

## **Summary Transcript from Procurement Information Webinar – CPH130 Social Connectedness Opportunity Date: 14 January 2026**

**Presenters:** - Jayne Smith – Senior Procurement Officer, Corporate Services & Transformation - Jay Patient – Adult Social Care and Health - Luan Wilde – Adult Social Care and Health

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### Transcript Summary

#### 1. Welcome and Introduction

- Jayne Smith welcomed attendees and explained the webinar would be recorded.
- Participants were advised to mute microphones and were informed that slides would be published after the session.
- Purpose: To provide guidance on the Social Connectedness procurement process.

#### 2. Agenda Overview

- Central Digital Platform registration and use
- Importance of timely registration
- Procurement time scales
- Overview of the procurement process
- Conditions of participation and the Procurement Specific Questionnaire (PSQ)
- Bidding models
- Key points and compliance tips
- Q&A session

#### 3. Central Digital Platform

- Providers must register once to access multiple opportunities.
- Required information: organisation details, legal registration, financial accounts, and associated persons.
- PDF export of registration details must be submitted with the tender.
- Registration ensures efficiency and compliance across multiple contracts.

#### 4. Procurement Time Scales

- Tender advertised: 5 February 2026
- Question window: 5 February – 9 March 2026
- Q&A log published: 12 March 2026
- Tender submission deadline: 19 March 2026
- Evaluation and due diligence: March–May 2026
- Notification to bidders: 2 June 2026
- Contract start: 1 November 2026
- Dates are indicative.

#### 5. Procurement Process

- Advertisement via Find a Tender Service (notice only).
- Full tender documents available on ProContract portal.
- Competitive flexible procedure: single tender submission, due diligence, and negotiation with high-scoring bidders.

#### 6. Tender Documentation

- ITT includes timelines, scoring methodology, pricing, and submission instructions.
- Single Tender Response Document includes:
  - PSQ (Part 5)
  - Pass/fail compliance questions
  - Quality questions

#### 7. Conditions of Participation (PSQ Part 5)

- Assesses financial capacity, technical ability, and compliance.
- Completion depends on delivery model:
  - Single provider: lead completes
  - Lead + subcontractor: both complete where subcontractor is being relied on for Conditions of Participation
  - Consortium: all members complete
- Associated persons: any organisation/individual relied upon to meet Conditions of Participation (excluding banks or non-relied subcontractors).

#### 8. Bidding Models

- Single provider
- Lead provider with subcontractors
- Consortium/joint bids
- Flexible delivery models encouraged, including community micro-grants

## 9. Evaluation & Scoring

- Quality is primary; financial check is pass/fail.
- Weighing not yet finalised possible options being considered are 80% Quality 20% Price, 70% Quality, 30% Price or 100% quality).
- Post-submission meetings may occur for high-scoring bids.

## 10. Micro-Grants & Community Delivery

- Ring-fenced minimum micro-grant pot included for grassroots activity.
- Providers may expand the pot but must maintain ring-fenced grassroots portion.
- Small community groups funded are not associated people if not relied upon for participation and be part of the delivery model.

## 11. Critical Compliance Tips

- Register on ProContract and Central Digital Platform.
- Upload all requested documents in correct formats.
- Answer all questions fully, no caveats or conditions added.
- Submit on time; late submissions cannot be accepted.
- Use portal for all communications; direct contact with council officers is prohibited.
- Ask questions during clarification window to avoid assumptions.

## 12. Questions & Answers

1. **Will the Q&A log be published as questions received or only on 12 March?** Q & A Log will be published on 12 March 2026, anonymised. Individual questions may be answered as they come in, however the Q & A log for all questions and answers will be published on 12 March 2026. Most questions tend to be basic and already covered in tender documents.
2. **Can providers expand the micro-grant approach to work with many small community groups?** Yes, flexibility exists to expand the micro-grant pot. However, the grassroots element must remain ring-fenced. Groups funded this way are not associated persons if not relied upon for participation requirements.
3. **How much is the minimum total pot for the Micro Grants per year?** This is set out in Annex 1 of the specification, the ring-fenced amounts; minimum £3,000 per lot for micro grants.
4. **Can specialist organisations (e.g., women-only services) bid?** Yes, but the overall service must remain a universal offer. Specialist providers may form part of a wider delivery model or partnership.
5. **Quality Questions and expected length?** Potential up to 6 quality questions. Word counts will be confirmed in the tender documentation but nothing is finalised at this stage.
6. **Is five-week Tender enough to form partnerships?** Concern acknowledged, particularly for voluntary and community sector collaboration. Providers are

encouraged to start partnership discussions immediately using the draft specification. Some of this may have started when the workshop event was held in November 2025 to encourage collaboration.

7. **Will there be presentations or interviews?** The Highest Scoring Tenders for each lot will be invited to due diligence meeting to validate delivery, and the Council reserve the right to negotiate in this meeting.

### 13. Closing Remarks

- Commitment to quality-led procurement and flexibility.
- Providers are encouraged to provide feedback via Microsoft Forms on draft specification, closes on Friday 16 January 2026.
- Bidders are urged to prepare early and ensure full compliance.
- Appreciation expressed for provider engagement and contributions.