Lanarkshire Meet the ‘Real’ Buyer

20 November 2024 – Airdrie Town Hall, Airdrie

www.sdpscotland.co.uk

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Lynzie McLean, SDP Marketing and Events Assistant
lynzie.mclean@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

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Supplier Development Programme

Lanarkshire Meet the 'Real' Buyer 2024

823
People pre-registered for the event

394
Attended on the day

215
Unique Scottish SME businesses attended

26
Exhibitors in attendance on the day

Including a range of North and South Lanarkshire Council services, Supplier Development Programme, Business Gateway, NHS Lanarkshire, BAM Construction, Hochtief, Laing O'Rourke, and more...

91%
of respondents **rated the event as 'Good' or 'Excellent'**

94%
of respondents **rated the exhibitors as 'excellent' or 'good'.**

88%
of respondents **rated engagement with exhibitors as 'Good' or 'Excellent'.**

Suppliers said:

"I wasn't sure what to expect, but I found everyone very helpful and very eager to support small businesses. I found SDP extremely helpful, and they were good at explaining the jargon."

Overview

The Supplier Development Programme (SDP) has published an online report on Lanarkshire Meet the 'Real' Buyer, which took place on 20 November 2024, at the Airdrie Town Hall.

Lanarkshire Meet the 'Real' Buyer was run by SDP, alongside headline partners North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Councils. This free event gave suppliers, based in Lanarkshire, access to the real buyers and decision makers in the region, helping suppliers raise their profile as a business, and prepare for upcoming contract opportunities.

Supplier Registration and Attendance

In total, 823 suppliers pre-registered for the event on the SDP website, which marks a 30% increase on last year's event, and 62 suppliers on the waiting list. 394 suppliers were in attendance on the day, including 186 suppliers based in Lanarkshire. In total, there were 281 suppliers from 215 unique Scottish SME businesses.

Buyer Exhibitions

There were 26 exhibition stands on the day, including a range of North and South Lanarkshire Council services:

- IT, Finance and Corporate
- Construction and Professional Services
- Social Care and Education
- Cleaning and Catering
- Waste, Environmental and Grounds
- Roads and Fleet
- Leisure and Culture

Buyers from NHS Lanarkshire and Scotland Excel were also in attendance, as well as several tier 1 contractors, such as: BAM Construction, Hochtief, Laing O'Rourke, Linear Design & Construct, and Mears Group.

In addition, representatives from the Supplier Development Programme, Business Gateway, and City Deal in North Lanarkshire were also present on the day.

Attendee Survey Feedback

An online survey was distributed to all attendees to Lanarkshire Meet the 'Real' Buyer through email. The survey was live from 20 November to 16 December 2024. 67 responses were received, and 60 of these came from businesses that listed themselves as an SME or a 'social enterprise, charity or supported business.'

When asked how they heard about this event:

- Over 70% of respondents heard about this event through SDP's marketing activity (website, email/newsletters, social media, etc).
- Over 13% of respondents heard about the event through Public Contracts Scotland.
- Over 4% of respondents heard about this event through the Local Authority.
- Over 4% of respondents heard about this event through Business Gateway.

The supplier survey highlighted that:

- 91% of survey respondents rated the event as 'excellent' or 'good'.
- 94% of survey respondents rated the exhibitors as 'excellent' or 'good'.
- 88% of survey respondents rated engagement with exhibitors as 'excellent' or 'good'.
- Over 64% of respondents feel more capable of bidding for contracts after attending this event.
- Almost 63% of respondents are more likely to bid for contracts after attending this event.

Some comments from suppliers included:

- "The entire event was great and really useful. This was my first Meet the Buyer event. I feel it provided me with great experience for the next one. Everyone was friendly and accommodating."
- "I liked the fact that I could discuss needs directly with the buyers, which makes a difference in building understanding and relationships. I was able to get the specific contact details that I was looking for."
- "This event was in an excellent location for public transport. I enjoyed the fact it was a smaller event that I could easily walk around."
- "It was a well set up venue, which was perfect for the amount of people in attendance. The exhibitors were excellent, and I was able to network with potential clients without it being too noisy to hear anyone (as I found with some other events)."
- "It was a very worthwhile event and great to meet with the buyers. The venue was good, but very noisy due to the amount of people in the room, which was too small for the event."
- "Some of the exhibitors only had a single individual on the stand, which made it difficult to speak with them and resulted in long queues. It would be useful if there were more exhibitors available on each stand."

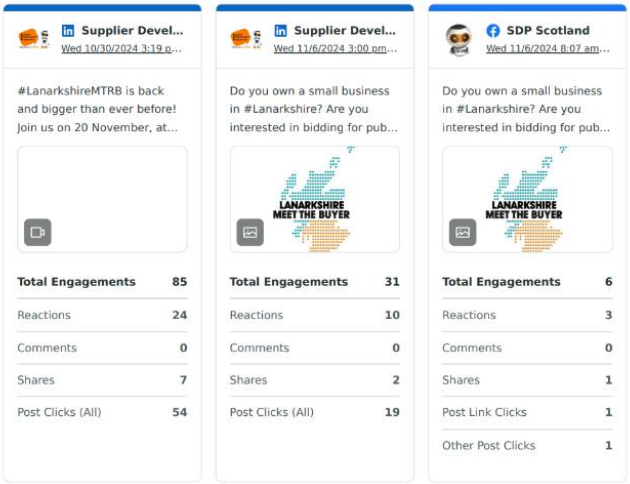
All feedback has been addressed and will be taken on board for future events.

Promotion through the Supplier Development Programme

Social Media

Prior to the event, SDP published 6 posts, across Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter (X), promoting the Lanarkshire Meet the 'Real' Buyer event. The campaign ran from 30 October to 20 November 2024. Collectively, the posts earned 1,679 impressions (the number of times users saw a post) and 124 engagements (the number of times users interacted with posts). In total, there were 74 clicks on the links embedded in these posts. These posts had an average engagement rate of 7.4%.

Highest performing posts include:



Newsletters/Mailings

The Lanarkshire Meet the 'Real' Buyer event was announced in SDP's July 2024, monthly newsletter, and featured in all subsequent newsletters before the event, on 20 November 2024:

- July 2024: 136 clicks
- August 2024: 277 clicks
- September 2024: 128 clicks
- October 2024: 75 clicks
- November 2024: 152 clicks

2 mailings were also sent to segmented groups of relevant suppliers registered with SDP, as part of the Lanarkshire Meet the 'Real' Buyer email campaign. In total, these mailings received 339 clicks.

Contact

More information on the Supplier Development Programme can be found at www.sdpscotland.co.uk

You can also follow the Supplier Development Programme on social media via Twitter (X), Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube to stay up-to-date with