

apse annual seminar 2026

Local Government on the Frontline

Meeting Challenges and Supporting Communities

DISCOUNT
for APSE
members

Wednesday 16 and Thursday 17 September

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Liverpool

Kindly sponsored by



Conference programme

Day one: Wednesday 16th

Exhibition and innovation hub

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

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

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

APSE Performance Networks:

Largest voluntary public sector benchmarking service

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

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

Exhibition and innovation hub: specialist local authority suppliers

11:30 Registration, coffee and exhibition hub

A rolling lunch will be served from 12:00

13:00 Plenary session one

Welcome address by Cllr Liam Robinson, Leader of Liverpool City Council

Chief Executive Challenge Panel

Chaired by Mo Baines, APSE Chief Executive, this panel brings together chief executives from across the UK to examine the most pressing issues facing local government.

- The financial, organisational and political pressures shaping the sector.
- Practical insight from chief executives leading councils through change.

14:15 Coffee and Exhibition viewing

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

14:45 Session two

Frontline roundtable discussions

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

Strategies for Communities

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

- Funding pressures and the future of local government finance.
- Local government reorganisation and its implications for services.
- Economic development and the creation of resilient communities.

Cleaner Communities

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

- Tackling waste crime, fly-tipping and environmental offences.
- Improving recycling performance and public participation.
- Strengthening street cleansing and environmental enforcement.

Facilitated by: Bonni Jee, Principal Advisor and Fiona Sutton-Wilson, Head of APSE Training

Future-proofing Communities

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

- Retrofitting homes and addressing fuel poverty.
- Preparing services and communities for extreme weather.
- Building long-term resilience into local plans and investment.

Facilitated by: Phil Brennan, Head of APSE Energy and James Jefferson, Principal Advisor

Healthier Communities

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

- Protecting community wellbeing through accessible local services.
- Responding to biodiversity and environmental pressures.

- Managing ageing assets, energy costs and constrained budgets.

Facilitated by: Matt Ellis, Principal Advisor

Community Infrastructure

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

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

Facilitated by: Debbie Johns, Head of Performance Networks and Abi Ademiluyi, Principal Advisor

Kindly sponsored by Enterprise Mobility

15:15 Coffee and Exhibition viewing

16:00 Session three

Keynote address:

Communicating Change with Confidence: Leading Through Uncertainty in Local Government

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

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

Rene Power - APSE Associate

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

René has extensive local government experience, including delivering APSE's nationwide commercialisation

Conference programme

programme and he's worked with several UK Councils.

His work helps organisations create compelling stories and develop practical, meaningful communications strategies.

APSE Annual General Meeting 2026

16.30 Annual General Meeting

17.15 Close, refreshments and exhibition hub

19.00 Evening reception

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

- Enjoy a hot supper in a memorable city-centre venue.
- Relax with light entertainment after the day's programme.
- Connect informally with colleagues from across local government.
- Visit the rooftop garden with views of Liverpool's historic landmarks.

Day two: Thursday 17th

09.00 Registration and exhibition viewing

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

10.00 Session Four

Growth: What Is It Good For?

In association with the University of Staffordshire

Leading academics **Professor Steve Griggs and Professor Mark Gregory** present their latest research into economic policy, local growth, devolution, rural economies, jobs and skills.

Island Economies: A Just Transition

Professor Griggs will apply his research on growth and environmental conditions in island economies to the challenges facing rural areas.

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

Driving Forward Growth: Local Authorities, Place Leadership and Sustainable Economies

Professor Gregory will examine the role of councils in shaping local economies and leading sustainable growth.

- Understanding the relationship between growth and devolution.
- Identifying approaches that work at a local level.
- Considering whether national policy places too much emphasis on cities.

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

11.30 Coffee and exhibition viewing

12.00 Session Five
Showcasing Innovation

Harnessing Data for Climate Action

- Using data to deliver measurable environmental improvements.
 - Targeting interventions that balance cost, savings, sustainability and pupil comfort.
 - Turning robust evidence and collaboration into a recipe for success.
- Elaine Smith, Senior Quality, Energy and Sustainability Manager, Northern Ireland Education Authority and Maria Diffley, Co-founder, SustainIQ

Creating an Urban Forest for People and Nature

- Growing Cardiff's urban forest across the city.
 - Delivering benefits for people, nature and local communities.
 - Harnessing community involvement to create lasting impact.
- Chloe Jenkins, Project Manager for Coed Caerdydd, Cardiff City Council

Sustainable School Meals Roadmap

- Achieving significant reductions in carbon emissions.
 - Increasing pupil awareness, participation and engagement.
 - Embedding continuous improvement and wider community benefit.
- Louise Gillam, Dietitian, Torfaen County Borough Council

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

13.15 Lunch and exhibition viewing

14.15 Session Six
Showcasing innovation

The Most Advanced MRF in the UK - A Sector First

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

Conference programme

Abbey Lodge: Conversion to Temporary Accommodation

- Turning an empty property into safe stepping-stone homes for people in urgent need.
- Replacing costly bed-and-breakfast placements with better support, value and stability.
- Expanding from 49 to 95 apartments and bringing a previously vacant site back into use.

Karen Brierley and Mazer Hussain, Derby City Council

Transforming Lives Together: The Activity Champion Network

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

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

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

15.15 Liverpool Visit or Networking Session

Delegates can choose between an arranged visit to an iconic Liverpool landmark or an informal networking session with colleagues.

- Discover one of Liverpool's best-known landmarks on an organised visit.
- Exchange ideas and build connections with colleagues from across the sector.
- A final opportunity to speak with participating suppliers and exhibitors.

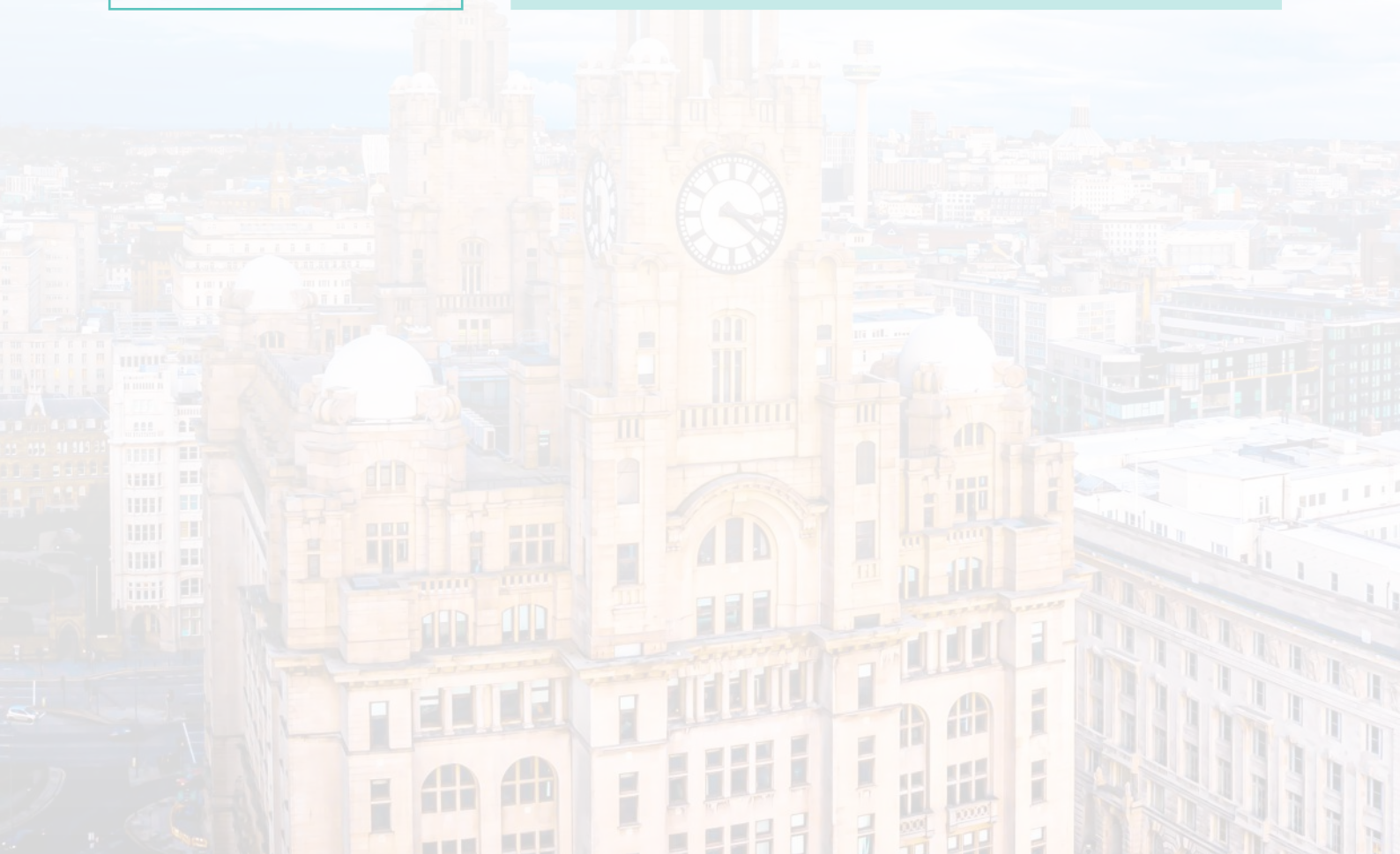
16.30 - Seminar Close

APSE Annual Service Awards Charity Dinner 2026 Crowne Plaza Hotel

19:00 Pre-dinner reception
19:30 Service awards dinner
Carriages at midnight

In aid of Parkinson's UK

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



Seminar Information

About the Event

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

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

Frontline services

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

Who should attend?

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

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

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

Booking information

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

Thank you to our overall event sponsor

