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Frequently Asked Questions

Why have I received this Notice of Intention?

The London Borough of Lambeth is seeking to replace a contract it uses to provide works and services to its tenants, leaseholders and homeowners. You have received this Notice because you are a London Borough of Lambeth leaseholder or homeowner and hence by law and by the terms of your lease, we must consult with you via a Section 20 Notice (given under section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Service Charges (Consultation Requirements) (England) Regulations 2003). Some of the services covered by this Notice are rechargeable to leaseholders and homeowners and if we do not consult with you, we may not be able to recharge our full costs.

I do not receive some or all of the works and services detailed in the notices so why am I being consulted and will I be charged?

This is a North area consultation; hence we consult with all tenants, leaseholders and homeowners in the North. You will only be charged for works and services that you receive in your block and/or on your estate.

My property is part of a block or estate managed by a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) who provide these services directly. Why am I being consulted and will the services currently being provided by my TMO be replaced by those provided under this contract?

This notice is a North Area Section 20 consultation to all North Area Lambeth Council homeowners irrespective of whether they may receive works and services under the proposed new contracts. This is so that all homeowners are aware of the proposal and can pose questions should they so wish.

Lambeth Council recognises that you will not receive some or all these works and services from our appointed contractor as they are provided directly by your Tenant Management Organisation (TMO). By sending you the notice we are simply inviting you to make comment. We have no intention of imposing these services upon you/your TMO and once any proposed new contract goes live, you will continue to receive your services via your TMO as you do now.

Why are we proposing to enter into a Qualifying Long-Term Agreement?

Having reviewed its current housing service delivery arrangements, the Council considers that long term agreements represent the best delivery mechanism for some of its service areas. A Qualifying Long-Term Agreement is one that lasts longer than 12 months.

The Council intends to establish and use a long-term contract for purchasing services that do not typically lend themselves to direct delivery by Lambeth employees.

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These include highly specialist services, those which cannot guarantee regular and consistent work volumes, and those where moving to direct delivery would adversely affect service costs or potentially lead to a prolonged period of service disruption.

Long-term contracts will provide an opportunity to continually improve services; deliver services in a consistent manner; increase cost certainty; and avoid repeated procurement exercises and the associated costs and delays these bring.

Long-term contracts also create pricing economies by virtue of their scale and longevity and instil a heightened willingness for contractors to invest in the borough. The Council does however intend to build flexibility into the long-term contract, such as by making no-fault termination provisions and appointing a reserve contractor, to ensure that it can deliver services in an alternative way should it so wish in the future.

What is the proposed scope of the long-term agreement?

The Council has reviewed current service delivery, examined best practice across the sector, and taken account of resident feedback. The review concluded that a long-term agreement offers the best way to deliver stability, value for money, and lasting service improvements.

The Council therefore intends to establish such an agreement and invite proposals from experienced contractors to provide a comprehensive Responsive Repairs and Maintenance service in the North Area. This will cover day-to-day repairs, works to empty homes, damp and mould remediation, disrepair works, and planned component renewals where items are identified as beyond economical repair through the reactive repairs service.

What do you mean by responsive repairs and maintenance?

Responsive repairs refers to work that is typically done in a reactive manner (usually reported by residents or identified by housing staff) and does not tend to form part of a planned project - although repairs are packaged together where possible to deliver them in a more efficient and coordinated manner.

Can I nominate a contractor?

You do not have the right to nominate a contractor. The Service Charges (Consultation Requirements) (England) Regulations 2003 refer to contracts "for which a public notice is required." This applies to contracts where the estimated value meets or exceeds the thresholds set out in UK public procurement legislation.

As the estimated value of the intended Qualifying Long-Term Agreement exceeds the relevant thresholds, the Council will be conducting a procurement process through an established Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), which was set up in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Under these regulations, contracts for services with a value above £213,477 (including VAT) or for works above £5,372,609 (including VAT) require advertisement through a regulated public procurement route via the Find a Tender Service (FTS).

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At this initial stage, the Council is seeking your views on the proposed works and services it intends to procure. However, you are not being consulted on the selection of contractor, as the Council is required to follow a formal procurement process under national legislation.

Why doesn't Lambeth provide these services in-house and employ officers to carry out these duties?

An evaluation of delivery options determined that bringing the service in-house would require substantial up-front investment and the capacity to scale resources in line with demand. At present, this presents greater risks in terms of both cost and service continuity. By engaging an external contractor, the Council can draw on specialist expertise, ensure compliance with health and safety and building regulations, and secure better value for money through competitive procurement.

How will I be charged for these contracts? Where do these fees show up in our service charge bill? Are they separate?

You will be charged for the services provided under these contracts in your yearly service charges. The costs will show on your estimates received in April and then actuals in September.

How will the Council ensure costs are kept to a minimum?

The Council will keep costs under control by setting clear specifications and using straightforward, transparent pricing arrangements that are easy to review and provide cost certainty for residents and the Council.

Contractors will be required to meet key performance indicators, developed with residents, which will be linked to payment. Where service standards are not achieved, deductions will be applied to contractor payments.

The Council's established cost and contract management team will ensure all costs are scrutinised, regularly reviewed, and benchmarked against market rates, while competitive procurement and strong governance will secure value for money and maintain service quality.

How will you be selecting the contractor?

Following completion of this Notice of Intention consultation, the Council will proceed to develop the Qualifying Long-Term Agreement. The proposed works and services exceed the relevant thresholds set out in UK public procurement legislation and will therefore be procured through a regulated process using an established Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), in line with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Once the procurement process begins, qualified contractors who are part of the DPS will be invited to tender. Submitted tenders will be evaluated against published evaluation criteria set out in the Invitation to Tender, which will include both cost and quality considerations.

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A robust evaluation of the cost and quality elements will be carried out by an evaluation panel, and residents will be represented in the assessment of quality-related criteria.

Following this evaluation process, and as part of the Stage 2 consultation, the Council will issue a Notice of Proposal to leaseholders. This will set out details of the proposed contract award(s), the evaluation process undertaken, and a more detailed description of the scope of services to be delivered. As with this stage, the Council will give due regard to any observations received from leaseholders.

Will you be applying lessons learnt?

Whilst the current interim contracting arrangements have mostly delivered the required volume of work, the Council has identified a number of important lessons — particularly in light of the early exit of the former contractor — which will inform the approach to future service delivery and contract management.

The Council will apply this learning to the new long-term delivery arrangement in the following ways:

- Straightforward forms of contract
- Embed contract scrutiny and governance oversight across the new delivery arrangements
- Financially incentivised KPIs that focus on the most important aspects of service delivery
- Create flexibility through clearly set out no-fault termination provisions and appointing a reserve contractor to ensure resilience
- The Council to have a say in the appointment of subcontractors
- Involve residents in shaping service delivery, and the evaluation and monitoring of contracts.

Will the agreement differ from the existing ones?

The intended agreement is yet to be established, though it will reflect the lessons learned as summarised above. In general, the intention will be to use straightforward forms of contract that are familiar to the market and potential bidders, and which incorporate straightforward pricing arrangements.

There will also be a robust performance management framework – including financially linked KPIs – embedded in the agreement. The intended agreement will also give the Council a lot more flexibility to reallocate work should it wish to do so.

How long will the agreement last?

The exact length of the agreement has not yet been determined. The Council is provisionally considering a five-year term, with no-fault termination provisions, and the option to extend for two further periods of two years each where performance

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remains strong (5 years + optional 2 years + optional 2 years). This approach is intended to give contractors the confidence to invest for the long term, while also ensuring the Council retains flexibility to respond to future needs.

How will you ensure the contracts are robustly managed?

The Council recognises the importance of strong contract management and has established a dedicated team to scrutinise costs, rigorously assess payment applications, and apply robust governance across all contracts. This team, supported by a clear performance management framework and KPIs linked to financial outcomes, will ensure the long-term agreement is managed effectively and delivers the required standards.

Will the council be getting independent advice and support?

To help establish and procure the new long-term North Area contract, the Council will be using external consultants to provide specialist support in certain areas. These include service/specification review, procurement advice and drafting of contract documentation.

However, the Council is committed to keeping the use of consultants to a minimum and will rely on internal resources wherever possible. The external support will be targeted and time-limited to ensure best value and to strengthen the Council's ability to deliver effective, long-term services.

How does the procurement of new service contract affect the services I currently receive?

During the tender stage there will be no impact to the services you're currently receiving.

What are the next steps?

The key next step for the council is to consult with you as leaseholders of our intention and to respond to any queries that you may have about this procurement.

Once the Observation period is closed and all observations have been responded to with due regard, Lambeth will seek to publish the contract opportunity on the Lambeth Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) and a notice in the Find a Tender Service inviting tenders for the contract and the procurement process will start.

Can I take part in the procurement process?

Given the constrained timescales for delivering the new North Area Repairs and Maintenance contract, resident engagement will be prioritised with those already involved in established and constituted groups within the Council's governance framework. These groups include the Resident Scrutiny Advisory Board (ReSAB), Area Boards, Repairs Panels, and Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs). Specifically, residents from the North Area who are members of these groups will have the opportunity to participate and contribute to the procurement process.

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Who do I contact about the current contractor?

Repairs: If you want to request a repair, please call our Lambeth Housing Management Contact Centre on 020 7926 6000. You can also request repairs online <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/housing/housing-repairs/leaseholders-repairs>. To report an emergency repair outside of normal working hours (including on a bank holiday or weekend) please call our Lambeth Housing Management Contact Centre on 020 7926 6000.

Caretaking Services: To contact your local housing caretaker or concierge operator during normal office hours contact us on 020 7926 6000.

Report a communal light repair: If you notice that a lamppost or stairwell light needs repairing visit: <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/streets-roads-transport/streets-roads/highway-issues-reporting/reporting-faulty-street-light>

Communal cleaning: If you feel there is a problem with the cleaning or you would like to register a complaint about the standard of cleaning, call us on 020 7926 6000.

Pest control services: If you think you are infested with these pests, or would like advice about dealing with them, call us on 020 7926 6000 or contact your area housing office who will arrange for a pest control contractor to visit you.

Service charges, altering your home, subletting: Please email us on hhomeownership@lambeth.gov.uk or call us on 0207 926 1116.

I have a question about this letter

If you would like to raise a query or an Observation about this letter, please contact us via the following methods:

- Online via our E-Form: <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/housing/housing-repairs/major-works-your-home/submit-observation>
- Email the Section 20 Consultation Team at: s20consultation@lambeth.gov.uk. Please state '**Section 20 Observation – North Area R & M**' in the subject box.
- Post: London Borough of Lambeth, Home Ownership Services, PO Box 80771, London SW2 9QQ, quoting '**Section 20 Observation – North Area R & M**' in the letter.