



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

## LATEST NEWS

### Croydon smashes 100 in 100 apprenticeships goal

Croydon Apprenticeship Academy has smashed its goal to create and fill 100 apprenticeships in 100 working days, benefiting residents and businesses across the borough.



The final day of the campaign found a total of 110 apprenticeships had been successfully created and filled since the launch of the 100 in 100 initiative in August.

Through Croydon Apprenticeship Academy – a one-stop shop for apprenticeships in Croydon – the council has worked with a huge range of employers and training providers to create a fantastic range of opportunities for residents and businesses. Both have benefited from a variety of industry roles with local, national and international employers based in Croydon

The 100 in 100 campaign was born out of a launch event in March 2019, when local training providers and employers came together and made a collective pledge to drive the apprenticeship agenda across the borough.



Since the initiative started, residents educated from GCSE to degree level have started apprenticeships in a range of fields, including data analysis, project management, plumbing, business administration, accountancy, construction management, hairdressing and teaching.

Apprenticeships are open to all ages and offer a practical approach to starting or changing career. They provide the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and training whilst being paid.

Increased productivity, reduced recruitment and training costs, instilling culture and the opportunity to develop a skilled and motivated workforce are just some of the benefits for employers taking on an apprentice.

## AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON



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

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I am absolutely thrilled we have not only met, but exceeded our ambitious target: to have successfully created 110 apprenticeships benefitting residents and businesses is a real achievement. As a London Living Wage employer, I'm also very proud that the council can offer residents across the borough a very competitive wage and exciting career pathways.

This fantastic campaign has and will change lives not just for the apprentices, but for their employers and their businesses too. I look forward to following the apprentices' journeys going forward. The campaign is just the beginning and as a council, we will continue to excel in apprenticeship opportunities.

To find out more about apprenticeship opportunities in Croydon please go to: <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/education/adult/apprenticeships/croydon-apprenticeship-academy-0/croydon-apprenticeship-academy>.

## **Croydon's Economic Strategy and Evening & Night Time Economy Action Plan**

An innovative and collaborative five-year strategy which aims to boost Croydon's thriving economy was approved by cabinet on the 18 November 2019 along with a new plan to galvanise our post 6pm economy. Croydon's Economic Strategy will create new jobs as the borough becomes one of sustainable growth with varied high streets, a dynamic business environment and an open and fair economy, with innovation at its heart.

It will build on Croydon's successes, which include a 33% increase in businesses coming to the borough in the past five years and being named London's best borough for the council's innovative and effective mix of support and engagement with its small businesses.

The strategy will see the council continue to work with partners and stakeholders to drive sustainable growth, with a vibrant and diverse leisure and cultural offer in its Evening and Night Time Economy action plan investment in public spaces and infrastructure, with a strong meanwhile use offering.

As part of efforts to drive commercial and industrial development, the council will look to adopt a responsive development management and building control plan to create high-quality commercial spaces which will be protected from applications to change them from business use and to engage with international trade delegations to open up markets for Croydon businesses.



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

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Continued investment by the council in commercial interests will support an enterprising economy and help develop creative, digital, innovation and new green technology sectors.

Investment in a world-class education offer will help raise the aspirations of the borough's 93,000 young people creating employment opportunities in growth sectors and ensuring the borough's training and jobs offer meets the needs of residents, employers and the economy.

You can read more about Croydon's Economic Strategy and associated Evening & Night Time Economy Action Plan – 6 'til Late here: [www.croydonobservatory.org](http://www.croydonobservatory.org).

Following the adoption of our new Evening & Night Time Economy action plan I am pleased to see that the borough's night time economy has been boosted by the opening of a new 500-capacity club and arts space.

Phase, which comprises two club rooms as well as a studio, will run with "a balanced and inclusive programme" and cover both electronic and live music. Operating with a 4am license, Phase has been fitted out with a Coda Audio sound system and will run club nights on Fridays and Saturdays.

Phase is the new Arts and Music Space that opened in December on Crown Hill, central Croydon. The 500 – capacity, 2 - room site offers a programme of live music, cabaret, comedy and international DJ's, and has worked with the council to source staff locally through Croydon Works and build partnerships in the borough via Croydon Music City. The venue will also be supporting local musicians and music projects through enabling access to their facilities and the development of a community studio space operated by music charity Grooveschool.

## **Croydon celebrates London Living Wage**

On November 12<sup>th</sup> I was privileged to celebrate London Living Wage Week with our Good Employers at the wonderful Mr Fox, Surrey Street, Croydon. With over 30 of our leading Good Employer businesses joining the discussion on the benefits of paying people the London Living wage, the event debated and discussed important opportunities and challenges faced by the business community.



The London Living wage makes a positive difference to people's lives. As part of our drive to achieve increased financial security and greater independence for local people, we would like all Croydon employers, big or small, to become London Living



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

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Wage accredited and join the Good Employer Network. We work with the Good Employer Network to drive forward best practice in the borough.

Strengthening our local economy requires collective commitment. Businesses and employers play an important role in creating a local economy that attracts investors and opens up opportunities for further growth. The Good Employer Charter aims to become a testament to the strengths of Croydon's market by showcasing local businesses' commitment to their employees, customers, suppliers, business partners and the local communities.

Being a good employer means your employees feel more valued and effective in their work. This translates into improved productivity, lower staff turnover and greater ability to retain talent. Your business gains a competitive advantage and improved performance.

Being a responsible business helps to satisfy your consumers' and business partners' desire to support companies that have strong corporate social responsibility. It improves the quality of life in communities where you do business, thus boosts your brand reputation, increases sales and positive consumer sentiment.

You can find more information here: [www.goodemployercroydon.com/](http://www.goodemployercroydon.com/)

## **Take Over Challenge.**

Croydon's Takeover Challenge – giving young people a unique chance to shape their borough by taking on the roles of local leaders – returned on November 22<sup>nd</sup> with more positions on offer than ever before.

With 93,000 under-18s, Croydon is home to more young people than any other London borough and local leaders stepped aside to give some of them the chance to step into their shoes.

This year 56 young participants aged between 11 and 18 took over 26 different roles helping to run the council, police, the newly-reopened Fairfield Halls and other organisations.

I was especially pleased to host three young people who had an interest in the Croydon economy, after shadowing meetings and providing input I was amazed at their potential and look forward to seeing them in the future as our Croydon leaders.



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

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## **CELF AGM**

The annual Croydon Enterprise Loan Fund AGM this year highlighted the significant support that the Council provides to residents and businesses looking to start, develop and grow their businesses.

Now in its 11th year the fund provides loans up to £50,000 helping our entrepreneurs who have not been able to access traditional finance options. I was astonished to listen to some marvellous success stories from businesses which ranged from Vintage Campers to Tile Showrooms and even a Croydon Bar.

The loan fund combines financial advice with expert, practical advice and support to help businesses develop and grow.

If you would like to know more <http://croydonloanfund.co.uk>

## **PopUp Business School**

November saw the return of the Pop Up Business School. Now in its fourth year, the PopUp Business School, which is run with the help of Croydon Council, started on 18 November, and lasted for 10 days.



Located on the ground floor of the Whitgift Centre next to Turf Projects, the school was open to all but particularly aimed at unemployed Croydon residents who were interested in starting their own business, or who have already started but want some more assistance to make it a success.

Going against the traditional approach to starting a business and focussing on business plans and funding, PopUp Business School looks at getting people going quickly and testing their ideas to begin making money as soon as possible.

Over the 10 days attendees were taught how to start up their own business for free, how to build their business effectively, promote their business, build a website, use social media successfully, and how to negotiate, among other good business practices. We look forward to seeing all the wonderful new start-up businesses joining in our business network.





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

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## International Delegation

We were delighted to welcome students and professors from Sankalchand Patel University and Kadi Sarva Vishvavidyalaya University in India in November.

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

## Christmas Markets

Several Christmas markets took place in our town centres in the run-up to the festive period supporting our high street traders.

The Addiscombe Christmas Market was organised by the Ashburton Park Project Team. It was the second Christmas Market following on from last year's inaugural market. The Christmas Market was hosted in Ashburton Hall in Ashburton Park. The Christmas market had a Santa's grotto, a variety of stalls offering for sell items such as clothing, food, Christmas cards and Christmas gift ideas. There was also a raffle that raised money towards the redevelopment of the Ashburton Park Playground. It was well attended with about 800 people in attendance.



## South Norwood's Clock Tower Market

South Norwood's Clock Tower Market teamed up with We Love SE25 to host a special Christmas market on Saturday 7 December. The community-run, monthly market was the ideal place to buy locally produced gifts and festive food. Entertainment was provided by the Baptist World Alliance Kids' Choir and the Croydon Brass Band. The winner of their Best Christmas Window Display competition was announced at the market. It was also the gathering point for SE25 Food Trail's inaugural walk, exploring good, fresh food in SE25, meeting the people who make and sell it and enjoying the festive displays of the area.



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

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## Selsdon Christmas Market

Selsdon's first Christmas Market was launched on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019. The idea of a Christmas Market in Selsdon was put forward, organised and delivered by the Selsdon Community Plan Group. Council Ward budgets contributed in paying for the hire of the market stalls and the publicity campaign.



## Full Fibre Broadband

The GLA Strategic Investment Fund has allocated £1million to delivering full fibre broadband to key public assets in Croydon. The council is working with the Connected London team to identify potential sites in the borough that will enjoy the benefits of better faster and more reliable broadband connectivity.

## Reddoor Digital Inclusion workshops

The first sessions of our Digital Inclusion Workshops have taken place across Croydon libraries, and the feedback so far has been really positive. Residents have the opportunity to use the internet and email, search for information online, and learn about how to stay safe online. Workshops will boost levels of confidence in our residents to help them use the internet and online services securely and effectively.



Upcoming workshops in 2020 are listed below with more dates to follow. Contact your local library or email [Digital.Workshops@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Digital.Workshops@croydon.gov.uk) to book your place:

- Selsdon Library – Thursday 6 February
- Shirley Library – Monday 10 February
- Ashburton Library – Tuesday 18 February
- Thornton Heath Library – Monday 24 February
- Central Croydon Library – Tuesday 3 March
- Bradmore Green Library – Wednesday 11 March
- Sanderstead Library – Wednesday 18 March
- Broad Green Library – Monday 23 March