

apse solutions

A diagnostic approach to service re-design to support your council's reorganisation journey





Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE)

APSE is a not-for-profit local government body working with over 300 councils throughout the UK. Promoting excellence in public services, APSE is the foremost specialist in local authority front line services, hosting a network for front line service providers in areas such as waste and refuse collection, parks and environmental services, leisure, school meals, cleaning, housing and building maintenance.

Association for Public Service Excellence

3rd Floor Trafford House
Chester Road
Manchester M32 0RS

telephone: 0161 772 1810
email: enquiries@apse.org.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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Diagnostic approach

APSE solutions has developed an approach to service review and design which uses tried and tested tools and techniques, but it is APSE's extensive knowledge of public service delivery that reinforces our position in taking this approach. All APSE consultants have first-hand experience of service delivery and are well known and respected within their fields. The APSE team will help you and your colleagues to understand the services that you provide from an 'end to end' perspective. This will allow you to focus on overall value rather than individual costs and avoid the temptation of cost reduction in one specific area, which can often result in cost increases elsewhere within the system.

The model looks to identify different processes within an authority and identify possible duplication of resources, wasted effort and avoidable demand. By deploying a range of techniques, we can look to reduce the steps in the supply chain creating efficiencies and savings leading to an improved end user experience. It is essential to properly understand the way in which a service currently runs before it is possible to determine how it might work more effectively and efficiently in the future. This is the logic behind the diagnostic approach.

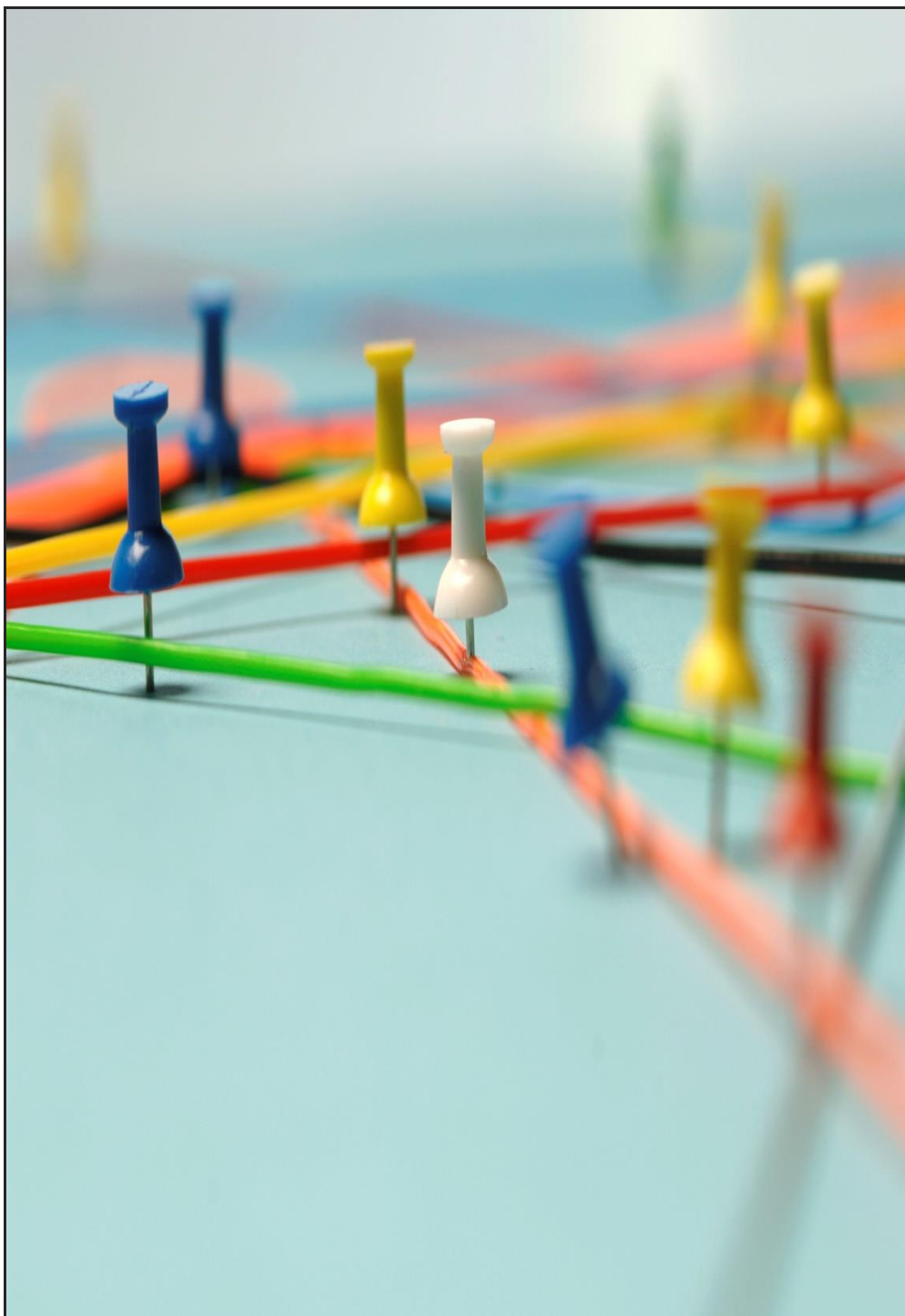
On-site diagnostic workshops are one way in which APSE has been able to work successfully with councils to effectively identify ways in which to improve processes within services, identify benefits of holistic working and realise efficiency savings. Workshops can be part of a single service review, a wider cross cutting review or combined with a high-level diagnostic report. The benefit of diagnostic workshops is they quickly identify areas for further analysis, which can save time and resources by getting to the root of the issue. It also helps to prioritise those areas that may provide 'quick wins' and also those that will have the greatest effect. In some instances, this can lead to further phases of work, providing further successful outcomes for the service.

A diagnostic workshop is undertaken using the extensive experience of APSE Associates who have worked within local authorities across the country to help support them in their aims. Workshops will be tailored for officers at an operational, service management and at a strategic level. Some authorities have found it beneficial to invite colleagues from support services to attend the afternoon session to give the review a wider perspective. Skills will be transferred to the council team through APSE's practical experience, which is key to ensuring the teams continued development.

APSE will work with the team to examine the service through a series of tools. The agendas are normally quite fluid, however, the morning usually involves an objective examination of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and external factors impacting on the way in which operations are provided, while also incorporating a look into the resources available to the team. In the afternoon the focus of the workshop is around process mapping, customer requirements and analysis of performance data.

The workshop will run for one day covering a morning and afternoon session and involve up to 2 Associates depending on service need. The workshops will be held on-site with morning sessions focusing on a strategic overview and afternoon sessions covering operational considerations. All our consultants are experienced local government practitioners and have a great understanding of each service area. A follow-up high level report will be produced, identifying key areas for change, improvement and potential savings.

The initial diagnostic workshop and follow up high level report will be charged at a fixed cost of £4,500 + VAT and expenses, which also includes follow up questions with the service manager for verification. A high-level desktop analysis is then conducted. This is designed to analyse the results of the workshop and carry out a critical assessment of a broad range of data including budgets, resources, management, operational processes and customer feedback. Alternatively, a diagnostic workshop can be part of a wider service review, helping to quickly identify areas where further analysis is needed and therefore creating the greatest impact on the service as a whole.



Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

With the government's invitation to County Councils, District Councils and some small Unitary Councils in England to submit plans to combine into Unitary Councils, with a population size of around 500,000, it is inevitable that in preparation for these new authorities' senior managers will be called upon to look at their services and plan for more efficient operations. These efficiencies could include asset rationalisation, combined services and a wider range of staffing experience within newly formed teams as well as service delivery models, including opportunities to explore insourcing, and how services are delivered across the complexity of reorganising areas.

With LGR in mind, APSE's diagnostic workshops offer the ideal opportunity for local authorities to work with industry experts to highlight business areas where improvements may be achievable. We are happy to run these workshops to support different councils impacted by reorganisation on a joint basis across multiple authorities (the fixed fee will not apply for cross-authority diagnostics but will be supplied on request).

APSE are running Diagnostic Workshops in the following service areas:

- Waste and recycling
- Transport and fleet
- Park and public realm
- Streetscene
- Leisure
- Cemeteries and Crematoria

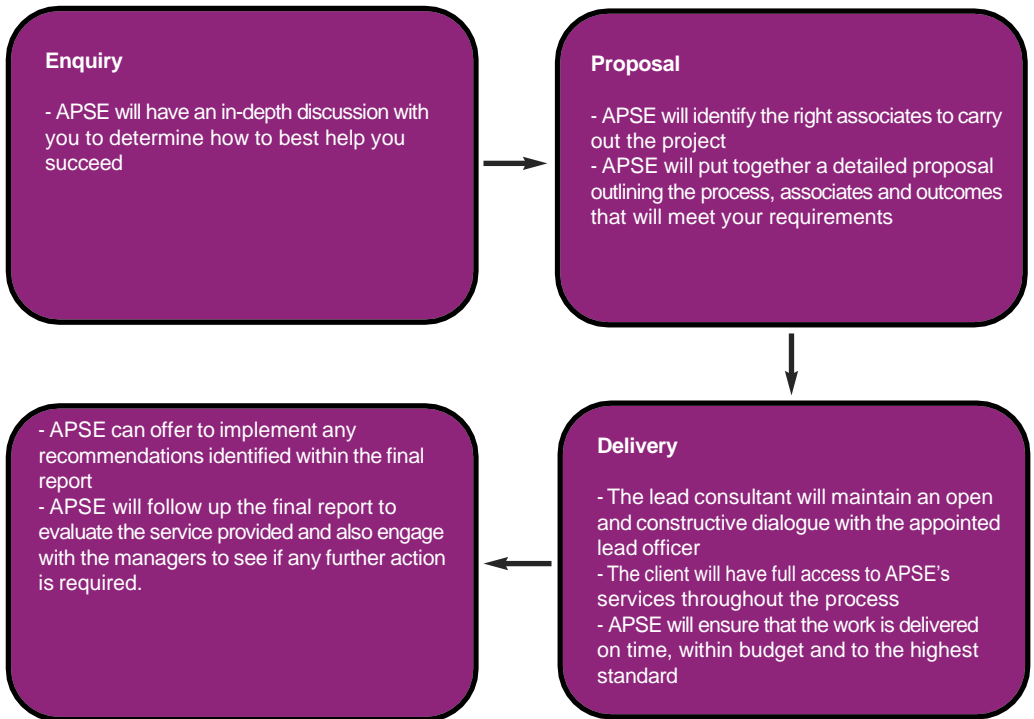
Are Diagnostic Workshops Just For LGR?

No, any local authority can utilise this workshop service. The government timelines currently plan for devolution to be completed by April 2027 and the reorganisation of unitary authorities to complete by April 2028. This provides an opportunity for local authorities to look at how services are currently operating in the short term to provide the best service to residents until reorganisation takes place.

Cost for Continuing Consultancy Work

Following the workshop, if you decide you would like further support then APSE can provide this. Each piece of work is unique and APSE will always be transparent about the consultancy cost. Services are discounted for APSE members and all consultancy is provided on a not-for-profit basis. APSE will only charge for days used. If you would like a quick, no obligation, valuation of your potential consultancy project, please contact the Manchester Office on 0161 772 1810.

The process





What can we offer you?

APSE carries out in excess of 100 consultancy projects a year and in virtually all cases, has been able to recommend changes that will deliver both service improvement and cost savings. APSE has also been able to feed useful data into high level options appraisals, ensuring that comparisons with alternative solutions are supported by an in-depth understanding of current performance and cost effectiveness.

Below is a detailed range of consultancy offerings, which APSE are currently employing throughout local authorities across the UK:

Value for money / efficiency savings reviews Diagnostic workshops

Single service reviews Critical friend support

Work study / time and motion study Economic footprint work Procurement support

Shared service initiatives Charging and trading workshops and advice

Surveys Coaching and mentoring

Energy efficiency advice and support Bespoke benchmarking

Demand innovation workshops Commercialisation and Entrepreneurialism

Contact the APSE Solutions team at the APSE Manchester office on 0161 772 1810

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email: enquiries@apse.org.uk

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