

## Crony COVID Contracts in the UK

Almost £2 billion in total has been spent on “crony” contracts going to Conservative friends and donors.

By [Nigel Barlow](#)

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*The Labour Party is calling on the Government to urgently clean up its Covid procurement as it emerges almost £2 billion in total has been spent on “crony” contracts going to Conservative friends and donors.*

The amount of money spent on contracts awarded to companies that have links to the Conservative Party has almost doubled since the first wave, rising to nearly £2 billion following Labour’s original tally of £1 billion in October 2020, and despite stark warnings from the National Audit Office in November.

The total cost of contracts that have gone to Tory friends and donors could have provided free school meals to every one of the 1.4 million pupils who are eligible – for over 3 years.

Of the £23.1 billion the public sector has spent on Covid, 85% – or £19.7 billion – have been awarded by central government, highlighting the centralisation of outsourcing not attuned to local needs.

In a speech from Labour Party headquarters in Southside, Rachel Reeves, Shadow Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, will demand the Government takes urgent action to stop cronyism consuming its outsourcing and contracts by urgently restoring tendering rules with improved transparency to scrutinise contracts.

And she will urge the Government to claw back taxpayer money on contracts that haven’t delivered what they’ve promised, to counter increasing concerns from the public on waste of funds.

She will also outline key policies a Labour government would put in place to tackle the increasing lack of transparency, cronyism and taxpayer waste at the heart of the Government’s outsourcing practice.

“This Government has eroded not only our public services to the brink of collapse, but so much of what it means to be an honourable and transparent government.

“While this Tory Government has denied key workers in our public services a pay rise, they

paid 900 management consultants at Deloitte £1,000 a day to work on test and trace.

“The beating heart of our country is the key workers who have kept us going through this last year. That’s why we applauded them. Children weren’t banging pots and pans for management consultants. They were clapping our key workers.

“The public is also paying a high price for this Government’s mismanagement and waste. This current Tory Party is rife with conflicts of interest. It’s all cheques and no balances.

“People expect all of us seeking government to spend their money with care and respect – and a Labour government will.

“Labour will clean up government contracting by strengthening FOI, introducing a new Independent Anti-Corruption Commissioner, and an Integrity and Ethics Commission to make us a world leader in good governance and transparency.”

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