

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Deputy Leader, Alison Butler

March 2019

Latest News

Delivering a balanced budget

The council's Gateway approach to early intervention, and interventions that assist households before they reach continues to make real differences to the lives of Croydon people. This holistic preventative approach responds to whole family/ vulnerable adult needs and focusses in particular on financial resilience, employment, training and housing, this approach in most cases improves the outcomes for our residents but also achieves cost avoidance/ savings for the Council both short and long term.

In 19/20 elements of the Gateway Service will be transitioned to permanent teams and the Gateway Link team will expand its coverage to provide greater early intervention and interventions support to statutory services which will assist with contributing to delivering a balanced budget across the council.

For 2018/19 (April to December)

Our Gateway approach has already helped –

- 917 families avoid homelessness through support with household budgeting, benefits advice and employability.
- 12,881 residents have received budgeting advice
- 2,617 residents on Universal Credit, have been supported with personal budgeting and/or digital skills allowing them to access services online
- 820 residents have attended budgeting, employment, debt and housing workshops
- We have helped 171 residents into employment and 218 into work placements and work experience; we have also supported 37 residents to retain their employment.
- We have also assisted with maximising residents' income to the value of £8,317,561 increasing their independence and financial resilience.

Gateway are continuing to work around the borough alongside the voluntary, community and faith sector from community assets; offering holistic preventative support to residents locally. The New Addington/Fieldway Community Connect and Food Stop has over 160 members of their food stop and have sustained 45 tenancies, supported 43 families with reducing arrears, helped 17 long term unemployed residents into work and 13 residents completed training courses. It has

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Deputy Leader, Alison Butler

March 2019

also helped 45 families in terms of income maximisation and £22,553 in total saved on food shopping bill since end of October for residents.

The next Community Connect/ Food Stop is now being coordinated in the North of the Borough in partnership with a local church in Thornton Heath.

While the council does its best to change outcomes for our residents suffering under the government's austerity measures it is worth noting that the DWP have reduced our Discretionary Housing Payment funds for 2019/20 by £118k, compared to our 2018/19 allocation; this is going to put extra pressure on a fund that is already stretched as we expand our early intervention model.

House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) non-immediate borough-wide Article 4(1) Direction

As part of our manifesto we pledged to look at the issue of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) in our borough

Currently, changes of use between a dwelling house (C3) and small HMO (C4) do not require planning permission. Over the past 10 years, Croydon has lost over 900 family homes to conversion and large HMO properties. This does not include the number of family homes lost to the current permitted development right.

Evidence supporting the [Croydon Local Plan 2018](#) identified a need to protect and deliver a large proportion of family homes to meet the estimated need as part of the borough's overall housing need.

This Article 4(1) Direction will enable the Council to ensure there is a supply of decent housing for Croydon families to live in, as well as give those moving into HMOs in future some certainty regarding space requirements and local amenity.

On 18 January 2019, Croydon Council made a non-immediate, borough-wide Article 4(1) Direction that will have the effect of withdrawing the permitted development right for the change of use from a dwelling house (C3) to a small House in Multiple Occupation HMO (C4). If confirmed, it is proposed the Direction will come into force on 28 January 2020.

Sprinkler Programme

To date the majority out of the scheduled 26 tower blocks have been completed with the installation and 'go-live' of the sprinkler system. Three blocks will be completed by the end of February and the remaining eight blocks completed by early April. The last eight blocks have taken longer due to the different construction forms and block

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Deputy Leader, Alison Butler

March 2019

layouts. New water tanks to supply the sprinklers in these last eight blocks are being installed in March with final testing and commissioning completed in early April.

Resident feedback on the sprinklers has been very positive and residents continue to support our contractors in these works during the temporary disruption to their daily lives. We are proud to be a borough that has put residents' safety first

Community Led Housing

Another of our manifesto commitments was to consider multiple options for bringing forward homes including Community Led Housing

- We launched a pilot process in January which is progressing well, and the first Council owned sites that will be released for Community Led Housing development will be announced soon.
- There is a workshop planned for Saturday 16th March to let residents know what's happening and how to apply for the sites. This will run from 10am - midday and be held at the Croydon Art Store in the Whitgift Centre.
- Visits are also being arranged to other inspirational Community Led Housing projects across London to show residents what Community Led Housing can be.

We are pleased that the National Community Land Trust Network, a registered charity which works to get greater funding and political support for its membership, has praised Croydon's scheme for having "some of the best policies in the country".

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Deputy Leader, Alison Butler

March 2019

Social Value

Wellington Appeal

Following a visit to The Wellington Hostel, the Repairs & Maintenance team organised a Bedding Donation appeal.

Individuals at this hostel often have little more than the clothes that they arrive in, so being able to provide clean sheets or a warm duvet, which to most people would be a necessity, would be a welcome luxury.

Generous staff across CHDR and Gateway Link have donated pillows, duvets and even sleeping bags which were delivered to the hostel the week before Christmas along with 75 care packages donated by Axis Europe office staff. They contained essential toiletries, hats and gloves and some treats.

The bags also contained blank Christmas cards and a pen, so that residents of the hostel who wanted to contact family or friends, could fill them in and they will be collected by Axis and franked and posted.

**BEDDING DONATION APPEAL
for Wellington Homeless
Shelter**



We are collecting clean used or new bedding
Please look through your airing cupboards for old bedding that you never use and put it to a good cause.
Residents here have little or no possessions so we are looking to provide them with clean warm bedding for their stay at the shelter

We are looking for donations of:
Sheets and Duvet Covers — all sizes,
Pillow Cases, Towels, Duvets and Pillows
Used is fine but washed and clean please
Collection point, floor 3, zone D

CROYDON | Delivering
wellbeing for Croydon



Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Deputy Leader, Alison Butler

March 2019

Christmas Dinner in a Bag

The Repairs & Maintenance team in conjunction with Axis Europe and Lidl supermarkets also organised 'Christmas dinner in a bag' for 47 residents in the borough. Bags consisted of a Chicken Joint/Nutroast, Yorkshire puddings, stuffing, gravy, carrots, parsnips, brussels, potatoes, sparkling non alcoholic drink and Christmas pudding.

Among others, 19 bags were given to residents in the north of the borough identified as being most in need.



Housing First

Housing First is our evidence-based approach to successfully supporting homeless people with high needs and histories of entrenched or repeat homelessness to live in their own homes. The overall philosophy of Housing First is to provide a stable, independent home and intensive personalised support and case management to homeless people with multiple and complex needs.

Having a home to live in is a human right and there are no conditions around 'housing readiness' before providing someone with a home; rather, secure housing is viewed as a stable platform from which other issues can be addressed.

Croydon Council's Housing First service launched in October 2018 and has successfully placed six individuals into tenancies with a further three individuals due to be placed into new tenancies imminently. This is a wonderful achievement.

The service itself has a provision of ten housing units allocated until April 2019 and a further ten housing units for 2019-20.

AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Deputy Leader, Alison Butler

March 2019

Social Value and Croydon's Long Term Partnering Contracts

In 2016 Croydon Council entered into long term partnering contracts for the General building and maintenance programme of its social housing (HRA) estate. The Contractors were Mulalley for General Building, maintenance and external decoration, Anglian for windows, AJS for electrical works, Guideline for lifts and Clairglow for gas boilers replacement.

These contracts contained key targets for providing social value outputs in line with the Council's social value objectives.

Since 2016 the contracts with Mulalley, Clairglow and Anglian have been achieved:

- 50 local residents have been supported into employment following training and support from the partnering contractors
- 10 local young people have been supported into trade based apprenticeships. All apprentices successfully completed 2-year training and qualified with a level 2 diploma and level 2 NVQ. They have secured full time employment through the contractors supply chain partners.
- A number of events and forums held to support local small business develop wider opportunities for growth
- 14 community based events supported
- An average of 50% local supply chain spend on our General Building Works contract
- Volunteering to help the Kinetic Foundation at Croydon Sports Arena with the refurbishment of the clubhouse
- Careers events held at Croydon College, Coulsdon College and Archbishop Tenison's High School's.
- Support for local art projects and neighbourhood improvement projects such as the Brigstock hostel mural project

As we enter a new financial year these social value objectives will be reviewed to ensure that the ongoing commitment secured with the contractors continue to contribute towards local ambitions for employment, business support and development.

Homes & Gateway Services

Cabinet Member Bulletin

Deputy Leader, Alison Butler

March 2019

Council tax rises proposed for abandoned homes

The owners of private homes in Croydon that are left empty and disused for years face paying double, triple or even quadruple council tax under cabinet proposals being considered on 25th January

Currently, councils can charge residents 100% of a council tax bill if the property is occupied, with an additional 50% if it is empty for more than two years.

From April, councils will have stronger legal powers to charge higher rates for long-term empty properties to encourage owners to bring them back into use and increase local housing supply.

Each council can decide how much to charge depending on the local housing market and Croydon will be going for the maximum we can implement.

- An additional 100% council tax on homes empty between two and five years - from April 2019
- An additional 200% council tax on homes empty between five and 10 years - from April 2020
- An additional 300% council tax on properties empty for more than 10 years - from April 2021

There is a housing supply crisis in London, so every empty home that can be brought back into use should be, we are only sorry that legislation does not allow us to go further.