



# Services Directory

A guide to the Association for  
Public Service Excellence





**Association for Public Service Excellence (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 council frontline service provision in areas such as waste and refuse collection, parks and environmental services, leisure, school meals, cleaning, housing and building maintenance and energy services.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



**GB 11409**



**GB 11132**



**GB 14074**

# APSE Services Directory

A guide to APSE's activities and services

---

Welcome to the APSE Services Directory. This booklet has been designed to explain everything APSE, including the range of activities and services that we regularly offer. This comprehensive guide is a quick snapshot of what we currently offer to our members, but we are developing new ideas constantly, helping public service providers to respond to the challenges of a rapidly changing professional environment. Information is summarised here. Full details of all of our services are available on our website, together with latest news, briefings, publications, case studies and information about events.

***[www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk)***

email: [enquiries@apse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@apse.org.uk)

tel: 0161 772 1810

fax: 0161 772 1811



@apseevents and @apsenews



APSE - Association for Public Service Excellence

# Find out more

An introduction to APSE	3
Being an APSE member	5
APSE near you	6
Seminars and events	7
Specialist advice on frontline council services	8
APSE performance networks	9-10
APSE solutions	11-12
APSE energy	13
APSE training	14
APSE research and campaigns	15
Media presence	16

## Who are we?

We are the Association for Public Service Excellence, but we're also known as APSE. We are a not-for-profit membership organisation that is dedicated to promoting excellence in the delivery of frontline public services. APSE is owned by its members and, working on their behalf, we sit at the heart of a network of local government officers and councillors from local authorities across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales who are providing frontline services to their communities. We are governed by our National Council, elected from APSE areas

## What do we do?

We work with more than 300 local authorities across the UK to advise and share information and expertise on a broad range of frontline public services that are delivered to local residents every day. We bring councils all over the nation together to share information and best practice. They are supported by our team of experts, who draw upon a wealth of knowledge in both policy and practice.

APSE conducts research, publishes reports, and campaigns to create a positive role for local government in delivering high quality, effective and efficient public services. Our targeted training programme, regular briefings and inclusive events strive to keep council officers and elected members constantly updated on the latest public service issues. Helping us to do this is APSE's performance networks, which is the largest voluntary local government benchmarking service nationally. We also have APSE Solutions, our in-house team that offers high quality consultancy and interim management support for members and other relevant organisations.

We are here to help local authorities, and we do everything in our power to help them achieve the excellence that the public expect.



ADVICE • AWARDS • BEST  
PRACTICE • BRIEFINGS •  
CONSULTANCY • INTERIM  
MANAGEMENT • MEMBERSHIP  
SERVICES • PERFORMANCE  
IMPROVEMENT • SEMINARS AND  
EVENTS • SUPPORT • TRAINING

HOUSING • FACILITIES  
MANAGEMENT • BUILDING  
MAINTENANCE • PARKS, OPEN  
SPACES AND HORTICULTURAL  
SERVICES • REFUSE COLLECTION  
CEMETERIES AND CREMATORIA  
EDUCATION CATERING •  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH •  
ROADS AND HIGHWAYS • CIVIC  
AND COMMERCIAL CATERING  
WASTE AND RECYCLING •  
SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITY  
MANAGEMENT • STREET  
CLEANSING • STREET LIGHTING  
TRANSPORT OPERATIONS AND  
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

# Being an APSE member

Our membership services are for those who deliver frontline public sector services in the UK. We welcome membership or associate membership applications from organisations including local councils, fire and rescue authorities, police services, housing providers such as social landlords, leisure trusts, and local government trade unions. As a member of APSE, you will have access to many excellent benefits that will help your council or organisation to grow stronger. One of the most important benefits is the opportunity to have your views as a local authority service provider voiced and represented at a national level. We develop this voice through collaborating with members, and support it using our valuable research, extensive campaigns and consistent media activities.

As a not-for-profit organisation, any financial surplus that APSE has is reinvested into the organisation. This means that we're always working solely for the benefit of you, our members.

## The benefits of APSE membership

The benefits of being a member of APSE include:

- Regular briefings on the latest policy developments and operational issues
- Free access to regular advisory groups on the specific service areas and topics that you choose
- Access to strategic forums that consider broader matters affecting local government
- Access to online 'special interest portals' on key subjects
- Access to our Network Queries Service, enabling you to share and receive information and advice directly from your peers in other local councils
- Free subscription to our membership magazine which reports on the latest key developments for direct service providers in local government
- Free or discounted access to our full range of publications, services, seminars and events
- Access to our regional activities and events in your local area many of which are free to APSE members

## Member involvement

We pride ourselves on the close involvement of our members, who are always encouraged to participate in APSE's governance. Our regional structure keeps the Association in touch with local priorities across the UK and we ensure that members get the most out of our work by hosting regular regional meetings and events, including free regional advisory groups and either free or discounted regional events and the opportunity to have your say at our Regional Annual General meetings. These are in addition to our regular Association Meetings and Annual General Meetings.

# SCOTLAND NORTHERN ENGLAND IRELAND NORTH WALES ENGLAND CENTRAL ENGLAND SOUTHERN

## APSE near you

Learn more about how APSE can help you by emailing [membership@apse.org.uk](mailto:membership@apse.org.uk) and we'll put you in touch with your local Principal Advisor. Alternatively, call us and ask to be directed to the advisor for your area.

Alongside our service areas, APSE provides a network of regional events and support for member councils across the UK.

We have six localised geographic areas which consist of three large English regions and three national bodies reflecting the governance arrangements in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Each area has its own individually elected Chair and Secretary, who are responsible for driving forward the work of APSE locally and for representing the views of their members on a national level. Support is provided to these areas by our Principal Advisors who work in partnership with their own assigned area, supporting local initiatives, organising activities like regional advisory groups on frontline service areas, strategic forums and seminars, and co-ordinating membership activities and networking events across local government services.

### Become a member

To become a member, ***email [membership@apse.org.uk](mailto:membership@apse.org.uk) or call 0161 772 1810*** and speak to someone from the APSE team. We would be happy to arrange a visit to discuss how APSE can help you.

# Seminars and events

APSE operates a busy calendar of high-quality seminars and events at venues around the UK. These are open to all professionals who are interested in local government, with discounted rates for members. Our regular seminars cover the latest topics affecting council services, with strategic policy events focusing on relevant topics like income generation, service transformation and innovation.

Our main annual events include:

- The Annual Seminar, which takes place every autumn and changes location depending on our National Chairperson for that year. This event features high profile speakers from national and local government who discuss the latest innovation and best practice in frontline service delivery.
- The Performance Networks Seminar, which takes place every December and looks at trends and benchmarks in local government.
- Annual residential and day seminars on frontline services such as waste, refuse and recycling, leisure services, school meals, highways and street lighting, housing, building maintenance, cemeteries and crematoria, transport and fleet services, parks and public realm.

We also run a programme of regular Advisory Groups, as well as forums on strategic issues, all of which are free for APSE members to attend and provide a great networking and learning opportunity on frontline services issues.

## And the winner is...

As part of APSE's mission to share good practice in local government, we celebrate excellence in the delivery of frontline services with annual awards. Our most prominent programme of awards, the APSE Service Awards, are presented to the best team or initiative of the year in each frontline service area. At this event, we also name the winner of the prestigious Overall Council of the Year in Service Delivery award.

In addition to the Service Awards, we also reward best practice in local government with our brilliant Apprenticeship Awards and Performance Networks Awards.

The winners of APSE Awards get local and national press coverage on the work they've been doing, and also set the benchmark of achievement for other local authorities. It is an excellent way to get your hard work noticed – for all the right reasons.



# Specialist advice on frontline council services

APSE's team of specialist Principal Advisors provide expertise on our dedicated local government service areas.

Our advisors have a keen knowledge of both strategic and practical aspects of service delivery. These experts are on hand to provide advice, keep public service providers updated on latest policy developments, and to support them in all aspects of performance improvement, efficiency and effectiveness.

## Service areas

Frontline council services covered by APSE's team of advisors include the following areas:

- Facilities management
- Housing and construction
- Housing repairs and building maintenance
- Cemetery and crematoria
- Civic, cultural and community venues
- Education catering
- Environmental Health
- Roads and highways
- Other (civic and commercial) catering
- Parks, open spaces and horticultural services
- Refuse, waste and recycling
- Sports and leisure facility management
- Street cleansing
- Street lighting
- Transport operations and vehicle maintenance

We also operate a commercialisation network for local councils seeking to generate new sources of income through charging or trading in local government services or through the operation of wholly owned council companies. This group is also free to attend for APSE members.

**To find out more, contact: [membership@apse.org.uk](mailto:membership@apse.org.uk)**

# APSE performance networks



APSE performance networks is the largest voluntary public sector benchmarking service in the UK.

We have been gathering performance data for almost two decades from a broad range of services, which is used to help local authorities manage and improve those services. APSE performance networks is used by almost 200 local authorities and organisations who provide public services across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

APSE performance networks lead the way in local government benchmarking and we use our comprehensive database alongside APSE's public service management expertise. This enables managers to benchmark their services against comparators nationwide and use detailed, relevant information to improve quality, cost, productivity and efficiency.

The performance networks team tracks trends, shares indicators, and produces regular performance reports.

We also run annual celebratory awards for the best and most improved performers in each service area, using APSE performance networks to recognise those winners.

## What services does performance networks cover?

APSE's performance benchmarking service can help authorities monitor and improve their performance in the following service areas:

- Building cleaning
- Building maintenance
- Cemetery and crematorium
- Civic and commercial catering
- Education catering
- Environmental health
- Facilities management
- Parks, open spaces and horticultural services
- Refuse collection
- Roads and highways
- Sports and leisure
- Street cleansing
- Street lighting
- Transport operations and vehicle maintenance

***For more information and to sign up, contact:  
performance.networks@apse.org.uk***

# APSE solutions



APSE solutions provides consultancy and interim management services to both APSE members and non-member authorities. As a not-for-profit organisation, all surplus generated by our solutions service is reinvested into the company for the benefit of our local authority members.

Solutions offers unrivalled expertise in the latest public service management theory and practice. Our experienced in-house team is complemented by a network of carefully selected associates, which means we can offer support in all aspects of local government service delivery, efficiency, performance and cost reduction.

## Consultancy

APSE's consultants have a strong track record in delivering effective solutions that reduce costs and improve performance for council services across the UK. Our team of experts combine a unique understanding of direct local authority service provision with the application of latest management techniques. Our consultancy services include diagnostics reviews, options appraisals, and practical recommendations. The consultancy is enhanced by our ability to draw upon the association's policy knowledge, research, training capabilities and performance networks data, something which is unique to APSE.

In addition to experience in key topics and services, solutions offers expertise in:

- **Income generation**

APSE's place at the forefront of thinking on income generation gives our solutions team an excellent understanding of commercial opportunities for local councils, and of legislative and practical aspects of trading and charging. Our experts conduct regular workshops, coaching and service reviews to identify any possibilities for income generation.

- **Demand management**

APSE has pioneered demand management approaches in response to financial pressures facing local authorities.

- **Critical friend**

Solutions offers a critical friend service to local councils and to trade unions to help develop service options, reviews and transformation strategies

### **Interim management**

APSE solution's interim management service draws upon decades of experience, ensuring that we offer local authorities a safe pair of hands, alongside experienced change managers, during sensitive times of transition, manager absence, or when a special skill-set is required. APSE interim managers are highly qualified, and are experts in their field. As a result, they will be able to step into an appropriate role immediately. An interim manager will become embedded within the council or organisation, working as part of the management team for a set period of time, usually between three to twelve months. Our interim managers can provide a fresh perspective, implement effective strategies on-site and mentor existing staff.

**To find out how APSE Solutions can help you, contact: [solutions@apse.org.uk](mailto:solutions@apse.org.uk)**

# APSE energy



APSE energy was recently formed to reflect the changing dynamics of the energy market in the UK. Not so long ago, major utilities sat within local authority ownership and control, reflecting their role in public health issues, such as the supply of clean water and sanitation. This has now changed; as the global threats of climate change and energy shortages continue to grow, local authorities are increasingly looking at the developing prospects of municipal energy. APSE energy is designed to bring councils together to share information, ideas, resources, best practice, and to support local energy projects. Working together enables them to exchange knowledge on finance, law, and procurement. It also helps them to gain greater marketplace leverage.

Our bespoke Local Authority Energy Collaboration is a partnership developed by member authorities that maximises the opportunities local authorities are currently offered by bringing councils together on a national scale to work on the green energy agenda. Currently, around 60 councils are members of APSE energy.

Some of the many benefits of this collaboration include:

- Support on demonstrator projects
- Brokerage
- Opportunities to share procurement frameworks, reduce costs and timescales
- Consultancy support
- Legal advice from dedicated legal partners
- Technical and policy updates
- Dedicated online portals and phone support
- Discussion groups, workshops and conferences
- Lobbying and networking
- Profile-raising and research

**To learn more or get involved, contact: [energy@apse.org.uk](mailto:energy@apse.org.uk)**

# APSE training

APSE's comprehensive training and development programme offers the finest quality courses, masterclasses and bespoke in-house training sessions at venues across the UK. Our team of experienced trainers provide local authority officers and elected members with uniquely targeted opportunities to develop their skills and improve their ability to deliver effective, efficient services to the general public.

Our courses are carefully designed to meet the exact needs of public service providers. Our trainers are highly qualified and we work closely with our expert partners to ensure that the courses we offer reflect the latest legal requirements, as well as responding to current policy, and strategic and operational considerations.

Our training events are offered in a variety of formats:

- Workshops, which are mainly used to help managers on the frontline and in strategic roles
- Masterclasses that we deliver alongside partners to provide legal, practical and specialist expertise
- Elected members training for councillors, offering a choice of personal development options
- Train the trainer, where you develop skills to become the trainer
- Bespoke courses, including in-house training that can be tailored for your organisation on site

APSE's training is priced to offer good value for money, with exclusive discounted rates for our members.

## Course subjects

APSE's training programme covers a broad range of topics. It is constantly being updated and expanded in response to the latest developments in local government policy, legislation and operational services.

Some examples of current topics that we cover are: project management, supervisory skills, event management, business change management, drug and alcohol awareness, health and safety, customer care, contract management, cost control, construction design and management.

We are also interested to hear about any training that you think would benefit your authority or organisation. Please get in touch, tell us your requirements and we will do our best to cater for your needs.

***For further information and to book, contact: [training@apse.org.uk](mailto:training@apse.org.uk)***

# APSE research and campaigns



APSE is dedicated to helping local councils achieve excellence in the delivery of frontline public services. As part of this, we represent the interests of our members and the wider local government community through our research and campaigns.

## Research

APSE runs one of the largest research programmes in local government. A key strand of this research is through our excellent partnership with De Montfort University's Department of Politics & Public Policy in the faculty of Business and Law. We took part in a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with the university, which was awarded 'outstanding' status by the European Social Research Council. The public policy research that we created through this transfer programme included work on local democracy and democratic accountability.

APSE also commissions research with other respected bodies, such as IPPR, CLES, TCPA and NLGN, covering a large amount of research subjects on policy and in our service areas. We also produce self-supported research through 'State of the Market' research reports, which draw upon surveys and analysis of the data from our member local authorities. We use these to gauge trends in service delivery and gather views to inform our campaigning activities.

APSE is also an experienced research body with specialist local government research teams, who can deliver your research project.

## Campaigns

Successful APSE campaigns in the past have influenced policy and practice on topics such as local authority housing, charging and trading, and environmental sustainability. We have also advocated to change policy on the benefits of in-house services and the public value of direct local authority employment.

***For additional information on our research and campaigns, contact: [membership@apse.org.uk](mailto:membership@apse.org.uk)***

# Media presence

APSE has a strong media presence, which comes from our own media outlets as well as from our relationship with various members of the press. As well as frequently posting news on our website, we also use social media sites like Twitter and LinkedIn to share news and inform our members of any events, briefings, or other activity that we've been participating in at APSE. Alongside this, we also use physical forms of media.



## In-house magazine

Our in-house magazine, published every 2 months, keeps our members updated on APSE news and the latest developments in local authority frontline service provision. We source our feature pieces from member authorities and local government organisations, which gives our members an opportunity to be recognised in a national magazine for their achievements. In the magazine, you can find informative contacts from other councils and discover new, innovative ways of running your frontline services. The magazine is delivered to all members and is also available online.

## Press and media

APSE's presence in the press and media is vital, as we represent local government frontline service providers and their views. We have built a strong profile as an organisation that speaks out on behalf of members through extensive national, trade and regional press coverage.

We are also available to provide information, press releases, and commentary to journalists who write about local government and frontline service issues.

**For media enquiries, contact: [enquiries@apse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@apse.org.uk)**

tel: 0161 772 1810

fax: 0161 772 1811



@apseevents and @apsenews



APSE - Association for Public Service Excellence



**Association for Public Service Excellence**

2nd floor Washbrook House  
Talbot Road, Manchester M32 0FP

enquiries@apse.org.uk

Tel: 0161 772 1810

Fax: 0161 772 1811



@apseevents and @apsenews

**[www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk)**

**LOCAL SERVICES  
LOCAL SOLUTIONS**