



Connect the Dots in Fife

As a registered partner of the Supplier Development Programme, Fife Council is committed to providing support to the local business community in the tendering process, ultimately supporting the economic growth for the area. Through SDP, Fife Council provides support to Fife businesses by raising awareness of the opportunities for SMEs from the public sector, increasing business readiness to tender, and assisting SMEs in accessing tender opportunities.

Dot Smith is an Economic Adviser for Market and Trade Development in Fife Council. She can be contacted by email at Dorothy.Smith@fife.gov.uk.



Dot Smith has worked for Fife Council for more than 16 years, which has allowed her to gain an array of knowledge and experience of the services and support available to those in Fife. Her main goals are to help make Fife a vibrant economy, and to ensure Fife is the best place to do business. Dot is the lead SDP Rep in Fife.

The SDP supports a number of businesses across Fife and Scotland to better understand how to engage with the public sector to bid for contracts. Dot's involvement has allowed her to gain a broader understanding of the requirements of businesses when working with the public sector, as well as build relationships with her colleagues in Fife Council Procurement to undertake a holistic approach whereby the Council can better understand the challenges business face and allow businesses to better understand the processes the local authority has with regard governance, processes and procedures. Dot said: "The Procurement process has changed significantly over the last few years, and therefore the workshops/webinars and guidance delivered as part of the Supplier Development Programme prepares businesses on expectations. My objective is to ensure that all of the support available to businesses dovetails with wider business development support programmes and activities and links to ensure Fife is the best place to do business."

When asked how this can be achieved, Dot explained: "I engage with the SDP to help raise awareness and understanding on bidding with the public sector for businesses. I also arrange for Procurement colleagues to attend the SDP workshops delivered in Fife to showcase that Fife operates an open and transparent Procurement process. The attendance of Procurement representatives breaks down barriers with businesses and allows knowledge sharing from both private and public sector perspectives. In addition to this, I link Business Gateway Fife Advisers to provide 1-to-1 expert help for businesses to support writing a bid, to provide businesses with the best possible chance of success. I believe that to make Fife the best place to do business, it needs to be the easiest place to do business – and this approach has proven to work extremely well for us."

She continued: "Success for me is seeing businesses have a 'lightbulb' moment with the realisation, "I can do this!" or hearing discussion in a SDP workshop whereby businesses are learning from each other. It's amazing when a business has attended a SDP workshop and as a result, submitted a tender with the public sector and won the contract."