

<b>Re-tendering of the Arboricultural Services Contract – Summary of discussions with potential suppliers</b>
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QUESTION:	RESPONSE FROM CONTRACTOR A	RESPONSE FROM CONTRACTOR B	RESPONSE FROM CONTRACTOR C	RESPONSE FROM CONTRACTOR D	RESPONSE FROM CONTRACTOR E
<b>What is your preferred contract length, and why?</b>	Minimum 5 years up to 10 years with suitable breaks. This will allow for familiarisation with the Borough's tree stock and a 'get out' if the contract is not working satisfactorily for either party.	Generally, the longer the better to allow familiarisation with the Borough's tree stock and investment in depot space, vehicles and plant, as well as employees.  Possible contract lengths – 7+3; 7+2.	Generally, the longer the better to allow familiarisation with the Borough's tree stock and investment in depot space, vehicles and plant, as well as employees.  Possible contract lengths – minimum 5 years.	Minimum of 5 years, given the investment in vehicles and plant, and the continuous change in the economic climate.	
<b>In your view, is it reasonable to package street tree work with parks based work, and why?</b>	Yes. The functions are broadly similar and many other clients do package these works together.	Yes. It allows a more flexible approach and more flexible use of resources, as well as allowing for access issues and bust times on the local road network.	Yes. It produces economies of scale. Parks work is generally easier due to less-impeded access to trees, and highways work can be delayed for this reason.	Yes. This is perfectly reasonable, but may preclude competition from smaller providers.	

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<b>From what (if any) knowledge you have of Brent, what would you see as our ideal maintenance regime – fixed maintenance cycles, wholly reactive, or something else?</b>	Fixed Maintenance Cycles, but with some allowance for ad-hoc works.	Fixed maintenance cycles. The company considers this the best use of public money and should attract more competitive prices from contractors, but recognises that there will always be an element of ad-hoc works.	Fixed Maintenance Cycles, but with some allowance for ad-hoc works	The company would need to know more about the Borough's tree stock to form a definite view, but in all probability there would need to be a balance between Fixed Maintenance Cycles and ad-hoc works.	
<b>From your other business, what maintenance regime do you consider to be particularly successful, and why?</b>	Depends on the tree stock, but working across the Borough is generally better (i.e. zonal based maintenance), assessing what works are necessary as and when visits are scheduled.	Current contracts in Lambeth and Camden are considered successful and based on a 'super prune' approach, with a 'check list' approach to maintaining trees.	They feel they are able to adapt to various different regimes and do not have a particular preference.  The maintenance cycle would not affect the cost.	There are always lots of variables, and the company would need to know more about Brent's tree stock and out strategy on tree management.  The company would not recommend a wholly reactive regime.	

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<b>In the context of local authority finances, year-on-year budgets are subject to significant change. What problems might this present to you, and how would you work collaboratively with Brent to accommodate these changes?</b>	Any problems would arise from what level of resources were being deployed, and thus it would be helpful to have some prior notice of proposed changes and thus allow proper planning on the part of the contractor.	The company would look to establish a good relationship with Brent, and establish a common understanding of where savings and efficiencies could be made.	The market they work within is very competitive, and they recognise the need to work closely with clients to retain business and grow.	Again, the company would need a better understanding of what Brent's ambitions were with regards to maintaining the tree stock.  The company's staff are well-remunerated and thus do a good job without cutting corners.	
<b>Would you be comfortable with a requirement to make annual cost savings efficiencies?</b>	The company experience this elsewhere, and are always looking at more efficient or new ways of working. Annual reviews are common and role-swapping with client officers has proven to be useful.	The company is experiencing this challenge more and more with existing clients, and have taken on some work traditionally viewed as the client's role.	As a company, they are always looking at this and accept it is a part of business development and survival.	The company is not uncomfortable with this, but the service needs to be properly priced and thought through.	

## Appendix A

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<b>Brent will be unable to provide an operational base or depot. Would this affect your ability to bid?</b>	No.  They would look for around 10,000 sq. ft. of concreted yard locally to Brent.	No.  The company could service the Brent contract from their existing bases close to the Borough.	No.  They would look for a depot local to Brent.	No.  They would be able to operate a contract in Brent from nearby existing company bases.	
<b>Other comments</b>	The company take all woodchip to Slough Heat & Power.  Prefer a schedule of rates approach to pricing, based mainly on height of the tree, and not too many different bands at this becomes over-complicated.  Prefer to communicate with client by mobile phone or email.	Prefer a specification based on performance standards.  Promote the use of aerial inspections of the tree stock.	None specifically.	The company were interested in how our evaluation may be carried out – specifically the balance between price and quality, as they recognised that they may not be able to compete solely on price, but could guarantee high quality work.	