

CONTRACTING THE COUNCIL EMPIRES

London
Adam Smith Institute
1985

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First published in the UK in 1985 by
ASI (Research) Limited
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ISBN 0-906517-68-0

'Direct labour can be an expensive luxury'.

- Aneurin Bevan

INTRODUCTION

Size of the problem

Local government is big business. It spends something over £33 billion per year - a quarter of total public spending. How much of that could be saved through competitive tendering and contracting the provision of services out to the private sector can only be conjectural. But a reduction in costs of only 3% would be sufficient to eliminate the current overspending of local authorities which has resulted in perpetual warfare between local and national government.

Where local councils have invited private sector companies to compete for the provision of services, savings have far exceeded such modest levels. On refuse collection and cleansing, reductions in cost of 25% to 30% have not been uncommon. Companies have even been willing to pay for the privilege of providing catering services which the council previously ran at a loss. In the construction and maintenance of council property, where competitive tendering is to become compulsory, private firms regularly undercut direct labour organizations by substantial amounts.

A costly contrast

Apart from building works, there is no compulsion on a local authority to seek the cheapest and most efficient way of getting its work done. The opportunities for economy have scarcely been examined, let alone exploited. Even where competition is compulsory, councils have gone to considerable lengths to frustrate the requirement for free and fair competition. Contracts have been organized, or conditions added, so that private firms would find it difficult or impossible to tender. After tenders have been received and opened, direct labour organizations have been allowed to revise their prices downwards to match the lowest offer. Sometimes they have been given the work without even that face-saving device.

The growth of in-house local government services and the determination with which they are defended stem partly from political ideology and partly from questionable economic theory. As long ago as 1953, the Labour Party Conference decided to encourage local authorities to build their houses by direct labour 'as a move towards ownership by the people'. That ideological commitment to direct labour is, if anything, deeper today than it was then. Others have come to support direct labour not for political reasons, but on the naive assumption that, because there is no necessity to make a profit, public provision must be cheaper.

Both positions are held with a seeming immunity to doubt, despite considerable evidence that direct labour not only loses money but sometimes fails to deliver the goods at all. Glasgow's

direct labour organization is supported as solidly today as it was before it overspent £8 million on house repairs and before its half-built houses at Darnley had to be demolished because it was cheaper for the council to cut its losses rather than let the DLO complete the contract.

Other councils have confirmed, with remarkable consistency, Aneurin Bevan's warning that 'direct labour can be an expensive luxury'. In the 1960s Salford, the then self-styled champion of 'public enterprise', lost £500,000 on contracts worth less than £6 million. The ensuing enquiry into their affairs only served to highlight for one authority what was then, and still is, true of many others.

But it is not only in building works that the high cost of council-run services has been demonstrated. Since Southend became the first major authority to put its refuse collection out to private contract, an impressive body of evidence has been built up to show how much more cheaply and efficiently private enterprise can provide cleansing and other services. In more specialist fields, such as pest control, private firms have long been able to offer local authorities a cheaper service than they can provide internally. The evidence is limited only by the unwillingness of so many councils to allow competition and risk seeing their inefficiencies exposed.

There must, therefore, be a very strong case for presuming that most, if not all, councils could cut their costs and save their ratepayers money by opening up their activities to the private sector. In the case of building works, that case led the government in 1980 to introduce the Local Government (Planning and Land) Act which forced councils to reorganize their direct labour departments, to introduce proper accounting practices, and to put the bulk of their work out to tender. Under that Act, council DLOs must compete successfully with the private sector if they are to survive. From that, it seems a short step to extend the same rigorous regime to much of the rest of local council activities. Therefore the proposals contained in the government green paper, 'Competition in the Provision of Local Authority Services', should be welcomed as a step in the right direction. These proposals for competition are long overdue.

Such competition is not to replace one dogma with another. There are efficient council operations just as there are inefficient private companies. Some aspects of a council's activities may be more cost-effective than any private alternative. The reason for putting the provision of council services out to tender is not to replace the public sector by the private, but to ensure that the council and its ratepayers get their services in the cheapest and most efficient way. It is a matter of price, quality, and efficiency, not a matter of ideological principle.

STEPS TO IMPROVEMENT

The need for cost analysis

The immediate difficulty that arises in making any comparison between the costs of a local authority in-house service and the charge a private contractor would make is that the traditional accounting practices of local government do not allow for easy identification of the total income and expenditure related to a particular activity.

While, for example, some of the income and expenditure directly associated with an individual golf course may appear in the accounts of a council's leisure and recreation department, it is more than likely that the capital and interest repayments will be given for all golf courses together or, perhaps, for the entire leisure and recreation service. Grass cutting and vehicle maintenance are likely to be carried out on a service-wide basis and again charged accordingly. The cost of central administration is unlikely to be allocated to the leisure and recreation accounts, let alone reallocated within the service to individual activities. Other expenses may be similarly omitted. Supporting services, such as architecture or quantity surveying, may not include in their accounts their share of the cost of central administration, the opportunity cost of the offices they use or the heat and light they consume.

This first prerequisite for establishing whether the public or the private sector can best provide a service is a change in accounting practices to allow present costs to be accurately known. Such problems have been more or less overcome in certain services already, with the new framework imposed by the Local Government (Planning and Land) Act. Earlier legislation created a similar accounting regime for council housing. Similarly, the recent Civic Government (Scotland) Act required councils who decided to adopt licencing for taxi operators, second-hand goods dealers, and other traders to levy charges sufficient to cover their costs. To meet that requirement, those costs have had to be quantified. Under the Government Trading Funds Act, certain central government organizations such as Her Majesty's Stationary Office and the Crown Suppliers must also now operate on a businesslike basis and produce accounts accordingly.

The first step, therefore, is for the Department of the Environment to produce a code of accounting practice which ensures that accounts are in future prepared in a way that identifies the total costs of provision for each service and each specific area of activity. To work, such a code will need statutory backing along the lines of the Local Government (Planning and Land) Act.

This change will have the added benefit of providing local councillors with far better information about their authorities' operations than they currently possess. It might well bring to

an end the many misleading claims commonly made about how cheaply particular services are provided and how little each cost each individual ratepayer. Experience has show that claimed costs can be as little as half, or less, than the real ones.

Practical experience of contracting

Once the real costs of local authority activities or services are known, it will be possible to implement a requirement that all or most should be put out to tender at regular intervals.

In some areas of activity, this will be a relatively simple operation. Several reputable firms already provide a number of local councils with refuse collection services, at substantial savings. The information therefore exists on which other councils can judge companies' competence to carry out the work. Without such a track record it would be possible for recalcitrant authorities to claim they were being forced to take chances with an important basic service.

Fortunately, the contracts so far let in these fields have almost all been successful and the savings have been significant, up to a quarter or more in many cases. Undoubtedly the fact that many British firms had been carrying out such functions abroad for years helped in ensuring that there were few problems.

These successes are not limited just to refuse collection. There are other areas where practical experience exists and where a rapid introduction of competition should cause no difficulty. **Pest control** is already contracted out to specialist firms in many areas. **Contract cleaning** of municipal buildings is common. Provision of **school buses** is often put out to tender, allowing small local firms the chance to compete with the large companies. The cleaning and maintenance of street lights and signs is also commonly contracted out.

In **catering, window cleaning, vehicle maintenance, ground maintenance** and other areas, adequate experience exists to show that there are private companies who can provide a satisfactory service at lower cost without any increase in problems for the councils concerned.

Though less common than it once was, the professional services of **architects, quantity surveyors, solicitors, accountants**, and a variety of consultants are still widely bought in, particularly to deal with peaks in demand that the council's own staff cannot cope with.

In other areas of council activity, the use of outside companies is much less common. Although there are many privately operated **crematoria**, for example, there are few if any municipal ones where the management has been contracted out. While many companies now provide a variety of **security services**, few if any local councils make use of them to protect their property. The

majority of **golf courses** are privately owned and operated but, by and large, local authorities have preferred to run their own rather than see if anyone else could do it better for them.

Extending competition

When the competition requirements of the Local Government (Planning and Land) Act were introduced, it was done on a phased basis to allow local authorities and potential contractors time to prepare. New competition requirements should be introduced in a similar phased process.

In the first stage of such a process, a limited number of services should be put out to tender with the minimum of delay. There is ample experience already available for councils to choose reputable contractors with a proven track record in those areas identified in the green paper, namely: **refuse collection, street cleaning, vehicle maintenance, ground maintenance, cleaning of buildings, and catering services**. However, the impetus of competition should not be confined to these services alone.

Other services such as **pest control, rent collection, refuse disposal, the operation of quarries, joinery workshops, the dredging of harbours, and the management of leisure and recreation facilities** should be included in a second stage where the introduction of competition is more gradual, allowing both councils and contractors to prepare for the change and gather experience on how to operate within it.

In all of the above, the principles of preparing tenders should be simple. The scale of the service and the standard required should be stated, along with the penalties for failure, with private contractors being invited to bid against the council's own operation. A preselection requirement would ensure that only contractors fully able to do the work would be allowed to tender, so that the lowest bid should normally be accepted.

In the case of **bus services**, the Transport Bill currently before Parliament will introduce a competition requirement into public services, school, and other services. It is to be hoped that this will prove adequate and that no further action will be necessary in this particular area.

The case of **professional services** is less straightforward. It is unlikely that many existing firms would be in a position to take on the whole of any council's work, even if they felt it desirable so to do. Again, considerations of aesthetic standards are involved in selecting architects. In addition, because of the difficulty of subdividing buildings and other similar factors, there may in fact be additional costs to the rest of a council's operations if some areas of professional work are contracted out.

Nonetheless, there is a clear case for establishing that the

council department is cost effective and the only way to find out is by comparison with the service the private sector can provide. The most viable mechanism is for a fixed amount, say initially 20%, of a council's requirement for professional service to be offered for tender and, in the light of experience, increase this if the efficiency gains justify it. The public would correctly perceive as unfair any legislation which only required blue-collar work to be put out to tender.

The difficulties inherent in contracting out professional services can be minimized by a fairly fine breakdown of those services. It is difficult to define 'data processing', but there is no need to do so if one is seeking tenders for systems analysis, programming, computer operating, or any other component. There will always have to be a permanent official with a residual responsibility for every function. The trick is to turn him into a keen buyer of services rather than an employer of staff. The best approach to contracting out of professional services is one which pares slices off the administrative tail - rent collection, litigation, payroll preparation, recruitment, programming, etc., rather than one which tries to chop it off in whole chunks (financial services, establishment, data processing, etc.).

THE TENDERING PROCESS

The timescale

Legislation requiring competitive tendering is long overdue, and it is important that it is enacted as soon as possible, certainly well before the next set of central government elections. This means that the legislation should become effective by the end of 1986, with tenders being invited during the first months of 1987 with the first round of contracts starting no later than April/May 1987.

It is reasonable for the compulsory tendering programme to be phased in, but not over too lengthy a period. Three years would seem to be about the right time. Phasing in competition requirements via a 'total expenditure' approach would entail the least problems. Contractors should first be able to tackle those contracts worth above a certain figure, the figure being reduced in three or four stages to zero, as new quantities of contracts are put out to tender.

There is no merit in having a *de minimis* exemption from competition. Very small contracts should also be put out to tender, creating opportunities for small, local entrepreneurs. If contractors are unable to perform such small contracts, then they will not put in low enough bids for them.

Tender documents

There is a strong case for the government to require local authorities to base their contracts on centrally determined model contracts, with local specifications being added. There are already a number of successful contracts in operation in the different services, on which model contracts could be based.

It is clear that the Secretary of State must have the power to make void enquiries in pre-tender questionnaires and clauses in contracts which are irrelevant and unrelated to performance requirements. This power should extend to actually striking out such irrelevant clauses and questions from the documents before they are returned to the council. In addition a statutory duty should be imposed on all councils not to discriminate against contractors on the basis of criteria unrelated to their ability to perform the work in question. Some councils in the past have attempted to specify the methodology of the service. (For example, insisting that bins should be emptied in the same way as before.) That is also irrelevant and should be illegal.

Each contract should include a standard arbitration clause providing for recourse by either party to an independent arbitration body. When tendering, the contractor should receive the full co-operation of the council in obtaining the relevant historical documentation, financial, legal, and statistical information to assist him in his detailed assessment of the task involved.

Contract length

Contracts must be of reasonable length. Any successful contractor will have to employ new staff to carry out his new responsibilities. He may well decide to use a significant proportion of the existing council workforce, but even so, he will have incurred a liability towards those workers should he fail to retain the contract in the next round of tendering. His potential rewards over the lifetime of the contract must be sufficient to cover that liability.

He will need premises, plant, and equipment. Again, he may decide to take over the council's property. More likely, however, he will provide his own. Just as a local authority would write off the tens of thousands of pounds a new refuse freighter costs over a number of years, so too a contractor must be given long enough to allow him to do the same.

Contracts must be of fixed duration so that councils do not manipulate the length of the contracts they offer so that the established in-house operation is the only organization capable of tendering.

It must always be borne in mind that a long-term contract does not mean that the local authority is locked into an arrangement

that might turn out to be unsatisfactory or even disastrous. Proper penalty clauses can insure that councils do not find themselves out of pocket due to a contractor's failure or that they cannot terminate a contract where the service is not being provided. In practice, this has already happened, and new contractors have been speedily found who were willing and able to take over. In such circumstances, local authorities are actually in a stronger position to maintain quality standards with private contractors than they are in dealing with the failures of their own in-house services.

Pre-qualification

A fair and properly organized pre-qualification procedure is an important part of the tendering process, but it is vital that it is done properly. Services to be put out to tender should be advertised in national trade journals, not just in the local press, so skilled national contractors are attracted as well as local service companies.

Experience to date shows that there have been occasions when contractors with sound operating experience and sufficient financial base have not been accepted by councils to tender, and no reasons have been given. Furthermore, companies with no operational track record have been pre-qualified, with the work later being retained by the DLO. Councils should not be allowed to play politics with the pre-qualification process, and the government should set guidelines to ensure that the process is fair.

After pre-qualification the council should be obliged to accept the lowest pre-qualified tender.

The individual services

Vehicle maintenance. The Audit Commission has already reported that 'there is a great deal of room for increased efficiency in the way in which vehicle fleet maintenance is organized and managed'. Large savings are possible, and difficulties involved in contracting out are not great. In particular the workshops and their activity are out of the public eye, and it should be noted that most people are unaware of any shift from DLO to contractors. Thus contracting out generates little political heat.

Early contracting-out of vehicle maintenance would eliminate much of the present wastage (eg. spare vehicles, bad vehicle and workshop running practices), and provide a firmer base for private contractors who take over refuse collection and street cleansing services. The general practice at present is for councils to impose their excess vehicles and facilities on new refuse and cleansing contractors, thus hampering their performance. Contracting out vehicle maintenance services first would

make the councils responsible for the disposal of excess requirements, making many vehicles and some workshop equipment redundant, thus enabling an incoming refuse collection or street cleansing contractor to provide a more efficient performance.

Therefore it would be sensible to require all local authorities to put all their vehicle maintenance work out to tender within 6 months of the date of enactment of legislation.

Councils should be required to make the existing workshop facilities available to the contractor at an annual agreed rent, based on market values. This agreement for use of the workshop facilities should last for the duration of the contract period, with the selected contractor having the right to use the workshop for third party work. Councils could generate extra cash by the sale of surplus, redundant council workshops, and should be required to do so.

Factors such as the time required to complete re-organization, possible high initial capital investment in new plant and equipment, and investment in specialized management and supervisory expertise, suggest that the contract period should last for a minimum of five years, with large contracts possibly being awarded for longer periods.

The contract should also clearly specify the revised charges which would apply if, for example, a council decides, after a contract has been let, to reduce the transport fleet in excess of five per cent, thereby reducing the contractor's workload.

It has been suggested that some private sector firms tend to specialize in the maintenance of either light general purpose vehicles, or heavy vehicles, or specialized vehicles, but not all three at once, and that therefore separate tendering for each category should be requested by councils. This is a wise idea, but it would also be sensible to require councils to issue a separate tender covering all the service requirements as one unit.

Refuse collection/street cleansing. Widespread experience in Britain clearly shows that these services can be successfully contracted out, and performed much more efficiently by the private sector, with large savings to the ratepayer.

A sensible contract period, based on existing experience, would seem to be five years, and the obligation to tender should be phased in over three years, starting with the large councils. Some councils might wish to combine their refuse collection and street cleansing work into one contract, which could produce savings as a result of shared facilities and vehicles etc., and would also reduce problems arising from disputed responsibility for such matters as a street left untidy by a refuse collection contractor. Contract monitoring arrangements must be very carefully worked out beforehand, as these can cause particular difficulties when especially subjective judgements are suspected

of being given.

Cleaning of buildings. Cleaning of buildings has already been contracted out successfully in many areas, again with large savings. Experience would suggest a contract length of three years, with the tendering process being phased in over three years.

Subsidy of in-house operations

All of these proposals will achieve nothing, however, if councils can continue to subsidize their operations, whether directly or indirectly, openly or covertly.

To meet this problem, the condition was imposed on direct labour organizations that they should make a minimum return on the capital they employed of 5% and councils were barred from making any payments to their DLOs that exceeded the actual price that had been tendered for the work to be done. In the event that the target rate of return was not met over a number of years, the Secretary of State has the power to order the organization closed down.

But return on capital is only one measure of success. Profit as a proportion of turnover is at least as important, since the narrower that margin, the greater the danger of moving from profit into loss. Neither measure is adequate on its own. The value of property and plant employed is not related directly to turnover and a high rate of return on capital can be achieved with a profit that is so small in relation to turnover as to be insignificant. Though less common, the converse is not unknown. The solution is to impose parallel targets for both return on capital and profit as a percentage of turnover.

Leaving it to government ministers to make a political decision on whether or not to step in when those targets are not met is unsatisfactory, however. It might, on balance, be better if something akin to company law were applied which, at its most fundamental level, would bar any organization from trading at a loss: but such a rigorous regime is not applicable to every area of council activity. Although the operation and accounts of a council's cleansing department could readily be organized along the lines of a private company, the same approach becomes more difficult to apply in the case of small services. For some, particularly those only partially put out to tender, it is probably impossible.

An alternative approach in such cases would be to bar an authority from paying any more for an in-house service than the tender price offered and to prohibit, so far as possible, any cross payments from one service to another or from one part of a service to another part.

Restrictive arrangements

The implementation of the DLO legislation revealed the ingenuity and effort some councils were prepared to put into frustrating the introduction of reasonable competition. Contractors were required to accept demands for the continuation of quite unacceptable working practices before being allowed to tender. Some firms that had worked on defence contracts were denied the opportunity to bid. Road haulage companies that had run lorries past NUM picket lines were saved from similar treatment only by the intervention of the courts. And tenders were organized, or the work subdivided, in ways such that only the authority's own workforce could realistically bid.

When offers have been received, many direct labour organizations have been allowed to reduce their price to match the lowest bid. On other occasions, the lowest bid has been ignored, either on an automatic but incorrect assumption of inferior quality or reliability or because the cost of redundancies would allegedly eliminate the savings. And those same redundancy costs have been used time and time again, even though they would have been incurred only once. Often, tenders have been invited solely as a means of putting pressure on the council's workers to accept changes in wages and conditions but with no intention of taking any private bid, however large the savings it offered. All of these means of restricting or eliminating competition are undesirable and thought needs to be given to their prevention.

Even after councils have awarded contracts to their own in-house departments, the dishonesty can continue. Long before the DLO legislation, councils were caught charging costs to the wrong project to make in-house services appear profitable. In other cases, where an authority's director of works and chief architect could collude, it was easy for contract conditions to be quietly altered, for material specifications to be changed, or for some work simply to be omitted so that inefficiency could be hidden and contract prices (apparently) met.

These are only a few examples of the steps that are being, and will be, taken to insulate in-house workforces from the threat of competition.

Some of these restrictions will be relatively easy to eliminate. The imposition of any conditions not directly related to performance of a contract should be prohibited. Similarly, failure to accept the lowest tender following preselection could be made an offence, with councillors liable to being surcharged for the difference between that tender and the one they accepted. Wrongly made payments or a failure to fulfil contract conditions could be treated as fraud, with the appropriate penalties applied.

Further detailed steps are required to ensure fair play. It is not reasonable to expect council officers, often the same people who are bidding on behalf of their own department, to be

impartial in evaluating tenders. Similarly, some councillors may allow their judgement to be swayed by strong political views on the desirability of privatization. In these circumstances it is clearly wise to insist on independent monitoring of tender documents. At the same time tender submission and selection of the lowest tender, the actual opening and evaluation of the tender documents should be done in the presence of an independent figure, perhaps a local solicitor or accountant. Needless to say, the DLO tender should be submitted at the same time and be treated in exactly the same manner as another contractor.

At all times the terms and conditions as laid down in the tender documents should be adhered to, whether the contract has been let to a contractor or to the DLO. Financial PENALTIES and the implementation thereof for non and poor performance should also be passed on to the DLO when they have retained the work. When the contract has been awarded to the DLO, it should not be possible under any circumstance, to increase the labour force or to award pay increases at any time during the contract period, which are in excess of the tender specified and agreed manpower level together with the accepted annual fluctuation clause. The Council should not have to provide extra financial funding if the DLO tender was found to be incorrect at a later stage during the contract period. The Council workforce should also be liable to provide a performance bond on identical terms and conditions to those applying to outside and independent contractors.

But whatever rules and regulations are applied, there will always be opportunities to find and exploit new loopholes. One solution would be a general requirement on councils to act reasonably and fairly, and to appoint an official overseer or 'ombudsman' with full powers to investigate all complaints and recommend, where appropriate, what remedial action or compensatory payments should be made.

The danger in giving this role to a government minister is that each case becomes a political battle regardless of its technical or financial importance. Equally, to ask the auditors to police the system is to ask them to become involved in political battles with the consequences that poses for their otherwise impartial role as guardians of financial rectitude.

Even though it is the role of government to lay down the rules within which local councils operate, it would be best if the supervision of those rules was the responsibility of an independent agency established specifically for the purpose.

Conclusions

Despite considerable time and money spent on management consultants, work studies, job evaluation, and bonus schemes, much of the work councils do is not done as cheaply or efficiently as others could do it if given the chance. Some councils, of course, are efficient and economical, but in many others it is

quite impossible to know what the services actually cost, let alone compare them with the private sector.

This situation should be as unsatisfactory for councillors and their officials as it is for the ratepayers who have to provide the finance. It is essential that the public should know the actual costs of providing services and can be assured that those costs are the lowest required to provide the standards they want. A standard mechanism of cost identification, coupled with the progressive extension of competition, independently monitored, is necessary if these aims are to be met.

Table 1
Local government services contracted out to private industry

Local authority	Operation	Annual savings
Bath City	public lavatory & street cleaning & refuse collection	£300,000
	catering in council & sports halls	£63,000
Birmingham City	school cleaning	£670,000
Boothferry BC	pest control	£14,390
Bromley BC	street cleaning	£200,000
Broxbourne BC	public convenience cleaning	£11,000
Cambridgeshire CC	school cleaning	£700,000
Chiltern DC	refuse collection	£160,000
Christchurch DC	public convenience cleaning	£16,000
Croydon DC	public convenience cleaning	£70,000
	pest control	£20,000
Dover DC	public convenience cleaning	*
Dudley BC	school cleaning	£600,000
	further education college cleaning	£130,000
Ealing BC	street cleaning	£600,000
	school meals	£695,000
	meals on wheels	
East Staffs DC	electrical contractors	£3,000
Eastbourne BC	street cleaning	£500,000
	refuse collection	
Edinburgh DC	architectural services	*
Epping Forest DC	pest control	£2,000
	delivery/collection of polling equipment	£365
	vending service	£7,000
Fareham BC	public convenience cleaning	£22,000
Gedling BC	office cleaning	£12,000
Gillingham BC	public convenience cleaning	£36,500
Gloucester DC	horticultural produce	£24,000
Gt Yarmouth BC	office cleaning	£6,114
Humberside CC	meals on wheels	£43,000

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea	refuse collection	£100,000
Kent CC	school cleaning	£1,100,000
Kingston BC	grass cutting	£46,000
Lewes DC	public convenience cleaning	£7,000
Lothian RC	car parks leased	£220,000
Maldon BC	street cleaning	£1,180
Mendip BC	refuse collection	£126,000
Merton BC	school meals	£833,270
	school cleaning	£250,000
	refuse and waste paper collection	£750,000
Milton Keynes BC	refuse collection	£488,000
North Norfolk DC	refuse collection	£175,000
Penwith DC	public convenience cleaning	£30,000
St Albans DC	public convenience cleaning	£20,000
St Edmundsbury BC	golf course leased	£15,000
Salisbury DC	pest control	£12,000
	office cleaning	£28,000
Solihull BC	school cleaning	£108,000
South Bucks DC	pest control	£7,000
	office cleaning	£2,000
South Kesteven DC	public convenience & street cleaning and refuse collection	£320,000
South Lakeland DC	grass cutting	£1,500
South Oxfordshire DC	refuse collection	£200,000
Southend-on-Sea BC	street cleaning	£600,000
	refuse collection	
Surrey Heath DC	street cleaning	£12,000
Sutton BC	cleaning of libraries	£3,500
	laundry	£14,000
Tamworth DC	refuse collection	£200,000
Tandridge DC	refuse collection	£160,000
Taunton Dene BC	refuse collection	£42,700
Vale of White Horse DC	street cleaning & refuse collection	£290,000
Wandsworth BC	street cleaning	£670,000
	refuse collection	£1,130,000
	garden maintenance	£200,000
	housing repairs	£151,000
	vehicle maintenance	£297,800
	community centre cleaning	£120,000
Waverley DC	golf course leased	£2,000
City of Westminster	architectural services	£235,000
Wirral BC	street cleaning & refuse collection	£1,400,000
Wycombe DC	office cleaning	£3,455
Yeovil	office cleaning	£21,500

Notes: * Authority unwilling to give figures
BC = Borough Council DC = District Council
CC = County Council RC = Regional Council

Source: Public Service Review, No. 3, 1984.