

**Westminster Business Forum policy conference:
Next steps for the UK professional and business services sector plan**
Timing: Morning, Friday, 17th April 2026
Taking Place Online



WESTMINSTER
BUSINESS
FORUM

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Key developments in the professional and business services sector and considerations going forward**
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **The Professional and Business Services Sector Plan - priorities, governance, and early implementation**
immediate priorities for delivery and early milestones | governance, transparency, and measuring effectiveness | oversight and accountability mechanisms | regional support and the role of PBS hubs | place-based interventions and strategic approaches to local growth | local authority roles and capacity for delivery | supporting business productivity | access to support for non-hub regions and mid-tier firms | interaction with wider SME support measures | cross-sector coordination | priorities for the proposed Office for PBS and interaction with the Industrial Strategy Council
Piers Burroughs, Managing Director, Burroughs; and Chair, SME Council, Association for Consultancy and Engineering
David McNeill, Director, Public Affairs and Campaigns, The Law Society
Senior representative, industry
Senior representative, regions
Senior representative, investment
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.20 **Strengthening the UK's international position - export growth, trade access, and global competitiveness**
Gareth Waterhouse, Head, Policy and Products, UK Export Finance
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.50 Break
- 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.05 **Opportunities for financing growth - inward investment and scaling up firms**
Senior representative, investment
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 **Support for the PBS workforce - attracting talent, upskilling, and impact of technology**
Mark Goldstone, Head, Industrial Strategy Policy, Confederation of British Industry
- 11.40 **Next steps for technology adoption, AI integration, and future operating models for PBS firms**
ways to support productivity | deployment of £150m in five AI and technology adoption programmes | priorities for the AI champion | procurement, cost barriers, and digital infrastructure | regulatory clarity and professional standards | equitable access to technology support | implications for pricing models, including outcome-based and subscription approaches | targeted support for tech adoption in emerging business models | developing the Made Smarter PBS delivery model | impact on workforce roles | liability, ethics, and professional judgement | interoperability with existing digital infrastructure
Hilary Smyth-Allen, CEO, SuperTech WM
Professor Martin Spring, Professor, Operations Management, Lancaster University Management School; and Principal Investigator, Technology in Professional Services (TiPS), Innovation Adoption Accelerator
Tom Quoroll, Chair, GenAI Programme, Linklaters
Senior representative, regulation
- 12.05 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Progress and next steps for delivery of the Professional and Business Services Sector Plan**
David Riches, Deputy Director, Financial, Professional and Business Services, Department for Business and Trade
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Business Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Thomas Howard, Westminster Business Forum