



# City of Westminster

## Appendix 1. Updated response to recommendations of the CityWest Homes Task Group, November 2019

	Recommendation	Status	Update
<b>Strategic Priorities</b>			
1	Change the culture at all levels of CityWest Homes. If CityWest Homes is to succeed, then it needs to be a more resident friendly organisation committed to clearer and fairer communication with all residents.	In progress	<p>Since the service came in house, staff have benefited from the Council's programme of activities on the Westminster Way, and attendance at WCC and GPH staff conferences.</p> <p>Staff workshops have been held by external consultants Just Housing Group to understand what remains to be addressed and a departmental awayday took place on 26th September which focussed on service improvement, culture and values</p> <p>The contact centre structure has been reviewed and improvements and training are ongoing.</p> <p>The review of resident engagement is opening up many more opportunities to participate and influence decision making so that housing services are more resident focussed.</p> <p>The Director's organisational change and priorities are in delivery and culture is a driver for change.</p>
2	Ensure that all CWH employees understand and accept ownership of issues in all resident engagements.	Implemented	<p>This message has been communicated to all staff repeatedly and is understood and accepted.</p> <p>Contact centre staff have been trained in customer care using the Gober Method, which is an established model of customer care, to improve empathy and quality in call answering rather than speed.</p>



## City of Westminster

			<p>The responsibilities of frontline services have been clarified to ensure they take forwards all reports from residents and own problems and can establish links with wider Council and public-sector services to improve outcomes for residents.</p> <p>We are widening access through our local housing offer publicised in the October edition of Your Home and ensuring a more visible staff presence on estates with staff empowered to act on concerns that are raised with them.</p> <p>We are providing staff with a branded jacket, so they can be recognised when out and about and are developing mobile technology, so staff can resolve issues effectively when working on estates.</p> <p>Tenant Association Chairs and Councillors have been provided with the contact details of their local housing teams.</p>
3	Change the approach to answering calls and emails from residents and councillors to ensure this is done in a timely manner and that ownership is accepted by the recipient of the contact.	Implemented	<p>A Central Members Enquiry team was established which continues to perform well and reports to Cabinet Member regularly.</p> <p>YTD performance at the end of August shows 92% of members' enquiries responded to within the 5 day target. Members have expressed confidence in the team who are now encouraging members to refer new service requests through the contact centre so that they can be triaged to the appropriate team.</p> <p>Performance in the contact centre continues to be delivered above target and is very much under control. YTD 101,074 calls have been offered of which 94% have been answered - tracking 2% above target. Additionally, 79% of calls have been answered within 30 seconds against a target of 70%.</p> <p>23,761 emails have been received into the contact centre with 95% of all emails handled within 48 Hours. 100% of Twitter enquires (549) have been handled within 4 hours</p> <p>Councillors have been provided with contact details for area managers.</p>



## City of Westminster

4	Provide clear points of contact for councillors that is not just the Chief Executive or Managing Director or their office.	Implemented	A dedicated team is in place to respond to Cllr enquiries and contact details for key members of staff are shared with Councillors.
5	Ensure data on long-term plans is routinely shared with councillors.	Implemented	A regular councillor newsletter managed by Communications in PPC provides updates on all long-term plans
6	Adopt an approach of reviewing all mass resident communications with councillors prior to its issue.	Implemented	<p>All City-wide communications relating to policy changes are now discussed with the Cabinet Member for Housing ahead of distribution.</p> <p>Local operational updates are emailed at least 24 hours ahead of distribution to ward Councillors. This includes information relating to meetings with contractors enabling the local Councillors to voice concerns ahead of the correspondence being issued or to attend any meetings arranged. The exception is emergency correspondence which is copied to councillors as it is distributed to residents.</p> <p>For major works communication, the property services team send correspondence to ward councillors 48 hours in advance for feedback and comments. This includes discussing any proposed major works meeting dates with ward councillors, so these can be agreed together.</p>
7	Review clienting relationship between WCC and CWH.	Implemented	Arrangements for overseeing housing performance have been established within the council, including a detailed performance dashboard presented to the Cabinet Member each month and regular detailed reporting to Audit & Performance Committee.
8	Greater emphasis and interest should be shown in 'Block inspections' by CWH. Residents should be allowed to access all areas including stairwells and roofs. (subject to normal health and safety concerns).	Implemented	<p>The new Local Housing Offer sets out a new approach to delivering local services and the Estate Inspection regime that is now in place.</p> <p>All estates are inspected on a monthly basis for cleaning, H&amp;S and communal repairs.</p> <p>Councillors and residents are invited quarterly to accompany staff on walkabouts. The location of these walkabouts are set by the Councillors and residents and</p>



## City of Westminster

			<p>they can access all areas of the block during those walkabouts, subject to safety requirements.</p> <p>The actions from these walkabouts will be published in new estate action plans to be rolled out over the coming year and available on the website and followed up by staff.</p>
9	Reform CWH board. This needs to consider the purpose of the board and the skill mix that is required to meet that purpose.	Closed	No longer relevant
10	Review CityWest Homes staff organisational structure to make clearer who is responsible for repairs and major works.	In Progress	<p>A restructure is currently underway of the housing service management team which includes streamlining responsibility for repairs and major works management. The restructure will not be complete until 2020 but the intention is to place responsibility for both functions under one head of service.</p> <p>Repairs surveyors, Morgan Sindall repairs managers and repairs teams are all aligned to the area offices. This ensures that they work together as one team, are accessible to residents when queries aren't resolved by the contact centre and they are familiar with the specific challenges of individual blocks and estates. This is improving the service, and further work is in progress to ensure the service meets resident expectations. The first point of contact on repairs and major works after the contact centre, is the surveyor and then the Area Repairs Manager</p> <p>For major works, where engagement on a major works project has started, typically 12-18 months before work is planned, there is a named member of the property services team as a point of contact to coordinate queries and this includes a direct e-mail address for ease of contact.</p>
11	The relevant Policy and Scrutiny Committee should review CityWest Homes at least annually.	Implemented	<p>The Housing, Finance and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee is the lead group for scrutinising housing.</p> <p>Arrangements for overseeing housing performance have been established including a detailed performance dashboard presented to the Cabinet Member each month and regular detailed reporting to Audit &amp; Performance Committee.</p>



# City of Westminster

<b>Customer Services</b>			
12	Provide estate management contacts for residents/councillors. These contacts should be officers that are responsible for looking after a block or an estate and who are empowered to act on concerns that are raised.	Implemented	<p>Tenants continue to be encouraged to use the contact centre to report any estate issues in the first instance, and we are now widening access through our local housing offer publicised in the October edition of Your Home.</p> <p>We are ensuring there is a more visible staff presence on estates and that our staff are empowered to act on concerns that are raised with them.</p> <p>We are providing every member of staff with a branded jacket so that they can be recognised when out and about and are developing mobile technology, so staff can resolve issues while out on estates. Tenant Association Chairs and Councillors have been provided with the contact details of their local housing teams</p>
13	Remove the current call centre interactive voice response (IVR) menu. Changes should be made immediately even if further improvements are then planned in the near future as part of wider improvement work.	Implemented	There are now only 4 options, where previously 26 existed, plus an option to speak to an adviser. IVR is reviewed regularly and amendments made as necessary
14	The distinction of lessee vs tenant should not be the first IVR question. This enables block or estate queries to be raised and understood. The current IVR and call centre approach is too prescriptive.	Implemented	The distinction between lessee and tenant has been removed as the first IVR question. There are now 4 options, plus an option to speak to an adviser. There is work being completed to implement further improvements to the IVR.
15	Ensure all locations where residents have contact with CityWest Homes staff have areas private areas for where personal information can be discussed.	Implemented	All the area offices have interview rooms where private discussions can take place. Staff have been briefed about recognising the instances where issues cannot be discussed in the reception area. As for surgery locations, it may not be possible where the surgeries take place in locations off the estate. However, in such instances an appointment will be arranged for either a home visit or for the



## City of Westminster

			resident to attend the area office. Staff have been provided with additional training and guidance on dealing with sensitive issues.
16	Introduce an improved CRM system for all customer contact points, and ensure it is fully integrated with repair contractors to allow for better interaction and sharing of data between call centre and repairs contractor.	Development	The housing service is now joined up with the council and CRM requirements are being scoped with a view to moving to MS Dynamics 365 with some functionality to be implemented this year. This is part of the council's customer experience and digital work.
17	Monitor as a KPI repeat calls and put in place an action plan to avoid repeat calls.	Implemented	Tracking is in place to monitor the volume of calls in relation to existing repairs. A speech Analytics project in September reviewed 30,000 calls to identify drivers of repeat contacts and understand customer sentiment. That date is now being analysed and areas for improvement identified.
18	Continue to monitor call wait time, longest wait time and length of calls and report exceptions to CWH management and to the CWH board.	Implemented	Monthly data is provided to the Cabinet Member and Director of Housing. Targets have been standardised with those for the council's contact centres and performance has been above target for each month since the service came in house.
19	Review the arrangements for surgeries, including location and current usage, to ensure they meet the needs of residents.	Implemented	<p>Attendance at surgeries is variable, with some receiving few customers. We have revised the next round of surgery dates according to demand and will be publicising additional surgeries at Queens Park library, Marylebone library and Lydford Hall.</p> <p>Westminster on Wheels has been well received at most locations and provides residents with access to a team of staff from different disciplines and quicker resolution than surgeries area able to provide. The current WoW vehicle is too large for many locations so leasing a smaller vehicle is being investigated. Some of the surgeries could potentially be replaced by WoW, subject to consultation.</p> <p>We plan to link estate walkabouts with WoW and are working with the Communications team to publicise both WoW and surgery dates to the end of December.</p>



## City of Westminster

			Surgeries were also set up for leaseholders in the four area offices following the receipt of the recent service charge invoices to assist with any queries about the billing. A total of just 20 appointments were made over the 4 surgery days.
20	Establish, outside of the complaints procedure, clear communications channels for residents to discuss works not being carried out or other 'questions'.	Implemented	<p>Residents can email the contact centre with any enquiry. Performance of this service is good with queries currently being dealt with within target times.</p> <p>Residents who prefer face to face contact can visit a surgery, WoW or their area office.</p>
21	Undertake a data mining/interrogation exercise and analysis of IVR and calls logged to produce intelligent data on repeat calls/missed appointments with a view to identifying causes and reducing incidents.	Implemented	A speech analytics project started in September and has analysed 30,000 calls which will help us understand the drivers of customer contact, reasons for service failure and tracking our residents' emotions as they interact with our service. It is anticipated that the results of this work will be available by the end of October.
22	Ensure a higher proportion of repairs are inspected upon completion to rebuild residents' confidence that repairs are done correctly. Special attention should be given to leaks.	In progress	<p>We have increased the level of post inspections since the Task Group report, and area surveyors (responsible for specific geographic areas) have increased targets for post inspections.</p> <p>We are also growing the post inspection team to be able to achieve a higher overall percentage of repairs post inspected.</p> <p>In addition we are using other techniques to identify, inspect and address poor quality work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We are now surveying tenants immediately after work is completed which helps to quickly identify work that is sub-standard for inspection and follow-up.</li></ul>



## City of Westminster

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contractors are required to provide a photograph of completed work which provides a 100% desktop post inspection regime and provides a record for any future queries eg. related to service charges.</li><li>• The Morgan Sindall contract includes a sum for the contractor to undertake their own post inspections. We are in the process of varying a sum out of the contract and giving that resource to the repairs team to further increase post inspections so that the council can be confident that work is delivered to the required standard.</li></ul> <p>The post-inspection regime in place is consistent with industry norms, which provide acceptable confidence levels of workmanship and quality of repair.</p>
23	Produce clear information for all residents on what is allowed with regards to short term letting (e.g. through Airbnb).	Implemented	<p>The website was updated last year to raise the awareness of the issue and to provide the rules for tenants and leaseholders to increase the understanding of the terms of the tenancy and lease in respect of subletting.</p> <p>All residents have been advised through the newsletter of responsibilities and restrictions on short term lettings.</p> <p>A register of all known and reported sublets is maintained and reports received by the contact centre are passed on for investigation. Checks are made to differentiate lessees who are subletting their flat on a longer term basis from suspected short term letting in breach of the 90 day rule. Online activity is checked and a letter is issued by email and post to the leaseholder to advise of the breach of the terms of the lease. Once the appropriate supporting evidence has been compiled, a claim for breach of the terms of the lease can be made and enforcement action undertaken. IT advances are being developed to produce AI which will scan for instances of short letting within our residential housing stock. This tool will be developed to help identify cases where short letting is taking place.</p> <p>There is close cooperation with Planning and PPC in relation to a strategic plan to deal with short term lets.</p>



## City of Westminster

24	Develop a clear protocol for dealing with tenants/lessees who will not allow access to their properties. Engage in legal proceedings at an earlier stage if emergency access is needed to enter a property to stop damage to other properties.	In progress	<p>Gaining access to properties is of particular importance when dealing with leaks and this remains the most frequently occurring reason for delays in carrying out repairs to leaks.</p> <p>A process for gaining entry was put in place in 2018 and has been reviewed for effectiveness post implementation. The process has shortened the time taken to gain access in many cases. Where it is necessary to resort to legal action delays remain. Work is ongoing to agree points of contact with registered providers with leasehold properties within the housing stock to reduce related delays.</p> <p>Introduction of a planned preventative maintenance programme has resulted in a reduction in reported leaks.</p>
25	Review engagement activity and produce a strategy that ensures residents can be empowered to scrutinise CityWest Homes' activity and performance.	In progress	<p>The Housing, Finance and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee is the lead group for scrutinising performance in housing.</p> <p>The resident engagement structure is under review and proposals were presented to the Cabinet Member on 27 September for discussion. The proposed structures include a regular meeting between residents and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Director of Housing. Resident consultation will take place during October/November and a report for decision will be presented to the Cabinet Member in December.</p>
26	Improve the feedback system for residents on the progress of issues they have raised (e.g. repairs or major works). This would include a formal escalation procedure within CWH to track such issues and the use of technology to provide updates.	In progress	<p><b>Repairs</b></p> <p>The principle repairs contractor (Morgan Sindall) provide a text messaging service to keep tenants advised on the progress of their repair. Immediately after a repair order is raised, Morgan Sindall send the tenant a text to confirm the appointment; a text is sent the day before the appointment and on the day of the appointment, with a link to a vehicle tracker to monitor the progress of the contractor's van to the property. On completion a further text is sent with a link to a satisfaction survey service operated by 'Rant and Rave'. This service allows residents to provide direct and instant feedback about repairs that have been completed, and uses powerful data analytics to provide information on service quality and improvements needed.</p>



## City of Westminster

			<p>Repairs are tracked at patch level by the area surveyors who have targets for ensuring repairs are completed within target timescales. Morgan Sindall staff are located in the area offices working alongside housing staff, and also in the contact centre which assists in resolving issues efficiently such as agreeing follow-on works and communication with the customer. Issues can be escalated by staff to WCC/MS managers and at weekly joint meetings. Currently, there is no formal escalation procedure for customers outside of the complaints process.</p> <p><b>Major works</b> For a typical project the engagement before formal leaseholder section 20 consultation consists of six written updates and up to three resident meetings/ drop ins/surgeries. From the introduction stage of a major works project there is a named officer in the property services communications team as a point of contact to resolve queries at that stage or escalate if required. This includes a direct e-mail address for ease of contact</p> <p>Each project has a dedicated webpage and all correspondence and updates are published. In addition to the above our contractors are also committed to providing regular updates during the works. This includes providing regular site updates as well as hosting regular surgeries and drop in's as well and regular walkabouts with residents so that they can obtain feedback about their performance on site and make improvements where required.</p> <p>It has been necessary to review the scope of some schemes recently and to build in fire safety and H&amp;S related works. This has resulted in delays and residents have not been kept regularly advised of progress. This has been identified as an area of frustration and we are reviewing how best to keep residents advised of delays.</p>
27	Improve the way that customer satisfaction information is collected. Use different milestones during projects and by using a greater variety of methods aimed	Implemented	A range of surveys are in place to measure customer satisfaction. Kwest, an independent market research agency are employed to gather satisfaction feedback from residents immediately after they have used the following services by e-mail and telephone:



# City of Westminster

	<p>at increasing the amount of feedback received. Improving data collection should be a KPI.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In flat repairs</li> <li>• ASB resolution</li> <li>• Complaints handling</li> <li>• Signing up for a new tenancy</li> <li>• Completion of major works</li> </ul> <p>We also monitor satisfaction with contact centre call handling as part of the centre management using specialist software.</p> <p>Going forwards, for all new major works schemes, satisfaction with consultation will be measured when we reach the stage that consultation is complete.</p> <p>A quarterly survey is also in place to measure resident perception of the housing service across a random sample of lessees and tenants. The results of the surveys are reviewed with the Cabinet Member.</p>
<b>Major Works</b>			
28	<p>Commence consultation with lessees in advance of issuing s20 notices on all major works projects.</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>Early engagement on major works projects is important in delivering successful projects. For a typical project, Westminster starts this engagement 12-18 months before any planned work is due. The engagement encompasses a range of methods and is aligned to the key milestones of a project. This approach allows residents to contribute at the initial planning and detailed design and approvals stage, before formal leaseholder consultation. It also gives an opportunity for residents to escalate any issues they have in relation to the works being carried out, at an early stage. The rationale for this approach is that the formal leaseholder consultation should reaffirm the discussions held with residents in the development of the project.</p> <p>For a typical project the engagement before formal leaseholder section 20 consultation consists of six written updates and up to three resident meetings/ drop ins / surgeries. From the introduction stage of a project there is a named officer in the property services communications team as a point of contact to coordinate queries and this includes a direct e-mail address for ease of contact. In addition, each project has a dedicated webpage and all correspondence and updates are published.</p>



# City of Westminster

29	Investigate the possibility of appointing a quantity surveyor who would act for residents to assist them with evaluating major works schemes.	Implemented	<p>This has been piloted at Gloucester Terrace and offered to residents at Luxborough Tower (this scheme is at an early stage). Residents nominate a consultant to act on their behalf and assist them with the technical and commercial evaluation of projects and their fees are paid by the Council.</p> <p>Following early positive dialogue with the consultant for Gloucester Terrace and encouragement from the working group, the consultant has decided not to continue. Feedback has been provided to the resident working group who acknowledge the Council's good intentions.</p> <p>The current arrangement, with the fees paid directly by the Council is not truly independent and consultants seem uninterested in performing this advisory role which may involve challenging the Council.</p> <p>An alternative proposal (based on a Monitoring Surveyor model) has been proposed where residents directly approach consultants to agree a scope of service. Under this proposal, the Council would offer a proportionate sum to the resident group to directly appoint and pay the consultant and in doing so preserve their independent status. Certain parameters would be specified, including RICS accreditation and Professional Indemnity insurance appropriate for the services commissioned and the council would need to support residents in becoming more organised and establish the infrastructure necessary to manage and pay consultants.</p>
30	Investigate the possibility of establishing leaseholder-linked sinking funds and an improved flexible payment system with a view to introducing one or both of them.	In progress	<p>Legal advice has been obtained on the options for sinking funds. Any change would require the consent of lessees so we are devising a consultation paper and survey to gauge the appetite of lessees for the implementation of a sinking fund. The accompanying information will provide details on the concept of a 'sinking fund' along with questions to allow our lessees to better understand the proposal and the implications to their service charge liability and reserve fund payments. Early examination confirms that few London local authorities offer the provision of sinking funds to their leaseholders and generally this is for new build blocks. A full report will be drafted within the next two months.</p>



## City of Westminster

31	Produce a coordinated plan dealing with leaks that identifies necessary repairs and major works that are needed to address the issue.	In progress	<p>One third of all repairs reported are plumbing related and half of those jobs result in more than one call to the contact centre. The need for roofing works is also a source of leaks and overall, this area remains a challenge.</p> <p>Planned preventative maintenance programmes are in place for roofs, drains and gullies which now receive regular inspection and clearance. So far on the drainage PPM in the first year (phase 1) Sept 2018 – Sept 2019, we have completed 290 blocks across 28 estates. Improved linkages between asset strategy and repairs have been created, with prioritisation of roof renewals being programmed in future years major works programmes.</p> <p>We have just commenced phase 2 and plan to clear stacks and gulleys at 171 blocks across 18 estates and also 35 standalone buildings. During these works we are identifying further works required such as cracks within stacks which are repaired using inner sleeves or applying a waterproofing sealant. We are also installing roof drainage cowls - 'hedgehogs', to stop leaves entering the stacks and causing further blockages.</p> <p>We have also identified a number of roofs that have required replacing, roofs have been replaced at 4 blocks.</p>
32	Set a KPI for CWH that prioritises bringing management and professional fees in line with industry to give value for money.	In progress	<p>Benchmarking with other London boroughs in 2018 provided an industry standard for professional fees of 10%. At that time, CWH' costs were approximately 16-18%, using traditionally procured contracts. The new major works contracts have significantly reduced the direct management and professional fees associated with major works reduced to approximately 9% and are forecast to further reduce to approximately 6% in 2019/20 which is low compared with peers. Further reductions may be possible as the contracts mature but performance and quality must not suffer by starving resource.</p> <p>Due to the time taken to complete major works schemes, it will be some time before schemes started under this new regime will reach completion. Lessees will therefore not see the benefit of new arrangements until xxxx</p>



## City of Westminster

33	Review the information provided to leaseholders to ensure that there is complete transparency on how costs for major works are calculated.	In progress	<p>Changes were made in 2018 following the task group recommendation and the revised format subject was first used in February/March 2019.</p> <p>The new Director of Housing has made simplification of lessee bills a priority and further work is underway to improve all lessee communications.</p> <p>Leasehold operations provide the full breakdown of the costs to be incurred within the statutory section 20 notification and associated documentation. During the observation period (30 days plus an allowance of 5/7 days due regard to postage) our leaseholders are invited to view the full contract specification. The full contract documentation can run to hundreds of pages, but costs relevant to an individual block or estate can be provided to our residents free of charge. The apportionment of the service charge (the calculation) is provided at the Section 20 stage and upon receipt of the service charge demand.</p> <p>The format of the actual service charge accounts, issued in September 2019 were simplified and from April 2020 an annual service charge demand will be issued to our leaseholders. Work is in progress to simplify the mailing to ensure clear and transparent information is provided to all of our leaseholders, which explains the basis of calculation, the rationale for the works and the method of payment. A lot of development work is underway on the web pages to provide dated updates on information and full cost breakdowns for each contact by scheme name, postcode and by wards.</p>
34	Establish an appropriate review mechanism within CWH to ensure that major works projects provide good value for money for residents and are appropriate based on the condition surveys carried out.	In progress	<p>Two governance boards for Major Works are in place - Project Board (operational) and Programme Board (strategic), responsible for ensuring all proposed projects deliver value for money.</p> <p>Client Briefs are prepared by the Asset Strategy team and define the scope of works which is informed by independent condition surveys and site walkabouts where they consult with interested stakeholders. Client Briefs are published on the council's website.</p>



## City of Westminster

			<p>Detailed surveys are conducted by both the Service Providers and the Major Works team and at least three competitive prices obtained for business cases where these are relevant. Proposals received from Service Providers detailing strategies, pricing, designs and the like are scrutinised by the Major Works team before notices are prepared and issued to leaseholders and works commence on site. Proposals received from Service Providers are again published on the councils website.</p> <p>The new contracts are very specific about the scrutiny process and ensuring value for money for both the HRA and Leaseholders and prices are routinely validated against the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) schedule of rates to ensure Service Providers are providing competitive prices for major works.</p> <p>A Working Group has recommended that citywide prices are prepared for frequently adopted components/trades such as roofing and fire doors introducing further added value to work undertaken. Soft Market Testing has confirmed that preferential terms can be secured without additional cost such as 30 year guarantees for roofs rather than 25 years typically offered by manufacturers. The contracting terms and relationship with the existing Partnering Team Members is yet to be agreed but tendering processes will begin subject to Core Group approval and will secure best value across the city improving not only prices but the service offered by the second tier supply chain.</p> <p>An Operational Excellence framework has been introduced that identifies the activities and best practice necessary to ensure projects within the Investment Programme provide value for money and meet the expectations of stakeholders. In the first year of introduction projects scored 3 (out of 5) against the criteria defined in the model and measured improvement is planned for as the contracts and processes mature.</p>
35	Produce a plan for reducing costs on major works projects.	In progress	Reducing costs on major works contracts has been a priority and we have clear plans on how to achieve that.



## City of Westminster

			<p>The award of the two major works term contracts has moved us significantly further forward on this. Those contracts cover planned works and cyclical repairs undertaken throughout Westminster for ten years.</p> <p>It will take some time for all of the schemes procured under previous procurement arrangements to complete and reach final billing stage so it will be approximately 12 months before lessees see the benefit of the new arrangements in reduced bills.</p> <p>The Project Management costs (including Procurement) for major works have halved following the award of the term contracts and are forecast to realise savings of approximately £28m over the full ten-year term.</p> <p>Following the procurement of the Major Works term contracts, the only remaining variable components of costs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project duration (Preliminaries).</li><li>• Business cases for second tier supply chain.</li></ul> <p>All other pricing components are fixed except net profit which both Service Providers priced at 2%. That profit is subject to performance against four KPI's.</p> <p>Project Management costs have reduced from 16-18% to approximately 8% since the award of the term contracts, with the reductions varying depending on the size of the project, but as an average they have halved. Arrangements to reduce the costs include:</p> <p><b>Better project programming to minimise duration and preliminaries</b></p> <p>Project programmes and durations are agreed between the Service Providers and WCC Commissioning Team. Programme durations vary depending on the complexity of works and are discreet to each individual project. Project programming is a specialist activity and we are recruiting a dedicated Task Programmer. This new role will ensure works are sequenced in the most efficient way to reduce management and health and safety costs.</p>
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## City of Westminster

			<p><b>Business cases</b></p> <p>A minimum of three competitive prices (Business Cases) are obtained for each component/trade package of work that could not otherwise be priced under the NHF schedule of rates included in the contract (version 7.4). The Business Cases are net of any discounts, rebates or other preferential terms, so the cost paid represents the best market price for each component/trade. Prices are regularly validated against the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) schedule of rates to ensure Service Providers are providing best value for money.</p> <p>A Working Group established following the Task Group's recommendations identified that citywide Business Cases should be prepared for frequently used components/trades such as roofing and fire doors. Soft Market Testing has confirmed that preferential terms can be secured without additional cost such as 30 year guarantees for roofs rather than 25 years typically offered by manufacturers. Contracting terms and relationship with the existing Partnering Team Members are to be agreed and tendering processes will begin subject to Core Group approval and will inform the net cost of work delivered throughout the city.</p>
36	Review why certain blocks or estates are not currently planned for major works to ensure that all buildings are maintained in a timely fashion.	In progress	<p>The strategic approach to stock investment is set out in the council's Asset Management Strategy. It is currently being refreshed and a new strategy will be in place in spring 2020.</p> <p>The new strategy will set out the council's priorities for investment over the next five years. With finite resources available, the priorities will be driven by compliance, health and safety, decent homes and condition. Where blocks are not earmarked for investment, it will explain the rationale for those blocks not being included.</p>