street lights and council buildings like sports centres, offices and libraries. It could also sell some back to the Grid. Profits from this sale could then be used to tackle fuel poverty by fostering community-owned renewable energy projects or paying vulnerable citizens affordable warmth dividends to offset their fuel bills.

Councillor Gordon Matheson, Leader of Glasgow City Council and Chair of Sustainable Glasgow, said: "Such a project could provide social, economic and environmental benefits for the city. Last year, the council's energy bill was almost £26million. This scheme could generate significant savings which could be used to help vulnerable city residents struggling to pay their fuel bills".

"Setting up a company could also help protect the council against future energy price rises and jobs would be created as new renewables projects were installed. Glasgow's carbon footprint would also be reduced as more people move to greener energy production through new community projects."

Glasgow is now holding discussions with energy providers about the commercial models used in other locations, prior to moving to a formal procurement process.

*Contact:* claire.holland@glasgow.gov.uk



### **Local authority energy collaboration; The APSE Approach**

It was not so long ago that major utilities sat within local authority ownership and control, reflecting their role in public health issues such as the supply of clean water and sanitation. Over a number of decades this has changed. However, as the global threats of climate change and energy shortages continue to grow, local authorities are increasingly looking at the developing prospects of municipal energy.

Initiated in APSE's South and South West of England region, APSE's bespoke Local Authority Energy Collaboration is a partnership developed by our member authorities which looks to leverage and maximise the opportunities afforded to local authorities by working together on a national scale on the green energy agenda.

Interested? Contact Helen Burkhalter for more details.

Email : hburkhalter@apse.org.uk



# Anybody fancy a dip in the blue ocean?

*Asks Andy Mudd, APSE's principal consultant within APSE Solutions*

**M**uch of our thinking about how to manage the cuts comes from a conventional understanding of how businesses survive when the going gets tough. It boils down to a simple mantra of 'cut your costs or go out of business'.

In industry the impetus for cutting cost comes from the threat of competition – in public services it is from central government cuts. It can also be from competition where market testing is used to try and drive down costs. According to conventional wisdom, competition forces cost reduction and therefore, savings but we know from experience that savings are often an illusion that can at times be rudely shattered when an under-resourced contract goes badly wrong, leading to additional costs, that often outweigh the expected saving. When contractors cut costs too far and go bust the implications can reach well beyond financial, as essential services come under threat. Any council caught up in the aftermath of the collapse of Connaught or Southern Cross will testify to that.

Winners and losers is of course the stuff of competition. If markets are working as they are supposed to, firms will go out of business to be replaced by others that have managed to shave costs so as to undercut them. Those that go bust because they have got their sums wrong, add to the carnage. The question for those responsible for public services is whether this inherently unstable environment is suitable for the procurement of essential public service providers. Is the risk of being left high and dry worth it to achieve savings that so often fail to meet expectations? For in-house providers the pressure to reduce cost, whether or not they face actual competition, creates real risk of service failure and therefore doubts about the sustainability of a cost reduction strategy.

Blue Ocean Strategy\* theorists describe existing markets as red oceans – red with blood as firms are dragged under by the circling sharks with which they try to compete. They propose an alternative to the standard differentiation strategies of either lower cost or higher quality, arguing that it is better to focus on being

different, so as to create new demand, rather than trying to compete in an already bloody red ocean - hence the blue ocean analogy. Essentially, they argue that success comes from creating a temporary monopoly – an ocean in which it will be safe to swim without fear - at least for a while. The onus is on creating demand rather than competing for demand and a move away from the zero sum gain of traditional competition strategies whereby one firm drops out of the market to be replaced by another.

The thinking behind Blue Ocean strategy is similar to some of the points that are being made in relation to how councils might respond to the next round of cuts. The scope for further cost reduction is clearly limited and there are real fears that further savings will do permanent damage to service provision. Some argue that the only answer to this is further contracting out but to my mind this can only lead to red ocean carnage as the sharks fight over ever diminishing spoils. What is needed is new approaches that do not rely solely on cutting cost for survival. These new approaches can include moving resources away from reactive work to preventative work so as to tackle causes rather than symptoms. They can also include some real blue ocean thinking to make greater use of the recent widening of powers that allow councils to go into business – any business. The scope for income generation to offset funding restrictions has

never been so great. So if ever there was a time for dipping a toe into the blue ocean this is surely it.

APSE has long advocated income generation through external trading and spent many years lobbying for changes to the law to allow it. Now that these changes are in place APSE Solutions and Training have developed new approaches to helping Councils to develop commercial acumen aimed at creating genuine new income streams that can offset the impact of cuts and maybe avoid the need to go swimming with sharks.

\*'Blue Ocean Strategy' is a business strategy book published in 2005 by W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne of The Blue Ocean Strategy Institute at INSEAD. They argue that whilst so called red ocean strategies are necessary, high performing companies go beyond competition to create new, at least temporarily, uncontested markets. Avoidance of the cut throat competition that exists within existing markets creates the conditions for growth and long term stability. A belief that the strategy leads to an expansion in demand, as opposed to the zero sum gain of one company outcompeting another for existing demand, has led the Malaysian government to adopt blue ocean thinking as a national strategy. Andy Mudd has recently delivered a two day workshop in Kuala Lumpur.

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## APSE environmental services seminar 2013

# The Green Stuff:

## An integrated approach to environmental services



A complete picture of local environmental front line services including waste and recycling, refuse collection, transport, street cleansing, streetscene, grounds maintenance and parks services.

Daventry Court Hotel, Daventry, Northamptonshire, 6 and 7 November 2013

The logo for 'apse' is located in the top left corner. It consists of the word 'apse' in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, set against a purple oval background.

# Performance networks seminar 2013

5 and 6 December, Hilton Hotel, Blackpool

# A brave new world: Benchmarking in the age of open data and open public services

The background of the entire page is a complex data visualization. It features a grid of numbers and percentages that curves and recedes into the distance, creating a sense of depth. The numbers are in various shades of blue and green, and the overall effect is reminiscent of a tunnel or a data stream. A prominent diagonal banner in purple and white cuts across the middle of the image, containing the main call to action.

**Bookings are now being taken!**  
Contact Vicky Starmer on 0161 772 1810 or email [vstarmer@apse.org.uk](mailto:vstarmer@apse.org.uk)  
to reserve your place