

PPN 026 • FROM 1 JANUARY 2027

Will It Survive the Report?

Under PPN 026 a social value commitment on a contract of £5 million or more becomes a KPI that is published centrally and reported at least annually. The drafting test is no longer whether it scores. It is whether somebody who did not write it can evidence it a year later, in public. Run a draft commitment through these checks before it goes into a bid.

1 Establish which model applies

- ☐ **The commencement date confirmed**, since PPN 026 applies to in-scope procurements commencing on or after 1 January 2027 and a procurement commences when the tender notice is published.
- ☐ **The buyer confirmed as in scope**: central government departments, executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies. Local government and the NHS may adopt the model but are not required to.
- ☐ **Contract value checked against the threshold**. PPN 026 applies from £1 million including VAT, where the previous model started at the procurement threshold.
- ☐ **Early transition checked with the buyer**, because some will move to the new model before it is mandatory and others will stay on the old one where transitioning would be disproportionate.

State it: which model this bid answers, in writing, before drafting begins.

2 Make the commitment reportable

- ☐ **The commitment resolves to a countable unit**, normally a role or a number of roles, rather than to an intention such as supporting employment in the region.
- ☐ **The discipline and the contract are named**, so the commitment is tied to this delivery rather than to the organisation in general.
- ☐ **The cohort is identified** against the criteria on barriers to employment, and the identification can be documented without relying on anybody's recollection.
- ☐ **The reporting cadence is stated in the answer**, not left to be agreed after award when nobody is in the room who wrote it.

State it: the number, the role, the discipline and the contract, in one sentence.

3 Give it an owner in operations

- ☐ **A named person outside the bid team has accepted the commitment** before submission. If the owner is the bid team, it will not be delivered, because they will be on the next tender.
- ☐ **The cost is in the tender**. A commitment with no budget line is a commitment somebody will be asked to absorb, and it will be the first thing cut.
- ☐ **It appears on the delivery programme** rather than in a separate social value plan nobody opens after month three.
- ☐ **The handover from bid to operations is a scheduled event**, with the commitment and its evidence requirements written down and passed across.

State it: the owner's name and the budget line, before the bid is submitted.

Written once, scored once, filed. Not any more.

4 Make the evidence a by-product

- ☐ **The evidence falls out of doing the work:** payroll records, timesheets, monthly reports. Anything requiring a separate collection exercise will be reported late or thinly.
- ☐ **The baseline is recorded at the start,** so the figure reported in twelve months has something to be measured against.
- ☐ **One person is responsible for the monthly record,** and the record is kept whether or not anyone asks for it that month.
- ☐ **The evidence would satisfy somebody who was not there,** since the person reporting in year two is frequently not the person who set it up.

State it: which existing document evidences each element of the commitment.

5 Test it against publication

- ☐ **Read the commitment as the annual report it will become,** then ask whether the sentence still reads well when the number beside it is real.
- ☐ **Assume a competitor will read it,** because on contracts of £5 million or more the performance record is published centrally.
- ☐ **Assume the client's next procurement team will read it** when scoring your following bid, which makes an underdelivered commitment a cost rather than a neutral outcome.
- ☐ **Cut anything you would not want quoted back.** The optimism that wins a score is the same optimism that reads badly a year later.

State it: the sentence you would be content to see published against your name.

Before the answer goes in

The three that decide whether this is deliverable or merely well written.

- ☐ The commitment names a role, a discipline and a contract, and resolves to a number somebody can count.
- ☐ A named person in operations has accepted it, and it carries a budget line.
- ☐ Every element can be evidenced from a document the project produces anyway.

Drafting a jobs-and-skills response? We will pressure-test the delivery side before it goes in, at no charge.

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