



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

LATEST NEWS

100 Apprentices in 100 Days



The '100 in 100' Campaign is well under way. Vacancies went live on Thursday 20th June on the Croydon Works website, including 10 vacancies in the council itself.

Roadshows and events to provide information about apprenticeship opportunities are taking place over the summer at libraries, community centres and colleges across the borough.

In June, the already excellent '100 in 100 Working Group' was joined by Crisis, Clarion Housing and JACE Training providing additional expertise about and connections to their sectors.

Can you help?

We are still looking for:

1. Employers who would like to find out more about apprenticeships and look into how they could benefit their business now or in the near future.
2. Enthusiastic local candidates to join our Croydon Apprenticeship Academy - tell us what you are looking for even if you don't see it advertised.
3. Local apprenticeship training providers who can expand our offer of apprenticeships and information, advice and guidance for residents.

To register your interest and for more information, please visit the Croydon Apprenticeship Academy webpage <http://croydon.gov.uk/100in100> or email us at 100in100@croydon.gov.uk



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Learning Disability Take-over Day



On Monday 17 June I was delighted to be part of the Council's first ever 'Learning Disability Take-over Day' where service users with a learning disability shadowed staff working across the council. The day was a busy and practical day forming part of wider activities for Learning Disability Awareness Week.

The day began with registration and coffee and an introductory session with staff and residents at Braithwaite Hall in the Town Hall in Katherine Street. The council's Chief Executive, Jo Negrini, welcomed participants and the organisers Emma Shepherd and Andrew Slegg gave an overview of the day. Participants were then taken by staff members from across the council to shadow a day in the life of a council officer.

I was delighted to meet and spend some time with Shaun Reid, telling him about the responsibilities associated with being a local ward councillor. Shaun told me all about his love of travel and his passion for aeroplanes and that he will shortly complete a childcare qualification with CALAT. We talked about the opportunities created by the council, such as an apprenticeship through our 100 in 100 campaign. Shaun was also introduced to our job brokerage service Croydon Works and is now registered for future job opportunities.

The unemployment rate for people with a disability is more than double that of people without a disability and it is estimated that around 40% of people with a learning disability also experience mental health problems, again more than double the rate of mental health problems of the general population.

Supporting our most vulnerable residents into employment and training opportunities is an important part of the work of our employment and skills team within the Economic Development Team.



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Croydon Open for Business - Croydon hosts international event celebrating the best of the borough

Croydon Council's work to forge links with international partners to highlight the borough's presence across the world have been boosted at an event celebrating the best of Croydon.

Philanthropic international investors from 22 countries gathered together on Thursday 20th June to discuss how they could be part of the council's drive for sustainable growth.

Those in attendance were part of the World Humanitarian Drive, an organisation focussed on using investment to drive growth to benefit the communities receiving the funding. They heard from council business partners including Croydon Business Improvement District (BID) CEO Matthew Sims, about how Croydon was the right place to invest in and help their businesses grow.

The event was held as part of a series of international events that we have hosted to raise the profile of our business community and investor opportunities internationally.

The event also followed the visits of several international delegations to the borough which includes;



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A visit of a delegation from our new twin city Xi'an where we held interactive talks about reciprocal opportunities for our Croydon and Xi'an businesses. Xi'an is the capital of Shaanxi Province, China. A sub-provincial city on the Guanzhong Plain in north-western China. This is an exciting opportunity to develop strong connections to drive inclusive growth for our borough.

We were delighted to welcome students and professors from Sankalchand Patel University and Kadi Sarva Vishvavidyalaya University in India on Monday 3rd June. Together the delegation and Croydon Council looked at the positive effect Universities had on growth and shared best practice about talent growth. The delegation were impressed by the Council's innovative Creative Campus approach and took back a positive impression of a diverse, welcoming and open borough.



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Friday 7th June saw us welcoming delegates from 15 countries, as part of the World Market Conference, this year being hosted in London. Participants visited Surrey Street market looking at how the £1.1million refurbishment created a more flexible open space with modern street art and graffiti installations to attract new visitors to boost the market, which has been operating since 1276.

It's great that delegations and individuals from across the world are continuing to visit Croydon and understand the potential the borough has. Croydon is open for business and I'm really pleased we're able to show investors what the borough could do for them – and what they can do for the borough.

Croydon's business support programmes celebrated at London awards

The support offered by Croydon Council to get hundreds of residents into jobs and enable small businesses to grow has been celebrated as the best in the capital.

At the Small Business Friendly Borough Awards, supported by the London region of the Federation of Small Businesses and London Councils, Croydon Council won the Best All-Round Small Business Friendly Borough category.



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Croydon Council has focussed its efforts in introducing a number of policies in order to support the borough's small businesses, stemming from the introduction of the business-led small business commission. The commission led to improvements in offers to employers, including last year's Croydon Means Business programme, which delivered support to more than 4,500 business delegates.

The council also introduced free job brokerage service Croydon Works – which has got more than 600 of the borough's residents into work since September 2017. There are also other avenues of support for businesses, including the Croydon Enterprise Loan Fund, which supports businesses to start, develop and grow – while offering finance, to companies which may not be able to get elsewhere, for them to invest.

The council was nominated in two other categories at the awards held at the Bloomsbury Hotel in London:

- Best Small Business Friendly Procurement to Support Local Trade
- Best Programme to Reduce Impact of Crime on Small Businesses (in partnership with Croydon Business Improvement District (BID))

Good Employer - Buy Croydon

On Thursday 9th May Good Employers from across the borough gathered to hear about the work of Croydon Council to encourage Croydon SMEs into the procurement chain.



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With a new business directory that businesses can sign up to which is being used internally to support the Council staff to locate Croydon SMEs when buying services and a focus on new policies that are more business friendly the Council continues its work with partners to enable opportunity for local businesses.

If you are a business in Croydon please do make sure you are signed up <http://www.itslocalcroydon.co.uk>

If you are interested in becoming part of the Good Employer Network which supports their employers with best practice, London living wage and a buy Croydon ethos please contact: Tufael.aliahmed@croydon.gov.uk

Start Up In London Library Launch – City Hall

I was delighted to celebrate the launch of a major new initiative, Start-ups in London Libraries, a three-year project with the British Library to support London's entrepreneurs from all walks of life to get their business idea off the ground. The coordinated network of free support for start-ups officially launched in over 60 public libraries last month, in partnership with ten London boroughs including Croydon.

With speakers that included the Deputy Mayor Rajesh Agrawal and former participants of the support that the British Library offers businesses. The delegates heard about the wonderful services that were now open to our Croydon residents.

Open to aspiring entrepreneurs, early-stage start-ups and those people who have simply dreamed of being their own boss, the new services will work with the Business & Intellectual Property Centre in our Croydon Libraries to provide a grass roots solution to business support and equip locals with the skills, information, confidence and connections they need to turn their ideas into viable businesses.

The project will invest in our local public libraries to transform our current offer. Librarians and newly appointed SME Champions in each borough will receive specialist training to work with business experts to co-deliver a comprehensive programme of free two-day workshops and events, confidential business information sessions and tailored, face-to-face advice. The offer also includes free, walk-in access to business information resources including COBRA (the Complete Online Business Reference Advisor), a programme of live webinars and practical industry fact-sheets.

For more information contact carol.squires@croydon.gov.uk



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Tackling Challenges Business Crime Workshop – FSB and London Councils

As one of the shortlisted London Councils for the Tackling Business Crime Award, I was delighted to be asked to talk at the FSB Tackling Business Crime Workshop on the 20th May. The morning seminar focused at how we were working collaboratively between local businesses, boroughs and the police to tackle crime in London.

Joining speakers like Sophie Linden, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Patrick Holdaway, Head of Operations at the National Business Crime Centre I was pleased to outline Croydon's collaborative approach and stressed the importance of working closely with Croydon BID, businesses and residents to tackle crime.



A clear message of ensuring that we encourage businesses to report crime was delivered by the speakers.

Feed into Croydon's Economic Growth Strategy

As part of Croydon Council's Economic Strategy engagement, partners Shaking Hands and Federation of Small Businesses joined together to facilitate a workshop on Wednesday 22nd May that encouraged Croydon business owners to share their views on the themes of the Economic Strategy.

With interactive discussion and debate the workshop ensured that the views of local business owners were captured. This will be fed into the Croydon's strategy which will focus on positive inclusive growth.

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The strategy has three 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.

If you would like to get involved to provide feedback please contact Carol Squires, carol.squires@croydon.gov.uk

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Croydon Works – National Employability Day 2019

In celebration of ERSA National Employability Day 2019, Croydon Works, in partnership with London Learning Consortium, held their 3rd annual Croydon Employment Fair on Friday 28th June at Jury's Inn on Wellesley Rd in central Croydon.

This was the biggest event yet with a number of major employers attending including McDonalds, Network Rail, London Fire Brigade and Henry's Construction. As well as meeting local employers, everyone who attended had the opportunity to join workshops, and access help with employability skills, health and wellbeing, and housing support.

National Employability Day has been running for 3 years now. It was created to celebrate the rewarding and challenging work of organisations like Croydon Works.

It was an amazing event, and a great day to celebrate the commitment of the council and our employer partners to the welfare of Croydon's residents.



Digital Inclusion

Croydon Council is undergoing an ambitious digital transformation, focusing on:

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Digital services – we are transforming the relationship between residents and the council by providing online services so good that most people choose to use them and can do so unaided.

Digital borough – we are maximising opportunities for digital design, data and technology to enhance economic growth, quality of life, sustainability and individual opportunity in Croydon.

Our objectives are:

- Supporting our residents to access council services more easily and efficiently.
- Ensuring inclusive provision for our residents across all groups including: age, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, income level, maternity/pregnancy, etc.
- Supporting our most vulnerable residents.
- Empowering our communities with the skills they need to thrive.

Increasing the level of Digital Inclusion across the borough will empower borough residents currently not accessing online services and support. It will improve their skills and confidence online and help to reduce costs for themselves and the council.

Digital skills make the lives of residents easier. With good digital skills they can more easily access council and central Government services. They can also more easily find a job and the support needed to get one. In addition, online shopping and price comparison sites can reduce the cost of many things, such as insurance and phone contracts.

Improved digital inclusion & resident participation has a direct and measurable benefit to the council. We have measured the cost of contact coming in through other channels versus in person or by telephone:

Transactions	per year	total cost	cost per transaction
Visitors to Access Croydon	65,000	£1,000,000	£15.38
Letters received	tbc	tbc	£12.00
Emails / Contact the Council Forms	130,000	£1,000,000	£7.69



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Calls to the General Contact Centre & Benefits Contact Centre	184,600	£1,000,000	£5.42
Don't mess with Croydon App	10,400	£20,000	£1.92
My Account Transactions	161,200	£300,000	£1.86
web visitors	1,680,000	£170,000	£0.10

Achieving a 10% combined reduction in calls and visits would therefore equate to a saving of £100k.

Our current offer includes:

- 13 Digital Zones active in the libraries across the borough. PCs are available in each of the Digital Zones – these can be booked in 2hr slots. 1-2-1 help is offered by library staff for these users – for online forms, sending email etc.
- Training is offered by volunteers and community organisations such as MyOutspace, aimed at residents that have no Digital skills at all.
- [CALAT](#) provides adult courses in digital skills.
- A number of Digital inclusion initiatives supported through the Our Community fund.
- Digital Inclusion training and the provision of free WiFi to 18 community hubs as part of our Full Fibre Broadband to Social Housing programme.

We are planning a borough-wide programme of digital inclusion support with partners such as CALAT, the Libraries and Localities teams, RedDoor IT which will provide:

- Assisted digital support to help residents use our digital service
- Digital inclusion learning opportunities and public computers across the borough to help more residents get online

However, non-digital channels always remain available to those who really need them.