

£2.5bn contract to modernise NHS and Public Sector infrastructure, goes live

4 months ago



Leading corporate services provider, [NHS Shared Business Services](#) (NHS SBS), has formally announced the launch of its [Digital Workplace Solutions 2](#) framework agreement, a £2.5bn contract designed to give the NHS and wider public sector organisations quick, compliant access to critical infrastructure to modernise IT systems, transform workplaces and drive future innovation.

This framework agreement supports the government's [Plan for Change](#) agenda to create an NHS fit for the future by helping overhaul aging legacy infrastructure across the NHS and wider public sector. It is accredited by NHS England and aligns with other critical national programmes.

NHS urgently needs digital foundations rebuilt

Lord Darzi's [report](#) called for a radical shift from analogue to digital systems, highlighting the urgent need to fix the foundational technology underpinning care. Supporting this, the government committed £10bn at the [Spending Review](#) to accelerate digital transformation within the NHS, to improve efficiency, enable responsive services, lay the groundwork for predictive, preventative care and boost productivity.

"Fixing digital foundations starts with refreshing and securing core infrastructure -from data centres to networking equipment," says David Holbrook, Senior Category Manager – Digital Workforce & IT Transformation at NHS SBS. "That's central to what this framework agreement enables."

Preparing for NHS Online and the future of care

The demand for secure, scalable infrastructure is set to rise even further with initiatives like NHS Online, the UK's first virtual hospital, set to launch via the NHS App in 2027. To support innovations like remote consultations, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered triage and digital bookings, the NHS must first establish robust digital foundations, including interoperable platforms, secure data environments, and resilient connectivity.

Councils face their own infrastructure hurdles

Beyond healthcare, local councils are also under pressure. Many are burdened with legacy systems,

fragmented procurement processes, and supplier lock-in which restricts innovation and drives up costs. According to a Local Government Association [report](#), these challenges are compounded by staff shortages, siloed departments and inconsistent data standards blocking interoperability and slowing digital progress.

Digital inclusion, AI and smarter services

Regardless, councils are increasingly investing in digital inclusion, user-centric service design and emerging technologies like AI and robotic process automation — all in pursuit of greater efficiency, accessibility and a future-ready public sector.

NHS SBS's single-lot framework agreement provides buyers with access to a broad range of IT infrastructure, including on premise network infrastructure, servers/storage, commercial off-the-shelf software licences, bespoke software licensing and end-user devices.

Holbrook concluded: "As we move into an era dominated by AI and Internet of Things (IoT), legacy systems simply don't have the processing power or data handling capabilities to support them. Unsupported, infrastructure doesn't just hinder transformation, it introduces significant security risks.

"Our Digital Workplace Solutions framework agreement in itself doesn't deliver innovative technology. However, it gives NHS and wider public sector organisations access to the core products and tools that make innovation happen."