

Hospitality Sector Council
29 September 2021
Note of first meeting

MS Teams

1. Attendees

Co-Chairs:

Paul Scully (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets, BEIS),
Karen Jones (sector leader)

Members:

Andy Hornby (Restaurant Group), Robin Hutson (Limewood Hotels), Simon Emeny (Fullers), Jane O’Riordan (bars/restaurants; ex-McKinsey), Will Beckett (Hawksmoor), Kate Nicholls (UK Hospitality), Emma McClarkin (British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA)), Steve Alton (British Institute of Innkeeping (BII)), Nick MacKenzie (Greene King), Nisha Katona (Mowgli), Emma Simmonds (Deliveroo), Alastair Storey (BaxterStory), Nick Summers (The Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS)), James Calder (Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA)), Rob Pitcher (Revolution), Rich McGinnis (Circus), Alex Rayner (Starbucks), Tim Doubleday (CFO Burger King)

Officials in attendance: officials from BEIS, Defra, and DCMS

Apologies: Paula Lindenberg (Ab InBev), Colin Hill (Nandos)

2. Summary of actions:

Action	Owner
Propose ways to ensure SME engagement	Members
Amend ToR to clarify that Council meetings will be conducted on a confidential basis	Secretariat
Members to volunteer to join a small, short-term task and finish group to consider current skills shortages and supply chain challenges faced by the sector	Members
Set up a page for the Council on gov.uk	Secretariat
Develop proposals for Council Working Groups	Secretariat
Place deep-dives into skills shortages and commercial rents on agenda for next Council meeting	Secretariat

3. Note of discussion

a) Welcome and introductions

Karen Jones opened the meeting and introduced the agenda. She commented there is much work to do to get the hospitality sector fully back up and running.

Paul Scully expressed his thanks to Karen Jones for agreeing to co-Chair the Council and also thanked attendees for agreeing to be members. He commented that the Council should consider the shorter-term issues of job shortages and supply shortages as well looking to the longer-term. He also said the Council should be led by the sector and work to develop a shared Government/industry approach.

Karen Jones invited members to each introduce themselves.

b) Terms of Reference

The draft terms of reference (circulated prior to the meeting) were discussed.

It was noted:

- the Council may make policy recommendations to Government, but these recommendations would not be binding on Government in any way;
- Council members had been appointed in a personal capacity (because of their particular expertise and experience), so it would not be possible for them to be represented at meetings by delegates;
- membership of the Council would be reviewed annually to ensure it takes account of changing priorities; and
- other Government departments would be invited to Council meetings when required;

BEIS said it was important to ensure SMEs are represented within the Council. Members agreed, and undertook to help ensure this happened.

The ToR were agreed with one amendment, which is to clarify that Council meetings will be conducted on a confidential basis – to promote full and open discussions.

c) Update on Hospitality Strategy

BEIS provided an overview of the Hospitality Strategy, which is built around the themes of: Reopening, Recovery, and Resilience.

The members were invited to discuss Council priorities, Working Groups, and reiterated their commitment to help ensure SME representation.

d) Council priorities

Members discussed the forthcoming priorities for the Council and agreed there should be a short-term task and finish group to consider the immediate issue of skills shortages and supply chain challenges faced by the sector.

It was also suggested it will be essential to agree the priority areas for the medium term to ensure the output of the Council gets traction and that it does not attempt to spread itself too thinly.

Members made the following points:

- it would be difficult for the sector to fully recover unless skills shortages were addressed;
- staff vacancies vary regionally, but are typically between 10% and 15% of workforces.
- apprenticeships will not resolve the challenge of skills shortages because experienced staff are required (people to fill skilled roles who have at least 5 years' experience). This is particularly true of chefs.
- many trade bodies have SME forums that can be tapped into;
- inflationary pressures within the economy, at a time when trade is suppressed, is a challenge for businesses; and
- thriving urban centres will be key for the long-term success of the sector.

e) Next Steps

It was agreed the Council Secretariat will develop proposals for Working Groups for discussion at the next Council meeting.

It was also agreed the next Council meeting will include deep-dives into the current skills shortage and commercial rents.

BEIS said it was making arrangements to set up a page for the Council on gov.uk. The page will include the list of Council members, the ToR for the Council, and notes of Council meetings.

The Chairs thanked members for attending this first Council meeting.

f) AoB

None.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 27 October 2021.