

# Data-Driven Decisions: From Benchmarking to Better Services

The UK's largest local government benchmarking conference



**Thursday 4 and Friday 5 December 2025**

Village Hotel Blackpool, East Park Drive, Blackpool FY3 8LL



9:00 Delegate registration

## 10:30 Session 1: Insight and opinions

### Neighbourhood services in European cities – how are they performing?

- Benchmarking urban cleanliness
- Encouraging proper citizen behaviour
- Recognising best practices

**Julie Eeckhoudt, Association of Cities for Urban Cleanliness (AVPU), France**

### RAF – how do they manage performance and risk?

- Performance reporting and structure
- Effective risk management
- Culture of performance in the RAF

**Wing Commander Frank Gmitrowicz and Sqn Leader Steve Spreckley, Insights and Analytics (I&A) team, RAF**

### What's happening in front line services?

- Latest performance issues affecting Local Government
- New Local Government Outcomes Framework in England
- Recent developments

**Debbie Johns, Head of performance networks, APSE**

### What do the public think about public service spending and the economy?

- Trends in public satisfaction
- What do taxpayers value?
- Key messages for decision makers

**Damian Lyons-Lowe, Chief Executive, Survation**

11:45 Coffee & Networking Break

## 12:15 Thematic Forums

### Forum 1: APSE service award winners 2025 – Best Health and Wellbeing Initiative

- Community partnerships and innovative programming
- Latest advances in leisure, libraries and parks

**Iain Varah, Chief Executive, Vision Redbridge Culture and Leisure and Debbie Johns, Head of Performance Networks, APSE**

### Forum 2: Monitoring and evaluating climate and environment action

- Demonstrating progress in reducing emissions against the carbon budget
- Improving adaptive capacity in relation to the changing climate

**John Atkinson, Climate and Energy Manager, Tameside MBC; Glynn Humphries, APSE associate and Phil Brennan, Head of Energy, APSE**

### Forum 3: Employment Rights Bill: Are you ready?

- What does this mean in practice?
- How can front line services prepare for this?

**Laura C McHugh, Partner, Forbes Solicitors and Lindsay Airey, Head of Business Resources, APSE**

### Forum 4: New Local Government Outcomes Framework for England

- What are the proposals?
- When and how will they be implemented?

**Jack Purchase, Head of Local Accountability, Local Government Accountability and Outcomes Framework Team, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) and Mo Baines, APSE Chief Executive**

### Forum 5: Re-organisation: Lessons from North Northamptonshire

- Preparing for becoming a unitary
- Experiences from the journey
- Lessons learnt and challenges overcome

**Cllr Mark Pengelly, North Northamptonshire Council and Fiona Sutton-Wilson, Head of Training, APSE**

13:00 Lunch and Networking

## 14:00 Workshops

### Workshop A: Building cleaning and catering

- Recruitment and retention
- Sustainability and environmental improvements
- Breakfast clubs and holiday feeding
- Barriers to free school meal take up
- Best practice case studies

**Anne Goldie, South Lanarkshire Council; Hayley Jones, Denbighshire Council; John Feeney, East Renfrewshire Council; Vickie Hacking, Principal Advisor, APSE and Kate Evans, APSE associate**

### Workshop B: Building maintenance (housing and non-housing)

- Apprentice programmes
- Charging arrangements and processes for work carried out for Housing Repairs Service
- Digitalisation
- Cladding Remediation Programme
- Dampness and mould

**Neil MacGregor, Fife Council; Lindsay Airey, Head of Business Resources, APSE and Colin McInnes, APSE associate**

### Workshop C: Cemetery and crematorium services

- Meeting the communities' expectations with reducing budgets
- Fees and charges for burials and cremations
- Working with other authorities about land for cemeteries
- Memorial inspection safety tool
- Best practice case studies

**Andy Bond, Wigan Council; Ellen Millar, South Lanarkshire Council; Fiona Sutton-Wilson, Head of Training, APSE and Matt Miller, Executive Consultant, APSE**

### Workshop D: Parks, street cleansing and streetscene

- Is your workforce productive?
- Income generation
- Enforcement, fixed penalty notices and flytipping
- Biodiversity and sustainability
- Digitalisation

**Andy Rogan, Huntingdonshire District Council; Debbie Sutton, Chief Officer, Highland Council; Matt Ellis, Principal Advisor, APSE and Dave Henrys, APSE associate**



### Workshop E: Refuse collection, recycling and transport

- Transformation and service change
- Simpler recycling, extended producer responsibility
- Decarbonisation
- Driver safety – good management of driver behaviour
- Transport enforcement and compliance

**John Birch, Lancashire County Council; Ann-Marie Lindsley and Michelle Sherlock, Cheshire East Council; Bonni Jee, Principal Advisor, APSE; Peter Kirkbride, APSE associate; Pete Johnson, APSE associate and Andy Derbyshire, Senior Data Analyst, APSE**

### Workshop F: Roads/highways, winter maintenance and street lighting

- Sustainability and energy efficiency in highways and street lighting
- Best practice case studies
- Environment issues including flooding
- Digitalisation within the sector
- Effective management of budgets

**Paul Binks, Lancashire County Council; Martin Barton, Wigan Council; Louise Melville, Principal Advisor, APSE and Andy Martin, APSE associate**

### Workshop G: Sports and leisure

- Securing the future of leisure
- Moving Communities collaboration
- Evidencing impact through data collection
- Best practice case studies
- How to best position Public Leisure within the evolving active wellbeing approach

**Rowell Gordon, Sport England; Sally Cheeseman, 4Global; Iain Varah, Vision Redbridge Culture and Leisure; Tim Hicks, East Riding of Yorkshire; Abi Ademiluyi, Principal Advisor, APSE; Ryan McNally, Senior Data Analyst, APSE and Mark Allman, APSE associate**

### Workshop H – Climate change and sustainability

- Sustainable Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan
- Community engagement
- Carbon and energy projects
- Climate adaptation
- Findings from the new benchmarking module

**Tom Guilbert-Newell, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council; Chloe Cox, Climate Change Officer, Wyre Borough Council; John Atkinson, Climate and Energy Manager, Tameside MBC; Glynn Humphries, APSE Associate; Phil Brennan, Head of Energy, APSE; James Jefferson, Principal Advisor, APSE.**

17:00 Seminar close

## Evening Programme

The prestigious performance networks awards are a high-profile occasion where both the best performing authorities and the most improved are awarded for their achievements. There are dedicated awards for most service areas and finalists are selected based on those authorities who have participated in performance networks

**19:00 Pre-dinner drinks**

**19:30 Performance networks dinner**

**21:30 Performance networks awards**

APSE is proud to once again be supporting Parkinson's UK as our event charity this year and hopes to add to the many thousands raised at our awards in recent years for this vital charity.



## Friday 5 December

### 10:00 Session 2: Use of technology

**Digitalisation and use of AI within local government services**

**Ben Cheetham, Programme Director for Local Digital, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)**

### 10:30 Panel discussion

**What's in store for local government front-line services?**

**Chair Mo Baines, Chief Executive, APSE**

Climate change, energy and net zero

**Patrick Allcorn, Head of Local Net Zero Delivery and Demonstration, DESNZ**

Workforce issues

**Lynne Morris, Regional Manager, Unison**

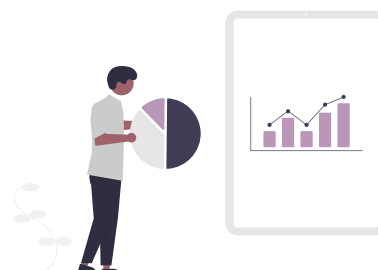
Local government finance

**Simon Allsop CPFA, Managing Consultant, CIPFA**

Managing demand and productivity

**Freddy Farias Arias, Economist and Lead Analyst at the Office for National Statistics (ONS)**

11:30 Lunch and seminar close





## Venue 2025

This year's performance networks seminar will be held at the Village Hotel Blackpool, East Park Drive, Blackpool, FY3 8LL.

Situated on the eastern edge of the town, the venue is easily accessible from the M55.

### Delegate Packages Exclusive of VAT

#### What's included?

*The delegate fee covers attendance on both days, delegate documentation, lunches, light refreshments, dinner and attendance at the performance networks award ceremony. Accommodation for Thursday 4 December is also included.*

Performance networks member delegates: **£260+VAT**

Non performance networks member delegates: **£430+VAT**

Private/non Local Government delegates: **£575+VAT**

### Accommodation Bookings allocated on 'first come, first served' basis

Accommodation for the night of Thursday 4 December is included in the delegate fee.

**Accommodation will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Please note that APSE cannot guarantee that bedrooms at the Village Hotel will be available for late bookings.**

Wednesday 3 December can be booked via APSE at £85+VAT per person using the event booking page.

Delegates wishing to book accommodation on any night other than 4 December must contact the hotel directly to do this.

Visit the APSE Events page to book [click here](#)

**CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY:** Reservation is a contract. Substitution of delegates is acceptable any time in writing by email to [iali@apse.org.uk](mailto:iali@apse.org.uk). Cancellations must be made in writing at least 10 working days before the event, and will incur a 20% administration fee. No refunds can be given for cancellations received less than 10 working days before the event or for nonattendance. In the unlikely event of cancellation by the organisers, liability will be restricted to the refund of fees paid. The organisers reserve the right to make changes to the programme, speakers or mode of delivery should this become necessary. If due to emergency action by UK Governments/Administrations or Public Agencies this event is postponed, for example for reasons of public health and safety, the organisers will transfer your booking to the replacement event or provide a credit voucher against a future event booking.

