



Economy and Jobs Cabinet Member Bulletin Councillor Mark Watson October 2017

Latest News

Surrey Street Sunday Market

The Surrey Street Sunday Market relaunched on 17th September, offering Sunday shoppers and visitors with a range of alternative goods to those available Monday to Saturday. Avoiding competition with the regular market, the Sunday market focuses on homemade and artisan products such as breads and cakes, street food and arts and crafts. The Sunday market runs from 10.30am to 5pm every week and pitches are available for just £15 per Sunday.

The relaunch was celebrated with ‘Little Canada comes to Croydon’, an event celebrating the 150th anniversary of Canada which brought a taste of Canadian culture to Surrey Street, including Canadian street food, craft beer, cocktails and whiskies and live music. The event was well-attended by an estimated 2,000 people, the furthest visitors coming from as far as Leicestershire. The Canadian street food proved particularly popular with an hour-long queue going strong for five hours, and the maple syrup stall selling more maple syrup than Canada Day in Trafalgar Square. A weekly programme of events coincides with Sunday trading at Surrey Street up until Christmas, including interactive children’s theatre and Christmas-themed events. The events schedule can be viewed on the Surrey Street Sunday’s webpage on the Council website [here](#).



Over August, the Council also asked the public what they would like to see and experience at the Sunday market. 189 responses were received in total, showing great support for the Surrey Street Sunday Market vision. The most popular goods residents would like to see being sold are street food (57%), artisan produce (56%) and vintage goods (40%). Similar levels of support were also expressed for the types of events residents would like to enjoy at Surrey Street, including food and drink festivals (66%), themed markets (55%) and outdoor performances and exhibitions (44%). The survey has helped to inform the Sunday market’s future development to help make Surrey Street the place to be on Sundays.



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Working Together

Small Business Commission

Croydon's Small Business Commission presented the findings of their investigation and recommended actions to boost the growth and success of local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

More than 100 businesses attended an event at the council's Braithwaite Hall on Wednesday 20th September, where commissioners detailed the findings of their assessment of the challenges faced by Croydon SMEs when trying to grow.

Set up by the council to investigate what can be done to better support local businesses who play an integral role in strengthening Croydon's economy, the commission surveyed over 1,500 small companies, held focus groups and interviewed business owners across the borough to understand the barriers they faced.

The commissioners, who are representatives from local SMEs and business groups, found Croydon businesses could capitalise more on the diversity with the borough which would allow them to access other markets such as international trade contracts.

Other findings included the difficulty SMEs faced in accessing funding, locating affordable move-on space, entering procurement chains of large companies, recruiting skilled staff and coping with the demand of increased costs, such as rising business rates.

The action plan details steps the council and its partners can take to help local businesses conquer obstacles in a number of areas including taxation, access to funding, procurement and international trade. Recommendations include lobbying government for London to be treated more fairly when business rates are set, positioning Croydon as a key player open for business and opportunity within the international business community and increasing the profile of business support available from different organisations within the borough. The recommendations set out in the commission's action plan will enable the council and its partners to better support local businesses and help them overcome some of the challenges identified.

Next year will be the council's year of business and the Council looks forward to working closely with Croydon's business network and the Small Business Commission to ensure local companies continue to develop and flourish. To read the Commission's full report click [here](#)

Business Rate Support

I am pleased to be able to confirm that the new Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy introduced in December 2016 has now awarded local businesses £77k discretionary relief which has supported and created 82 jobs in the borough.

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The aim of the scheme is to support inward investment and business growth to increase or safeguard jobs in the borough. The Council has so far granted rates relief to the Dice Bar, MyPTStudio, Croydon BID, Art Rebellion, and Sussex Innovation Centre. A condition of the relief is that these businesses will accredit through the Good Employer Charter. Business in the borough can make an application for discretionary relief at any time where proposals create or sustain jobs in Croydon. To find out more about the scheme please contact Director of Economic Growth emma.lindsell@croydon.gov.uk.

Following lobbying from Croydon and other areas the Government announced £300m transition funding for businesses particularly hard hit by the business rates revaluation exercise. We are pleased to announce that the pub relief and all small business rate relief has now been awarded. However due to software anomalies, the discretionary rate relief is now being manually calculated.

Implementation of the rest of the transition fund has been held up by software anomalies from an external company who are delivering software to Councils across the UK. In order to ensure that our local businesses do not wait any longer than necessary we are manually calculating the relief, this means that the relief should be distributed within the next four weeks; if you are a business having difficulty due to revaluation please contact the council and we will be open to flexible arrangements to overcome problems.

Croydon Business Month

A varied programme of 45 events and activities aimed at start-ups and established companies is taking place this October for this year's Croydon Business Month.

Launched at the We Mean Business Expo, Croydon's annual business exhibition and network opportunity, at Marco Polo House on October 3rd. The Expo was one of the first in a series of events comprising surgeries, workshops, seminars and conferences organised for the next few weeks. The council has teamed up with key business partners, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Croydon Partnership, the Federation of Small Businesses, Enterprise for London and NatWest Bank to provide the varied programme of events.

A selection of these exciting events include Ask the Expert Roadshows delivering business support and expert advice to our district centres, access to funding workshops, Social Media and sales seminars and a celebrations of our Croydon Businesses at our Annual Awards.

Anyone interested in Social Enterprise were welcomed at the Social Enterprise marketplace which showcased Croydon's social enterprise business scene, part of a series of events across the UK celebrating Social Saturday on the 14th October – Croydon is a social enterprise borough well known for its dynamic social enterprise community.

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So whether you were an Entrepreneur looking to join our new Entrepreneurs Sunday Market or a business looking to engage with young people at the exciting Croydon Live event there was something for everybody.

The full list of events is available at <https://croydonsmallbiz.com/events/>

Croydon Pop Up Business School

25th Sept to 6th Oct 2017, Whitgift Centre.

Second annual programme for unemployed housing tenants in Croydon developed in partnership between Croydon Council, Wandle Housing, Optivo (formerly Amicus Horizon), the Croydon Partnership, and the Pop Up Business School

Key highlights:

- 92 participants registered and attended both weeks
- 61 participants were Croydon residents
- 24 applicants requested space to trade for two weeks after the workshop

Classes covered:

- How to start a business for free
- Sales and the dark art of marketing
- How to make a great website for free
- The quickest way to find customers – social media explained
- Taxes and company structure
- Motivation, confidence and energy
- The mafia guide to networking
- Driving traffic – getting to the top of google
- How to pitch your product or service
- Negotiation – the secret to getting better deals

Surrey Street – Lighting Phase 2

Designs are currently being developed to deliver a second phase of the lighting project for Surrey Street – it will include:

- Festoon feature lighting throughout Surrey Street and Middle Street
- Up lighting on Scody art piece



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- Feature lighting projecting to the uppers of Millet building
 - Possible feature lighting to steps – further engagement with Vue management required
- Installation is expected in November 2017.

Update on High Street Pedestrianisation

The council, in partnership with the Greater London Authority and Transport for London, has begun improvement works for the pedestrianisation of Croydon High Street.

This scheme, is a 12 month pilot, which will see the closure of the High Street between Katherine Street and Park Street to all vehicles creating a new public space that will be used for walking, cycling, and for people to enjoy a range of cultural events and activities. These changes will provide a much needed boost to the evening and night-time economy, providing an open and accessible public space for businesses and local groups to utilise, which will encourage footfall at this end of the High Street.

The experimental trial will see the closure of High Street to all vehicles including buses and taxis from Monday 16 October 2017.

The following changes will be implemented:

- Park Street will be made one way up to the junction with St George's Walk
- All buses that used to travel along High Street will instead travel via St George's Walk
- The taxi rank on High Street will be relocated to Park Street
- The two bus stops on Park Street will be relocated further up Park Street to the current location of the bus stand
- The bus lane currently on Park Street will be removed to make way for all general traffic
- Along St George's Walk, the existing zebra crossing and motorcycle bays will be repositioned to allow room for the new bus stand which will have moved from Park Street
- Croydon High Street will be closed between Katherine Street and Park Street to all traffic including buses and taxis from Monday 16 October 2017.

Following implementation, the council will further engage with businesses, residents and people who work in the area to get their views and ideas about how the newly pedestrianised space could be used.

More information can be found, at: www.croydon.gov.uk/highst

Croydon Works

A new Croydon Works office has opened in the Clocktower and I'll be celebrating the opening on 25th October 2017. So far this year Croydon Works has supported 98 residents into work and is receiving plaudits from employers such as those below.

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Oakam:

Love working with you guys from Croydon Works! At Oakam, we are always looking for new talents for our Contact Centre in Croydon, from entry level Customer Service Advisors to experienced Team Leaders and Croydon Works provides us with the relevant quality candidates.

Highly recommend! Very helpful and friendly. Thanks Humberto and Adhnan.

Churchill:

I found Croydon Works extremely helpful which made the whole process of employing staff really quick and effective. As a supplier of services on behalf of Croydon Council we have Social Value targets to meet as part of our contract so it is important for us to employ local people to deliver local services. We currently have 86% of our work force both living and working within the Croydon Borough. We are proud of this high percentage and endeavour to retain or even increase it over time. I contacted Croydon Works to enquire if they had any candidates that would be interested in some permanent cleaning work. I gave the details of the positions, the contractual hours and the hourly rates of pay. Adnan came back to me very quickly with the names of possible candidates and included their CV's. He also gave me an overview of the applicants which I found really helpful. I was then asked who I would like to interview and when would be a convenient time for them to be held. They subsequently arranged the interviews and I'm very pleased to say we have employed 3 of the 4 candidates! We have found Pearlina, Nassaran and Geraldine to be real assets to our team and we are happy to have them on board. I will definitely be contacting Croydon Works again.

A real success story!

Reverse Jobs Fair - Wednesday 11 October

A jobs fair with a twist, Croydon Council and Croydon Works in collaboration with a number of partners hosted the 2nd reverse jobs fair after the success of last year's event.

The reverse jobs fair was an opportunity for employers to meet and great candidates who were looking for work with a twist, rather than employers showcasing it's the candidates who are presenting themselves outlining their skills and previous experience to employers in the room. It differs from usual recruitment fairs and gives the candidates the attention they need.



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The event gave employers an invaluable opportunity to meet 40 potential employees in an informal setting and will help to ensure Croydon continues to set an example to the borough as a Disability Confident employer.

Guest speakers on the day included The Mayor of Croydon - Councillor Toni Letts opening as well as other speakers including key employers in the borough as well as strategic partners. There was also an 'Advice Bar' for employers to find out more information about being Disability Confident and meet other companies who have already signed up to the scheme.

Following on from last year's success, the event turned the typical employment fair upside down by having up to 40 jobseekers with their own stands showcasing their skills and abilities, looking to attract offers of paid employment or work experience from the borough's employers.