

MEDIA RELEASE

Businesses across Coventry and Warwickshire are being urged to capitalise on a new government programme designed to tackle thousands of vacancies across the region.

The Department for Education has announced a £4 million Career Strategy for every school and college in the UK to have a dedicated careers leader from September 2018, and the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce is encouraging businesses to take a proactive approach.

The Chamber's advice was echoed by Kenilworth and Southam MP Jeremy Wright who joined a meeting of the Mid-Warwickshire branch of the Chamber of Commerce at the Holiday Inn in Kenilworth.

Martyne Manning, senior policy officer at the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, said: "While business investment intentions are at their highest this quarter and overall business confidence is up - recruitment difficulties have intensified.

"Our businesses have told us that they are unable to reach full capacity due to a shortage of available workers. One of the common reasons we are hearing is due to a lack of awareness amongst young people so we welcome this latest move by the government.

"It is important to ensure that careers provision is linked to local labour markets and job availability.

"That said, we also need to be considering people of all ages to fill vacant roles as there are no age limits to taking part in apprenticeships – this isn't widely known and we have asked Jeremy for help in how this is communicated."

MP Jeremy Wright attended the meeting to listen to recruitment concerns from local businesses.

He added: "Attending these meetings is really useful to understand the mood amongst the local business community, and it's clear a lot of work needs to be done to improve recruitment and boost business productivity.

"A key ingredient of helping to bring through the next generation of workers in any sector is ensuring there are role models not much older than the school pupils themselves that they can relate to.

"It's important as we move forward into a post-Brexit Britain that we make the most of these new measures announced by the Government so that in ten years' time, we have a healthy blend of skilled EU and British people working together hand-in-hand.

"I'll be working with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce over the coming months to advise them, where needed, on the implementation of the Career Strategy at a local level."

