



Economy and Jobs Cabinet Member Bulletin Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed March 2020

LATEST NEWS

Apprenticeship Academy and 100 in 100

I am delighted to share the success of our 100 in 100 campaign and it is particularly fitting that we were able to congratulate our apprentices, local employers, training providers and others involved in the programme, during National Apprenticeship Week (3rd-9th February 2020).



On the 4th February a celebration breakfast marked the success of Croydon's 100 in 100 campaign held at Croydon College, the event was attended by apprentices that secured employment during the initiative along with their employers and local training providers.

During the event, some of our employers and training providers were presented with a certificate in recognition of their commitment and contribution to developing staff through apprenticeships.

On Friday 7 February, a second event marking National Apprenticeship Week was held at Fairfield Halls. Steps to Success offered Croydon residents aged 16 and over, or those attending schools or colleges in the borough, the chance to speak to training providers, colleges and employers about their courses and opportunities.

It is fantastic that despite the 100 days coming to a close, apprenticeship recruitment continues to go from strength to strength in the borough. Through our Croydon Apprenticeship Academy partners and Croydon Works, we will continue to ensure both local people and employers benefit from the fantastic opportunities apprenticeships create."

The Croydon Apprenticeship Academy, is a one-stop shop for apprenticeships in Croydon – the council works with a huge range of employers and training providers to create a fantastic range of opportunities for residents and businesses, which saw 122 apprenticeships successfully created and filled in the 100 days after its launch last August.

To find out more about apprenticeship opportunities in Croydon click [here](#).

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Discretionary Business Rates Relief

I am delighted to report that Croydon Council has continued to support local businesses through our discretionary business rates relief scheme. The scheme has served as a valuable intervention in order to assist struggling businesses, along with those seeking to provide key inward investment opportunities within the borough. So far, 24 eligible businesses have been awarded discretionary business rates relief totalling over £296k, during the current financial year in 2019-20. During this period, the scheme has also supported over 141 jobs locally and indirectly assisted over 811 other local businesses.

Growth Zone Expenditure

Delivering the Growth Zone is a key priority of the administration to enable and support investment in jobs, housing, economic growth and the regeneration of the Town Centre. The benefits of the Growth Zone will be realised across the whole borough.

- The total Growth Zone programme capital expenditure over the next 3 years is £78million. The distribution of this funding across the Growth Zone themes are as follows:

Growth Zone Workstream	Committed funding 19/20-22/23 (£000's)
Transport	35,434
Public Realm	23,526
Construction Logistics	1,474
Parking	1,125
Culture	3,500
Smart Cities	2,721
Social Infrastructure	8,400
Employment and Skills	800
Energy	1,020
Total	78,000



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Croydon is Open for Business (Brexit Summit)

Thursday 27th February saw over 150 business leaders from across our diverse business community come together for a morning of inspirational talks, debates and practical advice.

Government representatives, outstanding academics and high ranking decision makers from businesses joined the event to discuss the key issues facing businesses today following our exit from the European Union.

This year the Croydon Brexit Summit programme featured top class and insightful speeches, intensive talks in interactive sessions and a chance to network, share best practice and create relationships. All of this held in the newly refurbished Fairfield Halls. Debate from panellists included Gatwick Airport, London Chamber of Commerce and London South Bank University. (A range of quality free support was readily available to our businesses).

This interactive event also incorporated a market place with specialised 1-2-1 business advice clinics with contributions from the Croydon Network which included organisations such as the London Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, LEAP (London Economic Action Partnership) and the council's Croydon Works apprenticeship scheme.

Event delegates who were European Union citizens were also able to get support from the council's registrar service on applying for a permanent right to remain in the country via the European Settlement Scheme.

Croydon companies large and small wanting a post-Brexit business boost are still able to obtain advice and guidance. If you would like to know more about support for your business please contact <https://www.growthhub.london/brexithub/>

I'm especially keen on supporting EU citizens who want help to continue living and working in Croydon after the Brexit transition phase and our European Settlement services remains dedicated to supporting residents and businesses. For more information <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/community/brexit-guidance/eu-settlement-scheme>

Apprenticeship Funding from GLA

In partnership with Croydon College, we have secured £393K of GLA funding for a project which will support employers to recruit apprentices in London.

One of only two successful pilots in the capital, this is a major legacy of the '100 in 100' campaign and an opportunity to further develop the role of the Croydon Apprenticeship Academy and support the 2023 borough of culture programme.

The **Croydon Apprenticeship Growth Hub** will build on the Croydon Apprenticeship Academy and develop and deliver an impartial single information point for advice and support to engage Croydon employers.



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The overall aim is to create and sustain quality apprenticeship opportunities and utilise unspent apprenticeship levy funds within four growth sectors: Cultural and Creative Industries; Tech and Digital; Financial and Business Services and Life Sciences.

The **Croydon Apprenticeship Growth Hub** will be delivered by Croydon College (lead) in partnership with Croydon Council, facilitating collaboration and partnerships between apprenticeship providers and employers creating a **Croydon apprenticeship skills strategy**.

The Growth Hub infrastructure will provide impartial advice and support on apprenticeships streamlining what can be a complex system for employers to navigate through:

- Organisational need and training needs analysis
- DAS support and guidance
- Learner recruitment matching service
- Increasing awareness of apprenticeships to meet the needs of businesses requirements
- Identifying current workforce upskilling opportunities
- Sharing best practice

Coulsdon & London Road Walkabout



Our district centres are important to us and that is why myself and my colleagues, visited Coulsdon (20th January) & London Road (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 areas were conducted and we are now currently looking at what positive strategic decisions could be put into place to drive forward positive change for all.

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The businesses I visited had showed great resilience but faced difficult challenges in sustaining their customer base and addressing real challenges. We are committed to providing support as needed going forward and will be working with Save the High street to support the independent businesses in these areas.

Pledges to Business by London Councils

London Councils' Pledges to Business was formally endorsed at the London Councils Leaders' Committee in December 2019. The Pledges cover relevant borough services that affect businesses, including their regulatory services and placemaking activities. It also has a series of asks of local businesses, enhancing their roles as employers and reducing their environmental impact.

London Councils has been developing the Pledges to Business during 2019. There has been consultation with borough officers and members, as well as the London Business Board, which brings together key business representative bodies.

Vision

The Pledges have been developed with a focus on boroughs' offer to business, rather than boroughs' ask of business. It looks beyond councils' business support services to consider the wider role of boroughs as:

- Placemakers and champions: setting a framework for the future development of an area and coordinating investment to deliver this vision.
- Convenors of business and local communities: brokering local solutions and agreements.
- Regulators: protecting residents and demanding high standards, but also delivering a quality and joined-up regulation process for businesses using these services.
- Providers of core infrastructure: providing or helping to facilitate infrastructure.

Pledges to Business

The Pledges are centred on:

- Engagement: ensuring effective engagement with business, including customer satisfaction surveys and consultation with those using borough services.
- Making business simpler: ensuring that businesses can get a more coordinated approach from boroughs, including enhancing digital access to borough services.
- Cleaner, greener, safer: collaborating with businesses in areas, such as community safety; waste reduction and recycling; air quality; and rough sleeping. This includes working with London's more than 60 Business Improvement Districts.
- Night-time economy: playing a coordinating role in supporting a safe and successful night-time economy.

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- Business rates: continuing to lobby for a system that lessens the impact on London's economy.
- Procurement: supporting local suppliers and social value outcomes.
- Developing a skilled workforce: working with employers to ensure a local labour force with the right skills.

The Pledges also have a series of asks of business:

- Becoming the best employer you can be, through the adoption of relevant standards.
- Ensuring an inclusive workforce that reflects London's diversity, including engaging with local employment and apprenticeship programmes.
- Engaging the next generation by working with schools across London to open up the world of work.
- Supporting sustainability by showing leadership in reducing emissions and waste.
- Becoming "business champions" by supporting the public sector in making the case for your borough and London.

The Pledges will require effective processes to ensure businesses find it easier to navigate boroughs' different services. This will require a commitment from boroughs to engage with businesses, seeking feedback on how they feel the process currently works for them and how it can be improved. There are wider policy issues boroughs will need to consider, for example, balancing the requirements of their regulatory role with a desire to promote vibrant high streets.

There are excellent examples of London boroughs working successfully with local businesses and Business Improvement Districts on diverse range issues, from aggressive begging to child protection and improving air quality.

Croydon Council will continue to work with business groups in making the case for London, on issues such as the apprenticeship levy, business rates reform and the replacement for European funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Business Survey - LONDON GROWTH HUB SURVEY

The London Growth Hub are keen to hear the challenges and opportunities Croydon businesses are facing every day, the aim of this survey is to help us better understand business needs so we can prioritise, design and deliver the tools and support.

The survey should only take 10 – 15 minutes to complete and participants will be automatically entered into a draw to win an iPad 7, John Lewis vouchers or street food vouchers for Mercato Metropolitano.

[CLICK HERE](#) to answer this short survey now