



Economy and Jobs Cabinet Member Bulletin Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed January 2019

Latest News

Working Together

Our Apprenticeship Programme Wins Again



In November, Croydon Council won the Personnel Today Award 2018 for Apprenticeship Employer of the Year. The awards celebrate success in both the public and private sector.

The winning submission focused on Croydon's large youth population and above average youth unemployment, and the barriers faced by residents, particularly looked after children, those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, those with disabilities and those from BAME groups. Croydon's solution to these challenges has been to implement innovative recruitment practices such as utilising social media platforms, simplifying the application process and introducing group assessment days so that candidates can demonstrate their strengths which is particularly useful for those who struggle to articulate themselves at interview. We have also worked hard to reduce unconscious bias amongst recruiting managers by putting the emphasis on potential not experience. We have put together a holistic and robust programme that includes activities, events and training to



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ensure that apprentices receive opportunities to grow into well rounded individuals. For example, they have been assigned mentors to support their development and growth throughout their apprenticeship and attended themed workshops to equip them with the knowledge they need to succeed.

Subsequently, in our first cohort 85% of the apprentices were from a BAME background, the average age of our apprentices was 20 with 97% of them being between the ages of 16-24. Furthermore, nearly 10% were care leavers, 20% had additional learning needs/physical disability and another 10% were lone parents.

Health & Social Care Recruitment Event

Croydon Works in collaboration with CALAT hosted the first Health & Social Care focussed recruitment event on Friday 14th December. The event was held at CALAT Thornton Heath, to ensure that local residents have access to the opportunities available.

The event was arranged following feedback from care employers who are struggling to find enough local talent to keep up with demand. A total of 16 employers were in attendance including some of the biggest local providers such as London Borough of Croydon, Caremark and Highfield House, all of whom had live vacancies.

We also had a number of training providers present and numerous workshops running throughout the day. This included CALAT showcasing various Health & Social care course, Skills for care, discussing the various roles available in the sector and Croydon Council on how to become a Social Worker.

With over 100 residents in attendance, the event was a success, feedback from employers was good and a number of residents secured interviews and tentative job offers.

Croydon Works and CALAT are planning to replicate the event across other areas in Croydon.





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Croydon's Year of Business

The Year of Business was started to help small and medium businesses thrive in Croydon. These businesses, with fewer than 250 employees, make up 99% of the businesses registered in the borough.

The year of business was all about helping companies in our borough thrive, offering them the support and opportunities they needed to fulfil their potential. With over 170 events, seminars and workshops held through the Croydon Business Network, supporting over 4000 delegates, we are pleased to announce that the year for our businesses has been a great success. As we enter 2019, our ambitions for our business community has not diminished, every year is a year for Croydon businesses and we will be keeping on working with our dynamic business community to help our businesses start, develop & grow.

If you would like to know more about our services listed below:

- Croydon Enterprise Loan Fund
- Discretionary Business Rate Relief
- Free job brokerage service – Croydon Works
- Free concierge service to help you find property – Croydon Urban Edge
- Support to help businesses inspire young people's careers in our local schools – EPIC
- Support to guide you to information and support on apprenticeships (100 in 100 campaign).

[CLICK HERE](#)

Croydon Economic Summit

300 businesses showed they meant business at our annual Economic Summit held in Box Park on Thursday 22 November. Guests heard from a host of local, national and international speakers.





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The summit addressed key issues highlighted by Croydon businesses in two sessions - Global Opportunities & Challenges. These explored Croydon's positioning within global markets from a national and international perspective at this time of Brexit uncertainty. The Future session explored Croydon's future transformation and included aspirations from a youth perspective as well as looking at local development.

With key note speakers: Crepes and Cones, Senior Economist and Head of Economic Forecasting & Stress-testing Economics at Royal Bank of Scotland Group, Marcus Wright and Mark Lever, Head of Corporate Affairs Gatwick Airport and many more the message that was highlighted was that Croydon's diversity was a positive strength that made us

resilient in these unsettled times. A call to work proactively to support and showcase opportunities for our young people was also a clear action for the Council to proactively work to drive this forward.

Good Employer – Living Wage Week

In October we held an event to celebrate Living Wage employers in Croydon.

With over 50 of our leading Good Employer businesses joining the discussion on the benefits of paying people the London Living wage, the event debated and discussed important opportunities and challenges faced by the business community.

The London Living wage makes a positive difference to people's lives. As part of our drive to achieve increased financial security and greater independence for local people, we would like all Croydon employers, big or small, to become London Living Wage accredited and join the Good Employer Network. We work with the Good Employer Network to drive forward best practice in the borough.

We would like to welcome our newly accredited Good Employers

- Enterprise for London
- Crepes and Cones
- Right at Home
- HML Croydon
- Hazel Home for Autism Ltd
- MR Scaffolding Services Ltd
- Click Enterprise
- Queen B Luxury Nail and Beauty Lounge
- White Hut Studio
- R&O Plumbing and Maintenance



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- Simply Lunch
- Croydon Pride
- John Ruskin College
- Fish Lab

Strengthening our local economy requires collective commitment. Businesses and employers play an important role in creating a local economy that attracts investors and opens up opportunities for further growth. The Good Employer Charter aims to become a testament to the strengths of Croydon's market by showcasing local businesses' commitment to their employees, customers, suppliers, business partners and the local communities.

Being a good employer means your employees feel more valued and effective in their work. This translates into improved productivity, lower staff turnover and greater ability to retain talent. Your business gains a competitive advantage and improved performance.

Being a responsible business helps to satisfy your consumers' and business partners' desire to support companies that have strong corporate social responsibility. It improves the quality of life in communities where you do business, thus boosts your brand reputation, increases sales and positive consumer sentiment.

If you would like more information [CLICK HERE](#)

Croydon Tech Forum

We celebrated our tech community on 4th December at 5.30pm at TMRW Croydon.

Committed to revolutionising how it interacts with the borough and its tech community through improved services enabled by digital transformation, our new Chief Digital Officer Neil Williams introduced his vision and objectives showcasing Croydon's drive to deliver top quality digital services to residents and businesses.

The event brought together some of the best tech leads in the borough for an evening of networking, sharing best practice discussing their digital expertise and showcasing some of the latest technology and services.

The next event will be held on the 26th February. To find out more email: carol.squires@croydon.gov.uk





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Evening & Night-Time Economy

I and my fellow councillors took part in walks around our metropolitan and town centres to explore the strengths, opportunities, barriers and threats to our night time economy, The objective was to “test” the experience of these destinations, especially the transitions between stations and destinations, and also to understand some of the issues affecting traders, residents, and visitors. The walks identified specific and practical environmental aspects such as lighting, signage, cleanliness, safety, etc. that can be improved at ENTE destinations.

Evidence from the walks will be used to inform our emerging Evening & Night Time Economy Strategy which Cllr Ali, Cllr Lewis and I will present to Cabinet later this year.



Pop Up Business School

The third annual Croydon Pop Up Business School took place for 2 weeks in December. Over 100 participants joined the Business School for a 10 day course on how to start your own business with no money and no loans. Participants were taught how to start a business doing something they love, without taking any loans and by learning how to harness the power of connections with people in person, online and through social media. The



course included workshops on how to start a business with no money, how to build a





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website for free, how to get on google, teaches about tax, law and company set up, and gives participants the confidence to get started. The course is followed by 6 days of free trading in the Whitgift Centre for participants.

The Croydon Pop Up Business School was sponsored by Croydon Council, Croydon Partnership, Optivo and Wandle Housing.

Management Apprentice Programme Launch

Departments across the council have been working together to create Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for Council staff. The new programme financed using the Apprenticeship Levy includes Leadership and Management apprenticeships and Business administration apprenticeships at levels 3 and 4. Customer service at level 2 is also on offer as part of this programme due to start in February 2019.

During two promotional sessions within the Council 44 members of staff registered interest in the Level 3 (Leadership & Management) and 12 for the Level 5. More sessions will be run in January to engage with staff, followed by initial assessments so that staff can start courses in February 19.

CPD apprenticeships are a great way to invest in staff to develop their skills and increase productivity as well as helping them to make their next steps in their careers.

Coming in September 2019: Facilities management Supervisor BIFM level 3, Facilities Manager BIFM level 4, Assistant Accountant AAT level 3

Economic Growth Strategy consultation

In December 2018 I presented the key themes and priorities of the borough's emerging Economic Growth Strategy at Cabinet with a view to consulting on them widely with stakeholders and partners before finalising the strategy in early 2019.

The themes for consultation are:

- To create [places](#) where businesses, investors and residents want to be and invest in [infrastructure](#) for growth;
- To create the [business environment for growth](#)
- To invest in [ideas](#) that can deliver real change for Croydon





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- To invest in our [people](#) ensuring they have access to quality skills provision and can access jobs that ensure financial independence.

I'll be working with partners both inside and outside Croydon to develop these themes further over the coming months – if you would like to have your say about the emerging strategy then please contact me or Emma Lindsell – Director of Economic Growth (emma.lindsell@croydon.gov.uk).