

Homes for all!

APSE and TCPA

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Brexit: The implications for Local Government

How will Brexit affect your services?



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2nd floor Washbrook House • Lancastrian Office Centre • Talbot Road
Old Trafford • Manchester M32 0FP

telephone: 0161 772 1810

fax: 0161 772 1811

email: enquiries@apse.org.uk

web: www.apse.org.uk



Editorial

As we go to press the outcome of the EU referendum has been announced. The decision to leave the EU, whilst something of a shock for many people, is nevertheless a mandate for the Government to commence the UK's withdrawal from the EU. Whatever one's views on the EU, the exit strategy may have a profound effect on local government and public services more generally.

Whilst negotiations will be on-going for some time, possibly years, APSE's view is that local government has delivered enough in recent times, by way of savings, and ought not to be subject to further austerity to offset any economic turbulence.

APSE is promoting the idea of a sector wide forum to ensure that negotiations on matters that will impact upon local government are not dealt with in silos. Consideration needs to be thoroughly given to matters which effect local government front line services such as waste and recycling, regulatory services, housing, procurement matters, local authority trading and public to public cooperation alongside workforce matters.

It is of course early days and there are many months, even years, of discussion ahead before any notable changes come into effect. However, that should not leave room for complacency amongst the local government family. What happens at a local level to our communities is every bit as important as our national strategy.

We now need a period of calm reflection and detailed analysis to take us through the changes ahead and ensure that local councils, democratically elected by local people, can continue to deliver the best possible local government services.

Best wishes

Paul O'Brien, APSE Chief Executive



Homes for all!

Catch up on the latest housing research by APSE and the TCPA, which follows up from our previous research, 'Housing the Nation: Ensuring Councils can deliver more and better homes'.

The latest APSE housing research 'Homes for All: Ensuring Councils can build the homes we need' is a collaborative effort between the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) and APSE. Our aim was to establish the latest position on housing across the UK and, crucially, find out how local councils could produce the homes needed to support everybody in their local community.

The latest household projections for England, published in November 2015, suggest that we need over 220,000 additional homes each year until 2031 if we are to accommodate the projected growth in households. Currently however we are reaching just over half of that figure. To catch up by 2020, we will now need to create over 310,000 homes a year over the next 5 years. This in itself is a stark finding; as the goal to provide enough homes slips further away each time we fail to meet these targets, the pressure on housing delivery is inevitably intensified.

Whilst Government policy has been concentrated on the delivery of so-called affordable homes, the research calls into question what we can reasonably describe as "affordable". Housing shortages, and the resultant high prices and rents, mean that young people are living with parents or in house shares for longer, rather than forming a household of their own. Rising student debt levels and potential future welfare reform are likely to make their position even more difficult. Even if the homes required are actually built, the latest government household projections suggest that couples aged between 25 and 34 will be less able to live in their own home in 2031 than their counterparts in 2011.

Housing need has huge implications beyond those unable to afford to buy or rent their own property. Improved planning and better housing have long been identified as essential for improving the health of communities, reducing health inequalities and cutting costs for the taxpayer.

Conversely, poor quality housing and an inadequate supply of new homes impacts on the social wellbeing of communities with costs to the NHS reportedly at £1.4bn. A lack of decent affordable housing also reduces labour mobility and undermines the ability of our towns and cities to attract new business. A recent CBI survey highlighted that housing costs and availability in London were having a negative impact on companies' ability to retain and recruit staff, particularly employees on lower incomes; 57% of businesses surveyed report that housing cost and availability was negatively impacting on attempts to recruit entry level staff.

So what are we, APSE, and the TCPA calling for? We want the Government to develop a housing strategy for the nation that provides decent homes for everyone in society, including those dependent on social and genuinely affordable housing for rent. Whilst efforts have been concentrated on affordable homes to buy, we want the Government to ensure that local authorities are at the heart of this new housing strategy, not least because the definition of "affordability" should be determined locally. Councils are best placed to respond to local need but they require the freedom and flexibility to deliver new homes.

We are also calling upon Government to reverse its decision to reduce social rents by 1% per year for the next four years – this move alone has taken millions away from local authorities' ability to invest in the social rented sector. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 arguably further removes councils from the equation, introducing new burdens through changes to Right to Buy and the selling off of the most valuable housing assets.

APSE and the TCPA believe that councils, despite the added burdens placed upon them by the Housing and Planning Act, can play a stronger role in driving the delivery of new homes either on their own or through joint ventures. Our research explores the role of local housing companies working alongside councils to deliver new homes. Council land and assets can help drive investment in the most sustainable locations, and housing tenures such as the private rented sector can help meet local housing needs, generating long-term income streams in the process. Councils investing in the private rented sector can also encourage others to invest in their local areas, and bring about positive investments. This can include providing greater choice and better quality accommodation for those reliant on the private rented sector. Whilst the private rented sector will not replace the need for social rented homes, it is part of the tool-kit available to local councils allowing them to respond to urgent local housing need.

Case studies within the report have found council being innovative using local housing companies. Thurrock Council established a local housing company named Gloriana. Wholly-owned by the council, Gloriana is delivering 1,000 new affordable homes over the next five years, as well as a 10% increase, using current projections, in the number of new private sector homes delivered over the next five years. All of these new council homes will be built to London Space Standards and Lifetime Homes, reflecting high quality design and materials.

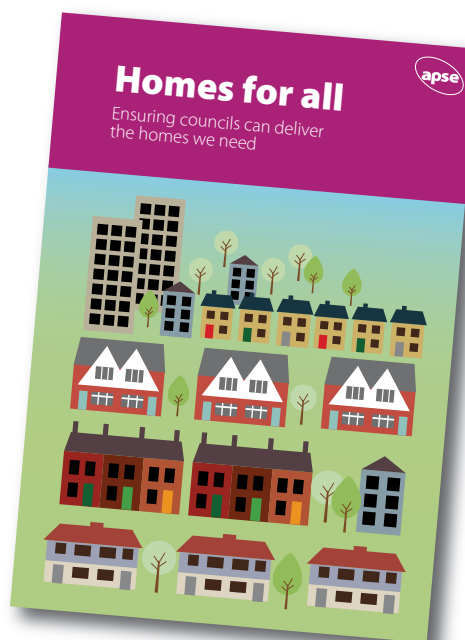
Within the London Borough of Harrow, their 'Great Estates Model' has established a local regeneration company with

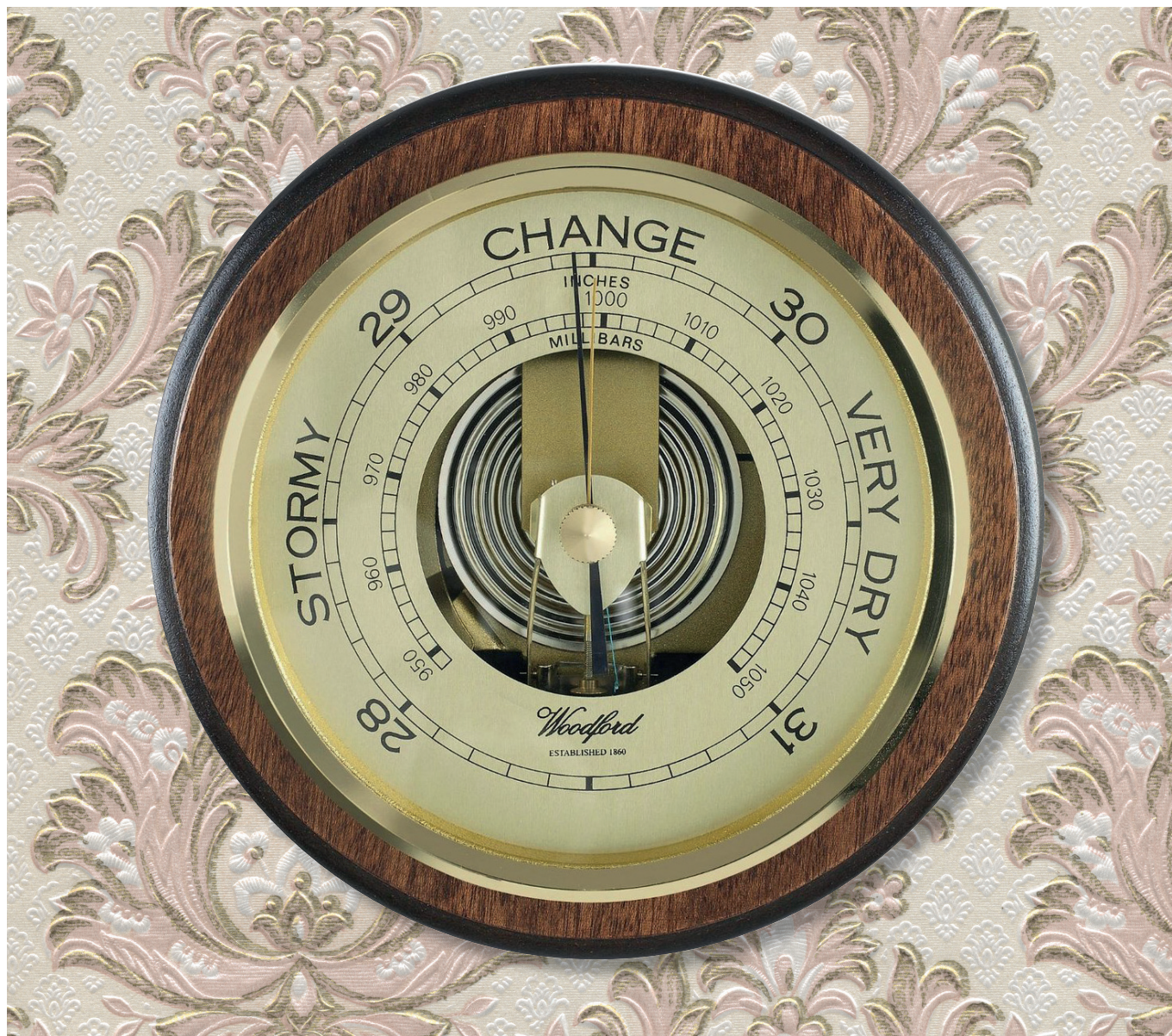
ambitions to deliver a £1.75 billion investment programme into Harrow and Wealdstone town centres. Included within the regeneration plan is the delivery of 5,500 new homes, two new schools, around 3,000 new jobs and a district heating network to service major sites alongside a £31.3 million funding pot through the Mayor of London's Housing Zones scheme.

In Manchester, the 'Housing Investment Fund' – a joint venture between Manchester City Council and the Greater Manchester Pension Fund, administered by Tameside Council – was established to deliver private rented sector housing, delivering on local housing need whilst also creating a return on investment for the local government pension fund. In Edinburgh, a council-led joint venture using the National Housing Trust initiative is helping to deliver new, affordable homes using £182 million of private and public funding. However, Edinburgh is not just delivering standard housing units – of 1,055 new affordable homes completed in 2014/15 around 115 homes were specifically designed with older people in mind. In another best practice example, Aberdeen has created a new council-led joint venture with People for Places, which is set to deliver homes for key workers on modest incomes. They plan to develop an initial 1,000 affordable homes and 1,000 private development homes, with the potential for a further 1,000 properties and an investment pot for affordable housing and private development of £300million.

We know that the solutions to the housing crisis facing the UK are complex. Yet, our findings show that without local councils in the driving seat, we cannot deliver the homes we need. A failure to put local councils at the heart of housing delivery, and to address the need for new social homes to rent, will spell catastrophe for a whole generation struggling to either afford to buy so-called affordable homes, or rent from a largely unregulated private rented sector. Now is the time for Government to place councils at the heart of delivering homes for all.

This research was carried out collaboratively by APSE and the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA). To order a copy, email mbaines@apse.org.uk or go to www.apse.org.uk and click on Research.





Sustainable local government finance and liveable local areas: Can we survive to 2020?

It is, of course, no secret that local government has suffered the harshest loss of funding since 2008 compared to the rest of the public sector. The underfunding of social care has made headlines in the national press and is never far from the debate on the future funding of local government services. However, there is much more than social care provided by local councils. Whilst social care is vitally important, it is used by around 5% of the population compared to the often financially neglected 'liveability' services, which most residents will experience on a day to day basis. Services such as parks and public realm, refuse collection

and street scene, pot-hole repairs, winter gritting and street lighting, not to mention local leisure centres and sports facilities, are services which many take for granted.

It was in the context of these liveability services that APSE wanted to explore the future sustainability of local government finance. Working with Dr Peter Kenway and Theo Barry-Born of the New Policy Institute (NPI), APSE commissioned a detailed study into the changing face of local government finance and crucially we explored what the funding cuts have meant to liveability services. We asked 'can we survive to 2020?'

The research findings have unveiled a timely and accurate picture of local government and its future shape. Current spending by UK local government is now below the previous post-1979 low point and by 2020, current and capital spending combined will be lower than at any time since before 1948. Within England, council tax – until recently a minority source of local government finance – will account for at least half the money coming in to every kind of English local authority by 2020. For shire counties, it will account for three quarters.

Recently announced changes to revenue support grant mean that by 2020, it will barely be a third of its current, already much reduced level, and will be mainly confined to metropolitan and unitary districts, and London boroughs. Shire counties and districts will be almost entirely reliant on council tax and business rates, signalling a new dimension in funding inequalities according to how strongly an authority can grow its business rate income. Equally for council tax funding, the most deprived areas are often the least able to raise the most from council tax with a high proportion of properties in lower bands and historically lower starting points. Ultimately, there is no correlation between need and the ability to raise funds through business rates and council tax.

So what does all this mean for local council liveability services? First of all, the 0.5% headline savings for local government, announced in the 2016 budget, do not offset the previous spending reductions which were upwards of 40% for many councils. Whilst the new 2% 'precept' in council tax to help social care meet some of the funding gaps in that service, this new money does little to address the drastic cuts that liveability services have suffered. This creates a schism in Government policy. At the very point that local councils are told that they can keep business rates to fund themselves, the frontline services which help to attract those businesses in the first place are put at risk. Making places attractive to local businesses means high quality public realm, good roads, good street lighting, clean streets and attractive high streets. Businesses also want attractive and healthy places for their local workforce.

As such, APSE and NPI are calling for recognition of the intrinsic value that liveability services bring to local areas. We believe that it is a false economy to allow these services to decline. Our research backs this claim, highlighting the 'spend to save' argument. This argues that allowing a local environment to normalise 'low-level' crime normalises law-breaking, spinning neighbourhoods into decline. Conversely, looking after local areas will improve neighbourhoods and the wellbeing of local communities. Our research found that many academics have supported the 'broken windows' theory and the role of the local environment in influencing behaviour.

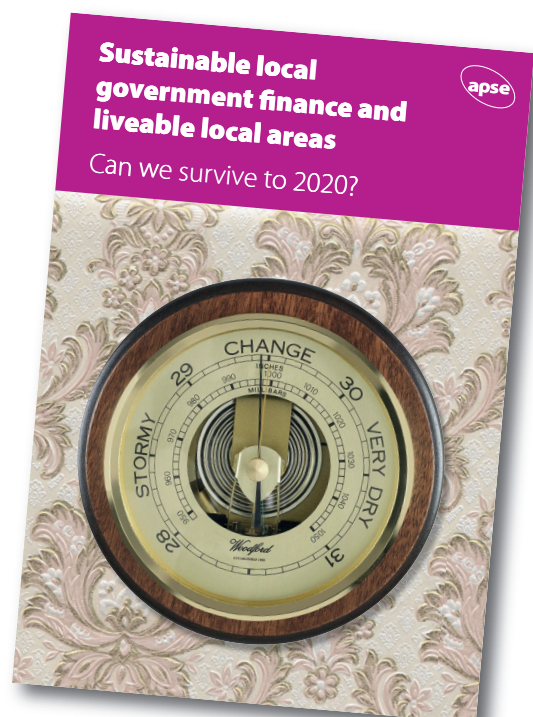
We also know that 'green' exercise in local parks and public realm has a hugely positive impact on physical,

and mental health and well-being. But to attract people to parks we need to ensure that they are well-maintained and prevent any potential spiral into decline. We cannot allow our parks to return to the under-invested and neglected no-go areas of the early 1990's.

APSE and NPI seek funding for liveability to be valued and recognised as vital for local areas. We know that there is scope for local councils to be much more proactive in the management of liveability services. This may mean looking at reducing demand in different ways and reducing costs by reducing demand, rather than simply salami slicing services. Many councils have adopted income generation strategies using their areas to generate new sources of income. Examples include using parks as locations for television or filming, to developing cafes and family-friendly activities. Many councils are selling services to local residents and businesses, generating income streams by providing winter gritting services to airports and retail parks, or charging for post event clean-ups for concerts. The list is endless and the innovation is highly encouraging.

Despite plenty of success when generating new funds, there is still a need for councils to resource liveability services. The prospect of losing liveability services is too great now to ignore. Whilst we have removed the teeth from the jaws of doom in the context of social care, the jaws are still very firmly attached to the heels of our local government frontline services. Now is the time to say enough is enough. Let's fund what our communities rely upon.

APSE and NPI's research 'Sustainable local government finance and liveable local areas: Can we survive to 2020' was written by Dr Peter Kenway of NPI in association with APSE. Details can be found on the APSE website www.apse.org.uk



Improving the Emotional Resilience of the workforce

APSE's Sophie Bannister was invited to Knowsley to take part in one of the Council's training programmes. Focusing specifically on the emotional resilience of staff, it teaches them ways to manage stress, find a good life balance, and increase their levels of productivity.



Why is it that some people are able to cope with difficult situations, when others struggle? How come some people complete their goals or projects on time and within budget, yet others find it difficult? Why do we never see the full return on our training investments when staff go on training courses? Often, they come back all fired up and enthusiastic, but within days everything is as it was before.

Knowsley MBC believe that they have a solution to this problem. They have created a new training course which helps staff to develop their emotional resilience, enabling them to deal with difficult circumstances better and make more rational life choices. It's called the Emotional Resilience Programme.

In short, the course was mind-opening. It focused on a blend of three key resilience activities, proven to help people develop; Mental Toughness, Mindfulness, and Restorative Practice. Backed by theory that's been likened to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), together these activities help people to develop confidence, manage relationships with colleagues, friends and family, and improve control over attention span, memory, thoughts and feelings.

The course has been developed and run by Ken Harrison and Mo Keegan, from Knowsley MBC. They have found that, when talking to staff about workforce development, the narrative has definitely shifted over the past few

years. People are moving away from asking for technical or professional training to requesting mechanisms that will help them develop their own personal wellbeing and resilience, and asking for coping strategies. This was very true of the people on this particular session – working in a variety of challenging social care roles – who repeatedly asked why this course hadn't been offered to them sooner. Despite being offered to managers in the past, it is clear that there is a wider need for this sort of training.

Some days before the course, participants fill out an online Mental Toughness Questionnaire to measure their resilience and ability to cope with pressure and change. This then produces a development report, with scores for different categories and tips on how to improve in those areas. This, in itself, is very useful to know, and reflects the course well. The whole experience is tailored towards learning more about yourself and how you react to different events. The course itself then gives techniques to allow you to alter that behaviour, ensuring that you are able to react in a better, more productive way next time.

The training session itself was both interesting and enjoyable. Through their friendly demeanor and ability to create a welcoming environment, Ken and Mo created a space in which attendees felt they could share their worries and answer questions about how they feel at work in an honest, open way. There was no sense of competition when we were filling out the resilience questionnaires, or finding out using a simplified Myer Briggs Type Indicator which Simpson character we were – all of which were ways of helping us recognise and analyse our own behaviours. Even as the only attendee not working in social care, I felt part of the group and could relate to the discussions around resilience and mindfulness.

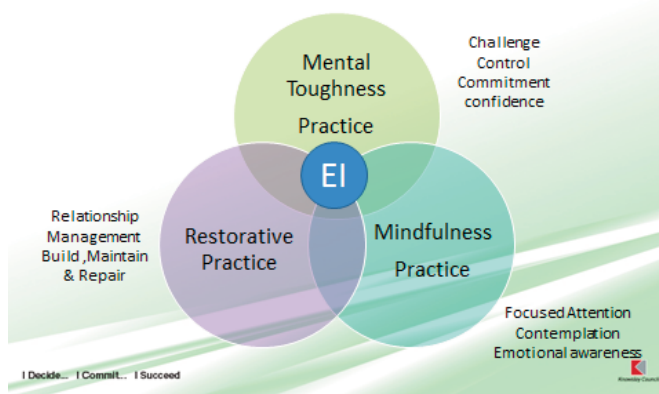
The Mental Toughness section was all about the four C's; Challenge, Commitment, Control and Confidence. We worked on techniques and ways of thinking that would help us develop in these areas. It was all about a change in mental attitude, and working towards a more positive mindset. Actually, this was an excellent part of the day, as many of the mental exercises and discussions were easily tailored to the attendees' own workplace circumstances. In this way, we were able to really benefit from Mo and Ken's knowledge.

When looking at Mindfulness, the group were taught some simple ways in which to become more 'mindful' (i.e. attentive, focused and aware) of the world around us. We even got a bit of homework in this section, as Ken showed us a 3-minute activity to do once a day. Doing this and keeping a diary is, according to Ken, an excellent way of developing our mindfulness. The short activity enhances a sense of calmness, as well as a clarity of mind. It worked so well that at the end of the day everybody committed to repeating the exercise for at least 28 days.

One of the final things we looked at was Restorative Practice in relation to the way we treat our colleagues and work partners. At times, relationships may require fixing, maintaining or simply building, and doing this in a restorative manner allows for a sense of social responsibility and shared accountability within the workplace. It is a fresh, enabling way to view relationships that stops them going sour. After all, many workplaces are stressful at times and it can be easy to feel resentful and angry towards colleagues. Restorative Practice attempts to eradicate those feelings and get to the root of the problem to fix it quickly.

Knowsley seem to have realised that its workforce is struggling under mounting financial and target-specific pressures. They understand that by investing in the wellbeing of its staff, the output will be better for all. They are currently tailoring this course to people in leadership roles and in social care. However, I am in neither of these positions and, having experienced it for myself, I firmly believe that everybody could benefit from a training course like this.

The Integrated Resilience Model



I'm trying to keep my commitment by continuing to practice the exercises and activities. It seems to be working; by being aware of my emotional resilience, I can manage my workload better whilst feeling better about it.

Ultimately, it seems that this course is a step in the right direction, encouraging employers to seriously consider investing in their employees' emotional wellbeing. And arguably, that should be something that is at the top of everybody's agenda.

For further information about Knowsley's work, please contact Maureen Keegan, Workforce Development Manager, on 0151 443 2466 or email maureen.keegan@knowsley.gov.uk

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A Tale of Two Cities

We take a look at the work that charity Landlife are doing, including their latest projects and the difference they're making to communities in the North of England.

Landlife is a charity that inspires people to take positive action for nature wherever they live. We do this by promoting the development of new wildflower landscapes, creating environmental learning experiences, and, ultimately, helping people achieve better health and well-being through the outdoors. Landlife also founded the National Wildflower Centre in Merseyside in 1999, which now welcomes over 30,000 visitors annually. Through our work, we have raised over £21m to bring nature and people closer together.

At Landlife, we have continued to work regionally and nationally on new projects, informing policy and new directions, and shaping urban nature and environmental justice work. We also run a trading company, Landlife Wildflowers, farming wildflowers for seed and offering consultancy advice across the UK, as well as providing support and consultancy services for local authorities, community groups, landscapers and gardeners.

In 2014, we developed a project called 'A Tale of Two Cities', which went on to win the Grow Wild England Flagship Award, a UK programme managed by Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Headed up by the

National Wildflower Centre, the project brought together Liverpool and Manchester, working collectively to use wildflowers, literature, art and song to promote the importance of flowers and nature to everyday life.

We worked with Friends Groups, the National Trust and a range of land management and other partners, to deliver spectacular displays of colourful wildflower landscapes along prominent transport routes, specifically Princess Parkway in Manchester, Islington in Liverpool, and in the landmark greenspace of Everton Park. In total, these landmark sites make up 10 hectares – the equivalent of 20 football pitches! And they are filled with colour and wildlife as a result of this project.

Using arts, music and popular science, the project generates involvement and excitement around the transformation of public spaces using native wildflowers. Working with festivals across these cities, such as Out of the Blue in Everton Park and Manchester International Festival, the project aims to engage with as many different cultures and individuals as possible. The name, A Tale of Two Cities, also plays on the Atlantic link between

the cities along the Ship Canal and their trading past.

Another up-and-coming project is Grow Wild. Supported by the Big Lottery Fund and led by Royal Botanic Gardens, Grow Wild inspires communities, friends, neighbours and individuals across the UK to come together to transform local spaces, by sowing, growing and enjoying native wild flowers. Grow Wild believes that this simple act of creativity can turn spaces into beautiful, inspiring and colourful wildlife havens and encourage people to care for and delight in the nature around them.

A Tale of Two Cities continues to forge new partnerships across Liverpool and Manchester, linking environment, the arts, academia, sports and popular culture, uniting people and communities in both cities to experience, celebrate and respond to the beauty of wildflowers. For us, 2016 holds unlimited promise with more diverse species and more people coming aboard.

More details about the work of Landlife and 'A Tale of Two Cities' can be found at: <http://www.wildflower.co.uk/> and <http://www.taleof2cities.org.uk/>

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Raising standards in frontline services:

Announcing the APSE Scotland Aviemore Rising Stars 2016

APSE Scotland Aviemore is always one of the top, much-anticipated events on our calendar. This year was as brilliant as always, with speakers from a variety of frontline service areas inspiring the many delegates in attendance with talks on best practice and policy.

It was also a highly successful event for the winners of the prestigious Rising Star awards. These awards celebrate local authority employees who show the skills, mind-set and innovative thinking necessary to stand out as potential future leaders in the public sector. Our gold, silver and bronze winners have all proven their exceptional abilities through their hard work and dedication to excellence in local government frontline services.

The winners of the gold award for each category, Gerry Farrell from North Lanarkshire Council, Stephen Ward from East Renfrewshire Council, and Andrew Macleod from City of Edinburgh Council, have shown themselves to be outstanding members of their authorities. They are willing to try new ideas to improve services and they have all developed skills that will allow them to successfully progress further in their careers.

APSE's Chief Executive Paul O'Brien said, 'it is a real pleasure to celebrate individual accomplishment within local authorities at these important awards. Now more than ever, we must cultivate and reward talent in the next generation of local government leaders and continue to promote innovation in the public sector. The winners of these awards are a great reflection of what the future may hold for local government, and we should encourage them as much as possible to continue developing excellence in frontline services.'

Congratulations to all bronze, silver and gold winners!

Finalists and winners

Fleet Services

Sponsored by BCA

Gold Winner

Gerry Farrell, North Lanarkshire Council

Silver Winners

Paul Menzies, Dundee City Council
Bruce Robb, Falkirk Council

Bronze Winners

Gordon Ross, Aberdeenshire Council
Adam Wallace, Fife Council

Parks, Grounds and Streets Services

Sponsored by DAF Trucks

Gold Winner

Andrew Macleod, City of Edinburgh Council

Silver Winners

Stephen Bly, Aberdeen City Council
David Carslaw, Renfrewshire Council

Bronze Winner

Derek McKay, Aberdeen City Council

Waste and Recycling Services

Sponsored by Zero Waste Scotland

Gold Winner

Stephen Ward, East Renfrewshire Council

Silver Winners

Gillian Wilson, Clackmannanshire Council
Sinead Norwood, North Ayrshire Council
Kirsty McGuire, South Lanarkshire Council

Bronze Winners

Nicola Simpson, Dumfries & Galloway Council
Peter McKay, Shetland Islands Council
Kenny Campbell, Stirling Council

Network news



What's new in performance networks?

Highways Maintenance Capital Funding and Performance Networks – How can we help you secure funding?

In December 2014, the Secretary of State for Transport announced that £6 billion will be made available between 2015/16 and 2020/21 for local highways maintenance capital funding and in November 2015. A further £250 million was announced for a dedicated Pothole Action Fund. From this funding, £578 million has been set aside for an Incentive Fund scheme, to reward councils who demonstrate they are delivering value for money in carrying out cost effective improvements. Each year, local highway authorities in England will need to complete a self-assessment questionnaire, in order to establish their share of the Incentive fund. Your answers to the questions determine the % share of the fund you receive. By 2017- 18, you could lose up to 40% of the incentive fund by not meeting the criteria and by 2020-21, you could lose it all.

In this questionnaire, authorities will be asked, "Does your local authority undertake benchmarking to drive improvement in its highway maintenance service?"

And, "Does your local authority have a process in place to measure the ongoing cashable and non-cashable efficiencies that are being delivered in the highways maintenance service?"

As a performance networks member you can say YES and qualify for 3 points.

Training

The Year 18 data templates are now finalised and available to access on the members web portal. The deadlines for the first set of reports, and to qualify for award entry are during Sept/Oct 2016. As usual we will be offering data completion training sessions in a number of locations.

Manchester - 13 July
Hamilton - 15 August

If you would like to book onto the FREE training sessions please contact a member of the performance networks team

If you are unable to attend these dates but would like to attend training, please let us know as we will be arranging further training sessions during the summer period.

New service areas

The environmental health model was rolled out on a UK-wide basis last year and substantial work has been carried out by the working group this year to develop the model further for this next data collection round; in particular to include relevant legislation and guidance for England, Northern Ireland and Wales. APSE performance networks member authorities who are subscribed to all services will be able to participate in this model for 2016 free of charge.

During 2016, a pilot will be carried out on Trading Standards. If you would like to get involved in this pilot, please contact us.

New types of case studies

Our latest case study reports include:

- Improving productivity whilst improving quality
- Improving performance with reduced costs
- Best and most improved performer award winners 2015

Land Audit Management System (LAMS)

Quality inspection system for grounds maintenance and street cleansing

LAMS is a quality inspection system to monitor grounds maintenance, which can also be applied to street cleansing for a total street scene quality score. You can use LAMS to measure the quality of your own localities and at the same time, benchmark these against other local authorities. You can choose between using the system to monitor grounds maintenance and/or street cleansing as well.

The LAMS system has already been proven to be a simple and effective performance measuring system, which has benefits far beyond simply showing the cleanliness and quality of green spaces and the street scene. LAMS can be a useful tool to senior managers who have to justify greenspace and street scene budgets, it can be used as a marketing tool when applying for new contract work, and is also a great way to publicise the work the council does in maintaining its local environment to residents and businesses.

This service is available free of charge to authorities who are subscribed to the parks and/or street cleansing models and the full pack is available to download from the web portal. Training days have proved extremely popular and additional sessions are now being ran in the summer.



Run the park, but keep the Parkrun: Thoughts on the recent Parkrun controversy

When a parish council decided to charge a local Parkrun club to use their park, 55,000 people signed a petition against the decision. We look at whether charging was a necessary decision and suggest what could have been done instead.

Parks are considered by many to be public assets. When they are well-kept and accessible to all, they are the hub of any community. Unfortunately, their upkeep is a non-statutory service, which means that the Government does not offer specific funding for them. As such, local authorities across the UK are struggling to maintain their upkeep and our parks and green spaces are very much falling victim to the austerity cuts made to local authorities' budgets.

With this lack of funding, it probably shouldn't come as much of a surprise to hear that a parish council near Bristol is struggling to pay for the upkeep of its park's paths. To compensate, this parish council has decided to charge a fee to those involved in the Parkrun group.

This decision has been widely criticised and condemned; Parkrun is advertised as a free weekly event that attempts to remove potential barriers, including cost, from exercise to get people fit. Parkrun has groups all over the world, and has been praised by Government, who described it as "a new model for community sport volunteering" in the recent Sporting Future paper from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

Despite the event's free status, Stoke Gifford Parish Council has claimed that Parkrun places a significant strain on the park paths, and that the runners should therefore contribute to its upkeep. It has recently voted through a proposal to charge adult Parkrun participants £1 every week they attend. This has angered many people who believe that the parish council is undermining the ethos of Parkrun.

In response to the outcry, Stoke Gifford Parish Council has argued that many of the runners come from outside of their boundaries, and so do not pay taxes towards its upkeep.

Alternatively, what else could the parish council do to raise the necessary funds? The park is leased by the parish council from their local authority. They don't have permission to charge people to use the carpark, yet there are other innovative ways of making money from green spaces. APSE Principal Advisor Wayne Priestley has been following the situation at Little Stoke Park. He suggests there are a number of ways that the council can make money for the upkeep of the paths. One of the simpler ideas is to have a donation box. Placing this near the start/finish line with a friendly poster asking for donations will mean that those who can pay are likely to contribute. This method doesn't leave anybody at a disadvantage, yet still raises funds.

Another potential way of raising these funds is by opening a coffee shop. Parkrun typically organises an informal post-run coffee for its attendees, which the council could provide, either as a permanent fixture or as a 'pop-up' at specific events like these. If not a coffee shop, some parks organise franchised or in-house workout classes to take place in their parks. These are paid for by attendees, to the advantage of the park. These classes could even be advertised to the Parkrun group as an extra for those willing to pay for further fitness experiences beyond Parkrun.

There is also the potential idea of getting either the Parkrun or the actual park sponsored by a company or organisation that would be willing to pay for the upkeep of the park. In fact, there is also a case for going to the Health and Wellbeing Board and pitching the Parkrun as a preventative measure which needs to be maintained for the community.

Many are now arguing that Government should make parks a statutory service. Parks require stable funding to continue to be the inviting, inspiring places they are, and surely there is a spend to save argument when it comes to the overall health benefits of parks?

Ultimately, you could charge everybody to use a park, and justify it. However, under the government's 'Rethinking Parks' initiative, parks are supposed to entice people outside.

They are expected to be used to boost mental and physical health, get people exercising and create community cohesion. As such, parks are highly beneficial for people of all walks of life and it is time we ensured that they will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. That can only come through a stable source of income and the time has now come for parks funding to reach the top of the political agenda.

To find out more, contact Wayne Priestley, Principal Advisor for parks and green spaces, on wpriestley@apse.org.uk.

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Filling stomachs and minds: Tackling holiday hunger in East Renfrewshire

As the summer holidays approach, many local authorities are facing the huge problem of holiday hunger. East Renfrewshire Council spoke to APSE about what they've been doing to alleviate this burden, and how they try to keep children eating healthily outside of term time.

East Renfrewshire Council's school holiday programme of activities has been running for over a decade. They currently cater for all children across the authority from nursery level to S1 (or, from 3 to 11/12 years old). It was initially set up in order to ensure that potentially vulnerable students – those who are entitled to free school meals – had access to healthy meals outside of term time. Attendance is free for these children, ensuring they get a full nutritional meal.

Holiday hunger is an ongoing issue for local authorities. Families of children eligible for free meals at school may struggle with the extra costs they incur at home during the holidays, and so these children may not eat the balanced meals they require. A lack of nutrition can lead to weight loss, malnutrition, and an inability to concentrate upon the child's return to school. Not only that, but these children are likely to develop unhealthy eating habits that remain with them well into adulthood, causing health problems in later life and placing an avoidable strain on the NHS.

Although East Renfrewshire's holiday programme has always catered for these vulnerable children, ensuring they are able to eat well during holiday time, the council recognised that this was merely a short-term solution to a long-term problem. In response, they chose to do something about it. When planning their Spring 2016 programme of activities, they designed a programme that worked to improve the health of the children – without restricting the fun factor. During that holiday, older children who attended were given the opportunity to learn cookery from the school catering

staff, and took control of preparations for lunch each day. This was then served to all of the attendees.

To kick-start this new activity, professional chef Ian Brown was invited to Barrhead High School, in the authority, to do a cookery masterclass with the children. The chef, who runs the Ian Brown neighbourhood eatery in Glasgow Southside, showed the youngsters how to cook inspiring dishes like smoked haddie ceviche, stovies and chocolate fondant for dessert. Throughout the rest of the holiday programme, the children continued their cookery masterclasses with school catering staff, who also took them through health and safety regulations within the kitchen, including a food hygiene course. At first, the staff found this new role quite challenging, something entirely different from the hustle and bustle of a busy school kitchen. Yet they also found it highly enjoyable and rewarding, as they were able to impart their cooking knowledge to the children, and teach them about the benefits of eating healthy home-cooked meals. This process teaches them important life skills, as well as showing the children how to prepare healthy, inexpensive meals which they can then make at home and take with them into adulthood.

In East Renfrewshire Council, school catering and holiday clubs such as this one sit in the Education department, which budgets to afford programmes like this throughout the year. Though the council have also been working alongside other council services too; Nicky Joiner, catering co-ordinator for East Renfrewshire Council said: "We've worked in partnership with East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure to develop an innovative school holiday programme that allows pupils

to access nutritious meals during school holidays for in excess of ten years.

"The cooking classes offer a safe and nurturing environment to engage children in nutrition and gives them the skills to prepare healthy, tasty food and enjoy many physical activities offered. The youngsters who attend really enjoy themselves and it also provides them with the opportunity to make new friends."

The Barrhead area has a great success rate for this programme, with 86% of those children who are eligible for free places enthusiastically taking them up. Alongside the lunch, they spend the morning and afternoon doing activities, though the day is predominantly structured around lunchtime. Not only is this treated as a time to cook and eat, it is also a very social part of the day. The children sit and eat with staff, who ensure that they try everything on their plate. The meals are served 'family style', with cutlery on the table, and good table manners are taught to the children.

An amalgamation of eating healthier, socialising more, and maintaining an active routine means that the children's behaviour improves when they return to school. This, of course, has a positive knock-on effect for their education. All of these excellent effects mean that East Renfrewshire Council are committed to maintaining the holiday programme of activities, and further helping the children in the authority to thrive and grow.

For more information, contact Nicky Joiner, Education Facilities Management, Catering Co-ordinator, on nicola.Joiner@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk



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GET INVOLVED!

Food for thought: Reflecting on the great work done by the School Food Plan

Cheaper than a sandwich but cooked by restaurant-standard chefs, school dinners have drastically changed since the people behind the School Food Plan got to work. We spoke to Director of the Plan Myles Bremner to see how it is helping to make school dinners healthy and delicious, as well as teaching a generation of children to cook more than just cupcakes.

We are at risk of having a generation of people in our society who do not know how to cook. They have never been taught about nutrition, and many of them struggle to eat a balanced diet. Unless action is taken, this cycle will not be broken; more children will struggle to maintain a healthy diet, obesity will rise and our country will struggle in the face of a looming health crisis. We need to promote a culture of healthy eating in our schools and instil a love of cooking in our children. This is where the School Food Plan can help.

The School Food Plan is a set of 17 agreed actions, published in July

2013 by the Department for Education. It was written by Henry Dimbleby and John Vincent, owners of the LEON restaurant chain, and contained actions for government departments, Ofsted, and school food organisations. The Plan brought these people together in classrooms, in a bid to tackle England's unhealthy relationship with food. By working together as a whole sector, using the principles of positivity and consensus, the Plan has been able to make amazing progress.

Many of the School Food Plan's actions will be quite familiar to you; offering free school meals to all infant schoolchildren across England, ensuring that compulsory cooking

was back on the curriculum, and developing food-based standards for school meals and food across the day. Alongside these policy changes, there has been a focus on taking a whole school approach and embedding a great school food culture across the day. And there are many stories and case studies of schools successfully doing just that, connected together by the School Food Plan.

Excellence, as many of us will know, does not come simply through Government decree. It is the will and skill of those involved in implementing the School Food Plan that has made it the success it is today. By working with schools, head

teachers, local authorities, caterers, governments, parents and pupils, to name just a few, the people at the School Food Plan have created a bank of resources that can support schools on their journeys, all freely available for present and future use on the website.

Ultimately, the Plan recognises that bringing schools and local councils together to work harmoniously is vital in achieving the vision and actions in the Plan. There is a virtuous circle that benefits from this close working relationship; namely, if you invest and improve the quality of food and the dining experience for children, take-up will increase, and then the price of the meals can decrease. Which, of course, allows more students to take advantage of healthy, tasty school meals. As such, local councils play a huge role in ensuring that the School Food Plan is implemented to create a good quality service in all schools across their area.

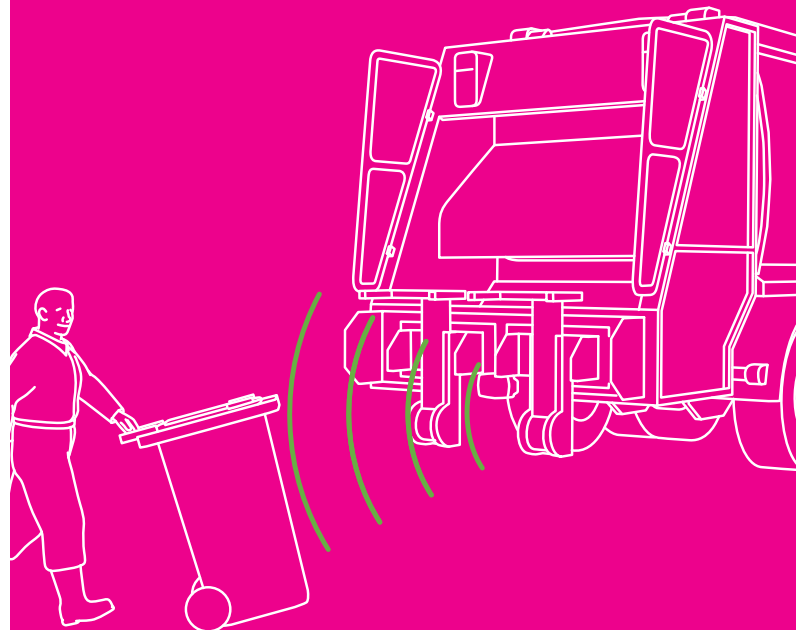
Perhaps most importantly, the School Food Plan shows how investing in school meals is a preventative measure; it enhances children's health and wellbeing, encourages healthy growth, and reduces hospital admissions for obesity-related health issues or, on the other end of the scale, admissions for malnutrition. To give in to the false economy of reducing the money going to school meals, you are doing your schools and their students a huge disservice; with rising childhood obesity levels and food poverty, school meals are more important than ever in our society.

Once, all school food was provided by local councils. These days, schools have much greater freedom to decide who should do their catering, with many choosing to hire private companies or bring the service in-house. Nevertheless, local authorities remain big-hitters in the world of school food. They can help set the tone by encouraging schools to prioritise food, and they still provide 56% of all school meals and manage contracts for a further 18% of school meals.

- *The School Food Plan*

For more information, visit the School Food Plan website <http://www.schoolfoodplan.com>

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Recycling and litter: Flexibility is the key to change

Zero Waste Scotland tell us about their latest moves towards tackling litter and increasing levels of recycling – and they have some great new ways to help local authorities, too.

Our mission at Zero Waste Scotland is to help drive behaviour change, to make better use of our resources for the economy and planet. Through our process of gathering evidence to inform our interventions, we've discovered that sometimes very different approaches are needed. This has emerged starkly in the approaches to increasing recycling and tackling litter, which we presented at the APSE Scotland Fleet, Waste and Grounds Seminar at Aviemore in May.

While nationwide consistency is the driving force behind moves to increase recycling when tackling litter, the evidence shows a more granular approach is likely to be successful. Scotland's national rate of recycling is currently hovering around 43 per cent. We all want that to be higher to maximise the economic and practical potential of the materials, while cutting the amount we send to landfill and saving energy, water and other finite, valuable resources.

Achieving greater consistency within recycling collections across Scottish council areas will, we believe, help improve the participation from citizens in our services. We know it will help remove confusion around the different systems in different local authority areas, where households currently have several different bins that vary from area to area in colour, size, type, and what you should put in them.

Making recycling easier is one of the main drivers behind the Household Recycling Charter and Code of

Practice, launched last year. But so too is the economic benefits of having more consistent services. By moving towards a consistent set of materials, we also expect trading conditions to be more favourable. Investing in high performing kerbside recycling, where sorting of materials is limited to higher quality streams, makes it more likely that we can keep and create jobs in Scotland. We have the best chance of creating employment at the point of collection, when the material is within the control of councils.

Alongside other policy measures and work being done to drive up quality and broker materials into the market, the Recycling Charter will help channel our valuable resources and provide the key to unlocking their value on a national scale. Things are already moving fast. We were delighted to welcome Falkirk as the first Charter signatory earlier this year and we've seen strong interest from a further group of local authorities.

It's interesting that while stimulating consumer action around recycling is all about nationwide consistency, the picture is different when it comes to tackling litter. Here, the evidence



shows targeted action at a micro-level, and tailoring messages to specific environments – from beaches and parks, to leisure centres and pubs – could be more effective than a one-size-fits-all approach. As the delivery body for the Scottish Government's litter strategy, Zero Waste Scotland is interested in what works. At APSE's Aviemore seminar, our litter expert Cath Wilson showcased a new range of tools aimed at helping stakeholders to really get down to the micro-level in tackling litter – all part of continuing to foster a preventative approach, rather than relying on increasingly unaffordable clean-ups.

We have spent the past few years building a body of evidence to inform our approach. What the evidence shows is that context, and local and personal factors are crucial when it comes to litter. Our Rapid Evidence Review of Littering Behaviour and Anti-Litter Policies (2013) suggested that interventions, including communications, should aim to target specific instances of littering. This should take into account activities, locations, and types of litter concerned, as well as aiming messages at specific audiences, and considering the most effective channels for getting those messages across.

Our 2015 report, Public Perceptions and Concerns around Litter, built on the rapid evidence review with qualitative research to dig deeper into how people perceive litter and littering behaviour. The results showed that people care more about litter when it's on their doorstep, in an area or situation they use regularly for leisure and recreation, and according to their understanding of the 'story' of why it is there.

In response to these findings, we have developed a range of free-to-use communications tools. These target specific people in specific places with a prevention message – from dog walkers on the beach, to shoppers in town centres, to sports team at leisure centres. These tools deliver messaging that should help to make people

stop and think before littering as they go about their daily lives.

The materials are not complete, so they may not be perfect, but we would like you to test them and we'd welcome your feedback.

You can download the toolkit at:

www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/LitterCommunicationsMaterials


Or, get in touch with our litter team via

Catherine.wilson@zerowastescotland.gov.uk

As always we'll be in regular contact with all stakeholders, as we continue to use an evidence-based, but innovative, and flexible approach to tailor our interventions to get the most impact.

Zero Waste Scotland is there to support councils who sign up and we encourage any who are interested to get in touch with us. Find out more on our website www.zerowastescotland.org.uk or contact Sector Manager Andrew.Dick@zerowastescotland.org.uk

Zero Waste Scotland: To learn more, go to the Zero Waste Scotland website <http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk> or email Claire Munro on claire.munro@zerowastescotland.org.uk.



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Moving towards a self-sustaining future

Having never attended an APSE event before, Lucy Fleming from the Bristol Scrutiny Team didn't quite know what to expect from our recent South/South West Policy Seminar. She tells us what she learned from the day, and shares some of the speakers' trade secrets.

I arrived at the seminar with some time to spare. For those who don't know Bristol well, M Shed is a great venue. It's a museum situated right on the harbour side, with a fantastic view over the city from floor-to-ceiling windows. I admired the view – not for the first time – whilst anticipating the beginning of my first APSE event.

Though I could easily write all about the fascinating and innovative ideas that emerged from each of these speakers' presentations, I'll limit myself to talking about five of the speakers. For anybody who wants to read more, all the presentations from this seminar are available on the APSE website, under the Previous Seminars page.

After a warm welcome from APSE's Chief Executive Paul O'Brien, Mike Wiltshire from the Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) was first to take the floor. Mike pointed out that the whole devolution process was very un-Whitehall and there was therefore no real precedent. He stressed that devolution negotiations should be seen as an ongoing dialogue which local authorities must take the initiative in driving. He stressed that an initial "no" may not mean that there will not be room for negotiation in future, and if councils are passionate about their ideas they need to be prepared to bring these ideas back to the table time and

again. Authorities proposing more challenging governance reform (including mayoral models) with clear propositions and developed business cases have had more success in negotiating successfully.

Coming from a scrutiny background myself, I was looking forward to hearing from Jacqui McKinlay, Executive Director from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS). Jacqui said that scrutiny arrangements were intrinsic to the devolution deals being agreed, so it seems very clear that scrutiny is here to stay. However, the CfPS did have serious concerns about the lack of transparency of the process which, it was suggested, could set the tone for how devolution would work in future. Another issue discussed was how decision-making below Mayoral level will be carried out. This showed that the importance, therefore, placed upon local areas to develop their own robust governance and accountability frameworks could not be clearer.

After a very enjoyable lunch, with opportunities to network, Michael Lockwood from the London Borough of Harrow spoke about commercialism as a method for transformation and change.

Michael set the scene for his presentation by underlining how reduced levels of funding have left many councils requiring more efficiency than ever before. However, he believes that they have now been “re-structured to death” and that, ultimately, the next three to four years of funding cuts will be very challenging.

One of the key messages from Michael’s presentation was that councils need to be self-aware and, as such, sell the services they excel at, whilst buying in the ones they are more likely to struggle with. Interestingly, he encouraged councils to ‘win our share of the market from the private sector’. He suggested that a cultural change is desperately needed within local authorities, and a space should be opened up where new ideas are encouraged and innovation is celebrated. A very noteworthy example was Harrow’s ‘Project Phoenix’ that has resulted in a cost-neutral grounds maintenance service. Whilst setting up this project, they completely restructured their staff and services, and realised that they had excellent members of staff with skills that weren’t being fully utilised. Fully utilising their staff, they have now expanded some environmental services, enabling them to provide a substantial annual income for the council.

Our next speaker was Mark Bradbury from Southampton City Council, who provided a thought provoking presentation about generating income by means of property assets. Mark’s advice to other authorities was to do this whilst we still have the financial resources. He said a property investment strategy is a good idea though it is vital this is backed with political will, and he stressed that it was important to differentiate whether it was for income or regeneration purposes; it is essential to have separate strategies for each one. According to Mark, a trading

company isn’t always required, however if, for instance, you were building properties to rent out privately, it would make sense to have a separate company to protect the rest of your business from investors.

The final speaker of the day was Andy Mudd, Head of APSE Solutions. He gave a thought-provoking presentation about Trading, Charging and Income Generation, highlighting recent research showing 40% of councils are now undertaking more than £1 million worth of trading each year, which shows how important it has become that councils look to achieve self-sufficiency. Trading, it would seem, has now become a must for local authorities to close the funding gap. Although it was pointed out that trading alone will not be enough.

Andy recommended that we first identify what we’re best at and where we want to focus, then checking that we have the correct powers to trade. He also pointed out that it was important to look at key strategic issues, such as any synergies or conflicts with existing corporate objectives, resource availability, and market position.

I found attending this seminar to be highly beneficial. The programme covered some of the most pressing issues and difficult decisions that local authorities are currently contending with. In fact, I left the event relatively upbeat, armed with a range of ideas and newfound knowledge that I could take back to discuss with my colleagues. Overall, the seminar has left me optimistic that we can help move our councils towards a more self-sustaining, brighter future.

For more information, contact Lucy Fleming, Bristol Scrutiny Team, on lucy.fleming@bristol.gov.uk.



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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

Parliamentary launches

'Homes for All' was launched at the House of Commons on 12 May with the help of Helen Hayes MP and a panel of speakers which included APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien, Kate Henderson, Chief Executive of the TCPA, Paul Nichols, Divisional Director Regeneration Enterprise and Planning, Harrow Council and Sean Clark, Director of Corporate Finance at Thurrock Council. The packed event led to a huge amount of press coverage and support for APSE's approach to deliver more and better homes.

This followed a launch on the 26 April **'Sustainable Local Government Finance and Liveable Local Areas; Can we survive to 2020?'** which questions the viability of frontline liveability services provided by local councils in light of ongoing austerity measures. The parliamentary launch was led by the report's lead authors; Dr Peter Kenway of NPI, Theo Barry Borne of NPI and Paul O'Brien of APSE and Leader of Norwich Council Cllr Alan Waters. To order research copies, go to www.apse.org.uk and click on the Research page.

Future Policy Forum

On 4 May 2016, Principal Advisor Rob Bailey was a keynote speaker at the EDUCatering Forum 2016. In front of School Catering managers from across the UK, his presentation entitled 'Schools Policy and Money - Where do we go from here?' covered the funding regime for schools and specifically that for Universal Infant Free School Meals. Using APSE's performance data, Rob deconstructed the financial makeup of school meal delivery and looked at this in the context of the size of school required to breakeven on the current £2.30 per meal Government funding.

He also covered procurement law, ahead of the recently announced move to all Academy schools in England, although correctly predicted that the policy was likely to be relaxed, as it subsequently was 2 days later.

Money doesn't grow on trees

APSE Performance Networks held their Money doesn't grow on trees! Controlling cost, quality and productivity in environmental services event on 16th June in London. The theme was 'Measure for change' and speakers looked at how performance management can help local authorities to identify achievable cost savings and innovative approaches to service delivery. It focused in on environmental services with case study examples on streetscene and public realm services, parks and green spaces, and waste and recycling.

The MJ Awards

APSE sponsored the Best Council Service award at this year's MJ Awards, which was won by Wolverhampton Council for its leisure brand, WV Active. APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien had the honour of presenting them with the award alongside comedian Dara O'Briain. Congratulations Wolverhampton!

UNISON in Brighton

APSE attended the UNISON conference in Brighton to showcase its' services to local councils throughout the UK. Mo Baines, APSE's Head of Communication and Coordination, addressed a fringe event on Education and called for schools and academies to make more use of local authority services; using public to public collaboration such as the Hamburg exception to allow local authority catering, grounds and cleaning services, to work perfectly lawfully with schools and academies. Mo stressed this was a win-win enabling head teachers to get on with education in the knowledge that schools and academies could be well served by excellent council services well placed to deliver in local areas.

Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors

APSE's Andy Mudd, Head of APSE Solutions, addressed the ALDC conference in Birmingham in June hosting a fringe event on Sustainable Local Government Finance. The Fringe event was well received by delegates who debated the future of local government including the sustainability of council tax as a source of funding and the changes to business rates. A key question raised was how do we ensure a distributive system of local finance to ensure local needs are reflected in the new financial climate?

Chester High Streets

APSE Northern hosted its Annual General Meeting and Seminar in Chester on the theme of 'High Streets, Public Realm and Regeneration: Joining the dots for local economic success' with key note speakers including Chris Renahan, Economic Growth & Spatial Development Manager, of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council who explained the investment led approach to regenerating Stockton's town centre. Gary Clifton, Major Events Manager, Sheffield City Council went on to discuss with delegates the importance of culture and events in attracting city centre footfall and the support this brings to local businesses. Paul Tripp, Environmental Services Group Manager, East Riding of Yorkshire Council explained their approach to excellence in the delivery of public realm to attract visitors and businesses in the local area, as well as making the area an attractive place to live and work. Paul also emphasised a strong performance culture within the council.

Wales

Wales Commercialisation Seminar

APSE recently held an insightful seminar entitled 'Balancing the Books' which addressed the powers and options for local authorities to generate income, which is particularly relevant in time of ongoing budget cuts and austerity measures.

Held at Llandrindod Wells, Powys, speakers addressed senior local authority managers on how to develop strategies for income generation, whilst being aware of remaining within legal boundaries. Local authority assets were also considered with regards to their income generation potential.

Scotland

Scotland AGM

APSE Scotland held its Annual General Meeting on Friday 3 June in Glasgow. Chairs & Secretaries of the Scottish groups provided the meeting with an update of the work done throughout the year. The AGM also decided to introduce a new Scottish Commercialisation Network advisory group with successful nominations for the position of Chair & Secretary coming from Dumfries & Galloway Council (Cllr Archie

Dryburgh as Chair, and Ronnie Dempster as Secretary). Louise Melville, Principal Advisor, and Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive of APSE, presented the work of the Association including the current research programme highlighting some of the Scottish publications which have included the Solar PV toolkit and the recent elected member study "The Final Piece of the Jigsaw: elected members, everyday politics and local democracy in Scotland".

Nottingham City Council also made the trip to Glasgow to speak about their journey towards commercialisation, highlighting some of the aspirations and achievements of the Council to date. Finally, Professor Steve Griggs of De Montfort University led a discussion on APSE Scotland's newest piece of research which will look to examine the changing roles and relationships of councillors, officers and communities, in a changing political landscape. For further information on how to get involved in the Scottish advisory groups or the most current piece of research please contact Louise Melville, Principal Advisor for Scotland on 01698 459051 or email Lmelville@apse.org.uk

Aviemore

Scotland's biggest Fleet, Waste & Grounds event returned to Aviemore (17-20 May) with over 130 delegates from across 30 of the 32 local authorities in Scotland and over 110 exhibition stands.

APSE chief executive Paul O'Brien, presenting the Best Council Service Award, along with Dara O'Briain, to Wolverhampton City Council





Brexit: The implications for Local Government

APSE recognises that many local government regulations and functions, whilst set within a UK legislative framework, are also governed by European Union regulations. Whilst many may continue unchanged in the short term, and during the exit negotiations with the EU, local government must be fairly represented within a national public service context.

APSE is calling upon the Government and all political parties to ensure local government services are protected. A future domestic framework, governing matters such as freedoms and powers for local councils, procurement regulations, environmental protection regulations, employment matters for the local government workforce and, most importantly, council budgets are treated fairly with the full involvement of the local government sector. In developing alternative plans, policies and any necessary legislative changes, local government needs to be fully consulted.

Speaking about the referendum results, Paul O'Brien, APSE Chief Executive, said "It is not for APSE to judge the outcome of the referendum. The British people have voted for change, however we must not allow the results of the referendum to bring a further assault on local government finances. The ship is only just steady from years of austerity budgets and now is not the time to crush the progress that local councils are making in bringing about stable local government services."

APSE National Chair, Councillor Martin Reilly, said "We now need a UK-wide and sector representative local government forum to work with Central Government on responding to the EU exit. Such a forum needs to be fully representative of the whole of local government and should be one which understands the full intricacies of local council services and the interface with EU regulations. Only then will we be able to ensure the best possible outcomes for local councils and the communities they serve."

Further notes

Councils are governed by EU regulations in relation to public procurement contracts including complex regulations for contracts supplying goods and services.

Certain council operations are run through companies known as 'Teckal' companies, which are currently governed by such regulations which relate to council trading activities.

Councils must also comply with EU regulations on environmental matters, which capture a broad range of local services ranging from recycling targets through to the use of weed control substances in local parks.

Councils must also comply with EU-led employment protection matters, such as agency workers' rights, equalities matters, and the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment Regulations (TUPE), which operates when council staff are transferred to different service providers under contracts.

Local councils have faced huge reductions in budgets since 2010, and could face further funding cuts if there is an emergency budget or measures taken to stabilise the economy following market shocks at the UK exit from the EU.

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