

REPORT TO:	CABINET 18 November 2019
SUBJECT:	Croydon's Economic Strategy and Croydon's Evening & Night Time Economy Action Plan
LEAD OFFICER:	Shifa Mustafa - Executive Director, Place
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed Cabinet Member for Economy & Jobs Councillor Hamida Ali Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon & Communities Councillor Oliver Lewis Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Sport
WARDS:	All

CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/ AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON

Croydon's Economic Strategy and Evening & Night Time Economy Action Plan support achievement of outcomes in the 2018-22 Corporate Plan:

- **Businesses move here and invest, our existing businesses grow**
The aim of the Strategy is to support sustainable economic growth that increases economic prosperity across Croydon. Also, to increase the number of, and profitability of businesses, and the number of "good" jobs in the borough.
- **Everybody has the opportunity to work and build their career**
This Strategy will continue the work started under the Growth Plan to develop a robust sustainable economy with more "good" jobs available for our residents. We will deliver and support an extensive skills and employability offer for residents to help them access those jobs.
- **Everyone feels safer in their street, their neighbourhood and their home**
The success of the evening and night time economy plan depends on improved safety around venues and transport hubs.
- **We value the arts, culture and sports activities**
This Action Plan will support residents to access and enjoy cultural activities in the evening and night time economy.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Supporting our local businesses and our residents into employment by securing jobs and opportunities has positive impacts on the Council's finances in the longer term.

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: 2519CAB

This is a Key Decision as defined in the council's constitution. The decision may not be implemented until after 13.00 hours on the 6th working day following the day on which the decision was taken unless referred to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee by the requisite number of councillors.

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to

- 1.1 Endorse and adopt the Economic Strategy 2019-2024, attached to this report as appendix 1
- 1.2 Endorse and adopt 6 'til Late our Evening and Night Time Economy Plan for Croydon, attached to this report as appendix 2.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Croydon is London's Growth Borough. Our population is growing faster than at any time since the post war period. Our ambitious programme of regeneration and investment is reshaping both our metropolitan centre and district centres, developing opportunities for future generations. We are investing in our infrastructure, schools, culture, leisure and homes, making Croydon sustainable borough of opportunity. Our Economic Strategy and the Evening & Night Time Action Plan which sits below it are key to achieving our ambition of a stronger fairer economy that creates new and better jobs in Croydon.

Croydon's Economic Strategy

- 2.2 The Economic Strategy seeks to build on the current economic success of Croydon, to focus on a new innovative and collaborative approach in order to capitalise on potential future opportunities and to address current and future challenges facing the borough.
The aim of the Strategy is to enable good, sustainable, inclusive growth that places Croydon's residents and businesses at the heart of opportunity. Creating a strong, resilient and dynamic economy that drives and welcomes innovation: a vibrant borough of culture.
- 2.3 The strategy is based on four key priorities:
 - To create places where businesses, investors and residents want to be
 - To create the business environment for growth
 - To invest in ideas that can deliver change for Croydon
 - To invest in our people
- 2.4 Once the Strategy is delivered Croydon will:
 - 2.4.1 Be a borough of sustainable growth
 - A borough that invest in ideas and infrastructure to attract investors and

businesses, providing new homes and jobs.

- A place which reduces its negative impact on the environment and achieves balanced economic growth across our metropolitan and town centres.
- Have high streets with a good mix cultural, learning, leisure, commercial, residential and retail spaces and which meet the needs of local communities.

2.4.2 Be a dynamic business environment

- A place where businesses are supported in a dynamic business environment, connected by high speed broadband and reliable, affordable and sustainable modes of transport.
- A place where businesses and residents benefit from a thriving evening and night time economy, and a diverse cultural scene.
- Have a range of affordable workspaces options will support our growth sectors.

2.4.3 Have a fairer economy

- Have an open and fair economy that works for all residents and businesses and creates jobs that pay well.
- Have rich in productive and profitable Small and Medium Sized Enterprises as well as larger employers.
- Be a place where employers invest in our people, where excellent training and support enable access to jobs that ensure financial independence.

2.4.4 Nurture ideas in an enterprising culture

- Be one of the most innovative boroughs in London, where ideas, creative and autonomous thinking is nurtured through collaboration with communities, businesses and higher education institutions.
- Creative, digital, innovation and new green technology will become our growth sectors creating more well paid jobs. We will maintain and improve the health & care and construction sectors, and reduce dependence on low paid roles in service, retail and hospitality sectors.

6 'til Late Croydon's Evening & Night Time Economy Action Plan

2.5 The Evening and Night Time Economy (ENTE) contributes significantly to the borough and regional economy in terms of jobs and making the borough an attractive place to live, work and locate businesses. Prior to 2017/18 there has been a decline in the size of the ENTE economy in terms of jobs and businesses since 2001. Data from 2017/18 and feedback from local businesses suggests that the ENTE is now recovering and growing and we must now support and nurture this growth as it is a source of income for many residents and it helps to create a strong sense of place.

2.6 The development of the new ENTE plan has been supported by the ENTE steering group, whose membership includes the key provider/support stakeholders of the ENTE for example business owners; the borough's three BIDs; the Met Police; Council officers; the South End Business Association; Fairfield Halls and Pub Watch.

- 2.7 The steering group represents partners who can make a positive difference to the ENTE. Working together they have devised a detailed action plan to tackle the weaknesses and promote the strengths. The council can help in a number of ways, for example by signposting to business support, business rates relief, support to source a venue and loans to new and growing businesses where appropriate. It can also provide a supportive and helpful planning and regulatory environment. Activity around improving lighting, the cost of street parking and street cleanliness are also in the hands of the council. In partnership the council, the police, the BIDs and others can help to make people feel safer. All partners can contribute to the co-ordinated programming of events, marketing and promotion, which would also have a great impact. The aims of the Action Plan and Steering Group are:
- To ensure that Croydon's residents know more about their borough's amazing evening and night time leisure offer; we want them to have fun after 6pm and to spread the word.
 - To ensure the after 6 economy meets the needs of the whole population. It needs to be affordable, accessible and inclusive to all parts of our community.
 - To ensure Croydon's residents and visitors feel safe and can get out and home easily after 6.
 - To see the growth of resilient businesses that thrive and bring life to the streets of Croydon after 6.

Measuring Success

- 2.8 The Strategy and Action Plan will be managed and monitored via Future Place Board the Local Strategic Partnership sub-group that has oversight of the economy, business, skills and employment. An annual Economic Delivery Plan and ENTE Delivery Plan will be created and managed by the group with measurable targets ascribed to activities to be delivered by the council and partners.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Croydon is an award winning business friendly borough that has transformed over the past 5 years and continues to experience unprecedented growth with over £5 billion worth of investment. Croydon is a gateway into London from the growth corridor that springs from Brighton past the second largest airport in London. Croydon is home to 14,637 businesses. According to the Office for National Statistics, 99% of Croydon's business community are small to medium sized businesses (up to 250 employees as defined by the European Union). These businesses are consistently described as the backbone of the UK economy, driving growth, opening new markets and creating jobs and therefore their contribution is vital to ensure Croydon's growth potential. Supporting SME start up and accelerating SME growth is central to the Council's growth.
- 3.1.1 Our main employment sectors are retail, business & administration and health & social care. There remain a number of large scale employment sectors such as retail, hospitality and health & social care that pay low wages. However the number of high wage roles is increasing with the arrival of the Government Regional Hub and growth in the information and communications (tech) sector.

- 3.1.2 There continues to be disparity between the earnings of residents living in Croydon and working outside of the borough, and the pay rate of jobs in the borough. Those working outside of the borough are likely to earn more than residents living and working in the borough.
- 3.1.3 The unemployment rate in Croydon is the third highest in London at 7.2% (Annual Population Survey). Many of those who are workless have multiple and complex barriers to work and have significant challenges to accessing and sustaining work.
- 3.1.4 An additional issue for Croydon is the level of in-work poverty as families work hard and still struggle to pay their bills. 25% of those in work are being paid below the living wage. Women are more likely to be paid less than the living wage (27% of jobs held by women) (Annual survey of Hours and Earnings). In addition prior to Universal Credit, Job Centre Plus data showed that 16,600 families were in work and claiming tax credits.
- 3.1.5 Borough-wide data masks the extreme differences between various parts of the borough and sometimes between neighbouring wards. For example the three wards with the highest number of claimants (128-170) share a border with wards with the lowest (fewer than 46).
- 3.1.6 According to the Office of National Statistics after a steep decline starting in 2007/8 the number of people employed in Croydon's ENTE has risen by just under 4% (110,700 to 114,800) between 2012 and 2017.
- 3.1.7 The impact of Brexit is yet to be fully felt on the economy in Croydon. It is likely to have disproportionate impact on sectors where EU nationals fill high volume vacancies including construction, retail and hospitality and health & social care. Our response needs to involve providing reassurance to existing EU nationals, with the aim of retaining their skills in the workforce through promoting the EU Settlement Scheme. Also working with partners to ensure the UK workforce is able to fill skills gaps in the most affected sectors. The impact on trade is yet to be fully understood but our businesses continue to report a slowing in investment due to uncertainty.

3.2 Progress and achievements to date

- 3.2.1 It is vital that we acknowledge the success that has been achieved in the last few years so that we can assess what needs to be achieved to go forward and deliver further positive growth. In the last 5 years we have seen a 33% increase in the number of businesses in the borough and as a result significantly more jobs. The results of our ambitious regeneration programmes are clear particularly around East Croydon Station, where the swift progress on the Tide project at 101 George Street is particularly noticeable, due to use of modular construction techniques. Taberner House, Fairfield and College Green, the Nestle Tower and St. Georges Walk are also changing and developing day-by-day. The changing face of Croydon has never been more evident.
- 3.2.2 The Draft Economic Strategy Cabinet report from December 2018 detailed how since 2014 the council and partners have delivered a number of flagship

projects and significant achievements, and in the past 11 months we can add further achievements which include:

- The reopening of Fairfield Halls after its £42 million refurbishment which has had a positive impact on the ENTE. This South London Art Centre puts music, theatre, dance, entertainment and art at the heart of Croydon's regeneration programme.
- Secured over £14m to deliver our exciting higher education offer that provides an innovative way to deliver new opportunities to Croydon residents through the Croydon Creative Campus with partners such as London South Bank University (LSBU).
- Won the London Councils and Federation of Small Business Small Business Friendly Award acknowledging that of the 33 London Boroughs we have the most innovative and effective mix of support and engagement with our small business base.
- Secured more funding to invest in our town centres – we have received £1.7m to protect the heritage aspects on South Norwood and restore dilapidated Victorian buildings, improve public open spaces, back community education projects and encourage specialist heritage-related apprenticeships.

4. ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 The Strategy and Action Plan have been informed by strong evidence and engagement with a variety of businesses, residents, partners and stakeholders across Croydon and London. This includes the Croydon Business Network (a collaboration of business support and membership organisations which include the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, BME Forum, Shaking Hands, The Legacy Youth Zone, Croydon, New Addington and Purley BID).
- 4.2 The Strategy has been informed by the work of the Small Business Commission which has been ongoing since 2017 and engaged over 1495 businesses to develop their initial plan, engagement continued through the Croydon Year for Business in 2018 which allowed the Council to engage at 175 events with over 4,500 business delegates. This engagement formed the themes of the strategy which was tested again in 2019 by qualitative and quantitative approach. Therefore the strategy has a strong evidence base which has been aligned through 3 years of business engagement.
- 4.3 In 2019 Croydon Council adopted a varied engagement approach to gathering information for the Economic Strategy which included:
- A survey circulated to 1500 businesses (98 responses);
 - Face to face listening exercises in 9 focus groups (250 businesses & 40 residents) and 1:1 settings; and
 - Desktop research and best practice.
- 4.4 The Evening & Night Time Economy (ENTE) Action Plan was shaped by the steering group after doing a great deal of research which included desk-top research into the types of venues and experiences across the borough, two public surveys from October 2018 – January 2019 (1405 respondents), engaging with the community and night time walks around the borough.

5. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 5.1 Scrutiny & Overview Committee have also shaped the Economic Strategy and Evening & Night Time Action Plan. The Strategy has been shaped through Cabinet Member Question Time and pre-decision discussions of Growth Zone Delivery. The Evening & Night Time Economy has been shaped by the Committee's recommendations following pre-decision discussions in December 2018; the recommendations adopted are that there are measurable outcomes, that the work focuses on our town and metropolitan centres and that diversity is reflected in the work programme and action plan.

6. FINDINGS FROM THE ECONOMIC GROWTH & ENTE ENGAGEMENT Challenges & opportunities for the economy

- 6.1 Nationally businesses are continuing to face rising rents, significant increases in business taxation and changing shopping trends which are changing the face of High Streets throughout the UK. Croydon businesses are also facing these challenges, not just in the Town Centre but also the District Centres. Brexit, continues to provide uncertainty and anxiety for businesses and investors.
- 6.2 New calls to address growing issues with air quality and the wider implications of global climate change means that Croydon's growth must be done mindfully, in a sustained way that puts the health & wellbeing of Croydon residents and businesses at the heart of Croydon regeneration.
- 6.3 When discussing opportunities businesses overwhelming saw the areas listed below as opportunities for the borough.
- Creation of new grade A workspace
 - Croydon regeneration
 - Young agile workforce (Croydon is not facing an aging workforce).
 - International Trade – Croydon's diversity ensures good international connections with over 100 languages spoken there present further opportunity for trade.
 - Buy Croydon – Procurement changes to support local businesses to access low and high spend opportunities.
 - Business Network – a strong business network providing good quality representation and networking opportunities.
 - Collaboration & Innovation – working with public sector to provide workable solutions to public sector problems.
- 6.4 The four themes and deliverable actions that we proposed to businesses and residents in the engagement workshops and surveys were overwhelming seen as positive, we have therefore continued to use these themes and continued to focus them as key priority areas in the Economic Strategy.
- 6.5 The ENTE issues identified by the survey were the perceived high level of crime; a lack of high quality provision; a lack of variety; low level or a lack of street lighting; a lack of venues for live music; signage; and obstructions on pavements, particularly due to fly-tipping and legitimate waste disposal.
- 6.6 The survey and other research also suggests a number of strengths of Croydon's ENTE. There are many much loved venues such as the south end

restaurants, Boxpark, the Green Dragon and the Oval. Events such as the Croydon International Mela and Thornton Heath Lumiere & CR7 Culture were also viewed positively, although eating (89%) and drinking (75%) were most popular, survey respondents also enjoyed live music (48%), theatre (39%) and comedy shows (33%). Transport links are also a strength of Croydon, which has a number of public transport options that run until late and buses, trams and trains that run through the night.

7. OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL – A FAIRER ECONOMY

7.1 The Strategy highlights Croydon Council's commitment to developing an open and fair economy that works for all residents and businesses. An economy where the talent of Croydon's community is fully realised and enabled and supports the productivity and sustainability of local businesses growth. An economy which values and diversity and enables lifelong learning.

7.2 The Strategy will support inclusive growth by;

- Supporting employers through the Good Employer Charter and Good Work Standard promoting the benefits of the London living Wage. Promote inclusivity, and social mobility in recruitment approaches.
- Increasing employment rates for groups in Croydon's underrepresented workforce (BAME, women, disabled people)
- Support long term unemployed people back into the work place
- Support training provision that support the needs of disabled people
- Support and promote the provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses.
- Support a culture of entrepreneurship in schools and colleges.
- Breakdown stereotypes in key growth sectors.

8. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

8.2 The effect of the decision

Supporting the growth of the economy including the sustainability and growth of Croydon's business community will enable our residents to access employment and enable new investment into Croydon.

8.3 Risks

The risk of not adopting the economic strategy and evening and night time economy action plan could mean that the council fails to support the needs of businesses and therefore the employment needs of residents, this could have a direct impact on the growth of the local economy.

8.4 Options

Outlined below in section 12.

8.5 Future savings/efficiencies

This will have a positive impact on the Councils budget by.

- increasing business rates income to the Council;
- supporting residents to be financially independent, enabling reduced reliance on public funds.

Approved by: Lisa Taylor, Director of Finance, Investment and Risk and s151 Officer

9. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The Head of Litigation & Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance that whilst there are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in the report, as various projects and proposals are brought forward to support the proposed objectives, specific legal advice will be required as to the implications.

Approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer

10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 10.1 There are no specific HR issues arising from the contents of this report, if any arise these will be managed under the Council's policies and procedures.

Approved by: Jennifer Sankar, Head of HR Place & GSE for and on behalf of, Sue Moorman, the Director of Human Resources

11. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 11.1 The overall implementation of the finalised Economic Growth Strategy will have a positive impact on social and economic inequality by increasing the supply of good jobs and promoting routes into them thereby enabling residents to move out of poverty and into financial independence. We will deliver and support an extensive skills and employability offer for residents to help them access those jobs. We will ensure this process is inclusive and accessible to all residents including groups that share protected characteristics.

- 11.2 The strategy aims to ensure that Croydon Council will support inclusive growth by;

- Supporting employers through the Good Employer Charter and Good Work Standard promoting the benefits of the London living Wage. Promote inclusivity, and social mobility in recruitment approaches.
- Increasing employment rates for groups in Croydon's underrepresented workforce (BAME, women, disabled people)
- Support long term unemployed people back into the work place
- Support training provision that support the needs of disabled people
- Support and promote the provision of ESOL courses.
- Support a culture of entrepreneurship in schools and colleges.
- Breakdown stereotypes in key growth sectors.

- 11.3 Specific projects, programmes and work streams will be subject to equality analysis to assess the possible impact of proposed changes on customer/community groups who share a “protected characteristic” and mitigate adverse risk to customer/community groups who share a “protected characteristic”.
- 11.4 The Strategy will help the council to achieve its equality objectives namely; to increase the rate of employment for disabled people, young people, over 50s and lone parents who are furthest away from the labour market. Also to reduce the rate of child poverty especially in the six most deprived wards through paying the living wage. It will also support council priorities such as modern slavery.

Approved by: Yvonne Okiyo, Equalities Manager

12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 12.1 There are no specific environmental impacts arising from the contents of this report, however creating a borough that is a great place to live, work and play enables more sustainable living and reduces negative environmental impacts, carbon footprints and air pollution.

13. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 13.1 There are no specific crime and disorder issues arising from the contents of this report. However improving economic activity does help to reduce crime and disorder.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 14.1 The proposed decision is the endorsement of the strategy and ENTE action plan. Adopting the strategy and plan sets a clear vision and direction for the Councils activity developing the economy and creating great London Living Wage and higher paid jobs.
- 14.2 The strategy puts Croydon residents and businesses at the heart of growth opportunities. It is believed that the key priorities will provide a platform for delivery that will contribute to the Councils priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan.

15. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 15.1 Not to adopt a Strategy or ENTE plan. Not adopting a strategy or plan would mean that the Council does not have a strategic plan of how to deliver growth in the borough. This could lead to confused delivery of programmes which does not

maxmise opportunities for Croydon businesses and residents and does not conform to inclusive or sustainable growth.

16. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

16.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

No

16.2 HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NO as the only data collected was open business data

Emma Lindsell, Director of Economic Growth there has been no personal data processed as part of this report

Approved by: Emma Lindsell, Director of Economic Growth

CONTACT OFFICER:

Carol Squires, Head of Economic Development

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

Appendix 1 – Economic Growth
Appendix 2 – Night Time Economy Action Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Cabinet 24th September 2018 – Corporate Plan 2018 – 2022

Cabinet 10th December 2018 – Economic Growth Strategy

Scrutiny & Overview Committee 11th December 2018 – Evening & Night Time Economy Stratgy

Cabinet 8th July 2019 – Digital Strategy

Cabinet 15th October 2019 –Delivering the Croydon Growth Zone

Scrutiny & Overview Committee 29th October 2019 – Delivery of the Growth Zone

Implementation Plan (LIP3) & Liveable Neighbourhood Bid reports

Coast to Capital Gatwick 360

Labour's Plan for Croydon #Ambitious for Croydon 2018

Skills for Londoners Strategy

London Economic Development Strategy 2019-2024

Think Night, Neighbourhoods from 6pm to 6am – London Night Time Commission

London At Night – GLA Economics