



Meet the Buyer North 2026
3 September 2026 – Music Hall, Aberdeen
www.sdpscotland.co.uk

Noemi Finetti, SDP Events and Marketing Graduate
noemi.finetti@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Supplier Development Programme

Meet the Buyer North 2026

923

People pre-registered for the event

445

Attended on the day

233

Unique Scottish SME businesses attended

35

Exhibitors in attendance on the day

Including Commercial & Procurement Shared Services, Scottish Government, Scotland Excel, HPE, NHS Public Services Delivery Scotland, Business Gateway, hub North Scotland, ScotRail, Government Commercial Agency, Federation of Small Businesses, Balfour Beatty, Veolia.

96%

of respondents rated the event as 'Good' or 'Excellent'

94%

of respondents plans to pursue opportunities with organisations they met at the event

83%

of respondents said they felt encouraged to bid for public sector contracts following the event.



Suppliers said:

"The most valuable aspect was the networking, and the event was well organised with a good mix of exhibitors, buyers and suppliers"

Overview

The Supplier Development Programme (SDP) has published an online report on Meet the Buyer North 2026, the event that took place on 3 September at the Music Hall, Aberdeen.

Meet the Buyer North was run by SDP, alongside headline partners Scottish Government, Scotland Excel, Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE), and Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Highland Councils.

This free event gave suppliers in the North of Scotland access to buyers and decision makers from across the public and private sector, helping suppliers raise their profile as a business, and prepare for upcoming contract opportunities.

Supplier Registration and Attendance

In total, 905 individuals had pre-registered interest on the SDP website. There were 445 actual attendees on the day. Of these attendees, 9 confirmed they were from a social enterprise, charity, or supported business. There were 233 Scottish SME unique businesses in attendance.

Buyer Exhibitions

Meet the Buyer North 2026 played host to 35 exhibition stands, including event partners Scottish Government, Scotland Excel, Commercial and Procurement Shared Services (Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Highland Councils) and Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE).

In addition, several SDP partner organisations exhibited, including Balfour Beatty Power, Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited, Forestry and Land Scotland, Government Commercial Agency, hub North Scotland, Northern Lighthouse Board, PfH Scotland, RJ McLeod, Scottish Procurement Alliance, and Veolia

Health Zone

Meet the Buyer North 2026 also featured a dedicated Health Zone, sponsored by NHS Public Services Delivery Scotland. The zone offered delegates the opportunity to discuss contract opportunities with NHS Public Services Delivery Scotland, NHS Grampian, NHS Highland and NHS Orkney



Formal Agenda

Meet the Buyer North 2026 had a packed keynote agenda. Speaker sessions included:

- Welcome and opening address by Nick Ford, Director of Procurement and Property at Scottish Government
- Scottish Government - Lisa Goldie, Head of Construction Procurement Policy at Scottish Government.
- Commercial and Procurement Shared Services - Mel Mackenzie, Strategic Commercial Manager
- Scotland Excel - Laura Muir, Strategic Procurement Manager
- Hewlett Packard Enterprise - John Martin, Cybersecurity Channel Leader
- NHS PSD - Gillian Ray, Category Manager at Public Services Delivery Scotland, and Jennifer Yeomans, Head of Procurement at NHS Grampian
- Supplier Development Programme - The Tender Ready Checklist by Mandy Millar



Attendee Survey Feedback

An online survey was distributed to all Meet the Buyer North 2026 attendees. The survey was live from September 3 to September 21, 2026. 71 responses were received, 58 came from SMEs and 2 of these came from businesses that listed themselves as a social enterprise, charity or supported business.

The survey highlighted:

- 96% of survey respondents rated Meet the Buyer North 2026 as “excellent” or “good”.
- 94% said the event helped them network and make useful connections that could benefit their business.
- 94% of respondents said they were planning to actively pursue opportunities with one or more of the organisations they met, following the event.
- 87% said the event increased their awareness of opportunities in the private sector supply chain.
- 83% of survey respondents reported they felt encouraged to bid for more public sector contracts following the event.
- 70% said they felt more confident about bidding for public sector contracts after attending the event.

Some comments from suppliers included:

- *“The networking aspect was particularly valuable, and the event was well organised with a good mix of exhibitors, buyers and suppliers.”*
- *“I enjoyed meeting with different buyers and made some good contacts. Meet the Buyer North gave me ideas to expand my business.”*
- *“I appreciated the openness and clarity of the event. The format was easy to navigate and created a welcoming environment for open conversations and new business connections.”*
- *“I thought the presentations were very good: informative presenters who understood their sector.”*
- *“I met two companies that I have struggled to engage with in the past and managed to have fruitful conversations with them.”*
- *“It was great meeting Tier 1 contractors and understanding what to include in the tenders to be able to win contracts. Putting faces-to-names with all stakeholders involved in projects is also ideal, it’s easier to connect this way than on the phone or via email.”*
- *“The location and venue were great for such a mix of buyers. Everyone I spoke to gave me some of their time. I have now booked a few other Meet the Buyer events.”*
- *“At Meet the Buyer North 2026, we met the right companies for our value proposition.”*
- *“What I enjoyed the most was being able to connect with Tier 1 contractors and the councils.”*
- *“I much appreciated the opportunity this event provided to expand my professional network.”*

Exhibitor Survey Feedback

An online survey was distributed to all exhibitors to Meet the Buyer North. The survey was live from 3 September to 21 September 2026. 7 responses were received.

- 100% of respondents said they think this event helped make public contracts more accessible to SMEs
- 100% of respondents said they would participate in next year's event.
- 100% of respondents said they would recommend Meet the Buyer events to other organisations
- 86% of respondents said they met suppliers that they would be interested in working with in the future
- 86% of respondents felt this event helped make their supply chain more open and transparent.

Some comments from exhibitors included:

- *It was a good opportunity for us to engage with suppliers wishing to get on our frameworks and provide information to them which would otherwise be more time-consuming."*
- *"I particularly enjoyed meeting suppliers with new innovative ideas."*
- *"It was a worthwhile event with a diverse portfolio of organisations."*
- *"The event was very well attended and had a good turnout of exhibitors"*
- *"I really enjoyed meeting a wide range of engaged stakeholders. I presented a slot in the morning and liked how delegates had headphones to be able to listen clearly."*

Post Event

Delegate feedback has been reviewed, and individual questions addressed. All feedback will be taken on board and will be applied to future SDP events.



Promotion through the Supplier Development Programme

Social Media

Prior to the event, SDP published 48 posts, across Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter (X), promoting Meet the Buyer North 2026. The campaign ran from July 2026 to September 2026. Collectively, the posts earned 11,310 impressions (the number of times users saw a post) and 1,579 engagements (the number of times users interacted with posts). In total, there were 1,142 clicks on the links embedded in these posts.

Highest performing posts include:

Supplier Development ... Thu 9/3/2026 3:53 pm BST That's a wrap on #MeetTheBuyerNorth2026! A huge thank you to all of our... Engagements 878 Reactions 45 Comments 8 Shares 1 Saves N/A Post Clicks (All) 824 Other Post Clicks N/A Other Engagements N/A Video View Time —	Supplier Development ... Thu 9/3/2026 10:19 am BST #MeetTheBuyerNorth2026 is now open! Join us and over 30 buyers and... Engagements 120 Reactions 26 Comments 0 Shares 2 Saves N/A Post Clicks (All) 92 Other Post Clicks N/A Other Engagements N/A Video View Time —	Supplier Development ... Thu 9/3/2026 11:09 am BST The keynote at #MeetTheBuyerNorth2026 is now open! Engagements 93 Reactions 30 Comments 1 Shares 1 Saves N/A Post Clicks (All) 61 Other Post Clicks N/A Other Engagements N/A Video View Time —	Supplier Development ... Fri 8/14/2026 10:08 am BST No business is too small to bid for public sector contracts! Join SDP and a wide range of buyers... Engagements 41 Reactions 17 Comments 0 Shares 7 Saves N/A Post Clicks (All) 17 Other Post Clicks N/A Other Engagements N/A Video View Time —	Supplier Development ... Wed 9/2/2026 10:00 am BST 24 hours to go until #MeetTheBuyerNorth2026! Join us tomorrow at The Music Hall... Engagements 40 Reactions 18 Comments 0 Shares 4 Saves N/A Post Clicks (All) 18 Other Post Clicks N/A Other Engagements N/A Video View Time —
---	--	--	---	--

Newsletters/Mailings

Meet the Buyer North 2026 was promoted in SDP's monthly newsletters during the campaign.

- April 2026 Newsletter received 28 clicks to the MTB North event page
- May 2026 Newsletter received 339 clicks to the MTB North event page
- June 2026 Newsletter received 502 clicks to the MTB North event page
- July 2026 Newsletter received 102 clicks to the MTB North event page
- August 2026 Newsletter received 722 clicks to the MTB North event page

SDP also utilised a targeted approach to email marketing, sending out three solus emails (event-focused) to all suppliers based in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Highland Councils.

- 30 July solus email received 137 clicks to the MTB North event page
- 18 August solus email received 121 clicks to the MTB North event page
- 27 August solus email received 157 clicks to the MTB North event page

Contact

More information on the Supplier Development Programme can be found at www.sdpscotland.co.uk and on [Twitter \(X\)](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).