

## Hospitality Sector Roundtable Insights

Hampshire Chamber of Commerce is leading efforts to tackle skills shortages via the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). Through a series of roundtable events, the LSIP has gathered input from four business sectors\* to understand the current local landscape, their workforce challenges and skills gaps.

(\*Health and Social Care, Logistics, Construction and Hospitality).

In November 2024, local representatives from the Hospitality sector shared their insights on five key questions. Their discussions provided valuable qualitative data, driving priority actions for the sector's future skills ecosystem.

### Hospitality sectors represented:

Accommodation/Hoteliers/Catering/Event management, Public sector Local Authority & Training Providers/Colleges

#### What sector roles are most challenging to fill?

- Employers report challenges at all levels: managers, housekeepers, sales directors, all chefs, permanent F&B staff, front of house
- Ed providers report hard to secure apprenticeships for customer service, Chef de Partie, general hospitality or Chef work placements

#### What skills are in most demand for the roles discussed?

- Communication skills: phone use and customer service
- Strong work ethic/ Resilience
- Positivity
- Problem solving/creativity
- Team work
- Leadership
- Adaptability

#### What has been successful so far in addressing the skills gap?

- Positive marketing sharing sector/place specific opportunities
- Developing collaboration opportunities between employers and training providers to secure pathways into work
- Employers offering in house training opportunities (Chef/Sales academies)
- Employers visiting education settings – engaging in inspiring various forms of Careers Info Advice & Guidance activity
- Recruiting according to aptitude/personality rather than CV
- Train middle managers to support progression of existing staff

#### What is needed in your sector so that the skills gap challenge can be met more successfully?

- Clarify opportunities and pathways, continue to match qualifications to industry relevant need
- Increase Careers Info Advice & Guidance activity - masterclasses from sector specialists, T-Levels and increase availability of apprenticeship places
- Develop comms/PR piece to bust myths and raise awareness of positive opportunities in sector (DWP/all unemployed routes/Ed)
- Rethink how 'we' do hospitality here in UK – bring closer in line with other country's current practise: fewer unsociable expectations,
- Flexible working according to need

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#### How can engagement with skills development and workforce access be maximized ?

- Explore all avenues for recruitment, not just students
- Plan and protect training time within the workday
- Offer pre-apprenticeships/work experience to ensure suitability and boost retention
- Deepen employer understanding of learning system
- Collaborate to align curriculum with available roles
- Explore and adopt best practices from recruitment strategies in other sectors around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion