UK Shared Business Services Ltd

Minutes of the 125th UKSBS Board Meeting held in Polaris House, Swindon, on Wednesday 28 January 2026 commencing at 9:15am

Attending:

Board Members:		**UKSBS Executives:**	
John Clarke, Chair	**JC**	Liz Creedy, Chief Operating Officer	**LC**
Richard Semple, Chief Executive	**RS**	Caroline Jenkins, Company Secretary	**CJ**
Carolyn Isaacs	**CI**	Victoria McMyn, Chief Corporate Delivery Officer	**VM**
Mike Baker	**MB**	David Walder, Chief Digital and Information Officer	**DW**
Cath Denholm	**CD**	John Arnott, Chief Strategy and People Officer	**JA**
Helen Mills	**HM**	Akos Csernus, Chief Transformation Officer	**AC**
Rosanna Wong	**RW**	**Observers / Guests:**	
		Richard Henshall, Matrix SRO	**RH**
		Bernie Marsh, Head of Commercial (item 2 only)	**BM**
		Deborah Gregg, Deloitte (for item 4 only)	**DG**
		Dan Hardy, Fusion Product Manager (for item 6 only)	**DH**

Apologies:

Leslie Gilbert	**LG**

1. WELCOME, MINUTES, ACTIONS & DECLARATIONS (SBS 065-25 and 066-25)

1.1 The Chair opened the meeting at 9.15am and welcomed all attendees.

1.2 Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2025 were approved as a correct record.

1.3 The Board received the action log and noted that separate deep dive sessions were to be arranged for the outstanding actions.

1.4 No new declarations of interest were made.

2. ORACLE LICENCE EXTENSION (SBS 002-26)

2.1 The Board received a detailed overview of the Oracle BPS licence position. Discussion focused on the benefits, risks and cost differentials of the two options being considered, taking into account the legal advice received.

2.2 The Board approved to invoke the option to extend the existing Oracle Business Process Services agreement [redacted].

3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT (SBS 003-26)

3.1 The CEO highlighted several operational, programme and wider government issues which together presented a period of upcoming uncertainty for UKSBS. The impacts of the civil service pension changes were considered from the perspectives of BAU service delivery, testing, and future pension reform.

3.2 The 2026/27 costs to clients were unclear, with a number of variables to consider. A worst-case plan was being developed.

3.2 The Board received an update on the pay settlement negotiations, noting that favourable changes to the in-year position provided an opportunity to reconsider the submission and increasing the spend envelope by 0.5% for junior staff. The Board agreed to this and to the development of an updated narrative and business case for Ministerial consideration, ensuring focus on lower-paid staff.

Actions:

- **The revised business case and Ministerial submission for the UKSBS pay mandate are to be submitted, and the outcome briefed to the March Board meeting.**

RW left the meeting, and DG joined the meeting

4. TRANSFORMATION PROGRESS (SBS 004-26)

4.1 The Board received an in-depth update on the status of the transformation programme, and the following points were noted:

- The key business transformation design products delivered within the past 12 months, current priorities, and key challenges against current timelines were outlined.
- End-to-end testing had been delayed due to data-sharing issues; a remediation plan, including proposals to delay implementation, had been received by the programme for consideration by the Programme Board in February. The impacts of the decision are to be assessed once known, particularly in relation to the implementation of later phases.
- Dialogue was ongoing between the programme and the SI partner to ensure sufficient engagement and to recognise the value that UKSBS could bring to test planning.
- Earlier implementation of the service-oriented organisational design (OD) model on the Fusion / BOE services should be considered.
- A NAO report on the government shared services strategy is due for release in March and will be discussed at the next Board meeting.
- The year-to-date actuals and forecast financial position of the UKSBS transformation programme were noted. A further slide to clarify the financial position is to be considered at the February Audit Committee meeting.

- VM provided an update on the OD workstream implementation, including potential policy changes and the need for robust TU engagement. HM agreed to share details of a recent job evaluation exercise.
- The charging model would be based on a cost apportionment approach similar to the current model, with flexibility to meet new demands and provide the level of transparency required by clients. The business requirements had been agreed with departmental FDs, and the focus was now on the technical requirements for building the tool. Client charges would not be accurate until real-time volumetrics and data were available. Discussion took place on the treatment of depreciation and share capital requirements; the Audit Committee will consider further at the February meeting.

Actions:

- **The Transformation Progress report at the March Board meeting to include:**
  - **The outcomes of the full end to end assurance review of the Matrix Programme**
  - **The NAO report on government shared services strategy**
  - **A more rounded view of where UKSBS was on all business transformational activity**
- **The Audit Committee will consider at their February meeting:**
  - **Treatment of depreciation and share capital in relation to the new charging model**
  - **Financial position of UKSBS business transformation, in particular, the contractor resourcing costs and apportionment**

DG left the meeting and RW joined the meeting.

5. PORTFOLIO OF CHANGE (SBS 005-26)

5.1 The Board received the report, with VM providing an overview of the change portfolio, noting that all scheduled MoG activity was deemed achievable.

DH joined the meeting.

6. FUSION PRODUCT ROADMAP (SBS 006-26)

6.1 The Product Manager presented the Fusion roadmap, noting over 280 change requests raised to date. Prioritisation through BDA governance was recognised as increasingly effective. The Board encouraged continued focus on stabilisation activities, particularly within finance, and endorsed future opportunities for automation and AI-driven efficiency once stabilisation work concludes.

6.2 Integration of the UKSBS / UKRI change roadmap with the Matrix Programme roadmap to produce the full landscape of activity for UKSBS and highlight the risks and implications was requested by the Board.

DH left the meeting.

7. 2026/27 BUDGETS (SBS 007-26)

7.1 The Board reviewed the significant cost pressures for the coming year, including pay, pensions, D&I inflation and OD-linked structural changes. The Board emphasised the importance of a 3–5-year investment strategy, along with an understanding of the benefits and opportunities the investment would bring. More robust processes to be established and agreed with new clients around the raising of POs ahead of services being provided.

Actions:

- **A 3–5-year investment strategy to be considered at the March Board meeting to include the approach to be taken with depreciation and share capital, and opportunities and benefits, e.g. the use of AI.**

8. BUSINESS PLANNING 2026–27 (SBS 008-26)

8.1 The Board noted that minor UKRI-requested adjustments be made to the 2025 - 2030 Business Plan. The Executive highlighted a need to improve alignment between financial planning and the one-year Delivery Plan, distinguishing clearly between funded, committed activity, and aspirational elements aligned to UKSBS' long-term strategic intent (the North Star), which were currently unfunded.

8.2 Discussion took place on additional Board engagement ahead of March to ensure the Business Plan accurately reflects the organisation's ambitions, including areas such as AI adoption. It was emphasised that the Business Plan is the key instrument against which Board performance and organisational delivery are assessed and should therefore be sufficiently stretching. The Chair noted the importance of engaging through upcoming Board development sessions to deepen understanding of the distinction between strategic direction and the Delivery Plan.

8.3 The Board agreed that further refinement of the Delivery Plan is required before final approval in March, ensuring clarity on ambition, funding, deliverability, and the external expectations placed on UKSBS as a government shared services provider; JA to consider how best this is achieved.

9. STANDING ITEMS (SBS 009-26)

9.1 The Board received an update on operational performance and the five strategic themes with the following points noted:

- Overall service excellence had returned to Green status, reflecting strong progress against strategic outcomes for the year. Remaining Amber ratings were confined to areas directly affected by Neo and Cabinet Office onboarding dependencies, where timelines and requirements continue to evolve.

- Particular improvement in invoices processed was noted, attributed to a combination of targeted automation, selective use of AI and strengthened data quality.
- Procurement-related scores remained partly Amber, driven primarily by limited partner satisfaction survey responses.
- Payroll transaction processing briefly dipped into Amber due to a surge in employee pay-award queries and duplicate checks on pay-award accuracy; this was understood to be a temporary issue.
- Fusion stabilisation continued, with finance and pensions noted as the main areas still requiring attention. Despite high volumes, invoices on hold were trending downward, and helpdesk request volumes were decreasing, indicating stabilisation and an increase in self-serve transactions.
- Net Promoter Score (NPS) performance remained consistent with previous reporting, with fresh survey feedback due at the next meeting. Strategic milestones remained Amber, primarily due to the delayed implementation of the omni-channel capability, which was dependent on progress within the Neo and Matrix programmes.
- Procurement of a new telephony platform had been completed. Once deployed, the system would provide a multitude of benefits, including enhanced real-time analytics, smart call routing and long-term capability for AI-enabled call transcription.
- The Board was updated on ongoing work to strengthen right-first-time analysis, enabling UKSBS to target remediation of recurring data or process issues across client organisations. Enhanced reporting from Fusion on self-service adoption and transactional behaviour was expected by year-end and would be incorporated into continuous improvement activity.
- The Board reviewed the in-year financial position, noting a reported minor overspend driven by the interaction between BAU activity and recoverables. The Executive confirmed that year-end analysis of annual leave accruals had identified an opportunity to release £300k, which would be reflected in the January figures.
- A business agility baseline assessment had been initiated to identify priority areas for capability development and improvement in the next financial year.
- Positive progress had been made in building external communities of practice, enabling peer learning in areas such as performance reporting and Fusion optimisation.
- A new HR Director had been appointed, starting in April, bringing significant experience to support cultural and capability development.
- The ongoing challenge of embedding a culture that supports skills development at all levels was discussed. Whilst employee survey results show improving sentiment around training and development, it was agreed that UKSBS was not yet seen externally as a recognised destination for early-career development.

10. UKRI SERVICE REVIEW (SBS 010-26)

10.1 The Board was informed of the PwC review of UKRI end-to-end processes and welcomed the opportunity to streamline processes prior to NEO implementation, reducing inefficiencies currently affecting service performance.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 The Board approved onboarding the Fair Work Agency as a new client.

11.2 The items to be considered at the next Board meeting on 26 March 2026 were noted as:

- Transformation Progress
- Portfolio of Change
- Business Planning
- Financial and Investment Strategy
- 2026/26 budgets / financial bid
- Annual Governance Statement
- Gender Pay Gap reporting
- RCPS reforms
- Pay mandate business case to Ministers (reading room)

Board closed at 1.00pm

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 26 March 2026.