

New hospitality strategy to help pubs, bars and restaurants build back better from the pandemic

- First-ever hospitality strategy launched to support the reopening, recovery and resilience of England's pubs, restaurants, cafes and nightclubs
- measures to build back better and greener from the pandemic include bringing businesses together with universities to boost innovation, and reducing waste and plastic consumption
- Hospitality Sector Council set up and co-chaired by entrepreneur Karen Jones and Minister Scully to oversee delivery of the strategy

A new strategy to ensure England's pubs, bars, restaurants and other hospitality venues can thrive long-term and adapt to consumer demands has been launched by Business Minister Paul Scully today (16 July).

The Hospitality Strategy focuses on reopening, recovery and resilience.

To support the industry in its reopening, the Strategy sets out measures including highlighting opportunities in the hospitality industry to jobseekers through DWP's dedicated work coaches and helping the sector address current recruitment challenges. This is on top of the continued support for businesses through the government's unprecedented £352 billion package of economic support and guidance this week to help ease them back to operating normally.

Recovery measures will boost business and consumer confidence and help the sector return to profitability. This includes working with the government-owned British Business Bank and directly with lenders to support access to finance for hospitality firms so they can invest in their businesses.

It will be easier for pubs, restaurants and cafes on the high street to offer al fresco dining and serve more customers outside, with pavement licenses being extended and made permanent. Takeaway pints will also continue for another 12 months as the temporary permissions for off-sales of alcohol are extended in England and Wales, boosting sales.

The government is also setting out ways to help the sector improve its resilience, including by making hospitality a career option of choice, boosting creativity, and developing a greener sector. Measures include:

- exploring options for vocational skills and training that support careers in the sector, including apprenticeships, bootcamps and other qualifications like a T-Level, and working with the sector to raise the profile of careers in hospitality
- supporting innovation and productivity by using the government's Help to Grow programmes to strengthen the sector's digital and management

skills, and bringing hospitality businesses together with universities and other innovators to support the next generation of hospitality start-ups

- helping the sector reduce emissions, including by cutting waste and single-use plastic consumption

This comes as the £150 million Community Ownership Fund launched yesterday, giving people across the UK the chance to run local pubs at risk of closure as community-owned businesses. Communities in all 4 nations will be able to bid for up to £250,000 matched funding.

Business Minister Paul Scully said:

The pandemic has meant we've had to stay apart, and this has had a big impact on the hospitality industry, which exists to bring people together. We've been working with hospitality businesses throughout the pandemic to understand what support they need to not only reopen, but change and improve how they do things to meet changing consumer demands and protect jobs and livelihoods.

We want young people to see the hospitality sector as a go-to option for long-term careers, and that's why we will explore new options for vocational training and help further boost the creativity and environmental friendliness of the sector through the first-ever government strategy for the hospitality industry.

A new Hospitality Sector Council made up of industry leaders and government is being created to oversee the delivery of the strategy. The council will agree an action plan to deliver the recommendations, review progress against this plan and monitor the overall recovery of the sector as businesses transition from reopening to recovery to resilience. The council will be co-chaired by Business Minister Paul Scully and hospitality entrepreneur Karen Jones and further members will be announced in due course.

Entrepreneur and Hospitality Sector Council co-chair Karen Jones said:

I think the last 16 months has shown us many things, underlining the importance of our people and our teams and the key role hospitality has to play in lighting up our high streets and city centres. We need to capitalise on the energy, creativity and innovation that will be released post-pandemic to continue our creation of a world-class hospitality sector: this strategy will aid in making that a reality.

I am honoured to be co-chair alongside Minister Scully and will work with a will with hospitality and government colleagues to put in place all our wonderful industry needs to flourish.

UK Hospitality CEO Kate Nicholls said:

Hospitality is absolutely fundamental to the country's economic and social wellbeing, so this new strategy which recognises our unique role is very welcome. It provides our sector with a strong platform to deliver the supportive regulatory and trading environment we need to recover, rebuild resilience and thrive. We look forward to working closely with the minister to deliver an action plan that enables our nation's hospitality venues to bounce back from the devastation caused by the pandemic and return to creating jobs and careers – supporting government's agenda on levelling up.

Emma McClarkin, Chief Executive of the British Beer & Pub Association, said:

After nearly 18 months of closure and restrictions, our sector can now start its recovery as it begins to fully reopen.

This strategy for hospitality, the first of its kind, is a recognition of the importance of our sector's contribution to the economy and society and will bring government investment that will help our sector to build back better and serve communities across the UK once more.

We look forward to realising the government's ambition for hospitality with further investment in the sector and especially pubs and brewers.

British Institute of Innkeeping (BII) CEO Steven Alton said:

As our members start the process of rebuilding their businesses in every community, government support through this hospitality strategy will be essential. Pubs provide fantastic opportunities allowing progression through professional development, from skilled entry level roles to entrepreneurs running vibrant businesses across the UK.

This specific hospitality strategy recognises the contribution of hospitality to the economy, jobs and careers and the vital role that pubs play at the heart of their communities.

Today's announcement comes alongside the recent publication of the government's [High Streets Strategy](#) and Tourism Strategy. A thriving hospitality sector supports tourism and high streets and vice-versa – these strategies work together to deliver an even greater impact for businesses and workers.

Among other measures supporting the hospitality sector, the High Streets Strategy includes a commitment to work with local authorities and the sector to develop a model for hospitality-led regeneration hubs across each nation of the UK.

The Hospitality Strategy sets out a vision for the future of the sector, building on the unprecedented £352 billion package of support available throughout the pandemic. In addition to having access to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, loan guarantees and protection from commercial rent eviction and debt forfeitures, hospitality businesses also had access to further support including grants, business rates relief, a VAT cut on food and non-alcoholic beverages to 5% and the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme.

Last month, the government extended its measures protecting commercial tenants from eviction to March 2022 and announced that legislation will be introduced to help resolve commercial rent debts resulting from COVID-19 business closures.

- the UK hospitality sector is comprised of approximately 143,000 businesses, employs around 1.7 million people and in 2019 generated £40.4 billion in Gross Value Added