

apse annual seminar 2026

Local Government on the Frontline

Meeting Challenges and Supporting Communities

DISCOUNT
for APSE
members

Wednesday 16 and Thursday 17 September

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Liverpool

Kindly sponsored by



Conference programme

Day one: Wednesday 16th

11:30 Registration, coffee and exhibition hub

A rolling lunch will be served from 12.00

Exhibition and innovation hub

APSE has a range of services to assist local authorities to respond to the challenges of a rapidly changing environment.

This is an opportunity for delegates to attend drop-in surgeries with APSE experts in:

APSE Energy (trading as APSE Synergy): Bespoke Local Authority Energy Collaboration

APSE Performance Networks: Largest voluntary public sector benchmarking service

APSE Solutions (trading as APSE Synergy): high-quality consultancy and interim management services

APSE Training: specialist training to support frontline local authority services.

Exhibition and innovation hub: specialist local authority suppliers

13.00 **Session One**

Cllr Shelley Powell, *APSE National Chair will introduce delegates to* **Cllr Liam Robinson**, *Leader of Liverpool City Council and Cabinet Member, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority*

Chief Executive and Senior Leaders Challenge Panel

This panel brings together leaders from across the UK to examine the most pressing issues facing local.

Mo Baines, *APSE Chief Executive will host the challenge panel discussions*

Alison Allen – Chief Executive, NILGA – The Politics of Delivery: Leading Through Uncertainty

Adrian Phillips – Chief Executive, Preston City Council - Community Wealth Building: Keeping procurement local to boost social value

Alison McKenzie-Folan – Chief Executive, Wigan Council - Beyond Boundaries: Delivering True Health and Care Integration Through Place-Based Leadership.

Cllr Lynne Short – Convener of Climate, Net Zero & Environment, Dundee City Council - Igniting Local Impact: The Blueprint for Stronger Communities

Mark Davies – Chief Executive, Lancaster City Council - Beyond Carbon Neutral: Leading the North's Green Industrial Revolution

Question time: An opportunity for a panel and audience Q&A

14.45 **Session two**

Frontline roundtable discussions

Delegates will have the opportunity to attend one of the following discussions:

Roundtable 1 - Strategic Challenges for Local Government Services to Communities

Finance, Local Government Reorganisation, Economic Growth

A strategic look at the priorities shaping councils and the places they serve.

- Local government funding pressures.
- Service impacts of reorganisation.
- Economic growth and resilient communities.

Facilitated by: Darren Crossley, Director of Place and Economy, Cumberland Council, Fiona Sutton-Wilson, Director, APSE Training

Roundtable 2 - Cleaner Neighbourhoods for Communities

Waste Crime, Recycling, Street Cleansing, and Enforcement

A practical discussion about maintaining cleaner, safer and more attractive neighbourhoods.

- Tackling waste crime and fly-tipping.
- Improving recycling participation.
- Strengthening cleansing and enforcement.

Facilitated by: Paul Naylor, APSE Associate and Bonni Jee, Principal Policy Lead, APSE

Roundtable 3 - Future-proofing Housing and Energy Resilience for Communities

Housing Retrofits, Energy Costs Support, Planning for Extreme Weather

Exploring how councils can build sustainable and resilient places in response to growing social, economic and environmental pressures.

- Retrofitting homes and tackling fuel poverty.
- Preparing for extreme weather.
- Embedding long-term local resilience.

Facilitated by: Phil Brennan, Director, APSE Energy and James Jefferson, Principal Policy Lead, APSE Energy

Roundtable 4 - Active Healthier Children and Communities

Sports and Leisure Services, School Meals, Biodiversity, Access to Greenspace

Examining the role of parks, school meals and leisure services in supporting healthier people and places.

- Access to activity: the role of sports and leisure assets, parks and greenspace
- The value of school meals in engaging healthier lifetime habits
- Adopting a cross-council holistic approach to active and healthier communities
- Incorporating biodiversity

Facilitated by: Debbie Johns, Director, APSE Performance Networks and Matt Ellis, Principal Policy Lead, Communications Manager, APSE

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Roundtable 5 - Infrastructure for Resilient Community

Potholes, Road Maintenance, Fleet, Street Lighting

A focused discussion on maintaining the infrastructure that keeps communities moving.

- Addressing potholes and improving highways maintenance.
- Managing fleets and street-lighting services efficiently.
- Adapting local infrastructure to improve resilience.

Facilitated by: Glynn Humphries, APSE Associate and Abi Ademiluyi, Principal Policy Lead, APSE

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Conference programme

15.30 **Coffee and Exhibition viewing**

An opportunity to meet our valued exhibitors and learn about the latest innovations and product developments to help you run a more efficient service

16:00 **Session three**

Keynote address:

Communicating Change with Confidence: Leading Through Uncertainty in Local Government

This keynote will help officers and elected members communicate difficult decisions with greater clarity credibility and confidence.

- Frame challenging decisions clearly and strengthen public understanding.
- Build trust with employees, communities and partner organisations.
- Turn uncertainty into a shared sense of purpose and direction.

Rene Power – APSE Associate

René Power is a CIM-qualified senior marketing communications professional with over 30 years' experience across client-side, agency and consultancy roles.

Since becoming self-employed in 2015, he has worked as a marketing consultant, trainer and speaker, supporting organisations across manufacturing, engineering, construction, pharmaceuticals, local government and the not-for-profit sector.

His recent local authority work includes APSE's commercialisation programme, council projects and training on AI, communications and story-brand strategy.

APSE Annual General Meeting 2026

16.30 Annual General Meeting

17.15 Closing remarks and tickets to the evening reception

Delegates can collect their tickets to the evening function at the close of the AGM

The AGM is the chance for all APSE members to have their opportunity to scrutinise the work of APSE, receive the Annual Report and Accounts and ensure that the association remains transparent to its member councils. Please make sure you attend this short but important business meeting.

19.00 Evening reception

Join colleagues at OH ME OH MY, a striking former bank in the heart of Liverpool, with impressive views of the city's iconic Three Graces and Royal Liver Building.

- Enjoy a hot supper in a memorable city-centre venue.

Guest speaker from Liverpool Historical Society

- Connect informally with colleagues from across local government.
- Visit the rooftop garden with views of Liverpool's historic landmarks.

Day two: Thursday 17th

09.00 Registration and exhibition viewing
Registration for new arrivals, with the exhibition open to all delegates.

10.00 **Session Four**

Delivering for Communities

Keynote address:

Growth: What Is It Good For? In association with the University of Staffordshire

Leading academic **Professor Steve Griggs** presents his latest research into...

Island Economies: A Just Transition

Professor Steven Griggs and **Ryan Fox** will discuss economic growth, environmental conditions in island economies and the challenges facing rural areas.

- Creating sustainable growth in rural and island economies.
- Addressing local employment and skills challenges.
- Delivering a fair transition while protecting environmental priorities.

Steven Griggs is Professor in Public Policy at University of Staffordshire and Director of the Local Governance Research Centre. His research focuses on local democratic governance, local service delivery, community campaigns and environmental politics.

Ryan Fox is a Research Coordinator at University of Staffordshire and specialises in participatory research and community-based approaches to knowledge generation. His work focuses on creating spaces for people to shape research agendas, influence decision-making and challenge power dynamics.

Driving Housing Service Improvement using the Regulatory Framework and getting match fit for LGR.

- Strategic Regulatory Alignment
- LGR Transition Leadership
- Transforming Culture & Performance

Sarah McQueen, Head of Housing, South Kesteven District Council

Driving Operational and Environmental Excellence: The Success of Insourcing Streetwise Environmental Services

- Balancing the Books
- Decarbonisation at Pace
- The Tech and Culture Toolkit

Luke Colaluca, Streetwise Manager, Rushcliffe Borough Council, Best Council Services team, MJ Awards 2026

11.30 **Coffee and Exhibition viewing**

An opportunity to meet our valued exhibitors and learn about the latest innovations and product developments to help you run a more efficient service

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12.00 **Session Five**

Innovation Showcase: A Changing Climate and Sustainable Services

Harnessing Data for Climate Action

- Using data to deliver measurable environmental improvements.
- Targeting interventions that balance cost, savings, sustainability and pupil comfort.
- Turning robust evidence and collaboration into a recipe for success.

Elaine Smith, Senior Quality, Energy and Sustainability Manager, Northern Ireland Education Authority and Maria Diffley, Co-founder, SustainIQ

Creating an Urban Forest for People and Nature

- Growing Cardiff's urban forest across the city.
- Delivering benefits for people, nature and local communities.
- Harnessing community involvement to create lasting impact.

Chloe Jenkins, Project Manager for Coed Caerdydd, Cardiff City Council

Sustainable School Meals Roadmap

- Achieving significant reductions in carbon emissions.
- Increasing pupil awareness, participation and engagement.
- Embedding continuous improvement and wider community benefit.

Louise Gillam, Dietitian, Torfaen County Borough Council

Question time: An opportunity for a panel and audience Q&A

13.15 Lunch and exhibition viewing

14.15 **Session Six**

Innovation Showcase: Service Transformation

The Most Advanced MRF in the UK - A Sector First

- Increasing efficiency and sustainability through advanced sorting technology.
- Delivering high-purity recycling, financial resilience and early adoption of flexible plastics recycling.
- Improving recycling rates through a nationally recognised model of innovation and partnership.

Layla Shannon, Business Development Director, Sherbourne Recycling

Leading the Way in In-House Leisure

- Award-winning leisure services exceeding targets.
- Community Health and Wellbeing Impact:
- Sustainability and Continuous Improvement

Deaglan O'Hagan, Commercial and Programming Manager, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

Transforming Lives Together: The Activity Champion Network

- Explaining the purpose and reach of the Activity Champion Network.
- Demonstrating the impact of its activities on health and wellbeing.
- Exploring opportunities for wider collaboration and future growth.

Julie Nisbet, Transformation Manager, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Question time: An opportunity for a panel and audience Q&A

15.15 **Session 7: Liverpool Visit or Networking Session**

Delegates can choose from two afternoon options:

Option 1 - a guided tour of the iconic Liver Building, exploring its history and architecture, or

Option 2 - a relaxed Meet the Author and Informal Networking session.

The session features **Neil Barnett**, Research Fellow at Leeds Beckett University, who will share insights from *Local Government and Democracy in Britain*, co-authored with Jim Chandler.

Both options support networking with peers, suppliers and exhibitors. Please select your preferred option via the survey in the joining instructions.

16:30: Seminar close

APSE Annual Service Awards Charity Dinner 2026

Crowne Plaza Hotel

19:00 Pre-dinner reception

19:30 Service awards dinner

Carriages at midnight

In aid of Parkinson's UK

PARKINSON'S^{UK}
CHANGE ATTITUDES.
FIND A CURE.
JOIN US.

Seminar Information

About the Event

This year, APSE's Annual Seminar and Service Awards Charity Dinner will take place in the vibrant and historic city of Liverpool on Wednesday 16 to Thursday 17 September 2026. Delegates will enjoy an opportunity to explore the regeneration of this wonderful city whilst gaining unique insight into how local councils can ensure their frontline services are green, clean, smart and sustainable.

One of the biggest events in the local government calendar, APSE's Annual Seminar offers frontline service providers the chance to learn from each other, network with sector experts and develop strategies for our vital local services. Delegates will get the opportunity to hear from industry-leading experts across UK local government cover topics including:

Frontline services

- Refuse, recycling and street scene
- Leisure, health and wellbeing
- Parks, open spaces and playgrounds
- Cemeteries and crematoria
- Policy developments
- Local government finance: Fairness for frontline services
- Green energy, flooding and climate change
- Digitisation and demand management
- Place-making and regeneration

Who should attend?

This highly interactive conference is the must attend event for all those looking to future-proof the frontline including recovery for local economies, those seeking to develop strategies and implement climate change objectives.

The event incorporates the APSE Annual General Meeting which we would encourage all member councils to attend, on Wednesday 16 September.

The Annual Seminar concludes with the APSE Service Awards Charity Dinner on Thursday evening, 17 September.

Booking information

Book your place at the Annual Seminar [here](#)

Thank you to our overall event sponsor

