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Supplier Satisfaction Survey 2025/26 - Results

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INTRODUCTION

1.0 The annual Supplier Satisfaction Survey for the Council's procurement function was issued in June 2026 and remained open for four weeks.

1.1 The questionnaire was issued to 218 suppliers, successful in bidding for a tender/ quick quote contract award during 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

34 were completed, which represents a response rate of **15.6%**, a decrease from last year's response rate of 23.8%.

1.2 The questionnaire, provided by the Scottish Government, comprised 9 standard questions covering the following: Bidding for Contracts, The Life of a Contract and Overall Satisfaction.

1.3 Suppliers were asked to respond to statements using a scale of 1 – 6, 1 being strongly disagree and 6 being strongly agree.

FEEDBACK

2.0 Feedback received indicated that - (each refers to responses of 4 or higher):

2025 / 26	
82.4%	Know where to find out information about contract opportunities.
88.2%	Felt the tendering process is open and transparent and that they had received fair treatment.
90.9%	Understood and were satisfied with the quality and level of information contained within tenders issued by the Council.
96.8%	Understood the roles and responsibilities expected of their business when the contract was agreed.
94.1%	Agreed that they work towards clearly defined performance measures agreed with the Council to ensure effective delivery of the contract.
84.8%	Agreed that they attend regular meetings (where applicable) with the Council to ensure effective contract delivery.
87.5%	Agreed that problem issues are identified and, necessary action plans agreed, and progress is monitored by both parties.
90.9%	Felt that over the term of the contract they are happy with the way that the Council engages with their business.

2.1 Data Overview

Two areas showing an increase – where to find information on contract opportunities, and regular meeting attendance to ensure effective contract delivery, however, 6 out of 8 areas showing percentages in high 80's and 90's, indicating high levels of satisfaction.

Tender Process Fairness: Satisfaction is very strong, with **59% strongly agreeing** and a further **18% agreeing** that the process is open and fair - indicating high confidence in transparency overall.

Contract Engagement Satisfaction: **79% of suppliers are satisfied or highly satisfied** (52% strongly agree, 27% agree) with how the Council engages during contracts, suggesting generally positive relationships.

Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities: A standout strength, with **58% strongly agreeing** and **32% agreeing** they clearly understand expectations - showing effective contract onboarding and clarity.

Performance Management: **85% of respondents agree or strongly agree** that performance measures are clear and used effectively, indicating strong contract governance.

Access to Opportunity Information: While still positive, this is slightly weaker - **67% agree or strongly agree**, but around **18% rate mid-to-low**, suggesting some suppliers struggle to find opportunities.

Public Sector Trend Perception: 26.5% of those that answered felt that working with the public sector was getting better and **53%** thought there had been no change. It should be noted that this feedback was not specifically in relation to Argyll and Bute Council.

3.0 As a result of the responses received, PCCMT will endeavour to:

- Review Terms and Conditions and tender documents to make them user friendly. Support service teams to review the caps on liability on an individual contract basis to ensure SMEs/local businesses are not unfairly excluded due to unnecessarily high liability caps.

- Review method of feedback to unsuccessful bidders to provide more detailed feedback when appropriate to do so.

- Review and update how they communicate with suppliers on Public Contracts Scotland when managing questions and throughout the process and align clarification periods with site visits.

- Ensure service teams are fully improved as to what they require to purchase, if not then recommend Requests for Information are issued prior to tender process.

- Support service teams and their external experts to ensure all key project information is available at the tender release stage.

and have implemented these actions within our 2026/27 Action Plan (page 9).

SUPPLIER SATISFACTION SURVEY 2025/26 – COMMENTS (15)

Comments	Notes
Keep doing what you're doing.	Duly noted
Upon completion of the tender process, irrespective of the outcome, we would appreciate it if a summary list could be circulated to all tenderers. This list should indicate the final award position of each company, together with their respective tender submissions. This information was previously shared a few years ago, and we found it to be highly beneficial in supporting the evaluation and continuous improvement of our tendering processes.	Noted, PCCMT will review our method of feedback and update accordingly to support unsuccessful bidders learn what areas they need to improve in to improve, for future opportunities.
I value the business that the Council entrusts with me, but do believe that I could add more value, and ultimately provide advice and guidance that could provide costs savings to the Council, but really struggle to get engagement, which I used to have with the Council going back 3-4 years ago.	Noted. Would encourage contact via procurement email address procurement@argyll-bute.gov.uk so we can support engagement with relevant council service team.
I would prefer more engagement prior to the contract being issued, as I believe we can help iron some of the queries we raise on the product specification.	Duly noted, this could be managed via Request for Information where appropriate prior to tender.
Documentation is too much and contradicts. The main thing is getting tendering and jobs done quickly and efficiently with well documented information.	Noted. Tender documentation and council terms and conditions are being reviewed in 2026.
There is so much time and energy wasted in completing all Council work for obvious reasons, but we are not clear in how we can fill out one form for all - I'm sure there must be one?	Noted, tender documentation is standard, however, service specification and questions on how suppliers will deliver a project/work will differ on each project. Support is free for suppliers via Supplier Development Programme.
More detailed feedback on tender scoring to allow us to improve.	Duly noted, officers will ensure detailed feedback.
Areas for improvement include: - ensuring all key project information is available at the tender release stage; - improving communication and consistency of updates throughout the process; - aligning clarification periods with site visits; - providing timely responses and issuing all relevant information through the procurement portal; and - offering more detailed feedback to unsuccessful bidders. These improvements would support a more efficient, transparent, and competitive procurement process, enabling suppliers to submit stronger and more informed proposals.	Duly noted. Occasionally tenders are issued when not all documentation is ready but there are tight timelines set due to external funding which means documents are issued during the live tender process. PCCMT will endeavour to improve timing of responses, service teams and external experts are usually required to answer these questions as technical in nature. Workload/ resource means delays do happen. PCCMT will support services to

Comments	Notes
	ensure clarification periods align with site visits.
Further opportunities to involve local creative businesses from projects outset.	Noted, this comment will be shared with our Economic Development colleagues.
A more transparent procedure for maintenance services in general would be greatly appreciated.	Noted. Please contact procurement@argyll-bute.gov.uk to discuss your concerns in order that we can engage with the relevant service team who manage the maintenance services.
The conclusion of procurement processes is very slow. It can be months from a submission before the result is notified.	Duly noted.
Procurement within the Public Sector is often quite long-winded, with various questionnaires to complete and social value being looked for within the location of the authority. Having completed many tenders over the years, it can be very frustrating when more and more 'obscure' questions are being introduced (please note, I'm not referring to Argyll and Bute here, just on some other opportunities I've come across). The Social Value element is often difficult as authorities are looking for things relative to their own area, which is difficult when the supplier is not situated locally. The firm I work for supports many charities around the country (both small and national) and staff are also encouraged to join in fund-raising, which the company then matches. With the way the Social Value element is worded on many tenders, it is centred on what you as a firm can do within that area. We are always happy to donate products to e.g. schools etc and would welcome guidance.	Duly noted. Nationally we are required to adhere to social value elements of tender documentation. We understand this is difficult for tenderers as there is always an expectation, that the social value is within the locality that the service is provided rather than nationally. This of course, would be different if it were a national contract. Larger SMEs will find this difficult; however, our advice is to link it to the locality the service/works are being delivered in.
Notifications of tender opportunities could be improved	Noted, contract plan usually published in April each year after the budget has been set, however, often additional tenders advertised throughout the year when external funding has been received by the council that was not known at the time of contract plan publication.
We have not started working with A&B Council yet, therefore some answers were in the middle as we have no experience yet to draw on.	Noted
Overall, you are an easy authority to tender for and set a great standard. The only small bit of feedback I would give is if clarifications can't be answered immediately by the officer looking after portal enquiries, please may you send a message to confirm recipe and that the question is being looked into. Thank you so much!	Duly noted, will require officers to acknowledge receipt and advise question is being reviewed by relevant officer, and we are awaiting a response.

SUPPLIER SATISFACTION ACTION PLAN 2025/26 – UPDATE

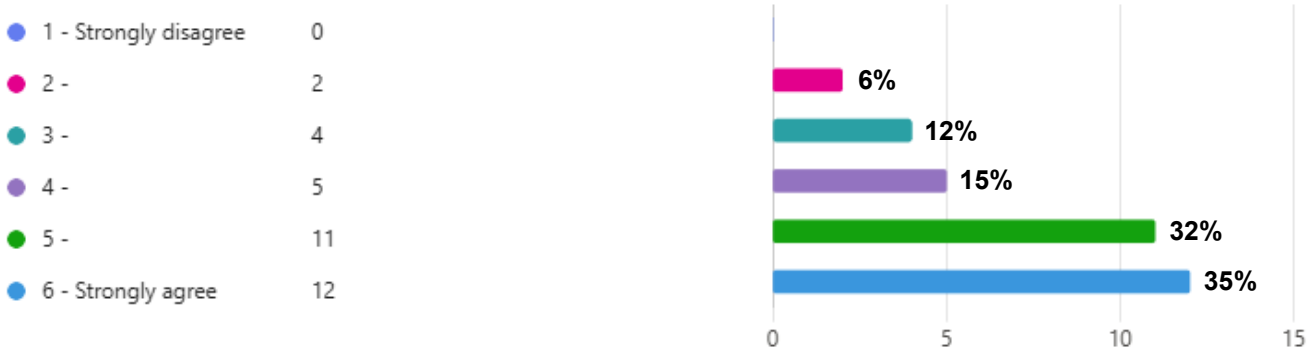
Action	By	Comment
PCCMT to ensure budget details are discussed at third-tier managers meetings to determine if they wish the budget to be disclosed on their contract opportunities. This will be on a case-by-case basis.	March 2026	Completed, PCCMT discuss with officers prior to tender if budget to be disclosed. Budget is included on case-by-case basis depending on nature of what is being purchased.
PCCMT to review their procurement page on website and engage with our comms colleagues to ensure we are communicating appropriately with our supply base.	March 2026	Completed. PCCMT updated their webpage. In addition, PCCMT work with comms colleagues to produce various social media posts on upcoming tender opportunities, requests for information, community benefits etc., which have proven successful.
Review Terms and Conditions and tender documents to make them user friendly. PCCMT to support service teams to review the caps on liability on an individual contract basis to ensure SMEs/local businesses are not unfairly excluded due to unnecessarily high liability caps.	March 2026	This is currently work in progress, and partially complete as we are doing a full review of all the council's various terms and conditions, templates and processes.

SUPPLIER SATISFACTION ACTION PLAN 2026/27

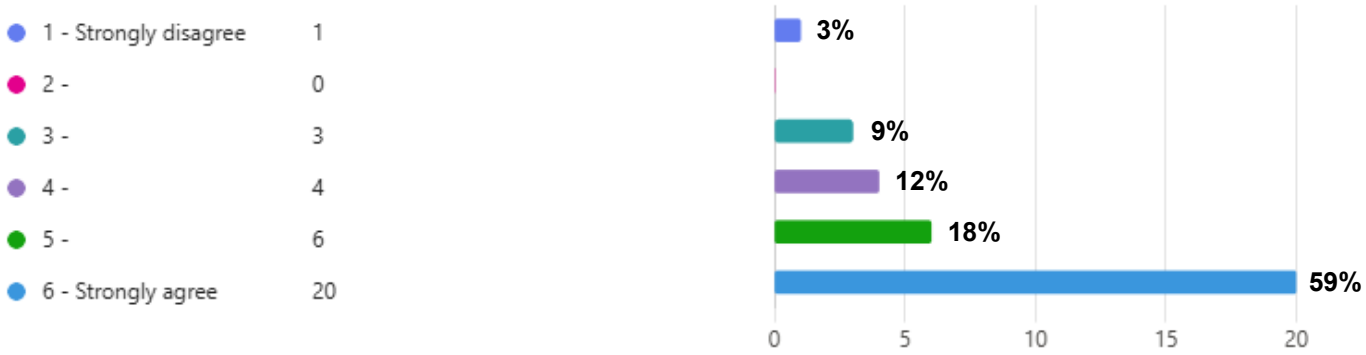
Action	By	Comment
Review Terms and Conditions and tender documents to make them user friendly. PCCMT to support service teams to review the caps on liability on an individual contract basis to ensure SMEs/local businesses are not unfairly excluded due to unnecessarily high liability caps.	March 2027	
PCCMT to review method of feedback to unsuccessful bidders to provide more detailed feedback when appropriate to do so.	March 2027	
PCCMT to review and update how they communicate with suppliers on Public Contracts Scotland when managing questions and throughout the process and align clarification periods with site visits.	March 2027	
PCCMT to ensure service teams are fully improved as to what they require to purchase, if not then recommend Requests for Information are issued prior to tender process.	March 2027	
PCCMT will support service teams and their external experts to ensure all key project information is available at the tender release stage.	March 2027	

Appendix 1 – Supplier Satisfaction Survey Results - Graphs

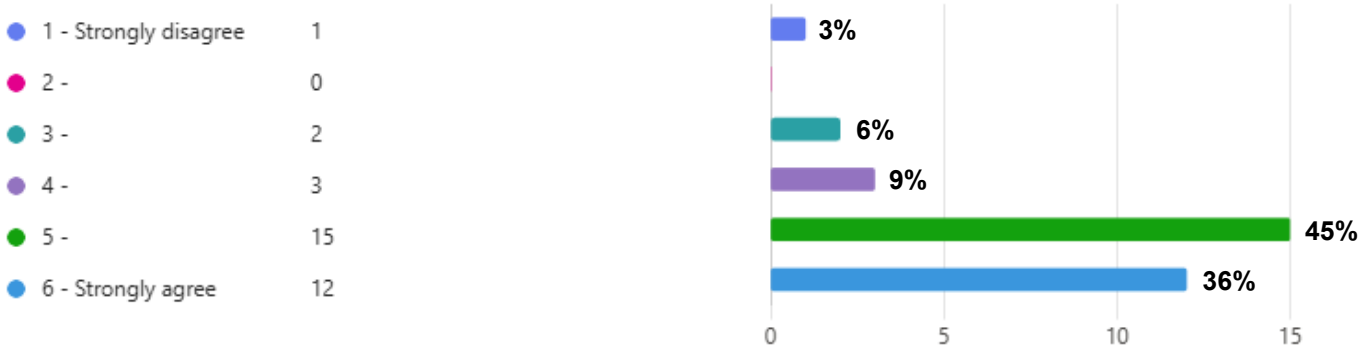
1. I know where to find out information about contract opportunities Argyll and Bute Council has for a commodity suppli ed by my business:



2. The tendering process is open and transparent and I am satisfied that I received fair treatment throughout:

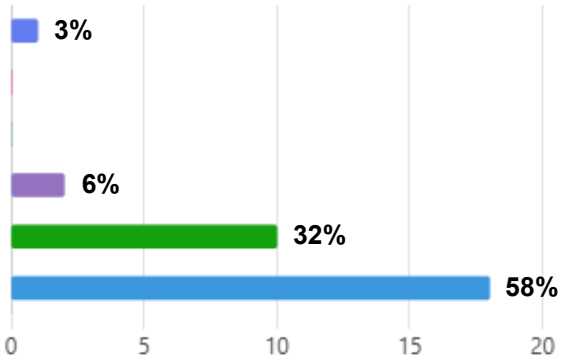


3. I understand and am satisfied with the quality and level of information contained within tenders issued by Argyll and B ute Council:



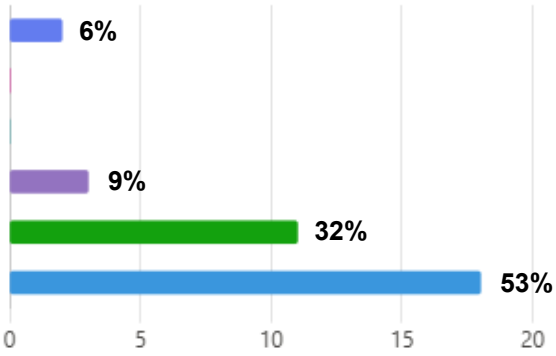
4. I fully understood the roles and responsibilities expected of my business when the contract was agreed:

1 - Strongly disagree	1
2 -	0
3 -	0
4 -	2
5 -	10
6 - Strongly agree	18



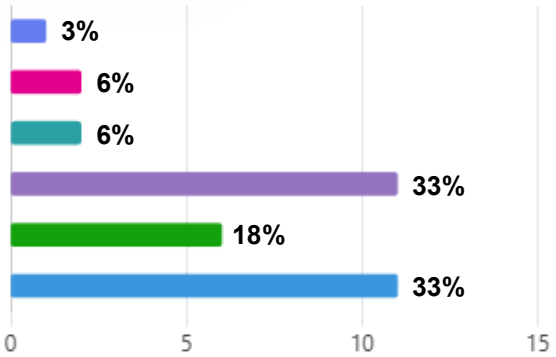
5. I work toward clearly defined performance measures agreed with this organisation to ensure effective delivery of the c ontract:

1 - Strongly disagree	2
2 -	0
3 -	0
4 -	3
5 -	11
6 - Strongly agree	18



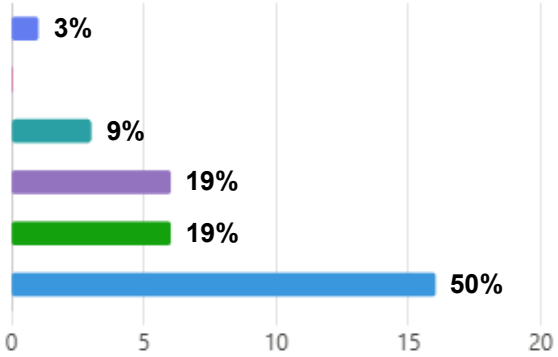
6. I have regular meetings with the customer organisation to ensure effective delivery of the contract (where applicable):

1 - Strongly disagree	1
2 -	2
3 -	2
4 -	11
5 -	6
6 - Strongly agree	11



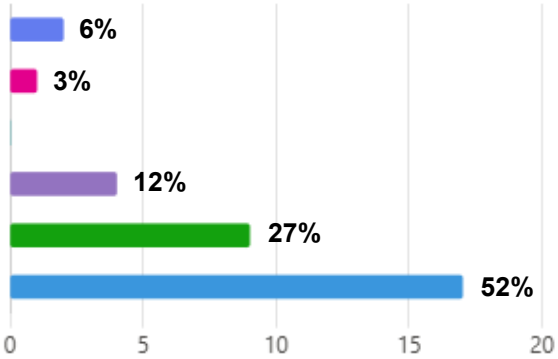
7. Problem issues are identified, necessary action plans agreed and progress monitored by both parties:

1 - Strongly disagree	1
2 -	0
3 -	3
4 -	6
5 -	6
6 - Strongly agree	16



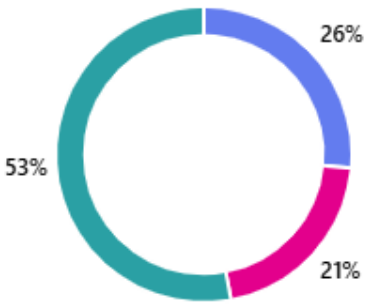
8. Over the term of the contract, I am happy with the way Argyll and Bute Council engages with my business:

1 - Strongly disagree	2
2 -	1
3 -	0
4 -	4
5 -	9
6 - Strongly agree	17



9. In general, not specific to Argyll and Bute Council, do you find that doing business with the public sector is getting...

Better	9
Worse	7
No Change	18



10. Comments - what else can we do? - **17** Responses

ID	Responses
1	keep doing what you're doing
2	Upon completion of the tender process, irrespective of the outcome, we would appreciate it if a summary list could be circulated to all tenderers. This list should indicate the final award position of each company, together with their respective tender submissions. This information was previously shared a few years ago, and we found it to be highly beneficial in supporting the evaluation and continuous improvement of our tendering processes.
3	Not Applicable
4	None
5	I value the business that the Council entrusts with me, but do believe that I could add more value, and ultimately provide advice and guidance that could provide costs savings to the Council, but really struggle to get engagement, which I used to have with the Council going back 3-4 years ago.
6	I would prefer more engagement prior to the contract being issued, as i believe we can help iron some of the queries we raise on the product specification.
7	Documentation is to much and contradicts The main thing is getting tendering and jobs done quickly and efficiently with well documented information
8	there is so much time and energy wasted in completing all Council work for obvious reasons but we are not clear in how we can fill out one form for all- im sure there must be one?
9	More detailed feedback on tender scoring to allow us to improve
10	Areas for improvement include: - ensuring all key project information is available at the tender release stage; - improving communication and consistency of updates throughout the process; - aligning clarification periods with site visits; - providing timely responses and issuing all relevant information through the procurement portal; and - offering more detailed feedback to unsuccessful bidders. These improvements would support a more efficient, transparent, and competitive procurement process, enabling suppliers to submit stronger and more informed proposals.
11	Further opportunities to involve local creative businesses from projects outset
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ID	Responses
14	Procurement within the Public Sector is often quite long-winded, with various questionnaires to complete and social value being looked for within the location of the authority. Having completed many tenders over the years, it can be very frustrating when more and more 'obscure' questions are being introduced (please note, I'm not referring to Argyll and Bute here, just on some other opportunities I've come across). The Social Value element is often difficult as authorities are looking for things relative to their own area, which is difficult when the supplier is not situated locally. The firm I work for supports many charities around the country (both small and national) and staff are also encouraged to join in fund-raising, which the company then matches. With the way the Social Value element is worded on many tenders, it is centred on what you as a firm can do within that area. We are always happy to donate products to e.g. schools etc, and would welcome guidance.
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