

Hospitality Sector Council
16 May 2024 Meeting Minutes

1. Attendees

Co-Chairs:

Kevin Hollinrake, (Minister for Enterprise, Markets and Small Business)

Karen Jones DBE, Pioneer Hospitality

Attendees:

Minister Jo Churchill (Minister of State for Employment)

Andy Slee (Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA)), Andrew Tighe (BBPA), Emma Heal (Lucky Saint), Jane Holbrook (Côte Brasserie), Jane O’Riordan (Caravan, Flight Club, Turtle Bay), Kate Nicholls (UKHospitality), Nick MacKenzie (Greene King), Nisha Katona (Mowgli), Rich McGinnis (Circus), Sarah Warby (Nando’s), Shamil Thakrar (Dishoom), Tim Doubleday (Burger King), Will Beckett (Hawksmoor)

Officials in attendance:

Officials from DBT, DWP

Apologies:

Alex Reilly (Loungers), Alistair Storey (Baxter Storey), Andy Hornby (Restaurant Group), Brian Perkins (ABinbev), Emma McClarkin (British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA)), Joe Carberry (Deliveroo), Nick Summers (The Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS)), Rob Pitcher (Revolution), Simon Emeny (Fullers), Steve Alton (British Institute of Innkeeping (BII))

2. Summary of actions

Action	Owner
Members to use Jobcentre Plus and give feedback	Members
Minister for Employment to be invited to future meeting to discuss the apprenticeship levy	DBT

3. Note of discussion

a) Welcome

Karen Jones welcomed members and gave apologies for those that were unable to attend.

Karen Jones also welcomed new member Jane Holbrook and Minister Jo Churchill, Minister of State for Employment.

Karen Jones provided an update on the actions from the previous meeting in February which were all completed.

b) Government Update

Minister Hollinrake provided an update during which he:

- Discussed the improving economic situation.
- Shared that work is being done to help improve access to finance and reduce barriers to growth.
- Noted that following changes to immigration rules, recruitment efforts must focus on the domestic workforce where there are high levels of 'inactive workers'.
- Stated the importance of encouraging people back into work, an area which is being worked on with Minister Churchill.
- Praised the work already being done by the sector in this area, noting examples from Greene King, Mowgli, and BKUK.

c) Update from Working Groups

The working group chairs were invited to update the Council on their progress.

Innovation

Jane O'Riordan provided an update on the upcoming Hospitality Innovation Day event, scheduled for May 22nd, 2024. The day will focus on the issue of labour productivity in the sector and what can be done to address this.

Attendees have been curated to ensure there are representatives from across the hospitality sector, with businesses from across the country and of all sizes set to attend.

The group will take forward learnings and is looking to establish a process for future events.

Sustainability

Tim Doubleday shared updates on the deposit return scheme, extended producer responsibility for packaging, food waste reporting, and deforestation.

The Zero Carbon Forum continues to grow, having reached 65 operators measuring over 8m tonnes of CO2 and representing a third of the hospitality sector by number of outlets. Of those members, 95% have now measured their emissions across scopes 1-3. The free to use carbon calculator has now been used by 500 companies, measuring 1.8m tonnes of carbon.

The biodiversity sub-group is progressing with the development of a toolkit.

FBI Forum

Emma Heal shared that the group has expanded, with a more diverse membership which includes independent pubs, cafes, and hotels.

The group met with Minister Hollinrake in April, where members each shared a challenge, opportunity, and proposed solution. Commonly raised issues centred around profit and loss, food and drink inflation, and the inability to offset costs with price increases to consumers.

Resilience

Kate Nicholls provided an update from the resilience group, which has been reviewing its progress against the Hospitality Strategy and looking to focus future work around the resilience phase.

The group is also continuing to work with Ofgem to help improve transparency through best practice guidance.

Jobs and Skills with Minister Churchill, Minister of State for Employment

Karen Jones spoke of the importance of the hospitality sector to the economy and local communities, and for providing job opportunities for a variety of people. Karen Jones then invited members of the Council to share some of the work their businesses have been doing to attract and retain talent.

Members mentioned that they were using internships to attract people from different backgrounds, supporting prisoners, offering training and apprenticeship opportunities, as well as enhanced employee benefits.

Minister Churchill spoke of the valuable skills employees can gain while working in hospitality roles, skills which are highly transferable, and can be taken throughout careers and beyond. She recognised that this is one of the primary sectors stating it is struggling to recruit.

Minister Churchill then spoke of the work DWP has been doing to support the sector, including launching a new Hospitality Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP). She discussed how hospitality businesses can use DWP support to fill their vacancies, such as by working with their local Jobcentre Plus and using the Find a job website.

Kate Nicholls discussed the work the Hospitality and Tourism Skills Board had done on the Hospitality SWAP and how they would like to see this expanded. She discussed how these programmes could help accelerate entry into the workforce for those facing barriers, which both Minister Hollinrake and Churchill supported.

Members further discussed how flexibility around the apprenticeship levy would allow businesses to provide the right training opportunities required to address labour and skills shortages in the sector.

Closing remarks and AOB - Karen Jones

Karen Jones and Minister Hollinrake thanked members for their time.

Date of next meeting

The next quarterly Council meeting is scheduled for 10th September 2024.