



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

Latest News

Budget Update

The council continues to deliver strong services for residents and businesses despite continuing budget pressures. Across my portfolio we work in partnership with others and source external funding to deliver training and employment outcomes for residents and support to our businesses.

I would like to thank our key partners and sponsors for this year for their continuing support – without you we would not be able to deliver the range of support we need to provide to our residents and businesses in these tough economic times.

My portfolio aims to create the conditions for economic growth in Croydon, it seeks to increase the number of jobs in the borough by generating inward and supporting our existing businesses to grow and then helps residents secure these jobs. By creating a sustainable economy and helping our residents to secure good jobs through training and support we enable them to live financially independent lives. My portfolio contributes to a balanced budget by working in partnership, sourcing new funding, increasing business rates income and by reducing reliance on public funds.

Growth Zone

We are using Tax Incremental Funding to fund much needed infrastructure for Growth in and around the metropolitan centre. The Growth Zone will invest £309.9m (plus an additional c£210m being met by other sources including TfL, the GLA and Section 106 planning obligations) in infrastructure in metropolitan centre and along key transport corridors (Brighton Road / A23) to bring more businesses and jobs to Croydon and increase the amount of business rates income. The Growth Zone will deliver improvements to transport, public realm and open spaces, walking and cycling, digital and social infrastructure such as health, culture and energy.

Discretionary Business Rates Relief

The council's Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy encourages inward investment and business growth by offering up to 100% business rates relief to new or existing businesses that will create jobs in Croydon for our resident. Over the past 4 years several significant



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employers have relocated to Croydon including Superdrug, Green Energy Network and Regional Government Hub, these with other relief applications granted have created or safeguarded 4498 jobs in Croydon.

Brexit

The council website has a new Brexit focused resource for Residents and businesses that can be found here: www.croydon.gov.uk/community/brexit-guidance/croydon-and-brexit

As London's growth borough, Croydon already offers extensive support to local businesses, with an extensive package of measures to attract new investment, boost the local economy and help them thrive. This puts us in a strong position to help mitigate any negative impact on our local economy as a result of Brexit.

We will build on these strong foundations as we help our local businesses to navigate these uncertain times, and support them throughout the UK's withdrawal from the EU. Croydon is an inclusive, welcoming and diverse borough for our businesses and our Residents – whatever Brexit brings Croydon is open for and to everyone **#Croydonisopen**

Information on Croydon's support for local businesses can be found here www.croydon.gov.uk/business/support.

If you employ EU citizens, the Government has created an employer's toolkit with advice and information to help you support them and their families to apply to the EU settlement scheme. More information can be found via the links above.

Helping grow Croydon's digital economy

We are hosting an event on Tuesday 26th February for Croydon's tech businesses, on how to sell to government. This is our second event under the banner of croydon.digital – which is also the name of a new website where the council, and members of Croydon's digital community, are collaborating to tell the story of how technology, data and digital is helping with the regeneration of Croydon.

We are also developing our approach to Smart Cities - we have published a blog post about an Internet of Things pilot the Council has conducted in collaboration with AirPublic and Digital Catapult, to measure the impact of construction on air pollution. We will shortly begin



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consulting on a new digital strategy for Croydon, which will include our vision for Smart Cities. Subscribe to the email alerts from <https://croydon.digital> to hear more and get involved.

Investing the Apprenticeship Levy Wisely

We are using our Apprenticeship Levy to invest in the skills and development of our residents and our staff. We have developed an award winning Pathways to Work Apprenticeship Scheme that supports some of our most disadvantaged residents into jobs with the Council. We have also developed a Continuing Professional Development scheme using our apprenticeship levy to upskill existing staff.

Working Together

Norbury Tour

Our district centres are important to us and that is why colleagues, Cllr Tony Newman, Leader of Croydon Council, Cllr Shafi Khan, Cllr Oliver Lewis, Cllr Sherwan Chowdhury, Directors of Croydon Council and I visited Norbury on the 7th February. It was important to understand the opportunities and challenges our residents and businesses are facing on a day to day basis and align them with our local plans for growth. A tour of the library was conducted and the potential of developing an upstairs community space, currently unused, was viewed and improvements planned, and a tour of the parks and businesses allowed us to ensure that positive strategic decisions could be put into place to drive forward positive change for all.





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Economic Growth Strategy Engagement

In an economy where we cannot and will not stand still, we are ensuring that the London Borough for Croydon is resilient. Croydon is entering a new era of exceptional growth and the council is seeking your views on whether the current approach and vision that we have is right and so I would like you to view our draft Economic Growth Strategy themes that aim to ensure that Croydon enjoys good positive growth for our businesses and residents.

The strategy has four main themes:

- 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; and
- To invest in our people ensuring they have access to quality skills provision and can access jobs that ensure financial independence.

Over the next few weeks we will continue consulting with residents, businesses and stakeholders across Croydon to establish whether the council is aiming for the right outcomes and if we are taking the right approaches to delivering them. We will be running focus groups and inviting input to find out if our strategic vision contains the right themes for the borough.

If you would like to get involved please contact me or Emma Lindsell Director of Economic Growth on 020 8726 6000 (Ext 65626) / emma.lindsell@croydon.gov.uk.

Blackhorse Lane Business Surgery & Walkabout

Following real concerns from businesses affected by the extended closure of the Blackhorse Lane Bridge I visited businesses on Thursday 24th January to truly understand the impact that the delays had caused to the area. An after-hours business surgery was also organised in order to proactively provide advice, guidance and help on:

- Accessing finance through the Croydon Enterprise Loan Fund
- Discretionary rate relief
- Support on marketing and social media.
- 1-2-1 business advice & support



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The businesses I visited had showed great resilience but faced difficult challenges in sustaining their customer base. The drop in clinic provided clear expertise and guidance and we will continue to provide support as needed going forward.

Tait Road Industrial Estate Walkabout

Councillor Toni Letts and I visited businesses at the Tait Road Industrial Estate on 11th Feb 2019. Network Rail is currently developing a proposal for expansion works on the Brighton Main Line which will create greater capacity along the route and ease the pressure at East Croydon Station through the creation of additional platforms, track and rail service. The current plans require the land that the estate occupies for the expansion and Councillor Letts and I went to hear about the concerns of businesses and to offer the Council's support if businesses are required to relocate as the project develops. The site is at full capacity and houses jobs for many jobs for our residents. The businesses we spoke to had mixed views about the scheme; but whatever happens with Network Rail plans I will continue to support and champion our business community and work to retain Tait Road businesses and jobs in Croydon.

