



— INVESTING IN —
OUR FUTURE
APPRENTICESHIP
PLAN
2020- 2023



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YOUR
LEGACY
STARTS AT THE
HEART OF THE
YOUTH ZONE

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Foreword: Chief Executive

I am delighted to present the council's internal apprenticeship plan for the next three years. Following some amazing success I am very proud of our current Apprenticeship Programme.

It has already won two awards for management and equality, diversity and inclusion and we are one of only a handful of councils that can offer residents a very competitive London living wage and we have a fantastic range of apprenticeship opportunities across many of our services.

In the next few years, we will continue to uphold our corporate value that 'everybody has a chance to work and build their career' by providing extra support to priority residents, including young people, the homeless, care leavers and people living with a disability or long-term health condition.

As outlined in our workforce strategy our people remain at the heart of our service, it is imperative that we support and develop employment pathways into the exciting public service roles available within the Council. Apprenticeships remain a great way of providing opportunities into exciting new careers that open our residents to new opportunities and our existing staff's corporate professional development. Our ambition to continually develop our own internal apprenticeship programme and explore new ways of spending our levy which has enabled us to support the funding of our SMEs apprenticeships.

I am excited to see what we can achieve together to develop our staff and provide residents with opportunities within this Council ensuring that we continue to build our great workforce to deliver quality services to our residents.



Manju Shahul-Hameed
Cabinet Member for Economy and Jobs



Introduction

This document outlines the Council's approach to creating apprenticeships within our workforce. The approach will offer opportunities to residents that require additional training, experience or support to start, change or progress their career.

The Council's ambition is to provide good quality apprenticeships across a wide range of services and ensure clear pathways into employment and progression route opportunities.

The plan will be delivered by Croydon Council in partnership with training providers. It sets out the activities the Council has undertaken in recent years and our new priorities for action over the next 3 years.

This three year delivery plan has been agreed by the portfolio holder for jobs and economy and progress on its delivery will be overseen by an officer working group which will report corporately through the Future Place Board.

The plan underpins the Council's Workforce Strategy to ensure that the skill needs of departments are planned for and met.

This apprenticeship strategy supports the *Government's English Apprenticeships 2020 Vision* that young people see apprenticeships as a high quality and prestigious path to successful careers, and for these opportunities to be available across all sectors of the economy, in all parts of the country and at all levels.

It supports the Greater London Authority's Skills for Londoners Strategy which recognises that London generates the largest apprenticeship levy contributions nationally, but with historically low levels of apprenticeships delivered in London, employers risk being unable to maximise the use of their levy contributions and deliver the skills London's economy needs.

It also supports the South London Partnership Skills for South Londoners Strategy which identified the need to increase apprenticeships as a key pathway for people, combining learning and work experience, into employment or for career progression.

As part of our Corporate Plan commitment, the strategy ensures that 'everybody has a chance to work and build their career' by increasing apprenticeship and learning opportunities for all of our residents, particularly young people, the homeless, care leavers and people living with a disability or long-term health condition.

The Council is committed through the 'The Croydon Promise – Growth for All' to do all it can to deliver growth, which is inclusive and sustainable – for all. The promise makes a commitment to support Croydon residents, young and old – into employment and raise the skills of the workforce so that they can access the new jobs being created across the borough.

We will encourage all stakeholders working in the employment and skills sector to work collaboratively to enable our residents to benefit from the borough's economic growth.

The strategy underpins the Croydon Economic Development Strategy and the Employment and skills Action Plan which commits to 'invest in our people' by ensuring a 'world class offer' in relation to training and education; a commitment to work with schools to raise the aspirations of young people and to develop and consolidate new learning pathways including apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience provision.

The strategy will underpin our 2020-2023 Workforce Strategy, published in January 2020, by becoming a fundamental part of attracting, recruiting and retaining talent, improving workforce equality, diversity and inclusion and developing and growing outstanding leaders and managers.

A vibrant, purple-tinted photograph capturing a moment of celebration. In the foreground, a group of young women are smiling broadly, some holding up large balloons. The background is filled with more people, some holding up long, thin objects that look like confetti cannons or long balloons. The air is thick with falling white confetti, creating a sense of joy and achievement. The overall atmosphere is one of excitement and success.

VISION

Apprenticeships within Croydon Council are valued and seen as high quality pathways to successful careers, they provide opportunities for new and existing employees to develop and they support the Council in meeting its current and future skills needs.

► Key Statistics



Benefits of apprenticeships translated into significant monetary returns for individuals over a working life. These add up to between £48,000 and £74,000 for level 2 apprenticeships; and between £77,000 and £117,000 for level 3 apprenticeships.

Those completing an apprenticeship at level 4 or above could earn £150,000 more on average over their lifetime.

London Economics (2011) – BIS Research Paper Number 53, Returns to Intermediate and Low Level Vocational Qualifications

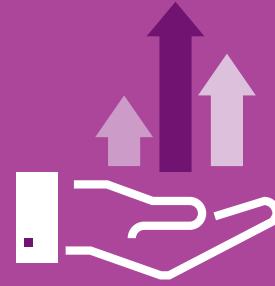
Croydon in 2018/19 had the highest number of apprenticeships starts of all the London boroughs with 2,170.

Despite the number of apprenticeship starts falling in Croydon, and nationally between 2012 and 2017, in the last year (2018 to 2019) the number of apprenticeships starts increased from 1,910 to 2,170 (14%).



Apprentices are also clear that their apprenticeships have increased their productivity and prospects. 85% of apprentices said their ability to do the job had improved, and 83% said their career prospects had improved.

AAT and CEBR (2013) University education – is this the best route into employment?



Apprenticeships also deliver important benefits to employers: 82% of surveyed employers said they were satisfied with the programme and 70% reported that apprenticeships improved the quality of their product or service.

Apprenticeship Evaluation: survey of employers (2014)



The cost of apprenticeship training pays for itself within one or two years of completion, through the increased productivity of the former apprentice.

These benefits lead to a significant return for the taxpayer too: the amount of return is between £26 and £28 for every £1 of government investment in apprenticeships at level 2 and level 3 respectively.

This is considerably higher than the average of £20 for every £1 of investment for further education qualifications as a whole.

Apprenticeship Evaluation: survey of employers (2014)



► Why are apprenticeships important to Croydon?

Around the world, apprenticeships have long been recognised as a crucial way to develop the skills needed by employers.

The Government’s vision is for people to see apprenticeships as “a high quality and prestigious path to successful careers, and for these opportunities to be available across all sectors of the economy, in all parts of the country and at all levels.”

Government has committed to creating 3 million apprenticeships by 2020. Public sector bodies, including local councils, have been given a target of 2.3% of their headcount.

The Apprenticeship Levy applies to employers in England who have an annual pay bill above £3m. The levy is 0.5 per cent of the annual pay bill. The Council must ensure that apprenticeships are created in order to reduce the risk of levy funding being lost to a central pot when it is unspent. Loss of the levy would have a negative financial impact on the Council and local businesses.

Apprenticeships are an investment for employers and Croydon is no exception. They raise the level of skills available, drive productivity and prosperity and address skills shortages by ensuring that greater numbers of good quality apprenticeships meet workforce needs.

For our residents, education and training helps them to achieve qualifications which will improve their employment prospects.

The significant economic growth predicted across the borough, means that we have a critical need for high numbers of new technical and professional skilled workers, as well as for medium-skilled jobs. We also have growing skills shortages in STEM and digital sectors, which are increasingly critical to the strength and competitiveness of the UK economy as a whole.

In addition, increasing proportions of employers report difficulty in finding appropriate communication, literacy and numeracy skills and apprenticeships can help address all of these challenges.

A well-crafted apprenticeships programme can support us to successfully plan for skills gaps by creating a pipeline of skilled and talented staff.

A coherent apprenticeship programme can offer clear routes into work for a cohort of Croydon residents who may not find it easy to access employment opportunities. Our apprenticeship pathways will be developed in a way which provides entry jobs for the Council’s priority groups.

We will also target those that decide not to follow a traditional academic, university based route and provide opportunities for older residents to re-enter the labour market or make a career change.



► Build on our success

The current Apprenticeship Programme is award winning having two accolades for equality and diversity and management. (Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (Apprenticeship Award) and Personnel Today (Apprenticeship Employer of the Year).

It has a dedicated Employment Pathways Co-ordinator who delivers the following pathway opportunities: -

1. Recruit, develop and manage new apprentices to the council. Not only does this give the council the opportunity to support residents, particularly young people and vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, but it also creates a pipeline of talented residents to enhance the Council's workforce and meet existing and emerging skill shortages.
2. To upskill existing members of staff through a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) process. Using the apprenticeship funding and training to support existing staff is a way to develop new skills, boost motivation and retain talented employees.

For both apprenticeship programmes, the Council takes a holistic approach offering support to managers, an induction programme for apprentices and on-going pastoral care. The wider offer of support to apprentices is similar to other exemplar London boroughs with employability support offered to apprentices as they come towards the end of their contract including access to the redeployment pool and mentoring and opportunities to act as ambassadors and to represent and speak at events.

In April 2019 the Council agreed to improve salaries for apprentices by introducing the London Living Wage. CPD apprentices remaining on their current

terms and conditions of employment and are offered initial and ongoing careers advice through a combined internal and training provider support offer.

Opportunities are offered in a number of service areas including project management, business administration, accountancy, construction, surveying, customer service, leadership and management, cultural heritage, finance, human resources, teaching and learning, youth work, data analysts, content and media, IT, sport and leisure, engineering, housing, health and social care, careers development and horticulture.

Apprentices have a standard fixed term contract of employment consistent with other members of staff and long enough for them to complete the apprenticeship successfully. (Fixed term contract for a minimum of 1 year.) They have job roles within the Council that provide them with the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to achieve their apprenticeship standard and they are supported by their team and directorate to carry out their job role.

Where a job opportunity exists at the end of the apprenticeship and the apprenticeship is achieved, the apprentice may have the option to remain with the council as a member of staff. Where this is not possible, the apprentice is supported by their manager and the

Employment Pathways team to seek alternative job opportunities, including access to the redeployment pool 2 months before the end of their apprenticeship contract.

Maintained/non academy schools are also able to access the Council's apprenticeship levy to purchase apprenticeship training and the Council has actively worked to develop apprenticeship opportunities.

Externally the Council has been working with businesses and training providers to increase the number of apprenticeships they offer. The 100in100 campaign was hugely successful in bringing employers and training providers through the Croydon Apprenticeship Academy together to deliver good quality employment outcomes for residents across Croydon. Through the levy transfer option we will continue to support our local economy with targeted apprenticeship support.

Through the campaign the Council has also successfully committed apprenticeship levy funds to support the development of young residents, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, by securing good quality apprenticeships with local small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in industries such as retail, hospitality and construction. These opportunities have given these residents the opportunity to start their careers whilst addressing some of the major skill gaps.



▶ Aims & Principles

Aims

- To create good quality apprenticeship opportunities for our residents.
- Actively promote apprenticeships within the Council as a valuable way to recruit and develop talent.
- Develop a pro-apprenticeship culture amongst managers and staff.
- Develop opportunities to utilise higher level apprenticeships in support of skill needs and raising aspirations.
- Provide opportunities for existing staff to progress and gain additional skills through an apprenticeship.
- Align the apprenticeship programme to support the workforce needs of the council to deliver its strategic objectives (workforce planning).

What will we do?

- To create at least 30 new apprenticeship opportunities per year (working towards 25% for priority groups)
- To create at least 35 new continuous professional development apprenticeship opportunities per year
- Double the range of CPD apprenticeship pathways

Principles

- **Public sector duty:** Minimising the risk of underspend on the apprenticeship levy, working towards the public sector target and capitalising on the breadth of sectors covered by the new apprenticeship standards
- **Workforce needs:** Underpinning and addressing the needs of the Council's workforce now and in the future by identifying apprenticeship opportunities as part of service workforce planning
- **Equality and Fairness:** Ensuring our opportunities are open and accessible to all residents in Croydon with processes and policies which do not disadvantage any of our priority residents



Priority Work streams

- Local Authority schools are included in the Council's levy charge and are required to 'have regard' to the 2.3% apprenticeship target. We will work with our schools to promote the benefits of apprenticeships and how they can help to meet skills gaps and future workforce needs. In particular we will promote the apprenticeships for Teaching Assistants and School Business Directors, as well as a range of other broader standards that could be used by the wider schools workforce to create apprentice opportunities.
- Care Leavers often find it particularly hard to enter and sustain apprenticeship opportunities. We will work to improve the package of support we offer including: - better engagement; tackling the issue of work experience and qualification levels; tackling funding barriers and; providing wider support packages to sustain placements and transition into longer term employment.
- We will underpin our status as a Disability Confident employer and support the Work and Health Programme: Better Working Futures by developing a package of support and creating opportunities for residents with health and disabilities, which are currently a barrier to securing and sustaining employment.

► Making it happen

Funding

We will continue to minimise the risk of underspend on the Council's Apprenticeship Levy pot through regular monitoring and continued transfer of 25% to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) through the Croydon Apprenticeship Academy.

The Council is required to provide the Department for Education with annual data regarding the number of apprentice starts.

Stakeholders and Partners

- We will continue to work closely with Adult and Children's Services to ensure a coherent and coordinated package of support to young residents of all ages.
- We will spread the responsibility of the work streams in the action plan across the main services of Economic Development, Human Resources, Procurement, Finance and Learning and Organisational Development.
- We will continue to support the Croydon Apprenticeship Academy and our key training partners across the sector, as well as improve our engagement with schools and employers.

Governance

- There are a number of key stakeholders with a responsibility towards creating an effective Apprenticeship programme. This includes: -the Youth Team, Economic Development, Human Resources, Corporate Learning and Development, Adults Learning and Development, Children's Learning and Development, Internal Communications, Finance, procurement and Legal.
- It is vital that our potential customers, whether they are internal or external, are provided with a joined-up and coherent offer, therefore it is proposed that a Steering Group is created that coordinates all apprenticeship activity, ensuring efficiencies are maximised, while giving sight to all stakeholders of apprentice-related activity.



► Action Plan

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	SERVICE	TARGET YEAR
To create a diverse, talented, dynamic workforce for Croydon Council that has the skills to deliver high quality services and products for the residents of Croydon. Offering apprenticeship opportunities that are available to all on a fair and liveable wage that supports Croydon Council succession planning.	• Embed apprentices as a priority within the workforce strategy, including consideration that all vacancies advertised below a particular grades should be considered for apprenticeships	Learning and Organisational Development and Human Resources Organisational Development and	2020
	• Managers to include apprenticeships in all service workforce needs and succession planning, HR business partners to support	Human Resources	2021
	• Map all council job roles to apprenticeship standards, identify hard to fill and high turnover roles and consider conversion to apprenticeships	Learning and Organisational Development and Human Resources	2020
	• Identify structured career pathways opportunities, including where existing vacancies can be converted into apprenticeship short term with substantive roles available longer term	Learning and Organisational Development and Human Resources	Pilot 2020 Ongoing
Raise aspirations for our young people and create a talent pipeline.	• Strengthen the links between work experience opportunities (school and extended) and progress into apprenticeships		Case studies 2020 Structural Implementation 2021
Getting the most from our levy.	• Review the current process for school apprenticeship levy funding and develop record keeping processes to track activity	Economic Development Team	2020
	• Create a regular bulletin for schools to share information, case studies and good practice	Economic Development Team	2021
Create a culture for apprenticeships within the Council	• Employment and Skills Policy presentations to senior management and management teams to promote employment pathways and programmes	Economic Development Team	2020 Ongoing
	• Consider the scope for a central pot for apprentice salaries and/or targets for services	Learning and Organisational Development/Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2021

► Action Plan

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	SERVICE	TARGET YEAR
Support accessibility to opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to engage with key stakeholders, attend events, publicise and advertise vacancies, develop case studies 	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target specific localities by providing events and drop in workshops in libraries, youth centres, schools/colleges and leisure centre 	Economic Development Team/Croydon Works	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to develop and promote our existing apprentices i.e. speaking and presenting opportunities, ambassadorial opportunities in schools and businesses 	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh the internal and external apprenticeship web pages to include clear advice and guidance to managers and team about recruiting and managing an apprentice (Apprentice led) 	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create apprenticeship champions amongst senior officers and managers 	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver drop in sessions for managers of new and CPD apprenticeships 	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve communications with regular case studies and success stories through a variety of methods including social media and local press 	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	Ongoing

► Action Plan

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	SERVICE	TARGET YEAR
To recruit and retain as a responsible employer.	• Recruit 2 larger cohorts of new apprentices per year	Economic Development Team/ Croydon Works/ Human Resources	Ongoing
	• Explore the scope to streamline the recruitment process and bring it in line with the council's central system	Economic Development Team/ Croydon Works/Human Resources	2021
	• Explore the scope for managers to be more involved at the recruitment stage.	Economic Development Team/ Croydon Works/ Human Resources	2020
	• Work with HR to ensure the selection process is fit for purpose and identifying appropriate processes to reduce barriers for candidates that need additional support	Economic Development Team/ Croydon Works/ Human Resources	2020
	• Continue to develop bespoke apprenticeship recruitment packages for teams running high numbers in between normal recruitment rounds. For e.g. Schools and Social Workers	Economic Development Team/ Croydon Works/ Human Resources	2020
	• Broaden how we market apprenticeships to target groups and provide a more bespoke package of support (e.g. sessions in the turnaround centre, mini internships for specific groups or package of pre-apprenticeship training)	Economic Development Team/ Croydon Works/ Human Resources	2021
	• Ensure that the terms and conditions of employment are fit for purpose	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2020
	• Ensure package of support for apprentices finishing their apprenticeship to gain further employment	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2020
	• Ensuring that managers and staff are fully equipped to meet the programme requirements of the 20% off the job training	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2020
	• Refresh the apprenticeship induction process and ensure that it is streamlined with the corporate process and that it is fit for purpose.	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2021
	• Refresh the manager's guide to apprenticeships and publish on the intranet.	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2020

► Action Plan

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	SERVICE	TARGET YEAR
To recruit and retain as a responsible employer... <i>continued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address manager concerns around lack of knowledge by attending team meetings across departments to present the strategy. 	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate manager drop in sessions and/or forums to share experiences and progress issues 	Economic Development Team/Human Resources	2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger relationships with managers and staff wishing to take up a CPD apprenticeship prior to making an application to ensure that the employee and manager understand the commitment of the apprenticeship programme, that the member of staff meets the necessary requirements and that the pathway is suitable (IAG) 	Economic Development Team	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh the apprenticeship support offer including; ambassadors, mentoring programme, champions, network, pastoral support, manager and team management 	Economic Development Team	2021
Support the right standards and quality in our apprenticeships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and increase the range of apprenticeships on offer within the Council. 	Economic Development Team	2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the CPD offer to include more standards and higher level apprenticeships 	Economic Development Team	2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the existing process to commission training and explore the wider Pan London and local DPS models 	Economic Development Team/ Croydon Works/Procurement	2022
Opportunity for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the work with key council services and Croydon works to open up opportunities for priority groups, including guaranteed interviews where applicants meeting the minimum requirements of the role 	Economic Development Team/People	2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with colleagues in People to develop a package of employment pathway support for care leavers and NEETs interested in apprenticeships 	Economic Development Team/People	2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the scope to commission funded Maths and English FS Skills programmes, possibly during the summer with CALAT (16-18 funding) 	Economic Development Team/CALAT	2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the scope to commission funded Maths and English FS Skills programmes as a pre-apprenticeship offer for new recruits and for staff 	Economic Development Team/ Learning and Organisational Development/CALAT	2021

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