



# Fife Council Meet the Buyer 2021: Dunfermline Learning Campus and Levenmouth Railway Link Supply Chain Opportunities Outcomes

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**On Thursday, 4 November 2021, a virtual event entitled, “[Fife Council Meet the Buyer 2021: Dunfermline Learning Campus and Levenmouth Railway Link Supply Chain Opportunities](#)” was held as part of Fife Business Week.**

[Fife Council](#) Economic Development, in partnership with [hub East Central Scotland](#), [Fife College](#), [BAM Construction](#), [Balfour Beatty](#), [Network Rail](#) and the Supplier Development Programme, came together to help local businesses find out what contract opportunities are available as part of the Dunfermline Learning Campus (DLC) (£200m project) and the Levenmouth Railway Link project delivery (£70m project).

Suppliers were able to explore how to do business with hub East Central Scotland, Fife College, BAM, Balfour Beatty, Network Rail and their framework of suppliers and Fife Council procurement by speaking 1-to-1 with procurement staff about upcoming supply chain opportunities.

### **Want to catch up on the day?**

There was a packed [agenda](#) which began with an opening message from [Fife Council Economic Development](#). Each of the partnering organisations delivered a presentation followed by a live question and answer session.

- [Fife Council Property and Fife College](#) gave a joint presentation. It included an overview of the Dunfermline Learning Campus project and its sustainable pipeline of work and community benefits that could be delivered as part of the project.
- [hub East Central Scotland](#) delivered a presentation on its sustainable pipeline of work and community benefits.
- [BAM Construction](#) gave a presentation on highlighting upcoming SubContractor opportunities and you as a supplier could work with BAM.
- [Balfour Beatty](#) also delivered a presentation highlighting its upcoming SubContractor opportunities and how suppliers can work with Balfour Beatty.
- [Network Rail](#) gave a presentation highlighting the Levenmouth Railway Link project, upcoming Sub-Contractor opportunities and how to work with Network Rail and its Framework of Suppliers.
- Suppliers also learned how to find opportunities on Public Contracts Scotland and how to become tender ready with the [Supplier Development Programme](#).

### **Outcomes**

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

Prior to the event, there were 477 supplier attendee bookings on the SDP website. On the day of the Fife Council Meet the Buyer virtual event, in total there were 252 participants. Of these, 158 attendees were from 144 unique Scottish SMEs/supported businesses. Included within this number there were 45 unique businesses based in Fife.

### **Supplier Engagement**

There was a high level of engagement during the Fife Council Meet the Buyer event, both with the main agenda and within the Exhibit Hall. Outcomes include:

- 151 attendees at the Fife Council Property and Fife College presentation.
- 152 attendees at the hub East Central Scotland presentation.
- 131 attendees at the BAM Construction presentation.
- 113 attendees at the Balfour Beatty presentation.

- 84 attendees at the Levenmouth/Scotland's Railway presentation.

There were 1445 visits to exhibitions and 28 networking connections made in the Meeting Hub.

### On the Day Polls

The Supplier Development Programme also conducted online polls during the Fife Council Meet the Buyer event. Attendees were very positive about the main agenda:

- **93%** said the Fife Council Property and Fife College Presentation encouraged them get involved with supply chain and subcontracting opportunities (**18** questions/comments received).
- **93%** said the hub East Central Scotland Presentation encouraged them get involved with supply chain and subcontracting opportunities (**32** questions/comments received).
- **96%** said the BAM Construction Presentation encouraged them get involved with supply chain and subcontracting opportunities (**33** questions/comments received).
- **95%** said the Balfour Beatty Presentation encouraged them get involved with supply chain and subcontracting opportunities (**15** questions/comments received).
- **94%** said the Levenmouth/Scotland's Railway Presentation encouraged them get involved with supply chain and subcontracting opportunities (**15** questions/comments received).
- **100%** said the SDP Helping You Bid Better Workshop encouraged them to bid for more public sector contracts and **100%** said it encouraged them to get involved with supply chain and subcontracting opportunities (**19** questions/comments received).

### Supplier Survey Results

The Supplier Development Programme also conducted an online survey after the event concluded, and there were **29** responses. Of those respondents, **21** were from SMEs based in Scotland and a third of those Scottish SMEs were based in Fife. After attending the Fife Council Meet the Buyer event in partnership with the Supplier Development Programme:

- **89%** of suppliers said they were more likely to bid for public sector contracts as a direct result of participating in the event.
- **85%** agreed that the virtual Fife Council 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.
- **94%** of respondents rated the quality of information provided by the events key partners as either 'excellent' or 'good'.
- **71%** of Scottish SMEs felt confident engaging with the key partners from the event - such as Fife College, Balfour Beatty, BAM, and Network Rail.
- **82%** felt their business could benefit from public sector procurement in the Fife region after participating in the event.
- **78%** feel that these area-specific events do support business and procurement in the local regions they are based in.

Responses also showed a noticeable difference in preference for the future format of Meet the Buyer events in comparison to previous survey outcomes:

- 40% would now like the format of procurement and business support events to return to in-person events;
- 35% would like events to be in a hybrid format; and
- 25% would like them to remain virtual events.

#### **Net Zero** (only Scottish SME responses)

- 43% said that carbon reduction and reaching Net-Zero targets is a priority for them in the future;
- 38% said it was a priority right now for their business; and
- Nearly a fifth of businesses (19%) said it was not a priority for them.

The three most common actions taken by businesses to reduce emissions were:

- Using sustainable suppliers and supplies;
- Raising awareness and knowledgeability of sustainable practices; and
- Reducing or eliminating printing.

#### **Some supplier comments included:**

"It was fantastic, and I am so pleased I signed up to it, I thought it was nice to get comfort from the likes of Balfour Beatty assuring smaller SMEs to still get involved."

"It's good to have localised smaller scale events so that third sector, smaller scale social enterprises can have confidence in their local area."

"It was my first one so wasn't sure what to expect but it exceeded my expectations thank you."

"I'd resigned myself to total disengagement with public contracts process after mystifying procedures, massive time spend on failed bids etc. These networking events really help to make real connections and I'm more engaged to try again at public contracts. Thank you!"

#### **Exhibitor Survey Results**

An online survey was also distributed to registered exhibitors at the Fife Council Meet the Buyer event. In total, 11 responses were received. Respondents included many of the key event partners such as BAM Construction, Balfour Beatty, Siemens Rail Infrastructure, hub East Central Scotland, Business Gateway Fife, and Fife Council Procurement among others:

The survey highlighted that all exhibitors would likely participate again in future Meet the Buyer events organised by SDP as well as recommend this type of event to other public sector buyers.

- 100% of buyers and exhibitors rated the messaging and theme on being a Fife event as either 'Excellent' or 'Good';
- 91% of buyers and exhibitors rated the on the day virtual event experience as either 'Excellent' or 'Good';
- 100% of buyers and exhibitors said that their overall experience of the event was either 'Excellent' or 'Good';
- 100% of buyers and exhibitors rated the pre-event and post-event communication from SDP as either 'Excellent' or 'Good'; and

- 89% of buyers and exhibitors said that the pre-training on how exhibitors can use the online portal, which was offered by SDP before the event, was either 'Excellent' or 'Good'.

**Some exhibitors commented that:**

- “We are delighted to support Fife Council in these events and will continue to do so.”
- “Great work by everyone involved to deliver a really worthwhile event.”
- “Thank you! It was a great event and very well ran. We were kept informed and supported throughout.”

**Contact**

More information on the Supplier Development Programme can be found at [www.sdpscotland.co.uk](http://www.sdpscotland.co.uk) and on social media via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).