

December 2025



Dear Colleague,

**'Delivering on Local Growth'. A FREE in-person symposium event for APSE member councils
Incorporating APSE Full Association Meeting 2026.**

Date: Friday 23 January 2026
Venue: The Birmingham Conference & Events Centre, Hill Street, Birmingham, B5 4EW
Time: 10:00 Registration and Coffee for a 10:30 start ending with a networking lunch at 13.00

As an APSE member you are invited to attend our upcoming FREE event "**Delivering on Local Growth**". This is a **FREE** to attend in-person symposium style event providing you with the opportunity to interact with our expert panel speakers.

The Symposium sessions will include: -

- **The APSE / Survation Public Opinion Poll findings including public attitudes to council spending priorities and what local growth means to them**
- **A Local Growth Panel with renowned economist Professor Mark Gregory, and public policy specialist Professor Steve Griggs of the Centre for Business, Innovation and the Regions, University of Staffordshire**
- **Jonathan Tew, Chief Executive South Tyneside Council, on delivering as a local anchor institution through new skills opportunities, green jobs and regeneration**
- **A discussion panel on housing delivery and its role in growth and jobs.**

Lunch will be provided at the rise of the meeting.

A short business meeting of the Full Association is incorporated into the symposium which will provide APSE member councils with an opportunity to be receive an update on APSE and have their say

On behalf of APSE's National Chair, Cllr Tracey Dixon, the APSE team looks forward to seeing you on the day.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mo Baines". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mo Baines, Chief Executive



Birmingham Hotels

Holiday Inn Birmingham City Centre by IHG

Smallbrook Queensway, Birmingham B5 4EW

Website linked [here.](#)

Radisson Blu Hotel, Birmingham

12 Holloway Circus, St. Chads Tunnel, Birmingham B1 1BT

Website linked [here.](#)

ibis Birmingham New Street Station

Arcadian Centre, 21 Ladywell Walk, Birmingham B5 4ST

Website linked [here.](#)

easyHotel Birmingham City Centre

81-91 John Bright St, Birmingham B1 1BL

Website linked [here.](#)

Travelodge Birmingham Central Bull Ring

Upper Dean St, Birmingham B5 4SG

Website linked [here.](#)

Malmaison Birmingham

1 Wharfside St, Birmingham B1 1RD

Website linked [here.](#)

Premier Inn Birmingham City Centre (New St Station) hotel

Exchange Buildings, Stephenson Pl, Birmingham B2 4NH

Website linked [here.](#)

Stay Kula Birmingham - New Street Station

40 Severn St, Birmingham B1 1GB

Website linked [here.](#)

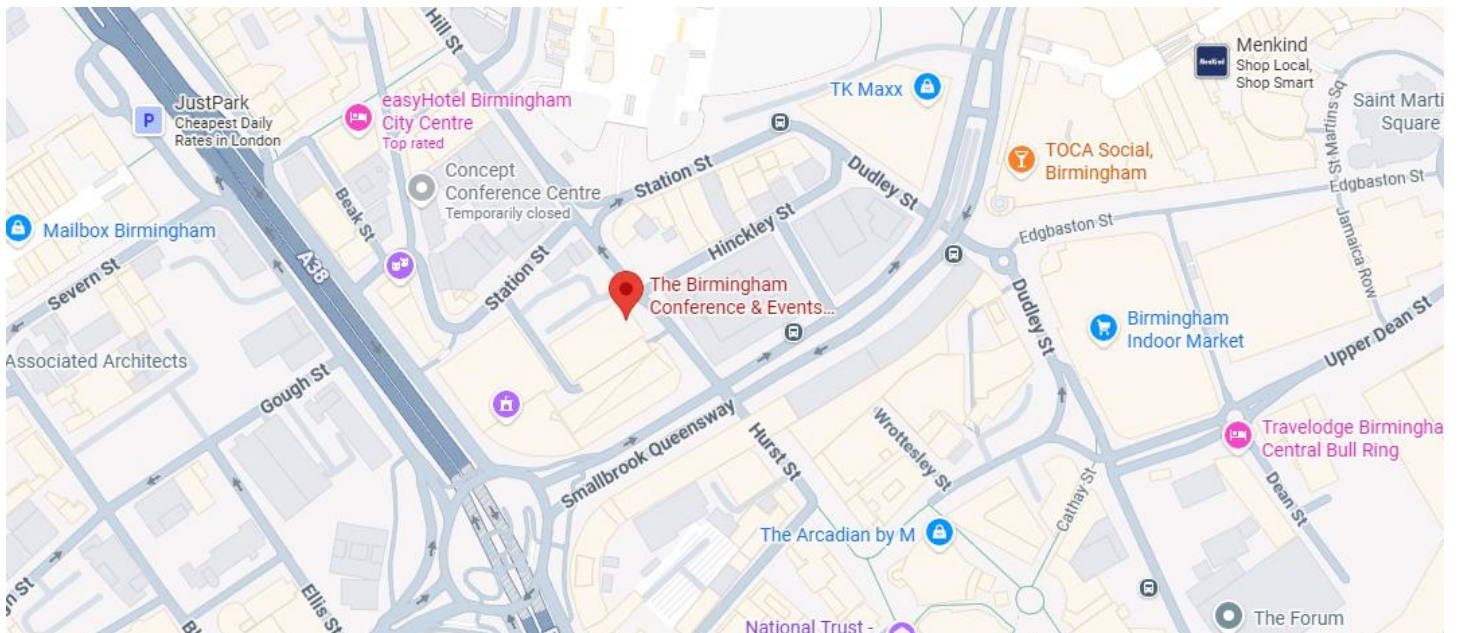


Full Association meeting

To be held on Friday 23 January 2026.

Birmingham Conference & Events Centre Hill Street, Birmingham, B5 4EW

Meeting Venue Map





Full Association Meeting 2026

Meeting papers



Association for Public Service Excellence

Full Association Meeting

Friday 23 January 2026

The Birmingham Conference & Events Centre, Hill Street Birmingham B5 4EW

APSE Member Symposium 'Delivering on Growth at a Local Level.'

Commencing at 10.00 with Coffee and Registration for a 10.30 start ending with a networking lunch at 13.00

Agenda

10:30 Chair's Opening Remarks – Cllr Tracey Dixon, APSE National Chair

10.30 -11.45 Symposium 1: Public Perceptions and the gnarly issue of delivering on growth

What do the public view as priorities for their local area? And how do they interpret 'growth' compared to chancellors and politicians? Mo Baines, APSE Chief Executive

The annual APSE / Survation opinion poll tracks the publics' views on local public services, tax and spend priorities, and, this year looks at the public perception on growth and what it means to them.

This session will highlight key findings to inform the narrative presented by local councils and councillors and differences in public perceptions and priorities.

New Research on Local Economic Growth. Professor Mark Gregory and Professor Steven Griggs, Dr Ryan Fox, University of Staffordshire

Economic growth is increasingly positioned as the key enabler of efforts by government to reduce regional inequalities, improve public services, advance social mobility and drive forward innovation and investment. However local councils face the challenges of delivering local economic leadership in high demand/low resource environments, characterised by institutional churn, fragmented governance, and an over-dependence on physical rather than social regeneration and renewal.

New research between APSE and the University of Staffordshire explores these vexed issues and asks how economic growth succeed and make a difference at a local level?

Panel Q&A

11.45-12.00 Comfort Break and Coffee

12.00 – 12.45 Symposium 2 : Theory into Practice. The role of local councils as anchor institutions

Delivering a new college for skills and jobs and supporting town centre regeneration with Jonathan Tew, Chief Executive, South Tyneside Council

South Tyneside Council has taken an anchor institution role in supporting the development of a new college and the role that they play in regeneration of the high street and town centre. Moreover, the council is supporting new green jobs, people with complex needs and developing the means to address worklessness.

Further speakers will discuss the role of housing and construction in local economic growth.

Panel Q&A

12:45 Full Association Business

APSE Chief Executive, Mo Baines will present the following agenda items for the meetings approval:

1. Minutes of the Full Association held on the Friday 24 January 2025
2. APSE Report – An update presentation on the work of APSE including research, the new APSE Synergy Trading Company and business plan development for 2026-2029.
3. APSE Budget 2026-2027 – recommendation of APSE National Council

13:00 Networking Lunch

Lunch will be provided at the rise of the Symposium and the Full Association formal business. Delegates are encouraged to stay for lunch and make the most of this networking opportunity with colleagues from across the UK. This event is **FREE** to APSE member councils. As this meeting carries formal APSE Business for its' members it is not open to non-member councils.



Association for Public Service Excellence Full Association Meeting

Friday 24 January 2025

Apex Grassmarket Hotel, 31-35 Grassmarket, Edinburgh, EH1 2HS

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

Cllr Archie Dryburgh – APSE's National Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting both in person and online.

2. Session 1: Finance and Local Government Reform

Mo Baines, APSE's Chief Executive provided a presentation discussing the Finance Settlement across the UK, the areas of pressure and what the white paper proposals will mean for the UK local government sector, staff transfers, service delivery and councillor numbers.

Glynn Humphries, APSE Associate, provided an operational overview of the changes and the challenges that will result from reorganisation including the impact on frontline service delivery including the people, government and legislative challenges.

3. Session 2: Devolution and Growth

Professor Mark Gregory and Professor Steven Griggs from the University of Staffordshire discussed devolution and growth. They discussed the impact of devolution to the Scottish parliament and lessons to be learned from the transfer of power.

Strategic, economic and political considerations were explored in advance of the potential devolution along with discussions around democratic accountability and the potential reduction in councillors. Prof Mark Gregory discussed how linking operational delivery to the growth agenda will create economic improvements.

4. Developing a proposal for a new unitary

Adrian Phillips, Chief Executive, Preston City Council gave a presentation on what the strategic, economic and application considerations are for local democracy in local government reorganisation, discussing the impact within his own area of Preston, Lancashire.

5. Minutes of National Full Association Meeting – Friday 19 January 2024

Agreed

6. APSE Report – An update on the work of APSE

The Chief Executive gave a report back on activity across the whole organisation including: APSE Solutions who continue to trade in tough market conditions, however a vacancy has now been filled and further interim roles are set commence shortly; APSE Energy will conduct their first ever awards in February and membership activity continues to be strong; APSE Training has had a reduction in learners due to market saturation of Carbon literacy, however, new courses are being

developed to update the offering; Performance Networks has developed a new climate data set including developments to legacy data. APSE's trading company 'APSE Synergy' will launch in the new year, which has been developed as part of the risk review. APSE's networking meeting continue to attract good numbers. The new database has now been launched and bad debts are much lower than previous years due to excellent work by the finance team. 85% of National Council members have now completed the compulsory NED training which has also supported the risk mitigation developments.

7. Budget 2025/26 – An examination of APSE's budget 2025/26

The Chief Executive proposed a budget for the 2025/26 financial year, discussing the changes required to accommodate the trading company and working capital requirements. Additional expenditure, including the NJC payrises, continued increase in goods and services and sub-inflation subscription rises were also discussed.

A vote was taken to approve the budget.

The budget was approved.

8. The APSE Business Plan 2023-2026 and ESG framework – Progress Report.

Following a comprehensive risk review, the recommendation of implementing a trading company, to provide the Association with a veil of incorporation has now commenced. No staff will transfer to the company, however charges will be made for services provided.

A discussion took place on the Thurrock matter including details of correspondence that has been sent by APSE but is still awaiting a response. The National Chair reinforced the position that Mo, as Chief Executive of the secretariat, should be the conduit for correspondence. The National Chair proposed that an extraordinary meeting be scheduled with National Council members to discuss the route forward.

It was agreed that a meeting be scheduled to discuss the route forward with the Thurrock correspondence.

9. Close of Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE

In attendance		
Title	Name	Authority
	Mo Baines	APSE
	Lindsay Airey	APSE
Title	Name	Authority
Alderman	Alan McDowell	Ards and North Down Borough Council
	Donald Balsillie	Clackmannanshire Council
Cllr	Archie Dryburgh	Dumfries and Galloway Council
Cllr	Lynne Short	Dundee City Council
Cllr	Graham McAndrew	East Herts District Council
Cllr	Judy Hamilton	Fife Council
	Mike Hill	Gedling Borough Council
Cllr	John Clarke MBE	Gedling Borough Council
Cllr	Jacqui Burnett	Luton Borough Council
Cllr	Adrian Phillips	Preston Council
Cllr	Andrew Parrott	Perth and Kinross
	Glynn Humphries	APSE Associate

APOLOGIES

Title	Name	Authority
	Samantha Dennis	Derby Council
	Martin Reilly	Derry & Strabane City Council
Cllr	Paul Bellotti	East Riding of Yorkshire
	Colin Rowland	Isle of Wight
Cllr	Terry Andrews	Newry Mourne and Down District Council
Cllr	Simon Letts	Southampton City Council
Cllr	Mark Wilson	Vale of Glamorgan
	Samantha Dennis	Derby Council
	Martin Reilly	Derry & Strabane City Council