

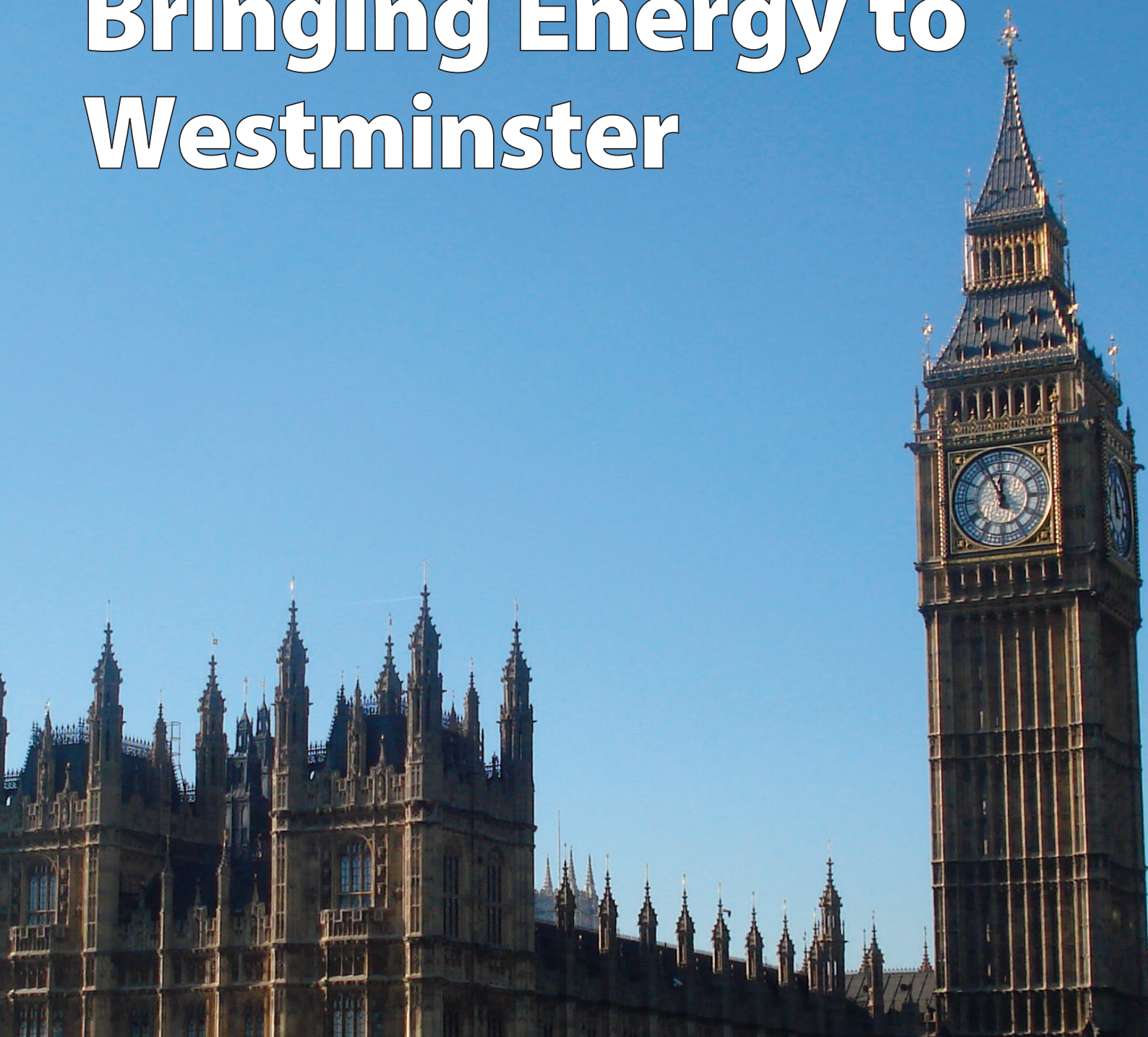
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# Bringing Energy to Westminster



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## Editorial

### Time for the People's Energy

At the turn of the twentieth century the poverty and squalor in which many people lived provided a fertile breeding ground for new ideas, out of which was born some of the great Liberal reforms of health insurance, unemployment benefits and pensions embedded in an interventionist state. New thinking, which recognised the scale of the problem could not be addressed by individuals alone, nor left to well-intentioned charitable bodies, allowed a new framework to flourish in which both central and local government took forward a new spirit of municipal working, leading to ground breaking changes.

At the turn of this century the need for such radical reforms may seem less urgent; after all we do now have a well-developed welfare state and whilst poverty has been far from eradicated the grind of life in the slums or the workhouse is thankfully past. But there is one area where 'progress' has rapidly declined into 'regression' and that is in the area of energy.

The role of the local authority in utilities supplies is not new. Indeed it was seen in the 1920's as an extension of social obligations providing water, gas and electricity as technologies emerged.

However monopoly markets in energy and a lack of control over supplies and pricing has seen a rip-off culture emerge, where councils and their residents are simply paying too much for energy. There is a cost to councils, who are facing austerity, who want to use their precious resources to keep frontline services moving rather than feeding the energy beast. And a cost to residents, many of whom are already in or moving towards, living in fuel poverty.

That is why we are delighted to announce a brave and spirited alternative to simply accepting the status quo. APSE Energy a new initiative, with over 30 pioneering local authorities, will move into the energy marketplace, helping its members invest in renewables, partnerships and brokering a new deal on energy pricing and supply.

Sometimes it is worth looking to our history to inform our futures and this is never more the case than for municipal energy.

Best wishes

*Paul O'Brien, APSE Chief Executive*

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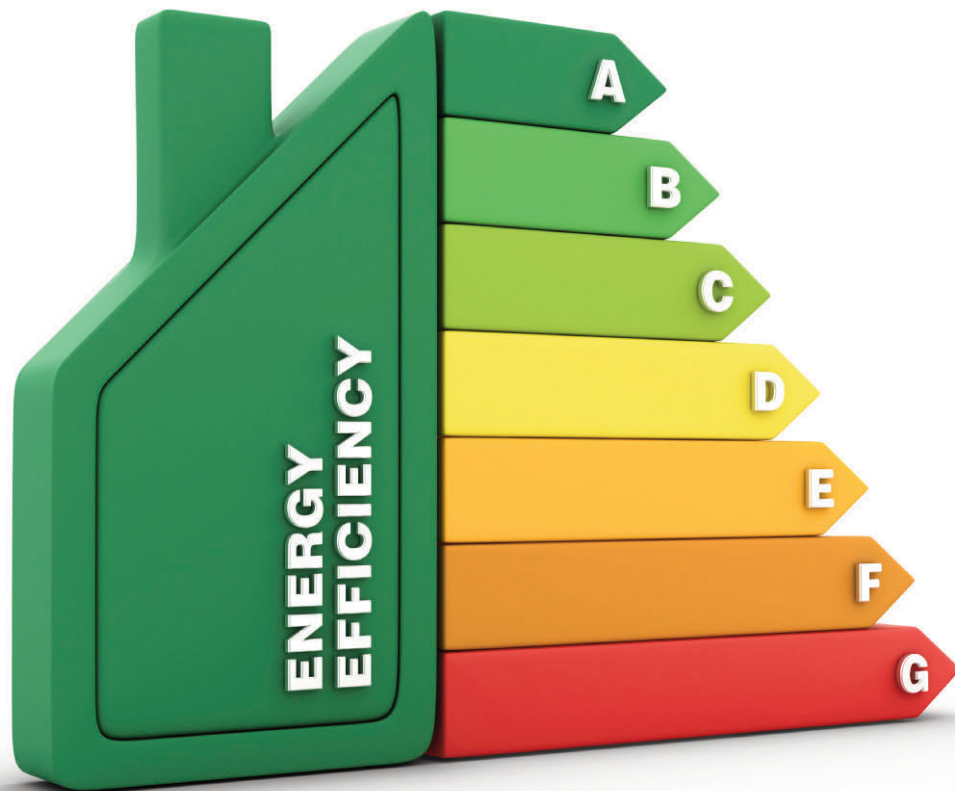
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# Bringing Energy to Westminster

*For the past two years, APSE has been working with members who are pioneering sustainable local energy projects to develop a collaborative network to support local authorities in sharing information, ideas, resources and best practice, coming together under a new service 'APSE Energy'.*

The APSE Energy service is now live and the official launch took place at the House of Commons on 11 June 2014 with the Rt Hon Ed Davey, MP, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, providing a key note address to over 70 senior local authority officers, councillors and leading academics who attended the launch.

This exciting new collaboration of councils, of all political parties from across the UK, brings together those who share an ambition to drive forward localised energy projects. Councils working together in this way can have greater influence and the potential to deliver economies of scale in green energy, while also stimulating economic growth and combatting fuel poverty. The collaboration will promote public and community, as well as private, ownership and management of local energy generation and distribution and delivery of energy efficiency measures.

Opening the launch event the Rt Hon Ed Davey MP, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change referenced that he was pleased by APSE taking a key leadership role in promoting energy collaboration, which he said filled him with confidence.

He said 'I know that tackling fuel poverty is an absolutely critical issue and local authorities have a crucial role in addressing this'.

**'Energy markets are not working well for energy consumers and we need to exert pressure to change this. Local government can do this through renewable energy strands whether that is solar, wind, community heating schemes and using energy efficiency schemes such as Eco and Green Deal.'** The Rt. Ed Davey MP, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change

Mark Bramah, who is responsible for APSE Energy, said 'Problems with energy pricing and supply are rarely out of the news and this crisis, along with a need to reduce carbon emissions, stimulate local business, employment and skills and address fuel poverty calls for a coherent, locally driven approach to energy that gives communities greater control. APSE Energy has been set up to support local government in driving forward the local energy agenda in ways that maximise value to local people and economies.'

APSE Energy will facilitate local authorities having a major stake in energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes in partnership with the private and community sectors and energy companies. The new service will allow its member authorities to share knowledge, expertise and build capacity to support each other, which will help reduce the time and cost of bringing forward projects and facilitate locally driven action.

APSE Energy is already involved in a diverse range of green energy projects; from solid wall insulation in social housing and district heat networks to renewable energy projects in wind, solar and biomass and waste to energy plants.

Speaking at the Parliamentary launch Paul O'Brien, chief executive of APSE, said 'Leading the local response to energy issues is a prime example of APSE's 'Ensuring Council' approach in action. The ensuring council means active stewardship to ensure social, economic and environmental well-being, linking strategic decision-making with delivery and generating income through municipal entrepreneurship. The Ensuring Council also means collaboration and APSE Energy supports collaboration to ensure better energy security, sustainability and affordability. Local renewable energy and energy efficiency projects have the potential to achieve a more balanced and stable market for the future supply of energy, build new supply chains and create green jobs. As major users of energy in their own buildings, taking an entrepreneurial approach to energy is also a chance for councils to save money and generate income.'

Dr Alan Whitehead MP, chair of The All-Party Parliamentary Renewable and Sustainable Energy Group also addressed the Parliamentary launch and told guests 'Energy policy is often talked about in terms of the trilemma of decarbonisation, security of supply and cost. I believe that if we want to meet this three pronged challenge, energy production will soon have to look radically different'.

David Kilduff a senior partner in Walker Morris Solicitors who are the appointed legal partner to APSE Energy said 'Local authorities are ideally placed to take advantage of the opportunities available to use their economic and community leadership role to drive the energy agenda in a number of ways to address economic and social objectives as well as enhance its own position as an energy consumer. Using normal business planning processes, project management techniques and the taking of timely advice there are very few legal obstacles to delivering their ambitions.'

#### Current Members of APSE Energy include:-

Aberdeen City Council	Lancaster City Council
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	Middlesbrough Borough Council
Bradford Metropolitan District Council	Newcastle City Council
Bridgend County Borough Council	North Ayrshire Council
Buckinghamshire County Council	Nottingham City Council
Cardiff City Council	Nottinghamshire County Council
Cumbria County Council	Oxford City Council
Darlington Borough Council	Peterborough City Council
Derbyshire County Council	Portsmouth City Council
Doncaster Council	Preston City Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	Reading County Council
East Dunbartonshire Council	Southampton City Council
East Riding of Yorkshire	Stockton Borough Council
Flintshire County Council	Swansea City and County Council
Gedling Borough Council	Wolverhampton City Council
Guildford Borough Council	York City Council
Knowsley Council	

The **APSE Energy Prospectus 'A Powerful Prospect'** is available together with membership details on the APSE website [www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk). go to 'APSE Energy' on the home page

The benefits for members of APSE Energy bringing local authorities together include:

- Support on demonstrator and infrastructure projects including renewable micro-generation schemes, energy efficiency works, energy networks
- Brokerage, building effective links with the energy industry and 'smart clienting'
- Opportunities to access frameworks and supply arrangements with the aim of reducing and sharing costs and shortening procurement timescales for projects
- Consultancy support, strategic advice and specialist assistance
- Legal advice from Walker Morris LLP specialists on local government energy issues
- Exclusive access to intelligence, technical and policy updates
- Dedicated on-line portals and phone support through which to access information and advice
- Discussion groups, practical workshops, meetings and conferences to share solutions with councils experiencing similar issues
- Negotiation and influencing policy through lobbying and networking
- Targeted marketing, profile raising and research
- Building national, European and International collaborations

**For more information contact Mark Bramah on [energy@apse.org.uk](mailto:energy@apse.org.uk)**

#### Upcoming APSE Energy events:

26 June 2014: Decentralised energy: An opportunity for councils, York.

3 July: From industrial legacy to future energy, Derbyshire

7 July 2014: Energy efficiency: Structures for local authorities, Old Trafford



# Smart Metering

Between 2015 and 2020 most households will have smart meters installed. Smart meters have the potential to transform people's relationship with their energy use and save money by helping people to be more energy efficient at home. The Government's vision is for every home to have smart electricity and gas meters – it is requiring energy suppliers to install smart meters in all homes during the roll-out period (although some suppliers have already started to install smart meters). The roll-out will play an important part in Britain's transition to a low-carbon economy and help to meet some of the long-term challenges the country faces in ensuring an affordable, secure and sustainable energy supply.

It's a major project – one of the largest and most complex investment programmes ever undertaken by the energy industry, involving installations of over 50 million meters and visits to all homes. It will undoubtedly impact in some way upon most APSE members too. The benefits that smart meters can bring may well align with your organisation's own aims and activities. At the very least, you might want to have a clear idea of what the roll-out of smart meters will mean for householders.

The benefits that smart meters can bring are significant. They offer a range of intelligent functions. Households will be offered an In-home Display linked to their smart meter, enabling them to see what energy they are using and how much it is costing. Smart meters will communicate directly with energy suppliers, allowing suppliers to give customers accurate bills. They will remove the need for manual meter readings and bring an end to estimated billing, helping people to budget better. And they will make switching energy suppliers smoother and faster.

Pre-payment customers can also benefit from smart meters, which can work in pre-payment or credit mode. For example, their energy supplier may offer new and more flexible ways of topping-up their meter, including the ability to top-up over the phone or online. Also, smart meters can provide a wider and more flexible range of emergency credit options to help ensure that people won't be left without power.

## Engaging people

It will be a huge task, making sure that every household knows about smart meters, what will happen at installation, how they can benefit from them, and how they can use them to manage their energy use and potentially save money.

A wide range of organisations are involved. Energy suppliers have a key role – they are the main point of contact with householders before, during and after the installation of smart meters. Suppliers' individual communications with customers will be supported by a new independent body - currently called the Smart Meters Central Delivery Body (CDB) but soon to launch a public brand. This body will run a programme of centralised consumer engagement, for instance developing and implementing promotional campaigns, providing independent advice and guidance, and tailoring engagement to vulnerable and low income consumers.

Individual suppliers and the CDB will also want to work with trusted organisations such as local authorities, housing associations, charities and community organisations, to ensure that people are engaged effectively and that the wide range of different consumer

needs are understood and met. Clearly, there may be roles for many APSE members.

Trusted organisations can provide a channel to communicate with people who are often hard to reach by other means. Organisations that are established within communities are much more likely to understand the needs of, and be trusted by, the people they work with. Local knowledge will also be highly valuable to ensuring householders have a positive experience before, during and after the installation of smart meters, and get the full benefit of this new technology.

### **The role for APSE members**

The Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) is managing the Programme to roll-out smart meters and has overall responsibility for ensuring consumers receive the full benefits of this technology. It is currently undertaking activities to increase awareness in local authorities and other third sector organisations.

DECC wants to make sure that everyone can benefit from smart meters, including those who are vulnerable or on low incomes. The benefits of smart meters may fit well with your organisation's own aims, for instance if they include helping people to stay warm, live more sustainably or to budget.

As a minimum, DECC believes that it's important for you to know that the roll-out is happening and what it will mean for people, not least because of the fact that the

roll-out will mean an installation visit for every household and many businesses throughout Great Britain. But the role that APSE members could potentially play will depend on the organisation and what stage the roll-out is at.

Involvement could include: putting customers in touch with their supplier or the CDB to answer questions, raising awareness of smart meters, discussing the benefits with householders, encouraging householders to use their smart meters so they become more energy efficient – maybe at events or on a one-to-one basis - or even providing practical help with using smart meters and In-home Displays. Such activities might be undertaken in partnership with energy suppliers or other organisations.

### **How to find out more and register interest**

You can find out more at the smart metering web pages on Gov.uk – [www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-households-to-cut-their-energy-bills/supporting-pages/smart-meters](http://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-households-to-cut-their-energy-bills/supporting-pages/smart-meters). DECC is keen for interested parties to register their interest by sending an email to: [smartmetering@decc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:smartmetering@decc.gsi.gov.uk). Keep an eye out also for the establishment of the Central Delivery Body's public brand to engage consumers: [www.smart-meter.org.uk](http://www.smart-meter.org.uk)

*Contact: Phil Nash, Smart Metering Implementation Programme email [phil.nash@decc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:phil.nash@decc.gsi.gov.uk)*



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# Keeping streets ahead?

*Debbie Johns discusses the results of APSE's latest State of the Market Survey for street cleansing, which shows how managers are responding to budget cuts*

It will come as no surprise that APSE's Street Cleansing State of the Market Survey 2014 reveals that councils are having to cope with budget reductions in the service. The majority of managers who responded to the survey think their budget will change and 95% of these expect a decrease over the next year – with most expecting reductions of more than 5% over the next five years. This is translating in to staffing changes; with 45% of respondents anticipating voluntary redundancies, 21% compulsory redundancies and 51% recruitment freezes over the year ahead.

So that's the doom and gloom, but what can councils do to help maintain services in the face of budget cuts and staff reductions? The budgetary climate is leading almost every council to undertake a thorough review of its street cleansing services reflecting the efficiency drive in local government and the need to review services to try and meet these challenges. A total of 37% of respondents have done a review recently, 43% have a review under way and 18% will be doing so in the next year or two. Respondents stated that the reviews will involve the following: review of working time/rotas in 70% of cases; route optimisation in 69%; review of use of machinery and transport in 63%; service re-design in 56%; use of technology in 54%; review of productivity in 32%.

Our survey found that authorities are implementing specific measures to improve efficiencies including: changing working days and patterns; evaluation of roles; reviewing mobile teams/zonal working; reviewing mechanical sweeping; more reactive working; scheduling services based on need rather than frequency. Alternative service delivery models, shared services and merging services are being considered, as are systems thinking and lean working approaches. Some are, unfortunately, having to stop providing certain services such as graffiti removal and cleanliness inspections

As well as reviewing the way they do things, street cleansing services are also looking at ways of bringing income in. Our survey found 43% of responding councils have income generation schemes. These include: property clearance and cleaning services to ALMOs and private sector clients; mechanical sweeping for businesses; cleansing on behalf of developers for unadopted highway; renting available space within depots to local businesses; sponsorship

and advertising panels in litter bins; and offering services to parish councils and other public services such as NHS, educational establishments and fire services.

The most recent APSE street cleansing recent survey follows on from our 2009, 2011 and 2012 surveys and similar questions were asked to enable us to make comparison. Budget reductions seem to have inevitably hit improvements in cleanliness standards. Only 23% of respondents thought that standards of cleanliness have increased over the past year, compared with 40% in our 2012 survey – with 60% saying that standards have stayed the same and 17% stating that they have decreased. When asked what they expect over the next year, 39% expect standards to stay the same, 44% expect them to decrease and 17% expect them to increase.

Just over half of the councils taking part in the survey reported that community sector involvement in street cleansing is increasing, down from 71% in the 2012 survey. Three quarters of respondents are planning education campaigns in the next two years. The main campaigns being planned are around litter (78%), raising awareness in schools (74%) and raising awareness of dog fouling (67%). A total of 55% of respondents thought that there will be an increase in enforcement and notices issued in the next two or three years.

When asked where they see areas of growth in their work over the next twelve months, 65% cited use of volunteers and community payback schemes, followed by community engagement and community based projects, as cited by 62%. More than half named tackling dog fouling, enforcement was mentioned by 43% and education by 42%. In terms of where they anticipate decreases in work over the coming year, almost two thirds cited 'levels of cleanliness', followed by frequency of cleansing rural roads in a third of cases. Late shifts or overtime to deal with the nighttime economy were cited by 35% and litter picking by 31%.

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*Contact:* For more information on the APSE Street Cleansing Advisory Group or performance benchmarking for street cleansing contact Debbie Johns on [djohns@apse.org.uk](mailto:djohns@apse.org.uk)

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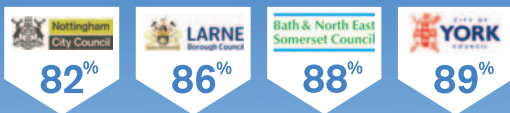


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# In-house proud of Oxford's commercial culture

***Business Improvement Manager, Jo Gardner, explains how Oxford City Council has created a commercial culture among its integrated in-house team, which is on target to generate £6m turnover while improving front-line services***

Oxford City Council could definitely be described as an enterprising, commercially astute council. But, rather than going down the route of outsourcing or setting up an arm's length company, we have chosen to develop a commercial culture among our own in-house employees in order to retain the benefits of direct service delivery.

Like other authorities, Oxford had to make dramatic changes in response to reductions in central government funding. For us, this resulted in a choice in 2011 to introduce a programme of maximising resources as opposed to cutting jobs and services. An overall objective of reducing expenditure by 20% and also increasing performance by 20% was set. To achieve this target, we are taking a holistic council-wide approach, pursuing maximum value from buildings and assets, simplifying and automating processes and introducing effective modern, working practices.

While recognising that business benefits could be gained from establishing a separate arm's length company, the council was also keen to retain the benefits of in-house services. Keeping front line services is an integral part of the council while also creating a commercial culture has therefore been a vital strand of our transformation. Oxford Direct Services was established to bring in-house building maintenance, commercial waste, grounds and environment, streetscene, fleet and workshop, highways and engineering services together to effectively deliver front line services and to raise income by actively marketing these services to businesses, council residents and tenants, charities, health and voluntary sector bodies, landlords and letting agents as well as other councils and housing associations.

This additional emphasis on income generation meant an intensive period of outward facing activities, such as professional sales and marketing, communications, design and setting up a dedicated website as well as internal business process development, cost base analysis, tendering documentation and accessing transformation funding.

By September 2012, turnover from new customers alone was £330k, which supported an increase in volumes for the full year of £1.24m. Direct Services has maintained and improved its core provision for local people while its external business continues to grow and projected turnover for the current financial year is £6m. We are also planning to offer back office functions such as procurement and legal services to businesses on a commercial basis, which will be a further boon to income. Changes were achieved without

additional resources as capacity to provide commercial services came from increasing efficiency among existing front-line staff, with additional staff recruited only to meet demand for income-generating services – and thus paying for themselves.

This success is due to both the capability and vision of the authority's management and the co-operation of staff. A partnership has been forged based on providing cost efficient services in return for investment and increased job security. There have been no job losses, the number of high quality modern apprenticeships has been increased and the council believes in paying a 'living wage' to employees, which is good for the local economy. Because it has been possible to maintain or improve services and bring in income, this has supported investment, boosted morale and improved efficiency further - creating a virtuous circle of continuous improvement.

Direct Services' frontline employees have been trained in new skills to improve the council's offer to customers and this is helping empower both staff and citizens. Our new decentralised approach to customer interaction is not just on a commercial level, but aims to maintain and improve residents services overall, despite the tough financial climate in which we operate. Evidence that this is working is found in a very low level of customer complaints. Our front-line staff's dedication to the communities in which they work was most evident during their round the clock support during adverse weather events.

Overall, we believe our change programme is contributing powerfully to delivering Oxford City Council's vision, of 'Building a World Class City for Everyone'. The quality and level of services to residents and tenants has not just been maintained, but increased and we have managed to commit to infrastructure development, as witnessed by the council's ambitious house building programme and leadership on recycling and carbon reduction measures.

As we move forward, commercial activity is becoming increasingly the 'norm', rather than an add-on to Oxford's Direct Services. Commercial mindedness is becoming embedded in our management processes and systems and supports our medium term financial plan. We are proud to say that business acumen, marketing skills and competitiveness, which were once associated with commercial companies, are now part of the thinking among our in-house managers and staff and that residents are benefitting as a result.

Contact: [jgardner@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:jgardner@oxford.gov.uk)

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# Game on for Glasgow

***Glasgow City Council is gearing up to host the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. Andy Waddell, who chairs the 'City Services' work-stream as well as being Head of Roads, discusses preparations for this prestigious event and the lasting benefits it will bring.***

As Glasgow prepares to host the Commonwealth Games, it was a pleasure to be able to discuss something so positive at APSE's recent seminar in Aviemore.

This is a big year for Scotland, with the Homecoming, The Ryder Cup and of course the Commonwealth Games, which will run from 23rd July to 3rd August and feature 17 sports. More than one million tickets have been sold and Glasgow is tremendously proud to be hosting the biggest sporting event Scotland has seen. In addition to our resident population of 600,000 and usual 100,000 commuters, we are preparing to welcome 350,000 people to the city each day to take part in an extensive cultural and festival programme with lots of live

entertainment alongside the sports. There will also be shooting in Angus, diving in Edinburgh, cycling in East Dumbartonshire and triathlon events in North Lanarkshire.

The city has been transformed with new or improved transport links, including the M74 completion at a cost of £700m, fantastic new or refurbished venues and massive regeneration of the city's east end with construction of the Games Village.

Preparing for the Games has meant meticulous planning along with partners dating back almost seven years. While the Organising Committee is responsible for what happens inside the Games venues, the council is responsible for

everything that happens outside and we must ensure that the city is presented at its absolute best. A combination of Glasgow City Council and Scottish Government funding of £500m has been used to pay for infrastructure, organisation and services during the Games. With so many visitors, extensive media coverage and the eyes of the world upon us, we see this as an opportunity to market all the great things Glasgow has to offer.

The council has set up ten work-streams to manage preparation for the Games, covering matters including communications and licensing, which meet regularly with the Organising Committee and partners such as police and Transport Scotland. For the past two years, I have been juggling my

day job as Head of Roads with chairing the 'City Services' work-stream for the Games, which includes cleansing and waste, parks and public domain presentation, environmental health and trading standards.

Getting the city's streets and public spaces in good shape before the Games and maintaining cleanliness has been a priority. The Clean Glasgow programme began as part of the bid process for the Games. With an anticipated worldwide audience of 1.5 billion, a deep cleaning programme has been in place since April to ensure all the routes to the Games and areas around the venues have been serviced, with repairs to paving and removal of graffiti and fly-tipping. Elected members and the public have welcomed the improvements and we are delighted that our latest LEAMs environmental cleanliness score from Keep Scotland Beautiful is our highest ever at 74.

Efforts to change behaviour in schools and among residents through education and enforcement has increased recycling and decreased litter and we will build upon these improvements. We are encouraging people to use parks more frequently with programmes to make them more attractive and educate children within parks. The Commonwealth Twinning project has involved environmental and education services working together. Parks have been twinned with Commonwealth countries, thematic sculptures have been designed and schools have learned about the culture of those nations and have planted native flora within the City's parks.

The fact that our environmental services are provided by in-house teams has given us the flexibility to provide upgraded services in the run up to and during the Games. We operate a four days on and four days off shift pattern and this has proved ideal at a special period such as this, as it means 50% of our workforce will be available to assist at peak times. Discussions between the council and trade unions have resulted in a way of accommodating shift changes within terms and conditions.

Having directly employed staff also gives us confidence that we have a trained and experienced workforce with the local knowledge to help things run smoothly. Having created a generic workforce across parks, roads or environmental services, this means staff can work flexibly to meet demands. Staff can engage with local communities and act as eyes and ears on the ground and our 'Ambassadors' training programme will ensure employees give visitors a warm welcome. It is important to maintain morale when staff may feel under extra pressure as a result of preparations for this big event, so the council has motivated employees to participate in this once in a lifetime opportunity, which includes giving those who were successful in the ticket ballot time off to attend events.

As well as the environmental benefit of the Games, there will also be a business benefit, as £184m worth of contracts have been won by Glasgow companies and 2,900 apprenticeships appointed to support the council or businesses in providing services. An

entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well, with businesses along routes to Games developing new offers, smartening up premises and creating a cafe culture. With three designated zones for cultural activities, bars and restaurants will benefit greatly. The council has engaged with businesses in the city and beyond to maximise their opportunities during those 11 days and also to aid their smooth-running, for example by varying delivery times during the Games.

Concerns about transport have been addressed from the outset. The Games are being promoted as car free and use of public transport, walking and cycling are being encouraged. Each ticket sold includes free public transport and information on the most appropriate services is provided. No spectator parking is available and a games route network has been developed to provide safe, secure and reliable travel for athletes and officials, which includes traffic management plans for each venue.

As well as the obvious infrastructure benefits, holding the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014 will bring a positive legacy to our city, its residents and businesses by making it a cleaner city, more prosperous city and a healthier city.

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# Refusing to be beaten

*Debbie Johns discusses the results of APSE's latest State of the Market survey among managers responsible for local authority refuse services*

Carrying out annual surveys among managers responsible for local authority refuse services allows APSE to gauge the 'state of the market' and identify trends. Our most recent survey, which received 113 responses, reveals some positive news in the shape of an upward trend in recycling and a strong emphasis on efficiency savings. It also forecasts testing times will continue, however, as budgets continue to decline.

The positive results of the survey are that local authorities and householders seem to be increasingly regarding recycling as the norm, as backed by DEFRA statistics. All councils that took part in the poll are now recycling paper, 99% are recycling cans, 97% card, glass and plastics, and 91% green waste. A total of 70% are recycling textiles, 63% batteries and 57% food waste, with 34% recycling bulbs. The emphasis on recycling is accompanied by alternate weekly collection of residual waste in 79% of councils.

The recycling trend looks set to continue, with 55% of respondents expecting increases in recycling of other materials, such as textiles, in the year ahead. Leaflets, household visits and council-wide campaigns are the most common ways to promote recycling, followed by school visits. The increase in recycling goes hand in hand with a decrease in residual waste collected. Data from APSE's performance networks benchmarking service showed a reduction in the average tonnage per council of domestic waste from nearly 75,000 in 2011-12 to nearly 68,500 in 2012-13 and 60% of respondents to our latest survey expect reductions in the tonnage of residual waste collected and waste going to landfill to continue.

The survey also reveals that councils are looking innovatively at the way they do things in order to cope with budgetary pressures. A total of 44% of respondents have completed a service review, 29% have one under way and 21% will be doing so in the next one or two years. Measures being taken to meet efficiency challenges through these reviews include: route optimisation in 82% of cases; more efficient use of vehicles in 77%; service redesigns in 69%, reviews of rotas in 62%; and productivity reviews in 55%. Almost 30% are using 'systems thinking techniques', to improve efficiency and 55% are reviewing productivity, which includes work study.

Co-mingled collections have increased from 72% in the 2012 survey to 84% in our latest survey. Other changes to collections include type of container, side waste policy and reduced frequency of green waste collections in winter. Technology used includes GPS tracking, hand-held CRM devices and eco-drive monitors.

Efficiency measures have been accompanied by attempts to introduce new income streams via trade waste, green waste, developer contributions and maximising material re-sale. More than half of the managers surveyed have income generation schemes from waste services. Of these, the vast majority relate to selling recycling materials, 9% cite renewable energy, 6% anaerobic digestion and a few cite solid fuel recovery as income sources.

Despite the best efforts of everyone involved in collecting and managing the UK's 23 million tonnes of household waste arisings every year, the financial outlook continues to be bleak in the immediate and longer term. Almost 80% expect the budget to change in 2014 with a worrying 66% of these expect a decrease in revenue and more than one in three expect a decrease in capital. Investment levels have been generally low over the past two years. Over the next five years, the majority expect to see a reduction in service budgets of up to 5% or 10%. Staffing looks set to decline in some councils, with 40% expecting natural wastage over twelve months, 17% expecting a recruitment freeze, 26% voluntary redundancy and 12% compulsory redundancy.

The overall picture from our latest survey is of a service that is innovative and resilient. But, the question is how far these budget reductions can be sustained until they start threatening the level and quality of local government waste services?

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*Contact:* Debbie Johns is principal advisor on environmental services at the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE). Email: [djohns@apse.org.uk](mailto:djohns@apse.org.uk)

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## apse annual seminar 2014

# The Ensuring Council: Transforming the frontline

The APSE annual seminar 2014 will concentrate on the theme of the Ensuring Council, a vision which recognises the legitimate role of local authorities as stewards of the local place. Supporting the findings of APSE research, which found that right across the UK and across councils of all political persuasions, the vast majority do not wish to divest themselves of capacity to deliver for their communities, the Ensuring council model starts to articulate an alternative vision for the future of local government.

The annual seminar will explore this vision which is built on the principles of democratic accountability, stewardship, public value, social justice, civic entrepreneurship, financial capacity and empowering local communities, underpinned by core capacity of in-house services delivered in collaboration, not competition, with other providers.

The Ensuring council model enables local authorities to join up strategic thinking with operational efficiency and gives greater flexibility in responding to ever increasing demands.

Reflecting these themes the seminar will commence with an opening plenary which will include Michael Lockwood, Executive Director for Local Government from the LGA with leading writer and expert Mike Bennet of Public Intelligence and APSE chief executive Paul O'Brien who will set out the challenges facing local government and ask what should local government be demanding of national government and national political parties moving into an election year.

This will be followed by a special plenary exploring the challenges of local government finance and reform and will be of particular interest to elected members as we explore the impact of funding reductions on local democracy and democratic governance at a local level from Dr Steven Griggs of De Montfort University. We will also hear from CIPFA Chief Executive Rob Whiteman with his thoughts on the future finances of local councils and bringing a frontline edge to this debate will be Joanne Roney, OBE, Chief Executive of Wakefield Council who will provide some insightful solutions to the finance and reform of local government such as the development of a West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Following lunch with an outstanding trade exhibition of local government lead

suppliers and innovators Mark Cullinan, Chief Executive of Lancaster Council will provide a working example of what it means to be an ensuring council. Showcasing how Lancaster has brought innovation to local services but retained core in-house services Mark will explain how this has allowed Lancaster to respond to both strategic and operational demands. Mark will be joined by Heather Wakefield, National Secretary for local government, UNISON and a renowned commentator on public services who will delve into the issues of supporting jobs and the local economy as well as the economic footprint of local government services.

Day one of the seminar will end with a choice of highly interactive Innovation Forums across local government service sectors from refuse and street cleansing through to school meals with a chance for delegates to learn from experts, network with operational and strategic leads in other councils and share best practice.

Using performance and business intelligence to transform service delivery will be the opening theme on day two of the seminar with Steven Phillips, Chief Executive, of Neath Port Talbot Council looking at how they have used local intelligence to deliver real change to the Valley communities. Steven will be followed by Brian Devlin, Executive Director, Glasgow City Council who will concentrate on how they take performance led decisions and have delivered reforms in Glasgow's land and environmental services. Andy Mudd, of APSE Solutions, and an expert on the use of data intelligence to drive service delivery will outline the approach adopted in reviewing frontline services whilst Audit Scotland will look at how as an audit body they gather and use source data to inform public sector improvements.

Continuing the ensuring council theme the seminar will then go on to explore municipal entrepreneurialism, looking at how local councils have responded to challenges by coming up with new delivery models and service innovation looking at housing and new build homes, and new financial models for public housing. This will be followed by Zena Cooke of Maidstone council who will explore how local authorities can develop more commercial strategies to support their finances as well as shared service options. Public health will also feature showcasing how East Riding of Yorkshire Council has become the provider of choice to health

and well-being boards generating new services and income for their leisure centres, speaker Kevin Hadfield will also explore whether this is a model that could help in the area of Parks. Fiona Seymour of Olympus Care Ltd, a wholly owned local authority company will explain how this model is helping the parent authority, Northamptonshire Council to deliver on its commitments for services to older people.

The final plenary will look at how local authorities are able to secure social, environmental and economic well-being with an exploration of the APSE energy project with APSE's appointed legal partner to APSE Energy, Walker Morris Solicitors, with an outline of options and legal tools for the development of renewable energy with resident expert David Killduff. Flooding has not been far from most newsreels and the seminar will provide an opportunity for delegates to hear from and meet with author Philip Monaghan who will report on the findings of new research on flood and water management.

The whole event, including the trade exhibition will be held at the prestigious Nottingham Ice Arena and will end with the APSE Service Awards 2014 on Thursday evening at a Parkinson's UK charity dinner. So to book ... you'd better get your skates on!

**Book online at [www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk) or email [vstarmar@apse.org.uk](mailto:vstarmar@apse.org.uk)**

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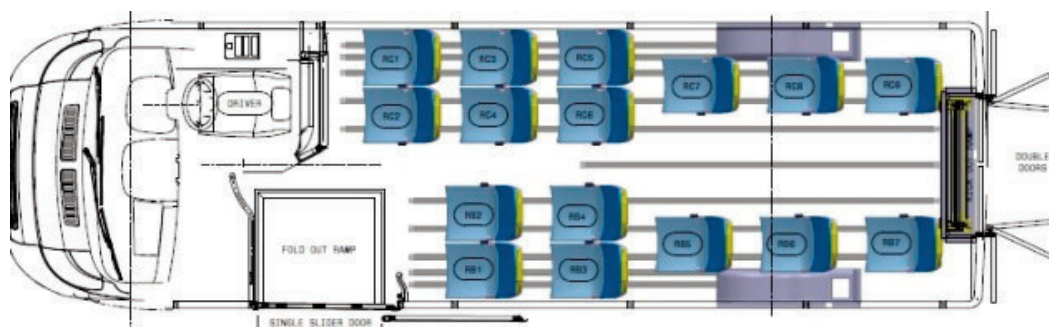
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## Spreading the message of sensible health and safety

If you believe some of the stories you hear, health and safety is all about stopping any activity that might possibly lead to harm – particularly where the public are involved. But this is not what the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) wants. HSE is more concerned with tackling the number of deaths and serious injuries that arise every year from people going about their daily work activities - not stopping people from getting on with their lives.

HSE is working hard to challenge the worst decisions wrongly blamed on health and safety – the

conker bans and other disproportionate decisions that become elf 'n' safety myths. By promoting sensible approaches to health and safety management, HSE wants to help employers to tackle the serious risks arising from their work activities and not get side-tracked by bureaucratic back covering.

For years, HSE has been responding to sensationalist media articles to put the record straight. It ran the popular 'myth of the month' series of cartoons which highlighted the funny side of the most common and bizarre elf 'n' safety stories - like

HSE supposedly banning wedding bunting, village fetes and pancake races on health and safety grounds. HSE's Myth Busters Challenge Panel now gives members of the public and organisations the opportunity to query decisions that they feel are disproportionate or that use health and safety as a pretext for something else. To date nearly 300 of these Myth Busters cases have been published on HSE's website. Many illustrate common pitfalls, such as misunderstanding the legal requirements, using health and safety as a convenient excuse, or applying blanket bans that are neither sensible nor proportionate.

A number of the cases have arisen from local authority, school or other community organisations.

Councils, with their unique public role, are well-placed to lead by example and help promote sensible, proportionate decisions on risk management. Many successfully manage the risks in a range of activities, such as refuse collection, highways and construction work, and amenity management.

The Myth Busters Panel work has had an enthusiastic reception and councils have called for more support in adopting rational risk-based approaches. In response, HSE recently published new web-based resources on sensible risk management across local government. These encourage councils to offer practical help and advice on managing risks and challenging overly protective approaches - particularly when it comes to public and community events.

The web pages are relevant to anyone who works in a local council. Directors, health and safety managers, support staff and elected members will all find something of interest. They can be used as a training and briefing tool and as a practical aid to address individual cases where a questionable decision has been made on the grounds of health and safety.

The information sets out logical steps to help users identify health and safety risks and understand how the law applies - as well as providing options for challenging the risk-averse mindset. Councils are also encouraged to think about how they communicate decisions to staff and the public, so that health and safety is not unnecessarily cited as justification for unpopular or difficult decisions made for other reasons.

Senior managers and councillors were introduced to the new web pages at a Sensible Risk Masterclass run by HSE with the Yorkshire LA Safety Officers group and hosted by Leeds City Council. The event prompted lively discussion and a number of authorities shared their experience of how challenging health and safety myths has helped them focus on their real risk priorities.

HSE encourages all councils to use the sensible risk web pages to help them get the balance right.

To keep in touch with HSE's sensible risk work you can also sign up to its local government eBulletin

Contact: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>



## Natratex Restores Essex Park's Natural Beauty

Natratex is Bituchem's leading product and was specified by architects, Chris Blandford Associates, to resurface the footpaths in Raphael park in Romford. Chosen for its aesthetics and previous success on a similar project, Natratex allows the hard landscaping to blend in with the natural surroundings to create a less urbanised look.

The mechanics and functionality of Natratex is similar to traditional asphalt as it is laid and compacted at the same nominal thickness, using conventional equipment. The combination of the specially formulated clear binder and decorative aggregate produces a hardwearing surfacing material while offering an attractive natural stone finish.

The versatility of Natratex is demonstrated in its numerous applications from residential roads and driveways, pavements and cycle paths to playgrounds, car parks and area demarcation. It can be applied all year round and the Bituchem design team is available to suggest solutions to individual requirements, tailoring the aggregate type to suit the contract specification.



*Having Borough Council has used Bituchem's Natratex hard landscaping material as part of regeneration works on Raphael Park in Romford. As part of a Heritage Lottery Funded project, £1.87 million has been assigned for the restoration of the public parks to provide a cleaner and safer environment for the users to enjoy.*

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# Championing change

***Chesterfield Borough Council, the APSE Award winner for Best Employee & Equality Initiative, is nurturing its in-house capacity to manage service transformation as a response to budget pressure and a desire to innovate.***



Chesterfield Borough Council's Project Academy won APSE's Award for Best Employee & Equality Initiative in 2013. Project Academy was developed as a way for the council to 'grow its own' project managers by training existing staff as an answer to skills shortage. Now the council is building upon the ethos of nurturing in-house capacity in its ambitious new service transformation programme.

Great Place, Great Service, launched last December, brings together a series of existing strategies and new initiatives into one overall place-based change management programme. Mark Evans, head of business transformation at Chesterfield Borough Council, explains: 'We are obviously facing a future with less funding, but rather than just adopt a slash and burn approach we are trying to invest in staff, ICT, property and transformation projects to produce efficiencies and generate income to make up for shortfalls in grants.'

'Instead of automatically turning to outsourcing or bringing in consultants, we believe there is no

reason why our own managers and staff cannot innovate and make savings in-house. We decided on the lean approach to transformation and a core band of managers and change management experts are leading this agenda. In order to deliver this change through a customer led process, it is essential that we develop the correct skills in-house – right up and down and across the organisation. Everybody will undergo some form of lean training no matter what their job, which will help us adopt a consistent culture across the council. We want staff to take it back into their services in order to ingrain that way of thinking into the organisation and get people working across teams,' Mr Evans says.

'By embedding awareness of change management throughout the organisation, staff come to take a broader view, which gives them more control and makes their jobs more interesting, so they bring their knowledge to bear and it's not just a top down process,' Mr Evans says. 'We have introduced a streamlined decision-making process with checks and balances in place to help speed up change.' Volunteering groups have been set up across the council to bring staff from different levels and different parts the organisation together. For example, a property group is looking at better use of buildings. Other groups are looking at communications, the intranet, website, flexible working and the customer service experience among others.

As part of its transformation agenda and commitment to developing its in-house change management capacity, Chesterfield has signed up to CHAMPS2® business change management training, to enhance staff capability in the delivery of its Great Place, Great Service programme.

Chesterfield's senior managers - including the chief executive and heads of service, along with the Project Academy and Great Place, Great Service project teams, are currently going through a comprehensive CHAMPS2 training programme. This began in February with Jan Kennedy, principal trainer at APSE, and CHAMPS2 trainer, Elena Martin, collaborating to design and deliver an in-house training session at Chesterfield, providing an overview of the method, its resources, tools and techniques. Further training at intermediate and introductory levels is planned for service managers and other staff to equip them with vital skills for managing ongoing and future change within the organisation.

CHAMPS2 business change method was originally developed by Birmingham City Council and its partners to manage the delivery of its ambitious ten-year Business Transformation Programme. It is an eight phase method, which is especially useful for encouraging innovation in the redesign of service delivery models and the creation of new business models. It is a common sense, non-prescriptive approach that can be adapted and applied to change projects of any scale and level of complexity. This ensures business change is approached and managed holistically. The method is also about creating a vision supported by concrete, tangible, measurable outcomes that can be delivered and measured incrementally throughout the change process. From its UK local government origins, the council owned method has evolved into and internationally recognised methodology with formal training and qualifications accredited by APMG International and an on-line tool kit [www.champs2.info](http://www.champs2.info).

Contact: [jkennedy@apse.org.uk](mailto:jkennedy@apse.org.uk)

# Falkirk's move to three weekly collections

*Last month, Falkirk Council became the first local authority in Scotland to trial three weekly collections for residual waste. Already a high performer, with a recycling rate of over 55% in 2012, the move aims to further incentivise recycling and boost this figure, with estimates suggesting that the change could see this recycling rate increase by around 6%.*

This decision is one which Falkirk Council has made based on the individual needs of their residents; however Zero Waste Scotland is playing a key role in facilitating the change by providing the council with support and advice on how best to implement it.

Falkirk, along with Clackmannanshire, Stirling, Perth and Kinross and East Renfrewshire, is one of the top five performing areas in recycling in Scotland. Looking at all five of these councils, we can clearly see a pattern emerging. All have a comprehensive system in place for collecting dry recyclates such as plastic bottles, paper and cans, all collect food waste, and all collect residual waste on a fortnightly basis. Under these circumstances, it's no surprise that the volume of residual waste is shrinking.

The figures show that householders across Falkirk are already playing their part in increasing the recycling rate in Falkirk, and this should be commended. Yet if we look at the composition of the residual bin, we can see that over 60% of materials in the bin could still be recycled. Diverting these materials from landfill could save £1.5 million in landfill gate fees and tax, plus generate income from the sale of materials.

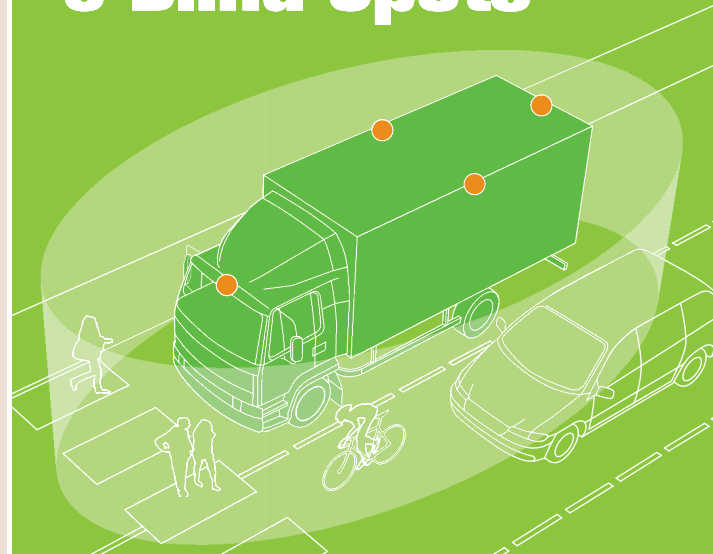
Looking at options to further boost recycling rates and reduce the amount of recyclable materials being wasted, Zero Waste Scotland was brought on board to work with the Council to appraise several options, one of which was reducing the collection frequency for residual waste to three weekly. Falkirk Council made the decision to go with this option, with support from Zero Waste Scotland for the implementation and roll out of the new system, and with help in communicating this to their householders. Perhaps most vital here is how the change is communicated, to ensure that residents' needs are fully considered and that householders are clear about the what, where and when of the new system. A full suite of communications was developed, highlighting the reasons behind the change, the logistical arrangements, and reinforcing the original recycling message, highlighting the wide range of materials which can be diverted from the residual bin.

Zero Waste Scotland is also supporting the Council to monitor and evaluate the roll out of the service, looking at set out and participation rates, and tonnages. Following the initial trial period, we'll be helping Falkirk to disseminate the findings and lessons learned.

As the first local authority to take these steps in Scotland, the move is likely to throw up a lot of interesting findings and lessons for others wishing to follow suit. What is apparent at the start of this journey however, is that Falkirk is well equipped to examine such incentives to increase recycling, coming from a foundation of well-established recycling services and a strong track record of service delivery.

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# Cause for ALARM?

## *The Asphalt Industry Alliance has issued its latest Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance (ALARM) Survey. Phil Brennan explains the key finding*

**T**he ALARM survey is an independent survey of all local highways departments in England and Wales which aims to provide a snapshot of the general condition of the local highway network. 75% of councils completed returns and the information relates to the financial year 2013-14. It includes questions related to funding, the type of maintenance carried out, and the issues affecting maintenance service levels.

This year's survey highlighted a number of financial issues; The average budget for local authority highway maintenance in England (excluding London) now stands at £20.4m which is a 1.5% increase on the previous year. The previous 2 yearly changes were a 10% rise in 2013 and an 11% fall in 2012. Whilst in London the average was £4.2m, this shows a sharp drop from £7m the previous year reflecting the higher levels of investment due to the Olympic Games. In Wales the average budget was £4.4m which was a reduction from £7m in 2012-13. This was also an unusual year in that there was a one-time borrowing facility from the Welsh Government.

Although the timing of the report meant that there was a lack of information about the costs of heavy rainfall and flooding, the majority of those responding to the survey noted that they did have to cope with unforeseen costs primarily down to wet weather. In England 65% of authorities reported that this was the case, in Wales 80% but only 29% in London. Based on limited information the report estimates an average cost of £1.6m per authority with this figure likely to increase when information from some of the most severely hit authorities is gathered. This is of concern since the report also highlights that most local authority highway maintenance programmes are managed against budget figures set annually - leaving little scope for emergency or unplanned spending. It has long been recognised that this hinders efficient planning of maintenance work, in particular, planned preventative maintenance which is at least 20 times less expensive than reactive work, such as patching and mending potholes. Nearly all authorities, 98% stated in this year's survey that they believed longer term funding would help efficiency and provide a more durable road network with 53% saying 5 years was the optimum term for set funding and 32% say 10 years or longer.

In terms of condition the reports notes that 18% of roads and in poor condition (less than 5 years of life) in England, 19% in London and 16% in Wales.

The survey asked questions about the definition of a pothole. Guidance points to 40mm as a guideline depth and 65% of English authorities and 53% of London and Welsh

authorities use this definition although many use a shallower definition. There was a 31% increase in the number of potholes filled in 2013 compared with the year before but that there was a small reduction this year compared with 2013. The average number of potholes filled per authority dropped from 16,041 to 15,195 in England and 7,802 down to 6,730 last year. In London, the average increased from 3,102 to 3,602.

The report notes that the ideal frequency of road resurfacing is between 10 and 20 years, accounting for the lifespan of specific materials, the road type, and the level and nature of its traffic. Replacing the surface layer regularly maintains an appropriate level of grip, vital for road safety, and maintains a weatherproof seal on guard against water ingress and winter freeze/thaw effects. Only principal roads in London came close to that which is considered the ideal frequency of road resurfacing, between 10 and 20 years. Principal roads in England and Wales are likely to be resurfaced in 33 years and 42 years respectively - showing a huge lag in the ideal timelines. And if you live in a rural community you may have to wait an astonishing 101 years to get your road resurfaced!

Compensation claims is a further focus for the survey which found that the average total amount paid out per authority in England reduced from nearly £200,000 to £96,000; in London from £191,000 to £138,000 and in Wales from £82,000 to 51,000. The lowest amounts paid out were in England (outside London), where the average claim is about £440, compared with £1,500 in London and £1,000 in Wales.

The survey findings will present little by way of surprise to APSE members in highwayas and winter maintenance services who have long campaigned for increased funding and a switch from reactive to planned maintenance regimes to save on long terms costs, reduce potholes and limit compensation claims. The survey justifies the calls of APSE members for adequate investment and treatment of the Highway as a national asset which should be subject to genuine investment and renewal. Whilst clearly extra funds are needed there is still a role for collaboration, new technology, asset management approaches and better communication which all have a role to play when addressing the condition of our roads.

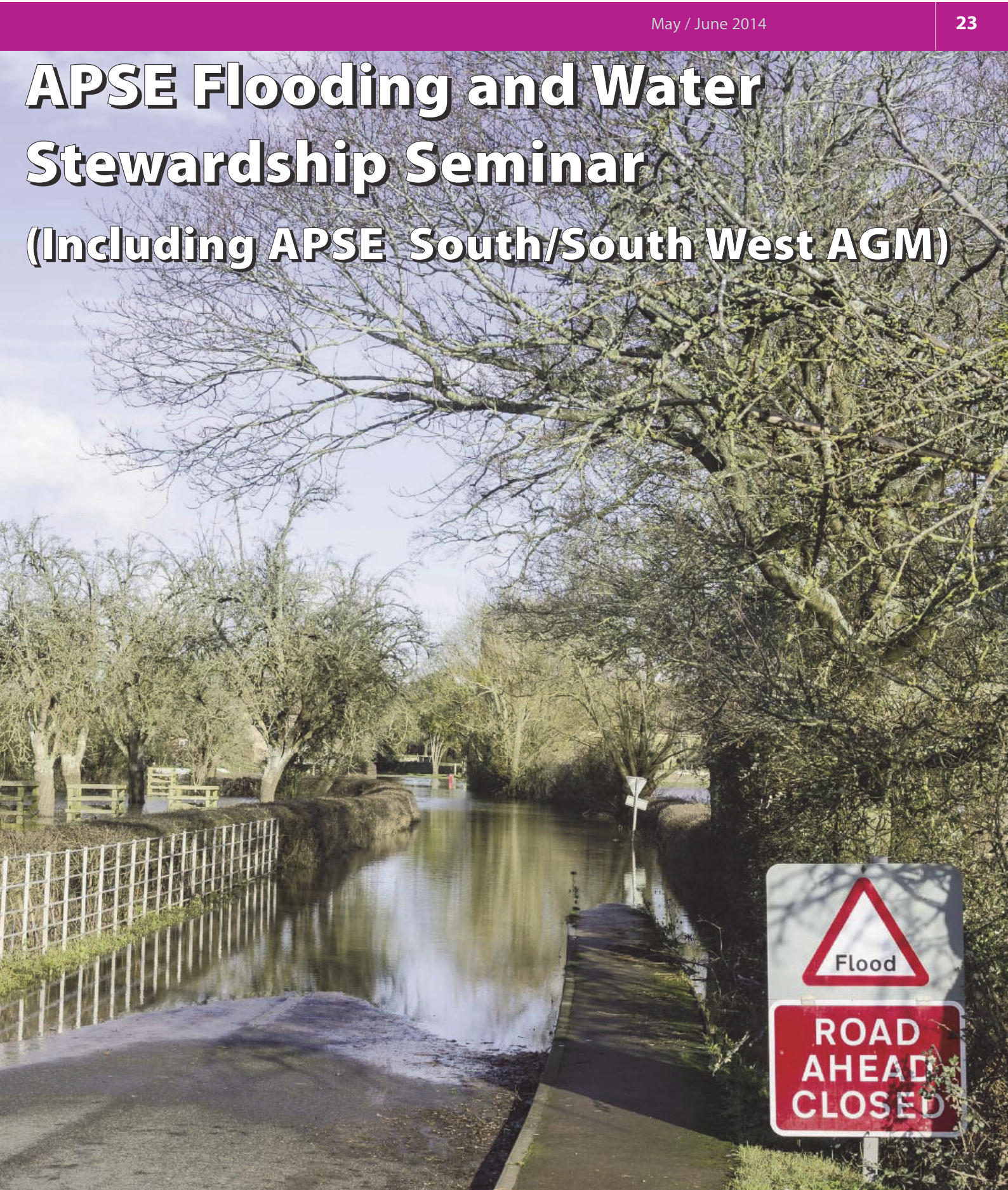
For further information on APSE's roads, highways and street lighting advisory groups which meet regularly across the UK contact Phil Brennan on [pbrennan@apse.org.uk](mailto:pbrennan@apse.org.uk)

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Contact: [pbrennan@apse.org.uk](mailto:pbrennan@apse.org.uk)

# **APSE Flooding and Water Stewardship Seminar**

## **(Including APSE South/South West AGM)**



APSE one day seminar at Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel, Oxford  
Thursday 17th July 2014

# Edu-catering for a healthier future

***Rob Bailey, APSE's principal advisor on catering and facilities management, welcomes the introduction of free school meals during children's early education***

School food currently has a higher political profile than ever and the introduction of free meals for younger pupils, along with the re-introduction of cooking within the curriculum, is recognition of the importance of nutrition to the education and health of future generations.

Free school meals are to be introduced in England for all five to seven year olds from September 2014. Similar arrangements will apply in Scotland from January 2015. Wales has decided to concentrate on its existing School Breakfast initiative. Northern Ireland has extended the criteria for free school meals but is still considering its position on the universal option.

APSE has campaigned for healthy school meals for decades and our role as co-ordinator of the Secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group on School Food places us at the heart of education catering policy. We warmly welcomed the introduction of free meals for younger pupils and are committed to supporting local authority caterers in preparing for this. We would encourage local authorities to use the wide range of information to support implementation of free school meals that is available (see box).

The expectation in England as of the start of the new school year is for a free hot meal to be provided for reception year one and two children. A flat rate of £2.30 per meal will be covered, with additional funding to small schools. The Existing Free School Meal entitlement remains as it is. Payment is based on January 2014 census and assumes 87% take meals over 190 days. However, based on Scottish pilots, it is expected that the average likely to be closer to 70%. Local authorities will receive upfront payment for the first two terms. A further actual take-up census will take place in October 2014 and January 2015 – payment for 3rd term adjusted accordingly. An emphasis on take-up is therefore important.

It is yet to be seen what financial effects free infant school meals will have on the long term viability of school meals services. Whilst the plight of small schools has been recognised within the funding streams, longer term it is likely that a flat price based

on £2.30 will significantly favour large schools whilst requiring a continued subsidy in smaller ones. With school budgets now almost entirely devolved, this cost will almost inevitably fall back on the schools themselves unless their local authority can be persuaded otherwise.

It should also be remembered that schools only operate for 190 days of the year and, if health issues are to be tackled, then equal emphasis needs to be placed on physical activity and nutrition support expanded to cover holiday periods too. APSE suggests that, as local authorities are now responsible for public health and well-being, which calls for holistic and preventative approaches, there is a strong case for directing resources into supporting additional interventions around nutrition and physical activity at the earliest stage in people's lives. A quarter of children currently leave school obese and the NHS spent £10bn in 2012 treating illnesses caused by bad diet. Investing relatively small amounts now in ensuring children have a healthy start can help save large sums of public money dealing with ill-health further down the line.

## **Implementing free school meals: Information points**

National helpline, run by the Children's Food Trust and Lead Association for Catering in Education consortium, will help schools across the country.

A universal infant free school meals support toolkit has been published:

<http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/toolkit/>

In support of the implementation, a set of roadshows are available to attend: <http://www.uifsm-roadshows.co.uk/>

Children's Food Trust, Food for Life Partnership (The Soil Association) and The Design and Technology Association have been contracted by DfE to increase school meal take-up in 2000 junior and secondary schools that currently have low take-up.

Contact: [rbailey@apse.org.uk](mailto:rbailey@apse.org.uk)

# New tool for ensuring public health and well-being

## *APSE's new tool-kit applies its 'ensuring council' principles to health and well-being*

**T**ransferring responsibility for public health to local government last April marked a welcome shift to a more preventative way of doing things and local authorities have responded positively.

Councils are best placed to understand the specific needs of their communities, operate in a joined-up way and work with partners to reduce risks, promote well-being and help their residents make healthier choices. Where people live, opportunities for exercise and access to open spaces are key to health and well-being, alongside measures to improve diet, tackle smoking and substance misuse and promote sexual health. Front-line council services including housing, school meals, sport and leisure and parks, all have an important part to play in addressing obesity, cardio-vascular and respiratory disease and mental illness. Statistics make a clear case to demonstrate how investment of relatively small amounts in housing, nutritious school meals or exercise opportunities, for example, could ultimately save the public purse billions.

Local authorities have now had eighteen months to get to grips with their new role and Health and Well-being Partnerships have made good progress in this time. Having established initial structures and processes following the transfer of responsibilities under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, health and well-being boards now need to maintain momentum as they face strategic decisions. APSE has produced a self-assessment tool-kit to help navigate their way through complex issues and find solutions that suit local circumstances at this important juncture.

The tool-kit has been designed to help health and well-being boards examine organisational cultures and processes and develop appropriate communications, monitoring and scrutiny arrangements that will take them into the next stage of their work. It considers resources and suggests that partners should look at different types of resources that are available, which can mean official powers, social capital, skills and assets and as well as finance.

The new e-publication, *Ensuring health and well-being: a self-assessment tool for health and well-being boards*, sets out questions that will help them consider the efficiency and effectiveness of partnerships. It draws upon research carried out in Northamptonshire County Council, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and City of York Council.

Finding consensus between partners who may have different organisational goals is not necessarily easy and competition for resources may detract from a focus on long-term, holistic outcomes. This toolkit has been developed to help tackle some of the tough questions involved in addressing these matters.

The authors of the tool-kit are clear that there are no standard answers to these questions. Circumstances, needs, priorities and resources vary between local authority areas. The toolkit has been designed to help consider these issues in a systematic

way and stimulate discussion amongst partners as to how they can begin to navigate the way forward in their locality. It also urges partners to think about what success might look like in terms of reducing risks and inequalities in health and supporting people to make more healthy choices in their particular context.

The tool-kit was produced as part of APSE's research partnership with De Montfort University, which has developed the 'ensuring council' as a positive vision for local government in the next decade and beyond. The Ensuring Council recognises the responsibility of local authorities to act as stewards of local communities. It foregrounds the democratic legitimacy of local authorities, placing local political leadership and public value at the heart of decision-making. It endorses collaboration with citizens and stakeholders and acknowledges the responsibilities of local government for advancing social justice through strategic mobilisation of local economies, public employment and civic entrepreneurship.

The self-assessment tool applies these ensuring principles to health and well-being goals. In APSE's view, the ensuring ethos will help equip local authorities to lead the strategic agenda of health and well-being improvement.



The new e-publication, *Ensuring health and well-being: a self-assessment tool for health and well-being boards* is available to download free of charge at [www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk)

# Report back

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

May and June proved busy months for APSE with a range of conferences, meetings and advocacy activity on behalf of APSE members.

## England

### High energy

The APSE Energy launch (featured on pages 4-5 of this edition of direct news) took place in Parliament on Wednesday 11 June with special guests Rt Hon Ed Davey MP and Dr Alan Whitehead MP.

### Kellogg's Breakfast

On Monday 9 June a launch event was hosted at the Houses of Parliament to launch a Kellogg's research report 'An Audit of School Breakfast Clubs' carried out on behalf of Kellogg's by APSE. The launch event saw a plethora of leading Parliamentarians interested in the school food agenda including Kate Green MP, Steven Twigg MP and Andrew Stunnell MP. The report was launched by the managing director of Kellogg's Europe and attended by Sharon Hodgson Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on school food, to which APSE provides secretariat support. Contact Rob Bailey for more details on [rbailey@apse.org.uk](mailto:rbailey@apse.org.uk)

### Town centres

APSE central held a Town Centre Assets event in Telford on Wednesday 30 April with speakers including Matthew Jackson Associate Director at the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, David Sidaway, Director of Development at Telford & Wrekin Council and Marie Bintley, Head of Physical Development at Wolverhampton City Council.

### Carlisle efficiencies

APSE Northern held a seminar in Carlisle on Friday 6 June with speakers including Richard Bradley of Stockton on Tees Council, Mike Bareham and Alan Ratcliffe of Cumbria Waste Services and Cumbria County Council, Dr Les Tickner and Andy Mudd of APSE Solutions, Isobel Nicholson and Nicola Wardle of Northumberland County Council and Ronnie Dempster of Dumfries and Galloway Council. This interesting event explored efficiency and performance management in environmental services, with a special presentation on responding to flooding.

## Wales

### Focus on food

The APSE Wales catering and cleaning group took place on 11

June at Llandrindod Wells with speakers from Denbighshire County Council and *Focus on Food* with Jan Kennedy of APSE speaking about customer relationship management in FM services.

### New group for APSE Wales

On 19 June APSE Wales will host a Housing and Building advisory group and the first APSE Wales renewables and energy efficiency advisory group. If successful the new renewables group will be incorporated as an APSE Wales advisory group in 2015.

## Scotland

### Marathon Man

Cllr Craig Melville, Chair of the APSE Scotland Waste & Recycling Group, has raised over £2500 for the charity The Dundee Association for Mental Health, after the chairs of APSE Scotland agreed to donate £1000 of the raffle money raised at Scotland's Fleet, Waste and Grounds Seminar fund-raising dinner held in Aviemore. £1000 was also raised for APSE's corporate charity, Parkinsons UK.

Craig, pictured at the finish line, completed his first ever marathon with an excellent time of 3hours 58 minutes and 46 second, breaking through his personal goal of under 4 hours.

Cllr Melville would personally like to thank APSE and everyone at the APSE Scottish Fleet Waste & Grounds seminar for their generous support to his marathon fundraising.



### Better Eating, Better Learning

Better Eating Better Learning, a conference between APSE and ASSIST took place in Edinburgh on 22 May with speakers from the catering sector including the Scottish Government. Delegates took the opportunity to debate the new guidance and the benefits of good nutrition to child learning and health outcomes.

## Northern Ireland

### Expectations and reality

APSE Northern Ireland regional meeting and AGM took place on Friday 13 June at the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Oxford Island, Lurgan, County Armagh, exploring new councils and services. The event was designed to consider the views expectations and reality of reorganisation

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