

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Stratford MP Nadhim Zahawi and the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce are to write to every primary school in the area stressing the potential of careers in the commercial hospitality industry.

The move comes after several leading hotels and hospitality companies attended a meeting to look at the local economy.

The movement of labour, immigration and skills were all looked at in the session organised by the Chamber, which was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in the town.

The meeting was part of a series across the region allowing businesses to raise issues with their local parliamentary representatives.

Peter Burns, past President of the Chamber, chaired the discussion and said it was clear that the local commercial hospitality sector did not feel the industry was being promoted to youngsters as a career choice.

He said: "It came over very strongly indeed that more needs to be done to get the message out there and that hospitality companies felt it was a contributory reason in why they find it so hard to recruit local people.

"Obviously the high levels of employment and a shortage of affordable housing are major factors. They are certainly not easily solvable, but a stronger contact with schools should be relatively easy to fix, and that is what we are trying to do with Nadhim's help."

Mr Zahawi said the commercial hospitality sector needed skilled people in a wide range of disciplines.

He said: "It is such a varied sector and the feeling from the meeting was that the opportunity it offers is not being highlighted to our youngsters, so does not become a potential career choice.

"Obviously the sector in this area must help that message get across, but I am more than happy to encourage our schools to engage with the businesses in our area so that it is really appreciated.

"I will write to all our primary schools as an introduction and am sure that they will be interested.

"The people representing some of our leading business themselves highlighted just how rewarding a career in hospitality can be and how it can offer a strong career ladder."

Pictured (left to right): Peter Burns, Martyne Manning (Chamber) and Nadhim Zahawi.

