

Introduction

As the Vice President of the Dorset Chamber of Commerce, I am committed to serving the President and CEO in championing the interests of our vibrant and diverse business community. We have done much in the last year to raise the profile of Dorset, the business awards showcasing what an amazing place for business Dorset is; with its rich history, stunning natural beauty, and a thriving entrepreneurial spirit. We continue to face a changing economic landscape, rising tax, the lack of affordable housing for our workers, high cost of living for customers, skills shortages, and the need to adapt to a new political landscape. It remains my belief that business is the greatest forces for good in our world when done with 'right' at its core. Empowering one another through sustainable trade, good business practice, quality staff engagement, and business done with purpose, becoming a blessing to people and communities.

My Vision for Dorset

I can see a future for Dorset where businesses thrive, where innovation is fostered, where the young are invested in and can afford to stay, and our community flourishes and prospers. A Dorset where we are not only resilient but also forward-thinking, dynamic, hopeful, compassionate and empowered for the opportunities that are before us.

Core Priorities

To achieve this, I see three core priorities for the Chamber:

1. Supporting Business Growth and Prosperity:

- Advocate for policies that promote business investment and growth in Dorset.
- Foster collaboration between businesses, charities, government agencies, and educational institutions.
- Connecting businesses and entrepreneurs to resources and expertise that help them innovate and adapt.

2. Addressing Skills Shortages and Building a Talented Workforce:

- Work with education and training providers to ensure that our workforce has the skills needed by Dorset businesses.
- Promote apprenticeships and other vocational training opportunities.
- Encourage collaboration between businesses, education establishments and schools to provide real-world learning experiences.

3. Promoting Dorset as a Destination for Business and Investment:

- Showcase Dorset's unique strengths and opportunities to young people, young professionals, potential investors and businesses; whilst seeking investment for affordable housing.

- Celebrate the growth of key sectors that drive our economy.
- Advocate for community investment, social and community development, sustainability, and infrastructure improvements that support businesses to thrive.

Healthy Competition with Collaboration

I believe that by working together, we can create a win-win for us all. A Dorset that is not only prosperous but also sustainable, innovative, and a place where people want to live. I am committed to collaborating with our members, the Dorset Chamber team, and stakeholders to achieve such a dream for the benefit of everyone.

Conclusion

I truly believe that if we work together, we can shape a brighter future for Dorset, a county where businesses and our community flourishes; where our workforce is equipped for success, and where innovation and opportunity abound.