

Annual Report **2020/2021**



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Introduction to the Supplier Development Programme

The Supplier Development Programme (SDP) is a business support initiative that uses training and information to improve the competitiveness of local businesses.

SDP is a partnership of local authorities, Scottish Government and other public bodies that works together to bring micro, small, medium, and supported businesses based in Scotland support in all aspects of tendering. By assisting businesses to become tender ready for public procurement, SDP improves all-round efficiency, sustainability, and market potential.

By helping businesses become more able to tender for contracts, SDP improves their prospects when competing in Scotland, where there is an annual public sector spend of £12.6 billion, and throughout the rest of the UK, where there is an annual public spend of £240 billion. SDP delivers this support through numerous free training and across Scotland throughout the year, face-to-face and virtually through webinars to:

- raise awareness of opportunities arising from public sector spend;
- provide training and support on all aspects public sector tendering;
- improve the tender readiness of local suppliers through early intervention;
- support SDP member organisations to meet the Sustainable Procurement Duty; and
- promote links to and integrate with other government business support services.

Strategic Direction

In January 2021, in order to provide additional resource to the SDP Programme Manager and Board, and through funding from Scottish Government, SDP appointed a Strategic Advisor to make recommendations for engagement and development to support the Strategic Development of SDP. The Strategic Advisor provided advice to SDP on future funding options, helped to secure funding from Scottish Government for the period 2020/2021 and prepared an initial outline Strategic Plan which formed a basis of work for the financial year of 2021/2022.

Strategic Objectives

The Strategic Advisor role aimed to:

- develop ideas and options for longer term sustainability of SDP (including a future funding model);
- be the source of new ideas and approaches that could be used for the strategic and operational development of SDP;
- develop future plans to progress and agree strategy for integrating/ aligning SDP services into future opportunities/projects;
- raise the profile of SDP and expand wider membership of SDP through attendance at key strategic meetings and partnership groups; and
- evidence increased collaboration and outcomes.

The Supplier Development Programme will publish its new Strategic Plan in 2021/2022.



Welcome from the Acting Chair

Councillor Peter Henderson



During the COVID-19 pandemic, with increased responsibilities with the Supplier Development Programme during such a difficult period for suppliers, I was also elected as leader of South Ayrshire Council in June 2020. Though the pandemic was and indeed still is wreaking havoc with our economy, with added complications for the public and private sectors related to Brexit, and promoting that SDP made a quick and seamless transition to webinars in place of face-to-face training for suppliers, connecting micro, small and medium sized businesses balancing new challenges related to business grants and furlough of staff with the opportunities available through public sector procurement. At South Ayrshire Council, I championed procurement and economic development working together and SDP provides the ideal vehicle to act as conduit not only in local government but in other government organisations without this function.

As Acting Chair, I extended a warm welcome to new members, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). We secured a further year's funding from Scottish Government and set about engaging with a Strategic Advisor to ensure that the "Power of SDP" could be maximised.

SDP has always been forward-looking, embracing technology to continue deliver dynamic and engaging events to support suppliers in having the contacts, skills and resources to bid more successfully. We continued the conversation on engaging with the public sector in June with a Twitter Takeover to mark the date of what would have been Meet the Buyer 2020, and invested in a robust online platform to deliver our first fully virtual event in September with Meet the Buyer North 2020, followed closely by our second fully virtual event in November during Fife Business Week with Fife Council Meet the Buyer.

When almost all business stopped during lockdown, I am proud that SDP pushed forward to support our colleagues across Scotland's public sector, and will build upon our early successes in partnership with our membership organisations to grow and expand in years to come. Thank you to all of our partners for your continued commitment to helping Scotland's businesses bid better through the Supplier Development Programme.

Welcome from the Chair

Councillor Heather Brannan-McVey



Helen Keller once famously said: "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." When the challenges of March 2020 rolled into 2021, I took parental leave and long-time SDP Board Member, Councillor Peter Henderson, drove the Supplier Development Programme forward as Acting Chair for the first half of the year. I extend my thanks to Peter for chairing SDP for providing stability and leadership as we navigated the on-going challenges that the pandemic presented to us.

Local authorities and organisations that joined SDP in the later part of the year included Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Highlands Councils, RJ McLeod and PfH Scotland. The combined strength of having all 32 Scottish councils as members is a significant milestone. Through the sheer determination of the SDP team working jointly with other public bodies to co-ordinate and improve access for our local suppliers and to help improve their ability to tender no matter where in Scotland they are based, we demonstrate the Power of Procurement.

As a Shared Procurement Service, the addition of the three councils has been particularly welcome. We can now offer a holistic and consistent engagement and tender training service to SMEs, third sector and supported business in the North of Scotland alongside Moray Council, as well as Shetland Islands, Orkney Islands and Western Isles Councils, and to ensure all local suppliers have consistent access to buyers nationally.

The COVID-19 pandemic hit everyone hard, but SDP never stopped driving forward the Power of Procurement amongst the public sector's movement forward and renewed energy for change. We aimed to dislodge some of the old thought patterns and assumptions about tendering and continue to break formal procurement processes down into manageable chunks of expert advice and practical insight, offering all things tender-related, from tasters to a deep dive masterclass.

SDP is a partnership, and we continue to encourage members to connect and highlight to the core SDP team as well as the local contract opportunities, but local initiatives and projects, offering deeper connections for SDP to deliver more training and engagement sessions. Our model of aligned training supports members in targeting local suppliers by sector. This ensures that we deliver impact for the very goods, services, and works that are being sought and bid for. SDP's model works, it led us to win two GO Awards with our partners at Scottish Borders Council and North Lanarkshire Council. As the premier free tender training programme in Scotland, we will continue to build upon these successes in years to come.

Introduction from the Programme Manager

Gillian Cameron, Programme Manager



The SDP Board and I have long aspired to become a fully national Programme ensuring that no matter where in Scotland a SME, third sector or supported business was based, they had access to a full range of award-winning

training. I am delighted that we have achieved that goal and I welcome the addition of Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Highland Councils as full members to the Programme. We also won not one, but two GO Awards for Scotland in 2020, taking recognition of our place in partnership amongst the best of the best across Scotland's public sector.

We are privileged to work with many talented people across the public sector to provide support, and a guiding hand, for the work that SDP does to close the tender skills gap in Scotland. Particularly when buyers share local knowledge and insight, SDP can be agile and deliver tender training that reflects the needs of the locale, the sector and inspire local businesses to embrace a fairer and greener future. On behalf of the SDP team, I offer a very big thank you to our members for continuing to support and work with us in these testing times to ensure that the supply base is aware of contract opportunities and training that can offer a lifeline to sustain and grow the local economy.

Whilst the ongoing challenges of the pandemic continued to disrupt the way we all live and work, SDP's team rose to the challenge and ensured that we connected buyers with suppliers and vice versa, demonstrating that the Programme was integral to the Power of Procurement and providing a conduit to deliver the Sustainable Procurement Duty on behalf of our members.

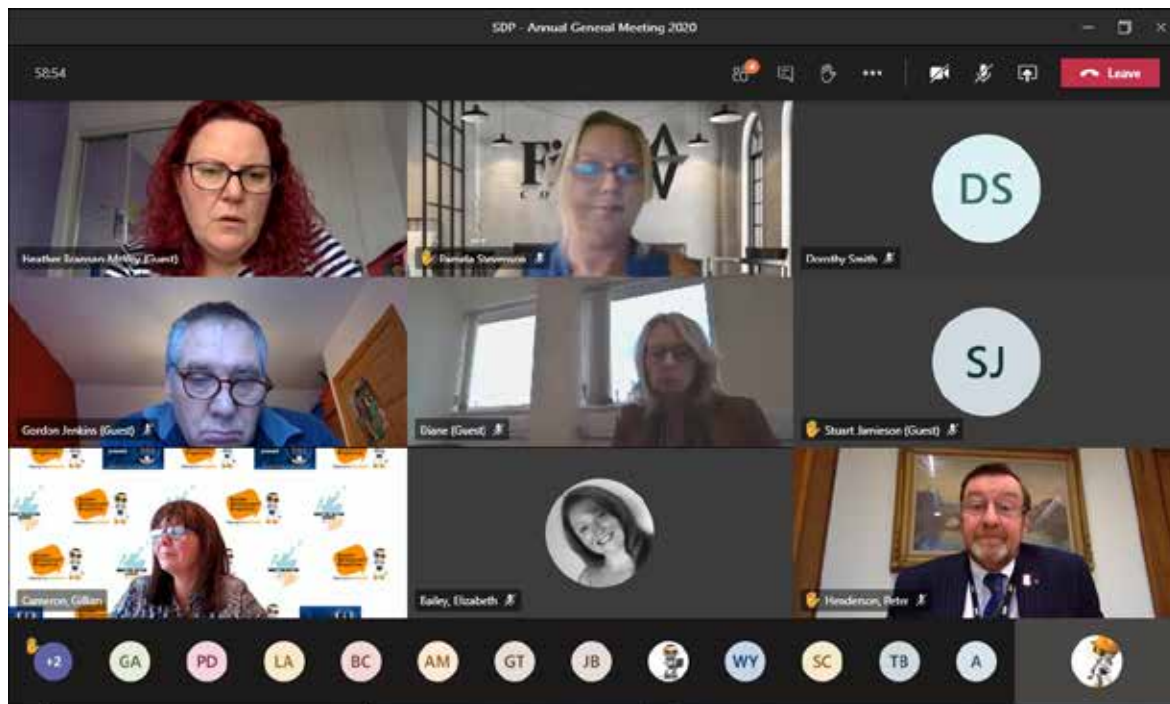
Despite the pandemic or maybe even because of it – SDP continued to work with all its members in a positive and effective way to enhance Scotland's SMEs, third sector and supported businesses tendering capability, contributing to community wealth building and a recovering economy, delivering our aligned tender training as targeted and direct support.

We fully embraced virtual events as did our members, with SDP expanding our offering to host regional Meet the Buyer events. Fife Council was an early adopter and led the charge to utilise our growing experience in delivering high quality, impactful events: 86% of attendees voted that the Meet the Buyer Fife virtual event in November 2020 had encouraged them to bid for more public sector contracts.

Our training events also continue to deliver, with 93% of suppliers attending core SDP training saying they were more likely to bid for future public contracts as a direct result of the training they received. This was a 5% increase on last year's figure, which is no mean feat during a pandemic.

As we go on to further develop our flexible training offer through e-Learning modules, I am excited for our future and to embrace new progressive policies for change for a greener and fairer Scotland within the Programme. As we move towards economic recovery, SDP is a trusted way to support Scottish suppliers on their journey to bid better.

Our Board



The Supplier Development Programme is led by its Board, which was composed of the following representatives in the 2020/2021 financial year:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| • Councillor Heather McVey : Chair* | North Lanarkshire Council |
| • Councillor Peter Henderson: Vice Chair | South Ayrshire Council |
| • Councillor Andrew Wood | Dumfries & Galloway Council |
| • Karen Lawson | Dundee City Council |
| • Councillor Gordon Jenkins | East Ayrshire Council |
| • Councillor Anthony Buchanan | East Renfrewshire Council |
| • Paula Deegan | Edinburgh City Council |
| • Peter Reid | Falkirk Council |
| • Pamela Stevenson | Fife Council |
| • Jackie Hill | Glasgow City Council |
| • Stuart Jamieson | Inverclyde Council |
| • Diane Beattie | Moray Council |
| • Councillor Collette Stevenson | South Lanarkshire Council |
| Ex-officio | |
| • Scott Bell | Scottish Government |
| • Gillian Cameron | SDP Scotland |

Secretary to the Board

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| • Elizabeth Bailey | SDP Scotland |
|--------------------|--------------|

* Councillor Peter Henderson was the Acting Chair of the Board from 1 April to 30 September 2020.

Supporting our Members

In 2020/2021, the Supplier Development Programme was made up of a small team of four, and a graduate marketing assistant supplemented the team in January 2021. The Team provides a fully managed service including:

- member and wider stakeholder engagement;
- procurement and management of the delivery of training via the framework of trainers;
- consistent, high-quality course materials;
- supplier engagement/training events booking and co-ordination service;
- creation and delivery of a range of webinars and policy workshops and e-learning; and
- SDP representation at key procurement/business group meetings, exhibitions, and events.

In addition, the team manages the Programme's finances, national marketing and social media, website content management and delivery of training nationally.

SDP provides a full secretariat service to the SDP Board and various management groups, coordinating the diaries for all the various SDP group meetings, as well as the administration for the full programme of events. This also includes providing monthly, quarterly, and annual reports as per the requirements of the SDP performance framework. The SDP team also provides desk-based assistance, as well as event support in person, to regional officers and membership organisations.

Affiliate Members



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA



National
Records of
Scotland



Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean



Forestry and
Land Scotland
Coilltearachd agus
Fearann Alba



Registers
of Scotland
ros.gov.uk



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Corporate Member



Trade Association Member



Housing Association Member



Full Members



SDP: COVID-19 response

The global outbreak of COVID-19 and its impact on society dominated early in the 2020/2021 financial year, and will likely continue to for several years to come. SDP found new and different ways of working, supported by infrastructure from South Lanarkshire Council, which hosts the Programme on behalf of all 32 Scottish local authorities. As the restrictions became apparent, the Supplier Development Programme responded quickly and effectively in ensuring unbroken, continuous delivery of our member services, so it was a year of all digital, webinars and virtual events.

SDP initially focussed on amplifying news and information to businesses in the first quarter via social media, newsletters and the website. Initial news included official postponement of the Meet the Buyer 2020 event to 2021 with partners Scottish Government and Scotland Excel, information on the status of live tendering and furloughing staff through the coronavirus job retention scheme, calls for suppliers to produce COVID-19 testing kits and services and Protective Personal Equipment (PPE), information on Construction Policy Notes (CPN) and Scottish Procurement Policy Notes (SPPN) from Scottish Government, and Supplier Relief. SDP was also on-boarded to the Find Business Support (FBS) website at an early stage of the pandemic.

In June 2020, when the public sector continued to prioritise COVID response and business grants, SDP focussed efforts on restarting conversations through a Twitter Takeover, guest blogs, news and advertising of contract and framework opportunities. When the Construction Industry Coronavirus Forum (CICV Forum) launched a major consultation among its members to discover what stakeholders wanted for the Scottish construction industry after COVID-19, and how to achieve it, SDP contributed to this and promoted the effort widely.

The Programme prioritised supply chain engagement and public contract opportunities from further afield, such as with the Ministry of Defence, Crown Commercial Services, NEPO and the MSIP Accelerator Programme. The Supplier Development Programme also welcomed inclusion in the Scottish Government's response to the Economic Recovery Implementation Plan and a continued commitment to fund the Programme to deliver targeted tender training and events to support increased participation of local businesses, including the third sector, in bidding for contract opportunities in the public sector and wider supply chain.

SDP invested in technology to run fully virtual events for the first time, catapulting the Programme into virtual events for the 2020/2021 financial year and beyond. Held virtually in September and November 2020 respectively, Meet the Buyer North and Fife Meet the Buyer, thousands of suppliers registered, and several hundred benefited.

- 95% of Scottish SMEs felt that despite the challenges in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the virtual event had demonstrated that public sector procurement is open and transparent; and
- 90% of exhibitors/buyers at the event also agreed that the virtual event demonstrated public sector procurement to be open and transparent even with the challenges caused by the pandemic.

SDP spent time promoting and developing its bespoke model of training, often filling the gap where buyers could not run the usual supplier engagement events to ensure sectors and locales were connected, and delivering tender training at the point of need. Additionally, SDP promoted the Scottish Government's 2020 public procurement supplier survey and results, while also defining strategic movements regarding Net Zero, sustainable procurement, Community Wealth Building and more. SDP is led by all 32 Scottish local authorities, and so while recovery and economic restart continue, so will the Programme adapt to meet the needs of suppliers in this changed landscape.

Supplier Relief

In May 2020 with the support of the Scottish Government, the Supplier Development Programme gathered suppliers' views in a survey on the effects of the Coronavirus outbreak on Supplier Relief, furloughed staff, access to free online training and capacity to bid for public sector contracts.

Outcomes from SDP's survey included:

- In total, 282 respondents shared their views through the online survey. Of these, 56% (157 respondents) were current public sector suppliers. Of these, 15% (24 respondents) were current suppliers and had requested Supplier Relief.
- Of the total of 157 respondents that were current suppliers, 59% (93 respondents) were claiming furlough.
- Respondents were asked if they or furloughed staff had participated in free online training during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. Out of the 282 respondents three quarters - 74% respondents (210) stated that they had not participated in online training.
- Whether they are a current supplier or not, 79% of respondents (222) said that they currently have the capacity to bid for public sector contracts.



In response to the survey results, the Supplier Development Programme shared the results of the survey with SDP membership organisations and the Scottish Government. SDP also considered the implications of new terminology relating to the impact of COVID-19 on procurement jargon as the public sector procurement transitions to new, sustainable solutions, and updated SDP's jargon buster, adjusted SDP course materials.

SDP also put out a social media campaign supported by a blog on jargon and terminology to increase supplier awareness of definitions and acronyms. Finally,

SDP worked with membership organisations to feed back the qualitative feedback submitted by suppliers, with the aim of providing aligned support where required, and has made a commitment to support future surveys on the experiences of Scottish SMEs and supported businesses as suppliers to the public sector.

Refreshing Tender Training for Scotland

Since 2014, the Supplier Development Programme has offered 10 core training courses to Scottish micro, small and medium sized businesses, third sector and supported businesses. These were traditionally delivered face-to-face and online via webinar.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of SDP's courses were delivered via webinar during the 2020/2021 financial year. This was a seamless transition, and SDP's marketing messages were updated during the lockdown period in particular, to offer free tender training to furloughed staff.

In response to supplier feedback and demand, in March 2021, the Supplier Development Programme launched a new, on-demand e-Learning offer and began a refresh of training materials.

SDP Training to mid-March 2021

0.1 Introduction to Working With The Public Sector

- 1.1 Introduction to Tendering
- 1.2 Using PCS and other portals
- 2.1 Tender Procedures and the ESPD
- 2.2 Finding and Understanding Framework Opportunities
- 2.3 Improving your Bid Score
- 2.4 Understanding Community Benefits and Sustainability
- 3.1 Seeking feedback and improving your bid
- 3.2 The Suppliers role in Contract Relationship Management
- 3.3 Expanding your Procurement

Marketplace

Practical Workshop Webinars

- Quick Quotes Made Easy
- Helping you Bid Better: Examine the ESPD Question by Question

Other Bespoke Webinars

- Talking Tenders
- Cyber Security Procurement Support Tool: Training for Suppliers

SDP Training from mid-March 2021

- 1.1 Working with the Public Sector – All you need to know
- 1.2 Using Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) – How to find and bid for opportunities
- 1.3 Planning your Bid – Timing and Resources
- 1.4 Getting your Business Tender Ready – The Checklist
- 1.5 Pricing your Tender – A Sustainable Approach
- 2.1 Passing the Selection Stage – The Single Procurement Document (SPD)
- 2.2 How to write outstanding tenders – The Invitation to Tender (ITT) Stage
- 2.3 Understanding and Bidding – Frameworks and Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS)
- 2.4 Improving your Bid Score – Increase Your Tender Win Rate
- 2.5 Responding to Tender Policy Requirements – Power of Procurement
- 3.1 Understanding your role in Contract Management – Critical Success Factors
- 3.1 Expanding your Business Globally – Tendering in New Markets
- SDP Masterclass

Practical Workshop Webinars

- Quick Quotes Made Easy
- Helping you Bid Better: Examine the SPD Question by Question

Other Bespoke Webinars

- Talking Tenders
- Aligned Training
- Cyber Security Procurement Support Tool: Training for Suppliers

e-learning Modules

- Quick Quotes made easy
- Working with the Public Sector
- Using Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) - How to Find and Bid for Opportunities

SDP: Meeting Strategic Objectives

Through strategic grant funding and an agreed set of grant objectives from the Scottish Government, SDP's work aligns with the National Performance Framework and contributes towards Scottish Procurement's drive to use its collective spending power to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Website registrations of Scottish SME unique businesses	Cumulative Total 17,972	Yearly Total 1,737	SDP supports Scottish SMEs and third sector businesses to increase their knowledge and skills, to improve their ability to win public sector contracts.
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From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, 1,737 Scottish SMEs registered with SDP Scotland, bringing the overall total to 17,972 SME suppliers. The baseline for this financial year was 975 new registrations, to increase SMEs accessing support from SDP by 6% by end of March 2021. The actual number is an increase of 10.7% year on year.

Despite challenges from the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, SDP worked with both existing and new member organisations to promote registration on the SDP website through a multi-channel virtual approach, including attendance at various online business exhibitions, speaking at key events through Microsoft Teams and Zoom, and by utilising social media and via SDP regional representatives, though promotion on Public Contracts Scotland's website was paused by the Scottish Government as part of its COVID response.

Strategic Objectives: Supplier Registrations

	Total registrations, 2020/2021	Total Cumulative Companies Registered to 31 March 2021
Aberdeen City	78	478
Aberdeenshire	83	371
Angus	27	338
Argyll & Bute	29	245
City of Edinburgh	222	1818
Clackmannanshire	9	192
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	4	34
Dumfries & Galloway	22	449
Dundee	66	506
East Ayrshire	30	442
East Dunbartonshire	30	283
East Lothian	24	242
East Renfrewshire	19	287
Falkirk	35	415
Fife	87	923
Glasgow	261	3297
Highland	103	517
Inverclyde	17	164
Midlothian	20	368
Moray	13	129
North Ayrshire	33	402
North Lanarkshire	102	1330
Orkney	5	54
Perth & Kinross	41	499
Renfrewshire	94	737
Scottish Borders	46	386
Shetland	2	22
South Ayrshire	23	405
South Lanarkshire	101	1417
Stirling	32	360
West Dunbartonshire	18	217
West Lothian	61	645
Total	1,737	17,972

Strategic Objective: Building Capability of Suppliers

Training Attendance and Feedback

From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, 2,700 people from 2,476 unique Scottish SME businesses attended 100% online events with the Supplier Development Programme.

Core Training

SDP hosts training throughout the year to registered SMEs, supported businesses and charities that are based in Scotland. Companies are encouraged to 'self-select' what training is appropriate to them and this could be from Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3. Usually, all SDP events are delivered in the traditional classroom style training and digitally by webinar. SDP carefully uses the same course content and trainers for both styles of delivery, to ensure that SMEs are free to choose their preferred style of training.

In this financial year, the Supplier Development Programme provided 70 core training webinars to 1,322 attendees from 1,247 unique Scottish businesses. In total, 2,485 bookings were taken through the SDP website in advance of these webinars.

Of those that responded to surveys, 93% said they were more likely to bid for future public contracts as a direct result of the training they received.

Included within the 70 core training webinars were 13 practical and policy webinars, including 'Quick Quotes Made Easy,' 'Helping You Bid Better: Examine the ESPD Question by Question,' and the two webinars on Frameworks and Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS) and on Public Contracts Scotland that ran on 2 June to mark the day that Meet the Buyer 2020 would have been run if it were not for the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Bespoke Training

SDP has worked with local authorities to align training to actual contract opportunities, thus improving the tendering capability of the SMEs that need it most. From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, the Supplier Development Programme supported 30 public sector partner events, including 16 bespoke, aligned training and engagement webinars aimed at suppliers, linking 1,031 attendees from 910 unique Scottish supplier businesses to future contracts. In total, 1,889 bookings were taken through the SDP website in advance of these webinars.

Aligned, bespoke training can be measured through SDP training feedback surveys of 'being more likely to bid' and actual results of contract/framework wins, which must be manually cross-checked by SDP staff against publicly available data published for each contract on Public Contracts Scotland in the Contract Award Notice. SDP identifies this as a business need and will work to improve reporting of outcomes in 2021/2022.

SDP Supplier Training Numbers

SDP builds the capability of Scottish SMEs and third sector to ensure they are 'tender ready' and best positioned to win new contracts. SDP can evidence improved SME and third sector suppliers' capability to bid for public sector contracts through reporting of attendance and feedback gathered throughout the year, as well as case studies.

1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021	Total	Bookings	Actual Attendees	Unique Businesses	Feedback Response
ALL SDP SUPPLIER TRAINING	100	4,374	2,353	2,157	
SDP face-to-face core training events*	0	0	0	0	-
SDP core webinar training events	70	2,485	1,322	1,247	93%
SDP webinar practical and policy workshops	0	0	0	0	-
SDP face-to-face bespoke training events*	16	720	436	384	Reported in case studies
SDP webinar bespoke training events	14	1,169	595	232	Reported in case studies

Finally, SDP supported 28 partner and external events through promotion on the SDP events calendar, without a booking service. The attendance for Meet the Buyer and Meet the Buyer North are explored on pages 25 and 29.

Training Event Feedback

April 2020
0.1 Introduction to Working with the Public Sector
"All information was relevant and well presented."

July 2020
0.1 Introduction to Working with the Public Sector
"The information provided was useful. The trainer was very knowledgeable."

September 2020
1.2 Using PCS and other portals
"The explanation of PCS and PCS-Tender was the most helpful. I was not aware they were two different portals as I have never submitted any bids myself."

December 2020
1.2 Using PCS and other portals
"I liked how we explored the PCS website in real time. It made it more real for me."

November 2020 1.1 Introduction to Tendering
"I liked the Q&A section of the training! I got more value out of everyone's questions and my own being answered."

March 2021 2.4 Understanding Community Benefits and Sustainability
"It is extremely useful that the trainer is able to give first-hand insights into the buying process."

January 2021
2.3 Improving Your Bid Score
"This was very informative."

January 2021
2.1 Tender Procedures and the SPD
"Having access to the slides on termination of the training for future reference will be very useful."

June 2020 2.2 Finding and Understanding Framework Opportunities
"This was a refresher event for me. It was excellent and delivered all information and updates I was looking for."

July 2020
3.1 Seeking Feedback and Improving Your Bid
"These types of webinars are good for knowing where the line is when asking for feedback."

August 2020
3.2 The Supplier's role in Contract Relationship Management
"The majority of the content was beneficial."

August 2020
3.3 Expanding Your Procurement Marketplace
"This is worthwhile training, delivered clearly and for all levels of understanding."

September 2020
2.3 Improving Your Bid Score
"The level of detail the trainer went into was useful with practical examples." at the training."

September 2020
2.2 Finding and Understanding Framework Opportunities
"All content was great, and very clear for a first timer."

October 2020
0.1 Introduction to Working with the Public Sector
"It was good to have a step-by-step guide through this course."

March 2021
2.1 Tender Procedures and the SPD
"Content was good and to the point."

May 2020
0.1 Introduction to Working with the Public Sector
"All areas gave me a better understanding!"

April 2020
1.1 Introduction to Tendering
"The presentation was very easy to follow."

August 2020 Expanding Your Procurement Marketplace
"The real life examples were useful to put the learning into perspective."

February 2021
Using PCS and other portals
"Understanding the process, abbreviations and acronyms were of use."

November 2020
3.2 The Supplier's Role in Contract Relationship Management
"The tips on keeping your relationship maintained were the best part."

August 2020
3.1 Seeking feedback and Improving Your Bid
"I learned how to use the Q&A section to be more specific." useful."

Breakdown of attendees at all SDP Supplier Training by Local Authority

		Webinar	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Angus	Argyll & Bute	Clackmannanshire	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	Dumfries & Galloway	Dundee City	East Ayrshire	East Dunbartonshire	East Lothian	East Renfrewshire	Edinburgh	Falkirk	Fife	Glasgow City	Highland	Inverclyde	Midlothian	Moray	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Orkney Islands	Perth & Kinross	Renfrewshire	Scottish Borders	Shetland Islands	South Ayrshire	South Lanarkshire	Stirling	West Dunbartonshire	West Lothian	Training Location
Aberdeen City	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Aberdeenshire	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Angus	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Argyll & Bute	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Clackmannanshire	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Dumfries & Galloway	43	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Dundee City	83	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
East Ayrshire	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
East Dunbartonshire	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
East Lothian	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
East Renfrewshire	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Edinburgh	274	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Falkirk	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Fife	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Glasgow City	273	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Highland	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Inverclyde	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Midlothian	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Moray	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
North Ayrshire	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
North Lanarkshire	90	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Orkney Islands	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Perth & Kinross	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Renfrewshire	114	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Scottish Borders	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Shetland Islands	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
South Ayrshire	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
South Lanarkshire	119	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Stirling	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
West Dunbartonshire	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
West Lothian	90	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Locations unavailable	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Business Location																																			

*The outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) impacted upon delivery of face-to-face events throughout the entire financial year, 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Breakdown of Unique Businesses at all SDP Supplier Training by Local Authority

		Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Angus	Argyll & Bute	Clackmannanshire	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	Dumfries & Galloway	Dundee City	East Ayrshire	East Dunbartonshire	East Lothian	East Renfrewshire	Edinburgh	Falkirk	Fife	Glasgow City	Highland	Inverclyde	Midlothian	Moray	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Orkney Islands	Perth & Kinross	Renfrewshire	Scottish Borders	Shetland Islands	South Ayrshire	South Lanarkshire	Stirling	West Dunbartonshire	West Lothian	Training Location
Aberdeen City	Webinar	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aberdeenshire	Aberdeen City	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Angus	Aberdeenshire	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Argyll & Bute	Angus	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clackmannanshire	Argyll & Bute	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	Clackmannanshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dumfries & Galloway	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dundee City	Dumfries & Galloway	74	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
East Ayrshire	Dundee City	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
East Dunbartonshire	East Ayrshire	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
East Lothian	East Dunbartonshire	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
East Renfrewshire	East Lothian	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Edinburgh	East Renfrewshire	244	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Falkirk	Edinburgh	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fife	Falkirk	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Glasgow City	Fife	253	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Highland	Glasgow City	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inverclyde	Highland	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Midlothian	Inverclyde	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Moray	Midlothian	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Ayrshire	Moray	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Lanarkshire	North Ayrshire	86	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Orkney Islands	North Lanarkshire	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perth & Kinross	Orkney Islands	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Renfrewshire	Perth & Kinross	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scottish Borders	Renfrewshire	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shetland Islands	Scottish Borders	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Ayrshire	Shetland Islands	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Lanarkshire	South Ayrshire	112	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stirling	South Lanarkshire	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Dunbartonshire	Stirling	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Lothian	West Dunbartonshire	82	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Location unavailable	West Lothian	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Business Location	Training Location																																	

*The outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) impacted upon delivery of face-to-face events throughout the entire financial year, 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Winning Tenders with SDP Support

At March 2021, 5596 registered users of the Supplier Development Programme were registered on the Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) website¹. Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, out of 1,630 Supplier Development Programme registered users that were invited to a Quick Quote, 590 chose to bid and 518 won giving a win rate of 87%. Additionally, 769 SDP registered suppliers won a contract².

¹ Data gathered from Public Contracts Scotland (PCS)

² Direct requests for quotations from suppliers registered on Public Contracts Scotland for lower value, non-regulated procurements and may include call-offs from frameworks.



SDP: Supporting our Members

Talking Tenders with Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Highland Councils

In January 2021 suppliers were invited to learn about working with the Shared Procurement Service across three Scottish local authorities: Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, and Highland Council.



During the webinar suppliers learned about the Shared Procurement Service and its role across three local authorities, as well as how its tender process worked and how the Shared Procurement Service advertised its tender opportunities. The Shared Procurement Service also talked about upcoming tender and framework opportunities.

At the end of the session suppliers learned about the Supplier Development Programme's range of training services, and how SDP could support suppliers in becoming 'tender ready' for the contract and framework opportunities mentioned in the session. One supplier said, "Being new to the process it was interesting to hear the entire presentation. I also found the Q&A quite useful."

Another Supplier said, "The presentation was great as it covered a range of information in regard to tenders, quick quotes and other buying methods. It lets you know what you are up against."



SDP: Supporting Scotland's Suppliers

Success Stories: Adamsons Drinks takes a shot at tendering

Established in 2002, Adamsons Drinks is an independent wholesale distributor of soft drinks, snacks and confectionery and employs 55 people in Central Scotland. With support from Business Gateway Fife's Expert Help Programme, staff accessed free tender training through SDP in 2018 and 2019. In 2020, Adamsons Drinks won its first ever public sector opportunity: a place on a Scotland Excel framework.



When Adamsons Drinks completed a business acquisition of a rival company in 2017, it inherited a place on an existing Scotland Excel framework for the provision of groceries and a contract under it for the supply of water to Fife Council. Having no experience of public sector tendering, but knowing it had the capability of servicing a much larger area than the acquired company, Adamsons Drinks explored the possibility of doing business with this new market with the support of Business Gateway Fife's Expert Help Programme. Staff registered with SDP in early 2018, participated in seven free tender training webinars, three "Talking Tenders" webinars, and attended Meet the Buyer in November 2019.

Gregor Wylie, Managing Director of Adamsons Drinks, said: "As we had not had any previous experience in public sector tendering, we benefited greatly from the webinars and Meet the Buyer event we attended. The webinars were a fantastic tool, providing in simple terms procedures and helpful tips."

In April 2020, Adamsons Drinks won for the first time; a place on Scotland Excel's renewal framework for two lots: "Supply and Distribution of Crisps, Confectionary, Soft Drinks and Water" and "Distribution of Groceries and Provisions." The framework has a total value of £120m, and will run for an initial two-year period, with the option to extend. While a place on a framework is no guarantee of work, Adamsons Drinks is now positioned to win a share of the total spend.

Gregor continued: "We had no experience in public sector tendering. I felt out of my depth, but I also knew this could be a lucrative opportunity for the business. With guidance and support from Fife Council's Economic Development team, who were incredibly friendly and approachable, we were advised to take part in what turned out to be invaluable training on how to tender through the Supplier Development Programme. We have now been successful in being awarded a place for two lots on a Scotland Excel framework for supplying Scottish councils, and we couldn't have done it without SDP." Pam Garrie, Admin Assistant for Adamsons Drinks, added: "I found the SDP webinars to be a great help in understanding the world of tendering. I learned that no question is a daft question when tendering!"

Dot Smith, Fife Council Economic Adviser, said: "Businesses are being encouraged to seek and continue to tender for vital contracts for a range of goods, services and works, despite difficult trading conditions. SDP can help businesses get tender ready, giving them the knowledge and tools to allow businesses to put themselves forward and reap the rewards, just like Adamsons Drinks."

SDP: Supporting Scotland's Suppliers

Success Stories: Keela Supplies COVID-19 PPE to NHS Scotland

Based in Fife, Keela employs 100 staff and is a leading technical outdoor brand and manufacturer of protective clothing and accessories for blue light emergency services around the world. From first registering with SDP in 2011, Keela has gone from strength to strength in winning public sector work. Amid supply issues of personal protective equipment (PPE) in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, with global demand for gloves and masks at unprecedented levels, a deal was agreed to manufacture more PPE for NHS Scotland in May 2020.



Soon after requirements for public sector procurement in Scotland changed in 2008, Keela registered with the Supplier Development Programme and began attending tender training events. Keela and Ilasco Ltd (Keela's factory shop) have since successfully tendered for millions of pounds of public sector contracts. In May 2020, the Scottish Government announced an agreement that would provide more than half of NHS Scotland's weekly requirement for non-sterile gowns, which would be partially manufactured by Keela in Glenrothes.

Keela and another supplier initially ramped production to an output of 20,000 gowns per week to provide NHS Scotland with a steady supply of 40,000 gowns per week. The non-sterile PPE gowns were manufactured in line with published guidance and testing standards and completions were ratified by Health Protection Scotland.

Sam Fernando, Sales Director for Keela, said: "The Supplier Development Programme supplied the building blocks to successful public sector tendering practices for Keela. The trainers gave very clear guidance on what was required, what the public sector were looking for and allowed us to ask questions. I attended the first introductory tender writing courses up to the more experienced levels with SDP, and as new people have come into the business as we expanded, it remains an invaluable part of the first stage of training to support the longevity of supplying to the public sector."

She continued: "During the COVID-19 crisis, the fact that we had consistently delivered high quality goods to fulfil our previously won public sector contracts was, in my view, key to being asked to help supply vital protective gowns in Scotland. SDP Scotland helped us form that foundation with regard to quality tendering."

Scottish Government Trade Minister Ivan McKee said: "This new supply chain means significant volumes of the PPE gowns used in Scotland can be manufactured in Scotland – thereby helping to protect us from any global supply issues and ensure frontline staff continue to have the protection they need. It also demonstrates what can be achieved when the public and private sectors collaborate to tackle the many challenges caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic."

SDP: Supporting Scotland's Suppliers

Success Stories: SDP Sparks Business with Perth & Kinross Council for E W Edwardson (Electrical Contractors) Ltd

E W Edwardson (Electrical Contractors) Ltd supplies electrical contracting services, including repairs and maintenance, design, inspection, and testing. Long used to supplying to the public sector, the medium sized business has worked with local authorities such as Angus Council, Dundee City Council, Fife Council, and Perth and Kinross Council for some 15 years. However, the company decided to take a proactive step towards refreshing its approach to tendering through SDP in 2019.



E W Edwardson (Electrical Contractors) Ltd first engaged with SDP in May 2019 at a Planned and Reactive Maintenance Tender Supplier Engagement Event with Perth and Kinross Council. In June 2020, the company was named as a successful supplier for Lot 2 - Inspection and Testing of Electrical Installations - which has an estimated value of approximately £15.6m over the seven years of the framework.

"We first engaged with SDP to improve our knowledge in the ever changing procurement processes of local authorities, and dynamic demands of local authorities and buyers," said Lewis Farrow, Contracts Director at E W Edwardson.

"After the training event with Perth and Kinross Council, we decided to try a variety of the courses available, which allowed us to apply a modern approach to our submission and offered the chance to meet guest speakers and other companies attending. We realised that some of our competitors were already doing this, and SDP helped us compete."

Staff from E W Edwardson (Electrical Contractors) Ltd have attended around a dozen engagement events, including the TayCities Meet the Public Sector Buyer, and tender training events and webinars through the Supplier Development Programme.

"SDP allowed us to take a diverse approach to our tendering process, focus on key areas of tendering such as community benefits, and understand the requirements of local authorities and public purchasing bodies. We have since been inspired and are now developing a student training programme within our key business areas – we put this forward at tender stage which we feel may have been advantageous to the selection process," said Billy McWilliams, Managing Director at E W Edwardson.

Founded in 1918, the Company of E W Edwardson (Electrical Contractors) Ltd is based in Fife and employs 50 employees.

SDP: Supporting Scotland's Suppliers

Success Stories: Complete Weed Control Hedges Bets with Public Sector Contracts and SDP

Keith Gallacher founded Complete Weed Control in 2005 as a sole trader and incorporated it as a limited company in 2011. Complete Weed Control operates across the Central Belt and South of Scotland. Since completing an introductory webinar on 'Using PCS and Other Portals' with SDP, Complete Weed Control has gone on to win several public sector contracts with Scottish local authorities.



"We had some varied results within the public sector tendering before we engaged with the Supplier Development Programme, but nothing as consistent as we feel we have now. We felt the need to improve our submissions across the public sector, so we registered for free tender training," said Keith Gallacher, Director of Complete Weed Control. "After staff engaged with the online webinars, we connected further through networking events and met a number of the SDP representatives across councils who offered solid advice on every occasion."

Since attending SDP tender training, Complete Weed Control has changed its approach to public sector tendering.

"We feel we can offer a lot more in our submissions, and rather than just supplying the bare minimum, we followed SDP's expert advice and now break down each requested step and try to map out all the specifics for that step. This results in a much more comprehensive submission with a lot more valuable information being shared, Keith said. "The top tip we found most useful was to share more on the team behind the work, how the business operates and more focus on the staff that operate within it. By providing relevant experiences of our people, it speaks volumes about our approach to the works we are tendering for."

In 2020, Complete Weed Control successfully tendered for works on streets for weed control with Scottish Borders Council, Renfrewshire Council, Inverclyde Council, South Ayrshire Council and Falkirk Council, and for Rural Road Verge Grass Cutting with West Dunbartonshire Council.

"Restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a huge backlog of work before this winter's frosts arrive. We have been working at weekends to meet demand and have had to hire two additional team members to cope with our workload," Keith added. "These contracts provide our business with stability in difficult times and having received tendering support from SDP, we now have the confidence to go for even more public contracts."

Based in Carluke, Complete Weed Control employs 18 staff and is a market leader in the amenity and industrial weed control sector that supplies all forms of landscaping works for local authorities, highways agencies and private companies.

Meet the Buyer 2020



On 2 June, SDP organised virtual activities to mark the occasion of what would have been the 12th annual Meet the Buyer event. While the face-to-face event was postponed, SDP carried out a “Twitter Takeover” of its account with buyers from Fife Council, East Renfrewshire Council, South Ayrshire Council and Scottish Government Procurement. This social media activity was complemented by two free SDP tender training webinars on Dynamic Purchasing Systems and Frameworks with Scotland Excel, and a “how-to” interactive session on using Public Contracts Scotland, the national public sector tender portal for Scotland.



While never billed as a replacement for a physical Meet the Buyer event, the virtual activities aimed to demonstrate an innovative approach to communicate with suppliers and contribute to open, connected and transparent procurement practices in Scotland's public sector during the ongoing restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Suppliers were encouraged to sign up to register interest in the overall event, as well as the two webinars, through a widespread promotional campaign in partnership with SDP's membership organisations and valued partners.



Due to the ongoing, understandable higher priority of communications related to COVID-19, Public Contracts Scotland did not promote SDP's virtual event to registered suppliers on PCS as it has historically done for face-to-face events in previous years. Additionally, e-newsletters to registered suppliers on the SDP website were much more limited than usual, due to arrangements around furloughed and out-of-office staff. In light of the limitations on SDP's usual routes of communication with suppliers to raise awareness, SDP promoted the event in a limited paid campaign to SME business owners through Facebook and Twitter on 1 June.

In total, 75 suppliers pre-registered to attend Frameworks & Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS) in the morning, and 57 suppliers pre-registered to attend Public Contracts Scotland (PCS): What would you like to know? in the afternoon on 2 June, as part of SDP's Meet the Buyer 2020: Live Virtual Event activities.



In total, 96 suppliers from SMEs as well as larger businesses attended the two webinars. The morning session was delivered to 54 suppliers from 46 unique businesses, and the afternoon session was delivered to a further 42 suppliers from 36 unique businesses.

The delegates that attended asked pertinent questions during each webinar.

A few examples from the morning training included:

"Is there a listing anywhere of the end/refresh dates for frameworks so that bidders can forward plan? This changes it from a reactive to proactive process."

"Does Scotland Excel differ significantly from other procurement groups e.g. PFH or SPA?"

"If an opportunity is aborted, does this affect the supplier?"

"We supply services such as social research, cross-cultural training, and management consultancy (and training) around climate change and related challenges. So far I haven't seen any mention in the framework/DPS discussion of these kinds of services. Are these generally handled outside frameworks?"

A few examples of questions asked during the afternoon training included:

"I'm registered on PCS, is it a separate registration for quick quotes?"

"Is there a quick way to search the Lots you may be able to supply when registering?"

"What does PCS-T stand for again? Sorry, just new to this."

"Are there any opportunities made available specifically to social enterprises?"

"What is a 'Call Off'?"

Meet the Buyer North supplier feedback

"Given the current COVID pandemic this was a good idea to have the event online, but nothing beats the atmosphere and face-to-face contact you get by meeting people in real life situations."

"I think the format and concept has potential."

"Very good event conducted in a virtual environment"

"Being a virtual event was a benefit for me. Attended these events is normally complicated by cost of travel, accommodation, and other ongoing work."

"I found it an easy way to take notes and using links to get further information was very helpful as it took me right to the information I needed and never knew how to obtain."

"Really good, innovative event."

"The opportunity to have a direct video call with prospective clients was excellent, one of the best type of formats I have seen since everything went virtual."

"It was my first time attending this sort of thing. I really enjoyed it and gained good contacts and information to help build our business."

Meet the Buyer North exhibitor feedback

"Easy to navigate around."

"Overall, we had a high proportion of useful conversations with potential suppliers as they could only queue one stand at a time."

"Considering the circumstances, we are in it would have been an easy decision to cancel the event so well-done SDP for organising and co-ordinating the day."

"Great to see so many suppliers registered and attended, it really extends our engagement across Scottish supplier in the North of Scotland."

Meet the Buyer Twitter Takeover feedback

"The Twitter Takeover was great as we got to interact with these councils directly on where to find specific resources to help us prepare our tenders better."

Meet the Buyer Twitter webinar feedback

"For the first virtual conference we attended, let me say I was blown away by how smoothly it went! Content was very informative for me (as I'm not familiar with the sales side of my business) and was interesting to be part of."

"It was good to hear directly from Scotland Excel."

"I enjoyed everything, but especially the live demonstrations."

"I found it useful hearing from the councils."

"The presenters managed the balance between slides and voice well – I know this is sort of a minimum standard, but it's refreshing to see it done well."

"It was useful to get a run through of the basics and to find out exactly where to find information about opportunities."

"It was helpful to find out some information surrounding the whole tendering process."

"I found it useful finding out more about the different parts of PCS."

"This session brought my attention on how to search for upcoming frameworks, so we plan ahead now for tendering."

"I enjoyed all of the event content and found it very useful."

Meet the Buyer

South Ayrshire Council engages with suppliers during COVID-19 at virtual Meet the Buyer

South Ayrshire Council participated in a planned takeover of SDP's Twitter account during the Supplier Development Programme's Meet the Buyer 2020 activities on 2 June 2020. Suppliers were encouraged to follow the #MeetTheBuyer2020 hashtag and ask real time questions to the Procurement Team at South Ayrshire Council on the topic, "Exploring Quick Quotes."



South Ayrshire Council Procurement has an ongoing commitment to engage with new and existing suppliers, and achieves this through local engagement events and training, as well as national participation in the Supplier Development Programme's annual Meet the Buyer event. Following the cancellation of 2020's planned face-to-face Meet the Buyer event, SDP Scotland planned virtual activities that aimed to facilitate communication with suppliers and contribute to open, connected and transparent procurement practices in Scotland's public sector during the on-going restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Working with the Supplier Development Programme promotes the Council's business to a far wider audience than we could hope to capture ourselves. Interest from suppliers in either bidding for specific opportunities, or in just making themselves known to the relevant internal services, is invaluable for the Council's efforts to achieve 'best value' in procurement. We decided to participate through our normal commitment to attend the physical event, with the support of our Portfolio Holder, Councillor Peter Henderson," said Gavin Cockburn, Acting Service Lead for South Ayrshire Council Procurement.

Gavin was joined remotely by Meghan Bryden, Procurement Assistant, David Moore, Procurement Support Assistant and Jennifer Payne, SDP Development Officer, during the Meet the Buyer 2020: Live Virtual Event. The team tweeted general tips about optimising the Supplier Finder Profile on PCS as well as the finer details involved in bidding for Quick Quotes with South Ayrshire Council.

Gavin said: "Immediate evidence of the positive impact that any SDP Meet the Buyer event can have, either virtual or face-to-face, is meeting a new supplier. This happened for us! One supplier who asked questions during our bit of the 'Twitter Takeover' then submitted business details to us, which we then shared with the relevant internal Service that is now actively looking to fulfil existing opportunities with that new supplier."

South Ayrshire Council's willingness to trying new technology to contribute to open and connected procurement was supported by SDP Scotland. Gavin said: "I cannot stress enough the importance of remaining visible to and supportive of Scottish SMEs during these difficult times. To achieve this with demonstratable outcomes, I highly recommend participation at future SDP virtual events to any of my peers throughout the public sector in Scotland and cannot praise the work of the Supplier Development Programme high enough. From having initial concerns about how we might fill an hour promoting Council procurement processes, to answering suppliers on Twitter, SDP made everything easy by encouraging our ideas, nurturing them through to their final format and assisting with all aspects of presenting these on the day of Meet the Buyer."

Meet the Buyer

New SDP Supplier Set for Public Sector Success

Kate Hookham had experience in supporting her previous employer to gather evidence and submit tenders, as well as in delivering programmes and projects commissioned by public sector buyers through Public Contracts Scotland. Since venturing out by starting her own business in mid-March 2020, Kate's plans were put on hold with the breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. She decided to use lock down to upskill herself on public sector tendering and began attending free webinars with the Supplier Development Programme in April 2020.



Kate Hookham is a sole trader based in Dunblane that is interested in public sector contracts with all 32 local authorities in Scotland. Kate is an education consultant who teaches and facilitates learning outdoors in nature in early years settings and schools, through delivering training, coaching and project work. In response to restrictions from COVID-19, this sole trader registered with the Supplier Development Programme and attended several SDP training webinars from April to June 2020, including participating in Meet the Buyer 2020.

Kate said: "I knew from previous experience that public sector contracts could be part of my business' future. I saw lock down and the pause on educational activities as an opportunity to understand Scotland's tender system better, including registration on PCS and how to submit a quality tender, so I registered with SDP Scotland."

Kate is adapting her business model in response to COVID-19 to embrace new technology, though it is at odds with her preferred personalised approach. She commented: "We are all seeking other means to communicate and interact, given the situation we find ourselves in with COVID-19 and social distancing. My industry, education, by its very nature is people focused. My preference is face-to-face contact with staff on their site. However, I am now looking at other means to support young people and the wider community. I have learnt how to create webinars, online courses and now I am even using Twitter. I do enjoy the methods I am discovering, as all have an important role to play in connecting people."

SDP's Meet the Buyer 2020 activities offered another "first" for Kate. She said: "I first heard about Meet the Buyer when I attended SDP's webinar on 'Using PCS and Other Portals' in April. Once I understood how Twitter operated and after a couple of mistakes, I enjoyed the approach. It allowed me to multi-task and drop in and out of conversations but still keep abreast of what was going on. It also allowed me to meet some buyers remotely, ask direct questions, and understand how local authority procurement operates. I will continue to use Twitter to interact with others and maintain awareness of current issues and evolving practice."

Kate recommends the Supplier Development Programme. She said: "SDP's webinar training helped me to improve my supplier profile and understand tendering processes, and I now feel ready to be invited to Quick Quote and tender with local authorities I 'met' through the Meet the Buyer 2020 activities in the future as well as the rest of the public sector."

Meet the Buyer North 2020



Meet the Buyer North could not take place as a face-to-face event in 2020 due to the restrictions put in place by the Scottish Government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the event did take place on 2 September 2020, as the Supplier Development Programme first live virtual event. In total, 1,606 supplier pre-registered on the SDP website for the Meet the Buyer North 2020: Live Virtual Event. On the day, there were 825 attendees, which was made up of 684 suppliers (from 590 unique businesses and 141 buyers/exhibiting staff. There were 30 virtual stands, which included not only public sector buyers but also some supply chain contractors, including Hub North, and various business support organisations, such as Business Gateway Aberdeen City and Shire and Tayside, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise. Through the 1-to-1 exhibitor meeting on the portal, we collectively achieved 11,000 minutes of video interaction.



Meet the Buyer North 2020 was opened by the SDP Board Director for Highlands and Islands, Diane Beattie, Payments Manager, Moray Council. After there was a welcome Ministerial Address by Kate Forbes MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance. Several presentations were delivered throughout the day, including:

- Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Highland Councils Shared Procurement Service, delivered a presentation on Connecting Local Suppliers followed by a live question and answer session
- Scottish Procurement Alliance: Connecting Northern Scottish Businesses with Scottish Procurement Alliance's tender opportunities by Lesley Anderson, Head of SPA Procurement
- SDP delivered a session on Helping You Bid Better, there was an introduction by the Programme Manager, Gillian Cameron, followed by a live Q&A panel with SDP's expert trainers.
- Scottish Enterprise organised a webinar on Links to Offshore Wind Scotland: Supply Chain Success



As this was a virtual event all the presentation were pre-recorded, followed by a live question and answer session where suppliers where able to ask any question they may have.

There was built in time in the agenda for suppliers to visit the virtual exhibition stands. At the exhibition stands suppliers could chat 1-to-1 with buyers via a video call. While waiting to speak to a buyer at their stand suppliers could read brochures and useful links provided by the exhibitor.



Exhibiting organisations include:

- Aberdeen City Council
- Aberdeenshire Council
- Argyll and Bute Council
- Fife Council
- Glasgow City Council
- Highland, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils
- Highland and Islands Enterprise
- Moray Council
- Perth & Kinross Council
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Scottish Procurement Alliance
- RJ McLeod Contractors Ltd
- Glasgow City Region City Deal
- Transport Scotland
- hub North Scotland
- Forth & Tayside Offshore and Deep Wind: Scotland's Offshore Wind Clusters
- Red Rock Power
- Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC)
- Scotland Excel
- NEPO
- Scape
- Dounreay Site Restoration Limited
- Crown Commercial Services
- Just Enterprise
- Partnership for Procurement
- Elevator and Business Gateway – Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire
- Elevator & Business Gateway – Tayside
- Business Loans Scotland
- Soil Association Scotland

Scottish Government - eCommerce Service

- Scottish Government – Supplier Journey
- Scottish Government – PCS/PCS-Tender Systems
- Scottish Government – Central Government Procurement Shared Service
- Scottish Government – Collaborative Procurement – Construction
- Scottish Government – Cyber Resilience Unit
- Scottish Government – Procurement Services

- Members
- Non members

Partner and External Events

Though every organisation and every individual was impacted upon by the COVID-19 pandemic, SDP actively supported membership organisations in online meetings, virtual conferences and more. SDP also developed a virtual event offer for local authority members to utilise by organising virtual Meet the Buyer events, with continued online support available through supplier engagement sessions, Talking Tenders webinars and more. SDP also highlighted some external and partner events that were of interest to Scottish-based SMEs and supported businesses, through the SDP website and monthly e-newsletter.

April – June 2020

- Modular Building (MB) Framework Webinar – Scottish Procurement Alliance (SPA)
- Schools and Community Building (SCB) Framework Webinar – Scottish Procurement Alliance (SPA)
- Pitched Roofing (PR) Framework Webinar – Scottish Procurement Alliance (SPA)

July – September 2020

- Sustainable Urban Regeneration in Aberdeen City and Shire: Plans, Opportunities, Challenges
- Enterprise Strategic Commercial Partnership – Market Engagement Day
- GCRC (Glasgow City Region City Deal) – Regional Sustainable Procurement Strategy
- Talking Tenders with NEPO
- P4P's Building an Inclusive Supply Chain Online Event
- P4H Scotland 2020
- Construction Industry Coronavirus (CICV) Forum Webinar
- Rail Cluster Builder Webinar
- TALGO UK's Scottish Supplier Event

October – December 2020

- Construction Industry Coronavirus (CICV) Forum Webinar
- Renfrewshire Council: Upcoming Procurement and Community Benefits Webinar
- Procurex Scotland 2020
- Fife Council Meet the Buyer Event
- East Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce Supply Chain Success Factors
- Local route to market: Exploring the Opportunities in school food for Scottish suppliers
- Talking Tenders with The City of Edinburgh Council – Hard FM Services Sub-Contracting

January – March 2021

- Talking Tenders with East Lothian Council – Construction Works Framework
- Talking Tenders with P4H Scotland
- Talking Tenders with Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Highland Councils
- Productivity Club Scotland
- Rail Cluster Builder – Rail Innovation Day for Scotland
- Talking Tenders with Argyll and Bute Council – Capital Building Works
- Cyber Scotland Week
- The City of Edinburgh Council – Temporary Accommodation
- Using PCS – East Lothian Council: Construction Works Frameworks opportunity
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Hard FM Supply Chain Engagement Planning
- Falkirk Council Procurement Clinics
- South Lanarkshire Council: Training and Employability Framework



P4H Scotland 2020



Procurex Scotland 2020



Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Partner and External Events

Fife Council Meet the Buyer Event

In the first ever local virtual Meet the Buyer event organised by SDP, Fife Council's Economic Development Team and SDP hosted a virtual Meet the Buyer event on Thursday, 5 November, as part of Fife Business Week 2020.

As businesses adapt to how they buy and sell, this virtual event was delivered under the banner of InvestFife in partnership with the Supplier Development Programme, and brought together 258 participants virtually to create new opportunities in the new 'normal'. Of those, 60 attendees were from businesses based in Fife.



The virtual Meet the Buyer event showcased a range of contract opportunities currently available in Fife, across various sectors, including construction, offshore wind, renewables, and manufacturing. In addition to a welcome from Fife Council's Economic Development and Procurement Teams, there were presentations from Talgo, EDF Renewables, SSE Renewables and Red Rock Power Limited that offered key insights into supply chain opportunities and nuances that could support Scottish SMEs interested in tendering.

SDP also delivered an interactive question and answer session with a panel of its expert trainers for suppliers in attendance.

Ann Camus, Enterprise & Business Development Manager at Fife Council, said:

"The coronavirus pandemic has changed the B2B marketplace. We're all having to adapt, and so this year, we took our traditional Meet the Buyer event, as part of Fife Business Week, online to support businesses to realise contracts in the new 'normal'.

"Participants learnt about significant projects happening here in Fife and were able to find out how to be part of the supply chain as well as invaluable tender training and support available free through the Supplier Development Programme.

"It was extremely encouraging to hear that over 250 participants took part in this event, and from a poll taken on the day, 86% of those believed the event would encourage them to bid for more public sector contracts."

Talgo UK

Talgo presented on opportunities to become part of its supply chain for works on its multi-million pound factory on the site of Longannet, whilst EDF Renewables updated local businesses on plans for Neart na Gaoithe (NnG) offshore windfarm, for which supply chain opportunities exist.

Jon Veitch, Managing Director of Talgo UK Ltd., said:

"We were absolutely thrilled with the opportunity to contribute to Fife Business Week and especially the Meet the Buyer event. It is so heartening to see the capability and qualities of organisations from Scotland and Fife, which we hope to harness in the coming and lasting years."

Outcomes

The Supplier Development Programme collated some statistics from the virtual event, including:

- Prior to the event, there were 292 supplier attendee bookings on the SDP website.
- On the day of the Fife Meet the Buyer virtual event, in total, there were 258 participants made up of 227 supplier attendees and 58 exhibitors/speakers/public sector colleagues.
- Of these, 168 attendees were from 138 unique Scottish SMEs/supported businesses.
- Included within this number, there were 60 attendees from businesses based in Fife and 49 of these were Fife attendees from 38 unique SMEs/supported businesses based in Fife.
- An additional 19 attendees from 16 unique businesses in Fife registered for the event, but did not attend.
- From the poll on the day, 86% of attendees voted that the Meet the Buyer Event has encouraged them to bid for more public sector contracts!

The Supplier Development Programme also conducted an online survey after the event concluded. After attending the Fife Virtual Meet the Buyer Event in partnership with the Supplier Development Programme:

- 75% of suppliers from Scotland that responded to the survey said they felt more confident engaging with Talgo, Offshore Wind Developers and Fife Council Procurement to determine/discuss future supply chain opportunities.
- 81% agreed that the virtual Fife Meet the Buyer event, delivered in partnership with the Supplier Development Programme, demonstrated that public sector procurement is open and transparent, despite challenges in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Almost half - 43% - heard about the virtual Fife Meet the Buyer event through the Supplier Development Programme and a further quarter - 24% - learned about it via social media.

Some supplier comments included:

"Very well structured virtual event. I was very impressed."

"Having never previously been to a Meet the Buyer, it was very informative and interesting."

"The event was well organised and well delivered."

"It was a great event."

"I'm going to take this opportunity by saying that was one of the best virtual events I've attended so far."

GCRCD (Glasgow City Region City Deal) – Regional Sustainable Procurement Strategy

Glasgow City Region was exploring a Regional approach to procurement and community benefits. It would build on the eight partner councils' collaboration on procurement and community benefits for the £1 billion Glasgow City Region City Deal over the past five years.



A series of improvements were introduced including streamlined processes and consistent documentation. A pilot community benefits integrated system had been tested which has already lead to better performance, monitoring, and reporting.

The Glasgow City Region City Deal wanted to work with its existing suppliers, local SMEs and businesses, large corporates and key stakeholders – to shape the development of a new Regional strategy and approach for sustainable procurement and community benefits that would:

- Be more effective;
- Support its aims to promote economic growth, tackle poverty and social exclusion, and minimise its own environmental impact; and
- Support businesses and recognise the challenges suppliers face.

SDP hosted this webinar to provide an opportunity for an open discussion about GCRCD's priorities and obligations and about the issues and challenges businesses faced, in bidding for and delivering public sector contracts and their related community benefits. GCRCD wanted to explore how it could support businesses, particularly local companies, through how it procured goods and services.

Early Supply Chain Engagement

SDP puts sustainability at the core of all activity in Scotland's procurement and economic development. As SDP is connected to each and every local authority as well as the Scottish Government, sitting independently right between buyers and suppliers, public sector buyers are keen to see primary contractors work with the Supplier Development Programme to bring supply chain opportunities to Scottish SMEs, third sector and supported businesses.

SDP offers a paid Corporate Membership and taking this is an outward sign that a primary contractor is truly committed to good and sustainable practices. Corporate Membership demonstrates a company's commitment to:

- supporting the delivery of key priorities of council and other public bodies, including meeting their Sustainable Procurement Duty targets;
- supporting and improving access to sub-contract contract opportunities for SMEs, supported Businesses, Social Enterprises, Co-Operatives, and the Third Sector as part of awarded contracts; and
- contributing to Community Wealth Building and circular economy objectives locally.

Community Wealth Building is robustly promoted by SDP, as when primary contractors consider a supply chain and supply chain opportunities for major contracts, necessities must also be delivered. SDP asks primary contractors real questions on behalf of suppliers! Examples might include: how do employees eat? How are cleaning services undertaken? What about recycling, or security? Where are MOTs carried out? Are B&Bs required for staff visiting a site?

By working with primary contractors and local authorities to tease out additional opportunities for smaller suppliers, and then robustly advertising them, SDP plays a crucial role in connecting Community Wealth Building opportunities related to Growth Deals and other national and local initiatives with the kinds of local suppliers that primary contractors need, including supported businesses and the third sector. This approach helps to keep money local for longer, and therefore contributes to more transparent and sustainable procurement practice.

In 2020/2021, SDP had two Corporate Members: Jacobs and RJ McLeod. SDP continued to work with local authorities and partners at all procurement stages to raise the sustainable and transparent benefits of supplier engagement through the Programme through several virtual events during the financial year. SDP welcomes more contractors to join the Programme to demonstrate their commitment to community wealth building.

Enterprise Strategic Commercial Partnership – Market Engagement Day

North Lanarkshire Council asked SDP to host an online market engagement event on 3 August 2020 to share information about its Enterprise Strategic Commercial Partnership contract which will support the Council's ambition to be the place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit.

To realise its ambitions, North Lanarkshire Council was seeking a partner to create a long-term, strategic, commercial, and place-shaping partnership to enable it to work together to deliver a full range of interconnected property, community asset and infrastructure investments including the repair and investment in current and new build housing and council assets, as well as building new community assets, infrastructure, and town centre regeneration programmes.



At the event, primary contractors and smaller suppliers heard from a senior member of North Lanarkshire Council's corporate management team and representatives of the project team provided an overview of the opportunity to prospective bidders, outlined the scale of the Council's ambition, its commitment to the project, what it was looking for in a partner and related indicative timescales.

Renfrewshire Council: Upcoming Procurement and Community Benefits Webinar

Renfrewshire Council was procuring for two flagship projects: Paisley Town Hall Re-development and the Paisley Museum Refurbishment. At the heart of these projects, community involvement and benefit back to the community was key.



Renfrewshire Council invited potential primary contractors and other suppliers to join the webinar to gain an overview of the community benefit priorities for Renfrewshire. The webinar was also an opportunity to become familiar with the Community Benefits Forum members and to gain an understanding of their role and learned how they can aid delivery.

One supplier said: "I enjoyed hearing the client's perspective as to the role community benefits play within a project."

Another supplier said: "I found it useful to hear what was important to the client group."

Supply Chain Events

Talking Tenders with the City of Edinburgh Council – Hard FM Services Sub-Contracting

City of Edinburgh Council approached SDP to deliver a free Talking Tenders webinar event, supplemented by one-to-one meetings between outgoing suppliers from the previous framework and the potential new Delivery Partners.

The commercial property repair and maintenance programme contract opportunity was for a 10-year period and the estimated contract value is £150m - £180m. In December 2020, in partnership with SDP, The City of Edinburgh Council engaged with suppliers of all sizes to fulfil the requirements of this procurement exercise. Potential manufacturers, suppliers and sub-contractors interested in potential forthcoming sub-contracting opportunities related to this tender exercise attended a 'Talking Tenders' webinar in a morning session.



"The facilitation of opportunities for SMEs remains a key priority for the Council and we were delighted to provide a platform for SMEs to engage with the bidders on the Hard FM Services tender. It was great to have the support of SDP in reaching out to SMEs and presenting our aspirations for the Project. A huge thank you to everyone who attended, and we hope the event was helpful and provided a good insight into our plans for transforming how we deliver Hard FM services," said Kelly Faulds of The City of Edinburgh Council.

Supplier feedback was positive, and commenting on the morning webinar session, one supplier said: "The webinar was informative." Another commented: "We currently work with most of the shortlisted FM companies and look forward to speaking to them all regarding the Framework."

To rectify unforeseen technical issues experienced at the event, SDP shared a recording of the full webinar, including introduction films from the bidders, on YouTube after the webinar had concluded. In total, 93% of the Scottish SMEs that participated in the webinar said they were more likely to bid for the opportunity with the successful Tier 1 suppliers as a direct result of the information they received. The Tier 1 suppliers were also supplied the details of all SMEs in attendance for further contact.

In the afternoon, SDP facilitated virtual direct meetings between outgoing suppliers from a previous framework and the potential primary contractors to provide opportunity for inclusion in future supply chains, via Microsoft Teams. It was organised by SDP as a 'speed networking' session, virtually, and all suppliers had the opportunity to directly engage one-to-one with the potential primary contractors.

One potential Primary Contractor said: "It was great to meet some of City of Edinburgh Council's supply chain and I believe we had, and encouraged, some very open and honest conversations about how we work. We definitely gained great feedback from the supply chain regarding our company."

An outgoing SME supplier noted: "The City of Edinburgh Council Procurement Team's input and vision for the contract was immensely useful. We feel more confident about the new process having engaged with the FM companies."

Engagement with Suppliers: Frameworks and Dynamic Purchasing Systems

Frameworks and Dynamic Purchasing Systems are an integral part of public procurement and can be a lucrative source of business, but suppliers often require support to understand what they are and how to bid for them. SDP offers an intermediate level course as part of core training, Understanding and Bidding – Frameworks and Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS), which often features Scotland Excel or the Scottish Procurement Alliance as guest speakers. However, SDP also offers bespoke, aligned training for upcoming opportunities and several examples are described within this report. Due to the long procurement timescales involved, tendering outcomes are often not available within the same financial year.

South Lanarkshire Council: Training and Employability Framework

SDP held a webinar on 24 March 2021 to support the Council in engaging with potential local suppliers. South Lanarkshire Council Employability Services put in place a new Training and Employability Framework, encompassing Employability Services being made available to South Lanarkshire residents aged 16 and over.



The anticipated date for the appointment of providers to the Framework was 1st October 2021. The Framework would be in place for a period of four years. South Lanarkshire Council were looking for providers of Training, Employability and Support Services from a wide range of sectors and disciplines.

One supplier said: "I think the event was overall clear and concise and just the right amount of time."

Using PCS-Tender – Renfrewshire Council's Framework for Transportation

Renfrewshire Council approached SDP to host a Using PCS-Tender webinar. The Council was trying to attract businesses that were interested in its upcoming Framework for Transportation. In particular, suppliers who had limited or no experience with engaging with the Public Contracts Scotland Tender portal. SDP held webinars on 30 March 2021.



One supplier said: "I enjoyed hearing an overview of the tendering process and the reminder to everyone to keep saving our work, so we don't lose the work already carried out."

Talking Tenders with East Lothian Council – Construction Works Framework

East Lothian Council was going to be refreshing its Construction Framework, which would facilitate and support a programme of public building works. The Construction Framework would run for a 4-year period providing many opportunities, with an estimated value in the region of £18m over the course of the framework. To support suppliers in this tendering opportunity, East Lothian Council partnered with SDP to run this webinar.



It was a multi-value lot framework, which involved works contracts for new, refurbishment and modernisation of council public buildings (schools, nurseries, libraries, offices, community halls and sports centres and facilities). The contracts varied in size, from small value projects up several million. Plans included Internal alteration to various schools and other public buildings, an Extension to Longniddry Primary School and an Extension to Windygoul Primary School in Tranent, to name just a few.

The anticipated value of the contract was £18m over the course of the Framework, and the Council and the Supplier Development Programme wanted to help and support suppliers to bid successfully so a share of that local wealth could stay in the local community, paid to businesses through transparent public procurement practices.

The Talking Tenders webinar gave local SMEs located in the East Lothian Council area and further afield the opportunity to gain an insight into the contract opportunity and an introduction to PCS to help suppliers get 'tender ready' in advance.

One supplier said: "I enjoyed the briefing from East Lothian Council."

Partner Events: Frameworks

Talking Tenders with PfH Scotland

When Procurement for Housing (PfH) Scotland became a membership organisation of the Supplier Development Programme a free session was organised for suppliers to learn about working with PfH.



Before the webinar PfH published Contract Notices on Public Contracts Scotland for frameworks in Whole House Refurbishment, Kitchen Supply, and Window and Door Manufacture and Installation. The webinar helped suppliers to:

- learn about PfH Scotland and its role;
- understand how its tender processes work;
- find out about where PfH Scotland advertises tender opportunities;
- learn helpful hints and tips on how to tender through the Intend bidding portal;
- gain an insight into upcoming tender opportunities; and
- promote the Supplier Development Programme's range of training services.

One supplier said: "I enjoyed the direct involvement from the East Lothian staff member, as he was particularly informative."

Another said: "I found it useful getting more information on members, opportunities and DPS/Frameworks."

Talking Tenders with the Scottish Procurement Alliance (SPA)

Following on from a general engagement webinar with SPA in May 2020, SDP organised another for this opportunity in February 2021. SPA was keen to engage with as many companies as possible throughout Scotland, particularly SMEs and supported businesses, as part of crucial development of its Housing Construction (H2) Framework.



It delivered a range of traditional housing as well as low, medium, and high-rise construction, sheltered, student and keyworker accommodation, care homes, and mixed-use sites, development agreements and land purchases. Associated civil engineering and infrastructure works required for new build housing and net zero buildings was also covered under the framework.

One supplier said: "I found it useful to hear about the DPS Framework."

Partner Events: DPS

Talking Tenders with Argyll and Bute Council - Capital Building Works

Argyll and Bute Council procured lower value (non-regulated under £2m) Capital Building Works contracts through Quick Quotes and were planning to replace this system with a lotted Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS).



The tender documents were published via PCS towards the end of March 2021 with a view to appoint contractors in June 2021 for the works unregulated procurements for Building Works contracts between £1k to £2m, covering the following types of works:

- General Building Works
- Electrical Works
- Roofing Works
- Heating Works
- Fire & Intruder Alarm Works
- Renewables Works

A Talking Tenders session was held by SDP aimed at suppliers that wished to bid for Argyll and Bute Council's new DPS. During the webinar suppliers learned more about the DPS tender process and heard from Argyll and Bute Council Procurement colleagues as they spoke about upcoming tender opportunities.

One supplier said: "I enjoyed this course, it was very informative and the content explaining the differences between how frameworks and the new DPS intends to work was delivered well."

The City of Edinburgh Council - Temporary Accommodation

The City of Edinburgh Council was looking to establish a flexible purchasing system for temporary accommodation. The long-term opportunity aimed to increase Edinburgh's capacity for temporary accommodation. The City of Edinburgh Council approached SDP to host this session to support suppliers that wanted to bid for this opportunity.



The Council required accommodation and associated services which were tailored to residents' needs and could adapt by flexing capacity whilst having a focus on value for money and allows continued change and improvement. The system was similar to a Dynamic Purchasing System; however, it operated with greater flexibility. The purchasing system comprised of Categories, each specified the type of accommodation and services required.

The Council used the PCS-Tender online portal to run and manage the opportunity, and as such strongly encouraged interested potential providers to attend SDP's PCS-T training sessions. During the webinar supplier were given a live walkthrough of the PCS & PCS-T portals, to demonstrate the bidding process for its contract.

One supplier said: "I found it helpful to understand what the Council is looking for. The explanation around the Lots and the need for the Price/Quality split was also helpful."

Another supplier said: "I enjoyed the question and answer section."

SDP Social Media

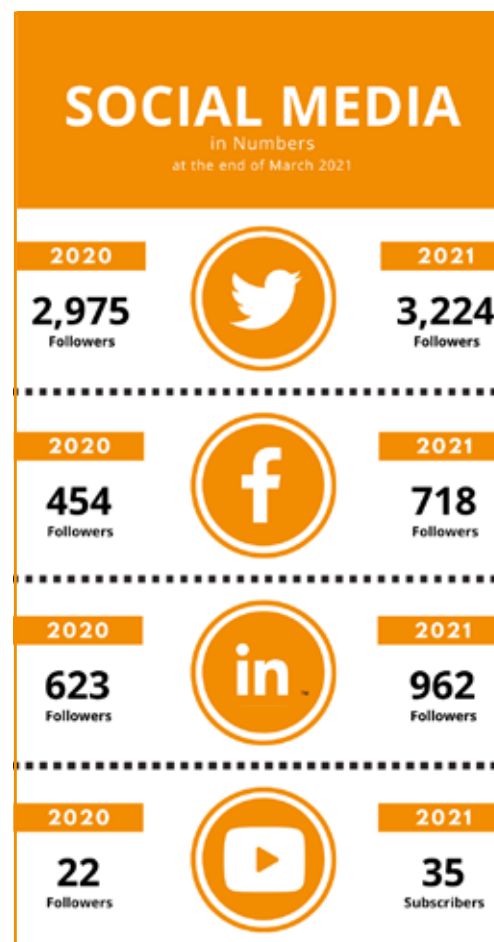
SDP uses social media to share information on upcoming training opportunities, events, market information, media releases, news, contract opportunities and other items of note relating to procurement, Public Contracts Scotland, and SDP member organisations.

During 2020/2021, SDP utilised several popular hashtags, such as:

#HelpingYouBidBetter
#PowerOfSDP
#SupplierOpp
#10DR
#MeetTheBuyerNorth2020

Additionally, to maximise efforts in the public sector to be open and transparent in communications around public sector procurement, the Supplier Development Programme utilises a joined-up approach to support the Scottish Government Procurement Communications Strategy with the use of the following hashtags:

#PowerOfProcurement
#GoodForBusiness
#OpenAndConnected
#GoodForCommunities
#GoodForEnvironment



Social Media Platforms

The Supplier Development Programme can be found on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#). From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, SDP Scotland increased its social media presence on the four channels. This was reflected as an 8% increase in followers on Twitter, a 58% increase on Facebook, a 54% increase on LinkedIn and a 59% increase on YouTube.

All 32 Scottish local authorities now follow SDP on Twitter. SDP encourages all public sector buying organisations to follow and share SDP posts about free tender support with their audiences on all four social channels.



Social Media: Meet the Buyer 2020 Twitter Takeover

A Meet the Buyer 2020 “Twitter Takeover” was designed to allow the SDP Twitter account to be put in the hands of specified public sector buyers for a specified amount of time.



This activity aimed to prompt discussion about upcoming contracts and frameworks in the public sector, in lieu of a face-to-face event. Local authorities were approached by SDP Scotland on a voluntary basis to participate for one hour of time on 2 June, with the overall aims to increase awareness of SDP, connections with key partnership organisations, and open up SDP's social media presence to new audiences while engaging current followers.

Fife Council, East Renfrewshire Council, South Ayrshire Council, Falkirk Council, Moray Council, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire

Council and Highland Council were promoted during the Twitter Takeover, as well as Scottish Government, Scottish Procurement Alliance, Wheatley Group and Scotland Excel.

Over the course of the working day on 2 June 2020, 162 tweets were sent from the SDP Scotland Twitter account by five public sector organisations. The tweets collectively earned 55,228 impressions (the number of times users saw a Tweet on Twitter) and 1,591 engagements (total number of times a user interacted with a Tweet). The tweets earned 76 retweets, 285 likes and 46 replies. The SDP Twitter account gained 25 new followers. In total, the 162 tweets collectively resulted in 165 user profile clicks, 265 URL clicks, and 49 hashtag clicks. Finally, the tweets during the Twitter Takeover resulted in users expanding tweets for more detail 481 times with 224 views of the media images attached to the tweets.

Overall, including the hour of the Twitter Takeover that SDP Scotland participated in, SDP Scotland supported the Twitter Takeover with 70 total tweets. The tweets earned 29,729 impressions and 636 engagements. Collectively, SDP Scotland's 70 tweets earned 46 retweets, 124 likes and 15 replies.

While never billed as a replacement for a physical Meet the Buyer event, the virtual activities demonstrated an innovative approach to communicate with suppliers and contribute to open, connected and transparent procurement practices in Scotland's public sector during the on-going restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social Media: Meet the Buyer North 2020

In advance of the first ever virtual Meet the Buyer North event, the Supplier Development Programme created the hashtag: #MeetTheBuyerNorth2020.

This was utilised by a number of buyers and suppliers in the lead up to the event. From 31 July to 2 September 2020, 71 tweets were sent from the SDP Scotland Twitter account to promote the Meet the Buyer North 2020: Live Virtual Event. The tweets collectively earned 40,697 impressions (the number of times users saw a Tweet on Twitter) and 578 engagements (total number of times a user interacted with a Tweet). The tweets earned 78 retweets, 118 likes and 3 replies, and the SDP Scotland Twitter account gained 12 new followers.

SDP: Recognising Achievement

Scottish Borders Council and the SDP were announced as a Winner in the Government Opportunities (GO) Excellence in Public Procurement Awards Scotland 2020.



The partners were one of three finalists in the 'Best Procurement Delivery' category and announced as the outright Winner at a virtual ceremony on Friday, 6 November 2020 which was hosted by TV presenter Sarah Heaney, with an official welcome from Nick Ford, Director of Procurement and Property, Scottish Government.

Councillor Mark Rowley, Executive Member for Economic Regeneration and Finance, said: "I am delighted to see the council win this award. This is recognition of the excellent partnership we have with the Supplier Development Programme and the work our procurement team and others have undertaken together to help local businesses engage in our tender processes.

"We always aim to support local businesses wherever we can and this award recognises a holistic procurement process which epitomised that and is a great example of community wealth building here in the Borders."

Scottish Borders Council procured a multi-trade, framework for a reactive repairs and maintenance service to a wide ranging property estate of over 800 buildings throughout the region, with an estimated £4.7million annual budget for repairs and maintenance. The Council partnered with the SDP to promote the tender opportunity to local businesses, and align and deliver free tender training.

During the online ceremony, the GO Awards judging panel said that Scottish Borders Council and the Supplier Development Programme were chosen to win because the procurement aligned with a Community Wealth Building approach.

One judge described it as a very good example of breaking down a complex procurement to deliver social and economic benefits to a wider supply base, while another commented that it was a great demonstration of a 'local first' policy with effective stakeholder and supplier engagement and tailored training solutions.

Gillian Cameron, SDP Programme Manager, said: "It is really wonderful that the award recognises that the real beneficiaries of this sustainable procurement approach is the local community, and that the Supplier Development Programme assisted Scottish Borders Council to make the crucial connection with local micro, small and medium sized businesses.

"100% of the local SMEs that attended SDP training and bridged the gap to bid through Public Contracts Scotland won a place on the framework, which ultimately contributes to social engagement, economic growth and community wealth building in the Scottish Borders."

SDP: Recognising Achievement

North Lanarkshire Council and the SDP were announced as the Winner in the Government Opportunities (GO) Excellence in Public Procurement Awards Scotland 2020 in the 'Best Procurement Leadership' category.



To create and deliver a framework for childminders and private nurseries designed to meet the Scottish Government's commitment to provide a funded placement of 1140 hours per year to eligible children, North Lanarkshire Council's Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Team worked with the Supplier Development Programme.

"North Lanarkshire Council recognised from the outset that early engagement with the

local supply chain was crucial to ensuring the participation of local childminders and nurseries in the tendering process, and they contacted SDP," said Jennifer Payne, SDP Development Officer.

"Our expert and free tender training programme is flexible to suit the needs of individual procurement exercises, as happened in this case, and we work hard to ensure local businesses understand the best way to engage with public bodies to ensure they can bid for contracts and tenders."

From March 2019, local childcare providers and nursery businesses in North Lanarkshire Council took part in a series of SDP tender training workshops to build the skills and confidence required to enable them to submit their tenders via the Public Contracts Scotland online portal.

SDP utilised the successful procurement model pioneered by North Lanarkshire Council for this change to the early learning model and to 31 March 2020, has provided 15 bespoke, aligned training events and webinars aimed at local early learning and childcare providers for a third of Scottish local authorities, South Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire, Clackmannanshire, Glasgow City, Angus, Dundee City, North Ayrshire, and Perth and Kinross Councils.

The partners were announced as the outright Winner at a virtual event on Friday 6 November 2020 which was hosted by TV presenter Sarah Heaney, with an official welcome from Nick Ford, Director of Procurement and Property, Scottish Government.



Contact Details

Gillian Cameron	Programme Manager
Elizabeth Bailey	Finance and Administration Officer
Fran Goldie	Development Officer - Digital
Jennifer Payne	Development Officer - Marketing and Events
Sophie Taylor	Marketing Assistant

Website	www.sdpscotland.co.uk
Email	info@sdpscotland.co.uk
Phone	01698 453734

 YouTube    @sdpscotland