

# Policy Committee

13 April 2026



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
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<b>Title</b>	Block Planned Maintenance 2026–2034 – Procurement Route and Contract Award Approach
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report</b>	Melissa Wise, Executive Director, Communities & Adult Social Care
<b>Report author</b>	Joanna Fuller, Principal Building Surveyor
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Cllr Matt Yeo - Lead Councillor for Housing
<b>Council priority</b>	Deliver a sustainable & healthy environment & reduce Reading's carbon footprint
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. That delegated authority is granted to the Executive Director of Communities and Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Housing, the Director of Finance, and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services to:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.1. Procure and enter a contract with the successful tenderer(s) for the Block Maintenance contract to be provided. The contract will be for up to 8 years (4-year initial term with extension provisions) with a total maximum value of £4.4m for the 8-year duration</li><li>1.2. Negotiate with the successful tenderer to mobilise the contract, vary the contract, extend the contract at the appropriate time, and otherwise contract manage the contract throughout its lifecycle.</li></ol></li></ol>

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report seeks approval to procure and award a cyclical planned maintenance contract for housing stock block properties, covering external and communal works over an up to eight-year programme (2026–2034) managed by Housing Repairs and Property Services. The most advantageous route to market is a call off via a compliant framework enabling a robust supplier field, a supported market engagement and expression of interest process. The intended contract is a Measured Term Contract designed for the construction industry, utilising the National Housing Federation Schedule of Rates which is industry standard and widely used in sourcing Housing Repairs and Property Services contracts managed by the service area.
- 1.2. Estimated annual value of this contract is £550,000 (£660,000 inc. VAT), funded from the Housing Revenue Account, based on the planned works budget annually approved at the Housing Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee in each financial year.

## 2. Policy Context

- 2.1 There is no single national policy that prescribes specific works to individual properties; instead, national legislation and standards set minimum outcomes and statutory duties, including the Building Regulations, the Housing Act 2004 (Housing Health and Safety Rating System), the Decent Homes Standard, and the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018.

- 2.2 The specific works required are determined locally, informed by stock condition surveys, compliance and risk assessments, and assessed need, including adaptations delivered under the Care Act 2014 and Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) framework, alongside energy efficiency requirements such as Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES).
- 2.3 Specifically for external fabric the Landlord and Tenant act 1985 requires landlords to keep in good repair, the structure and exterior of homes. Planned cyclical external maintenance is essential for local authorities to protect building condition, prevent health and safety risks, ensure legal compliance, reduce long-term costs, and support positive regulatory outcomes. It forms a cornerstone of good asset management and is central to meeting the Regulator for Social Housing's standards around safe, decent, well-maintained homes. In addition, it is a factor in meeting Decent Homes Standards and is referenced in the Housing Ombudsmen's Complaint Handling Code: failing to maintain external elements often leads to service failure and findings of maladministration.

### **3. Current Position:**

- 3.1. This contract will deliver essential cyclical planned maintenance to 284 housing owned blocks of flats. This contract will not include houses/bungalows outside of blocks, which will be managed and maintained by the direct service organisation (DSO) in collaboration with the existing contract for voids and planned works which was let in 2025.
- 3.2. The scope of this contract does not include the three Wensley Road tower blocks (193, 203 and 205) which have their own project of improvement underway, or the four Granville Road blocks (Elm, Oak Tree, Chestnut and Cedar) for which planning will commence for a standalone programme of works to meet the Building Safety Regulator requirements. Once all works have been completed according to the BSR requirements on these 7 blocks, they will be incorporated back into the cyclical external maintenance programmes and treated as service area business as usual stock.
- 3.3. The works commissioned under this contract will be external decorations such as painting and repointing, minor external maintenance such as window servicing, communal decorations internally to the blocks such as stairways and entrance ways, alongside communal flooring repairs and/or replacements where required. The contractor will also inspect roofing and report on the existing condition to allow the service to plan future roofing works in advance of a failure. These works allow the service area to reduce unplanned repairs, disrepair and damp and mould cases, extend the lifespan of assets, support compliance and enable adherence to decent homes standards improving the council's asset management. Improving tenant satisfaction relies on the area's ability to deliver this element of the service.
- 3.4. These works will allow the service area to adopt an enhanced proactive, strategic approach with a view to reduce both repairs and disrepair volumes and rebalance workload to focus on preventative maintenance and planned works. The data from this contract combined with decent homes will improve the council's understanding of its housing stock.

### **4. The Proposal:**

- 4.1. A procurement options appraisal has been undertaken, and the following options have been analysed, with the recommended option being appraised as the most time efficient and robust method of competition within this strong healthy marketplace.
- 4.2. **Option Recommended:** A call off via compliant framework offers the service area a robust competition, strong supplier base for competition, Measured Term Contract (known as an MTC) supported, proportionate and efficient process. It will allow for a prompter competitive process to be run.
- 4.3. **Options Rejected:**
- Inhouse delivery was assessed but as it stands, there are insufficient internal resources to carry out works to houses and bungalows as well as the works to block properties. The internal resources were allocated to individual properties, as the programmes can be managed on a smaller scale allowing the teams to allocate these resources across more than one planned maintenance programme at a time (decorators for example, can be used in a kitchen replacement programme and an external painting programme in parallel). This contract will require a high volume of

resources deployed on a block at the same time which the winning contractor will be able to provide capacity for.

- Competitive Flexible Procedure was considered; this is both resource and time intensive at a time when the service area is focused on a lot of areas of improvement; and therefore, capacity for this option is limited.
- Open Tender was concluded to have longer timelines than the service had available for delivery of the works.

4.4. **Delivery and contract management.** The contract will include specific management requirements and key performance indicators based on service delivery, budget management, adherence to timescales, tenant communication and tenant satisfaction measures. There will also be performance reports on health and safety and adherence to any regulations and legislation as required. A clause for financial retention set at 5% on stage payments will be implemented, reducing to 2.5% on penultimate payment. Annual price fluctuations standard corporate insurance will be accounted for. As stated above in terms of the length of contract there will be robust performance-based extensions based on these measures, and clear change control.

## 5. Contribution to Strategic Aims

5.1. The Council Plan set out for 2025 to 2028 has established five key priorities and in delivering this contract, we will:

- Promote more equal communities in Reading - planned maintenance helps reduce inequality by ensuring that everyone—regardless of income, background or neighbourhood—has access to safe, warm, well-maintained homes.
- Secure Reading’s economic and cultural success - Housing condition directly contributes to the borough’s wider economic resilience and attractiveness.
- Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint - Planned external maintenance is one of the most effective tools for meeting sustainability and decarbonisation goals by extending the life of building components and reducing waste associated with emergency repairs. It also protects the fabric of the homes, preventing damp and mould which reduce thermal performance.
- Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading’s adults and children - Housing quality is a determinant of physical and mental health. Planned maintenance ensures homes remain safe, dry, warm and structurally sound.

5.2. Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future – Planned maintenance strengthens compliance with the Regulator for Social Housing, showing the council has strong asset management and data and improves tenant satisfaction and therefore trust in the council reducing complaints and reputational risk. The Housing & Communities Service aspires to deliver a common purpose of ‘supporting the life that matters to you’. This aims to ensure we tailor our services to meet the individual needs and aspiration of our tenants. Ensuring our Council stock is safe, efficient and well maintained aligns with this objective.

## 6. Environmental and Climate Implications

6.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

6.2. There are no environmental and climate implications. A Climate Impact Assessment has been carried out with a result of net nil as the overall rating.

## 7. Community Engagement

7.1. The nature of the stock in council owned blocks, is that some leasehold properties are in scope. A Qualifying Long-term Agreement (QLTA) will be put in place under Section 20 consultation process. Stage one of this consultation commenced on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2026 and is underway.

7.2. Included in the management of this contract, will be a communication plan for tenants, leaseholders and key stakeholders. This will be drafted during the implementation phase of the contract and

visited at monthly contract review meetings to ensure a good cadence is maintained and any tenant or engagement issues are raised regularly to allow them to be resolved.

## **8. Equality Implications**

- 8.1. This contract will not lead to any direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation or any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010. It will not affect how people with protected characteristics access services. The outputs of this contract will improve the external standard of properties and we anticipate it will have a positive impact on our community.

## **9. Other Relevant Considerations**

- 9.1. All considerations made have been laid out in the report.

## **10. Legal Implications**

- 10.1. The competition process for this contract will be run in accordance with the appropriate procurement regulations under the Procurement Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR15) or Procurement Act, 2023, and contract terms will be drafted using standard construction terms under the compliant framework; those terms will be checked and approved by legal services.
- 10.2. In accordance with the Council Constitution, as the value of the framework is over £500,000 per year it is a key decision, it states under 13.3.2 'A Standing Committee may specifically delegate a key decision to an officer for them to make. In which case, the decision when taken by the officer, should be formally recorded by them'
- 10.3. Delegated authority to award the contracts following the procurement is therefore being sought from the Policy Committee.
- 10.4. Ann Ntephe , Principal Contracts Lawyer, has cleared these legal implications.

## **11. Financial Implications**

- 11.1. Cyclical maintenance for external decoration and common area works including flooring are funded annually within the HRA budget envelope.
- 11.2. The annual budget for these works is made up of:
- 11.2.1. External Decorations budget totalling £1,000,000 per annum
  - 11.2.2. Common Areas budget totalling £200,000 per annum
  - 11.2.3. Capital works budget for Communal Flooring of £100,000 per annum.
- 11.3. This contract is expected to require £550,000 per annum based on previous spend in this area and analysis of the works needed against contractor rates used in the service in other areas.
- 11.4. The cyclical maintenance annual budgets, as outlined in 11.2, are built into the HRA 30 Year Business Plan, with the annual budgets uplifted for inflation in each year. The 2026/27 HRA Business Plan therefore has sufficient financial capacity built in to cover the value of this contract over the 8-year contract duration.
- 11.5. Richard Burden has cleared these financial implications.

## **12. Timetable for Implementation**

- 12.1. The expected procurement timetable is as follows:

Stage one leaseholder consultation	06/02/2026
Issue expression(s) of interest to supply chain(s)	25/02/2026 return date 03/03/2026
Issue invitation to Tender (ITT)	17/03/2026
Tender clarification deadline	07/04/2026
Policy Committee decision	13/04/2026
Tender return date	14/04/2026
Evaluation Period 4 weeks	11/05/2026
Stage two leaseholder consultation	11/06/2026

Tender standstill period (end)	N/A
Notification of tender outcome to suppliers	11/06/2026
Contract mobilisation period	11/06/2026 – 31/06/2026
Contract commencement	01/07/2026

12.2. During the first month of the contract, an implementation plan will be developed collaboratively with the successful contractor which will present how they will deliver the programme to completion for year one, and annually there will be a review of process and performance to look at any changes for year two – and to look for continuous improvement opportunities This will be approved by Housing Repairs and Property Services and the Director of Housing Landlord Services. An initial plan will be submitted as part of the tender process, and this will then be developed in collaboration once the contract has been awarded.

12.3. The plan will include a communications plan for tenant engagement, relevant health and safety checks required for the properties, plan for phases of work and a process for inspection throughout the lifecycle of the works.

### **13. Background Papers**

13.1. There are none.