



Economy and Jobs Cabinet Member Bulletin Councillor Mark Watson December 2016

Latest News

Croydon Town Centre BID

Croydon Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) won the backing of the town centre business community, following a 31-day ballot conducted by Croydon Council Electoral Services. With a voting majority of 81.79% by number and 87.54% by rateable value, businesses voted in favour of Croydon BID continuing for another five years from 1st April 2017 to March 31st 2022.

The BID gives a strong voice to local businesses who will be able to directly benefit from the economic growth that will come with the significant redevelopment of the town centre. The Council will be working closely with the BID, and our business community to ensure that Croydon remains open for business and offers a diverse and quality offer to visitors and residents.

The Croydon Business Excellence Awards

On the 6th October 2016 we were pleased to be able to show our support to the local business community by sponsoring the Best SME business at the very prestigious Croydon Business Excellence Awards. The SME Business of the year was the most heavily subscribed category and covered a wide range of sectors, including local businesses from construction and development, manufacturing, environment, food and childcare services.

This year saw more than a hundred entries which were whittled down to 61 finalists who competed across 15 different award categories as well as for the ultimate prize – the title of Croydon’s Business of the year (Congratulations go to Hewitts of Croydon).

This year’s theme “Reach New Heights” inspired Croydon firms to aim high and shout about their success. The evening saw some of the most innovative and exciting businesses in the borough come together at the Grand Sapphire Hotel to celebrate business success in Croydon which also raised around £10,000 for this year’s chosen charities of the Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Wayne Trakas-Lawlor. Croydon Commitment, The Stanley People’s Initiative and the British Home & Hospital.

Our congratulations go to all of this year’s winners!

AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON



Economy and Jobs Cabinet Member Bulletin Councillor Mark Watson December 2016

South Norwood Pop-up shops to help new business start ups

Pop-up stores provide more affordable solutions than year-round rentals and can help an Entrepreneur to test the market for their products or services without the need to enter in to lengthy lease arrangements. They also provide an excellent opportunity to bring empty properties back into use and improve our high streets.

We have been working with the freeholder of three shops on Portland Road so that they could be offered to business start-ups. The choice of businesses was made through a competition in which entrants were invited to submit a proposal and business plan via a dedicated website. Submissions were whittled down to a short list of a dozen or so. These applicants were then invited to the Council's offices to make a pitch to a judging panel made up of Council staff and members.

The successful entrants are as follows,

Elizabeth James- Art and home ware sales.
Gamma- Gallery/music sales and coffee shop.
Next Step Fashion- Ladies clothing.

The units are currently being refurbished to a shell and core standard following which the shop fronts will be enhanced. The units will be handed over to the occupiers on a staged basis from the 30th November to the 12th December for a period of one year rent free. With this additional support in their first year of trading it is hoped these entrepreneurs will establish their businesses long term in the local area.



Economy and Jobs Cabinet Member Bulletin Councillor Mark Watson December 2016

Working Together

Croydon Works

Following the Boxpark recruitment event held in October 52 residents secured jobs at jobs at the Croydon site. A second recruitment day for Boxpark will take place at the end of November and to support residents into these jobs Croydon Works has secured training in hospitality, food safety and customer service – for more information about the training or vacancies please contact Adhnan Ahmed (Adhnan.ahmed@croydon.gov.uk).

Other recruitment campaigns that are underway include drives for the Council's tier 1 contractors including Axis and Mulalley.

London Living Wage and Good Employer Charter

8 businesses pledged to become London Living Wage employers at a the celebration event on 31st October 2016, these businesses join Ikea, the Council and many others paying the London Living Wage of £9.75 to all staff and contractors. To build on the success of London living Wage the Council is developing a Good Employer Charter – in addition to asking them to pay the London Living Wage the Charter will also encourage businesses to recruit local, buy local and be inclusive employers. More information about the Charter will be available over the next few months.

Small Business Commission

Almost all businesses registered in Croydon's businesses are classed as small businesses and they will play a significant role in the growth of the borough over the next few years. In recognition of this I will shortly be launching a Croydon Small Business Commission to explore the opportunities for and barriers to growth; chaired by an independent business leader the Commission will explore a range of issues with businesses and stakeholders and will deliver its findings and recommendations in spring 2017. If you would like to be involved in the work of the commission please contact me or Emma Lindsell – Head of Employment & Investment (emma.lindsell@croydon.gov.uk).

AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON



Economy and Jobs Cabinet Member Bulletin Councillor Mark Watson December 2016

Pop-Up Business School

In October budding Croydon entrepreneurs with a big business idea but no website or premises had the chance to learn the ropes for free by joining a council-backed workshop.

The Pop-Up Business School helped residents to develop their business ideas before offering them free use of an empty shop unit in The Whitgift Centre until Christmas.

More than 100 people signed up for the course, which included:

- One-to-one help from a team of experts
- Tips on developing your own website for free
- Advice on marketing via social media

The scheme was open to people of all ages including the long-term unemployed.

Residents who took part have the chance to operate their business rent-free from the old Shoe Couture shop unit near Starbucks in Whitgift Square.

The course was sponsored by Croydon Council, Whitgift and Centrale shopping centres, the Croydon Partnership, Westfield / Hammerson, and Wandle and Amicus Horizon housing associations.

The Council co-sponsor the event because we want even more people across the borough to tap into Croydon's growing economic success.

Delivering our Ambitions