



## ***Communications Strategy***

The Croydon Enterprise programme is a major long-term investment in enterprise as a force to regenerate Croydon's more deprived communities. Communications will help the programme deliver at strategic and operational level.

This strategy is designed to ensure that communications have focus and that messages remain consistent.

This strategy is designed to work in conjunction with the campaign programme (*in preparation*) and the communications protocol (*attached*) between the council, Croydon Business Ltd and their agents. It, and the protocol, is official policy for all partners and agreed by the relevant organisations and Council cabinet.

### **Aims**

The objective of this communications strategy is to support the aims of the programme. The three principal aims are to:

- Raise overall awareness of the programme and its objectives.
- Increase uptake of individual parts of the programme
- Raise Croydon's profile as the *Enterprising Borough*.

### **Key Messages**

In achieving these aims the communications strategy will advance the following key messages:

- Enterprise is regenerating Croydon
- Croydon welcomes entrepreneurs
- Croydon's communities are key players in the programme

## **Key Audiences**

1. Residents and businesses in New Addington-Fieldway, North Croydon, Shrublands, and the Monks Hill Estate.
2. People excluded from traditional sources of support and finance, particularly BME groups

Target audiences *also* include:

- Local entrepreneurs
- Croydon businesses
- The regional business community
- Business representatives
- Politicians at national, regional, constituency and borough level
- Professional interest groups

## **Key communications tools**

A full programme of communications activity is being developed. Activities will be tailored to specific target audiences (*see draft **communications matrix**, page 5.*)

This programme will include:

- Website and intranet
- Road shows
- Attendance at community events
- Media relations, local, national, target communities
- Speaking engagements and informal contacts
- Community relations
- Branding
- Croydon Reports/newsletters
- Programme events
- Schools events and course material
- Advertising
- Media partnership

## **Detail**

Communications can be broadly split into two: work focussing on **target groups** and **target communities** and **promotion** of the overall programme.

It is expected that the council, Croydon Business Ltd and individual programme providers will all deliver programme communications. This strategy and the attached protocol will help ensure that messages are focused and consistent, regardless of who is communicating.

## **Community relations**

Good community relations is a key element in the communications programme. Support from local people and business is needed help to drive it forward. A travelling road show should support public speaking engagements undertaken by key staff. There should be key staff training to facilitate this as well as well as road show staffing.

## **Branding**

A strong brand management programme is in hand. This will include a logo and corporate identity that retains visual cues from the original bid document and launch display material. The attached *protocol* deals with its implementation.

## **Website and e-mail**

An interactive web site has been developed. Short e-mail messages will be used to update members of the council and other key partners and opinion-formers on latest developments, on an opt-in basis.

## **Your Croydon magazine and other literature**

The council magazine and other literature will be used to build on relationships and create new ones using news and features on individual programme elements and personalities

## **Events**

A three-year programme of events to promote the aims and objectives of the programme will be developed.

## **Evaluation**

A baseline assessment of awareness amongst target groups should be carried out as a matter of urgency.

We should consider other, targeted, survey mechanisms, including telephone surveys including businesspeople. Croydon Business is about to conduct a survey and it is suggested that questions on the programme be included for this assessment.

The success of this communications programme will be will be measured against targets by a number of methods, including opinion polling:

This is not intended to be a definitive list as the programme itself has yet to finalise its performance targets.

Separate targets will also need to be agreed for each individual programme initiative, as they are developed.

## Targets (Indicative)

Measure	First year target
●Media coverage/evaluation, specifically for delivery of key programme messages	tbc
●Mailbag and website response monitoring	tbc
●Attendance/responses at programme events	tbc
●Attendance at road shows	tbc
●Event evaluation forms	tbc
●Website hits, 'clickthroughs', 'unique visitors'	tbc
●Numbers of public speaking engagements for programme personnel, champions	tbc
●Raise overall awareness <i>in target areas</i> .	tbc from ??? to 30 per cent
●Raise awareness in target groups	tbc from ??? to 50 per cent
●Raise overall awareness	tbc from ??? to ??
●Awareness/take up of individual initiatives (in target areas)	tbc 80 per cent
●Key message mentions in media coverage	tbc <<at least two>> included in all coverage.
●Attendance at road shows	tbc
●National media coverage, mentions	tbc
●Local media coverage, mentions	tbc
●Website 'hits', 'clickthroughs', 'unique visitors'	tbc
●Opinion polling, awareness	
●Public speaking engagements for principals	tbc
●Numbers signing up for email updates	tbc
●Numbers of 'programme champions' on database	tbc

### Communications matrix (Indicative)

Audience	Principal comms tool	Timing	Action
1. Target communities, geographical	Road shows, events, local media, <i>Croydon Reports</i>		
2. Target communities, BME	Road shows, events, specialist media, talks		
3. Regional business communities and their representatives	Targeted briefings, specialist media		
4. Local (potential) entrepreneurs	Road shows, face to face, trade events, advertising		
5. Local businesses	Targeted briefings		
6. Government, local regional and national	Targeted briefings, specialist media		
7. Local and national opinion formers (individuals)	Targeted briefings, letters, email, specialist media		
8. Professional interest groups	Targeted briefings, specialist media, email		
9. Ward councillors	Road shows, events, specialist media		
10. Other key partners (inc. LSP members)	Specialist media, briefings, email, board updates		
11. Residents and businesses not targeted	<i>Croydon Reports</i> , local media, <i>Croydon housing magazine</i>		
12. Local government opinion formers	Targeted briefings, specialist media		
13. Community leaders	Talks,		
14. Local opinion formers	Talks		
15.			

## KEY MESSAGES

- Enterprise is regenerating Croydon
- Croydon welcomes entrepreneurs
- Croydon's communities are key players in the programme
- It aims to reduce business failures.
- It is a new way of encouraging enterprise to revitalise neighbourhoods.
- This is a partnership between Croydon Council and the business community, working with Croydon Business Ltd.
- Target geographic areas are New Addington-Fieldway, North Croydon. Shrublands, and the Monks Hill Estate.
- Croydon as a whole will benefit.
- Target communities are those excluded from traditional sources of support and finance, particularly BME groups
- Local businesses and community organisations will be commissioned to deliver many programme initiatives
- It is about skills and opportunities
- The programme is about investment, not grants.
- Target areas will be connected with new town centre opportunities
- It is a perfect fit with other council-led business supply initiatives.

## ***Croydon Enterprise***

### **Communications protocol between Croydon Council, Croydon Business Ltd and their agents**

Overall executive responsibility for communications rests jointly with Croydon Council's Divisional Director Partnership, Business and Community and the CEO of Croydon Business Ltd.

This protocol seeks to regulate the new corporate identity. As this has yet to be agreed, this protocol is principally concerned with ground rules.

All visual material, whether electronic or print should also carry the logo, at a size and prominence to be agreed.

'Partner' and 'contractor' projects must credit the programme, either using the logo or the programme name.

- Supported by <<programme name>>
- Another <<programme name>>

#### **Share of 'voice'**

The overall effect of all communications, visually and in written content, must be that equal weight and impact is given to Croydon Council and Croydon Business Ltd. This does not *necessarily* mean that *all* communications must give equal space and prominence to the council and Croydon Business Ltd, but their cumulative effect must leave no doubt that the programme is a partnership between the council and businesses, facilitated through Croydon Business Ltd.

- See '*Who delivers?*' later.

#### **Communications 'style'**

Programme communications should be 'professional' and 'businesslike' in appearance and use of language, but should also appeal to its audiences. These are the terms that reflect the overall approach of the programme. Hyperbole is never appropriate.

#### **Communications partnerships (Internal)**

##### **Croydon Council, Croydon Business Ltd**

The programme is a partnership, and this should be reflected in all communications, (see *Corporate Identity* and other references in this paper).

For this reason, all communications should be approached in the same spirit. This means that Croydon Business Ltd and Croydon Council should collaborate on *all* communications from concept onwards and share all drafts and ideas.

This does NOT necessarily mean that every communication must be joint. Early planning discussions should determine whether communications should be joint or solus. The overall, cumulative effect, however, must be to give partners equal 'voice'.

'Communications' includes all media briefings, as well as PR activity, press releases, web presence, events and so on.

### **Who delivers?**

Programme partners have a responsibility to communicate the programme, help raise its profile and ensure a correct image is maintained.

Day to day responsibility for communications rests with the programme communications manager <<to be appointed, confirmed>>

### **Media relations**

Media communications will be issued jointly and separately, as appropriate. Drafts will be shared between the partners at the earliest stage.

All council media communications will be issued through the Council's corporate press office. All Croydon Business media communications will be issued from Croydon Business Ltd.

All 'off diary' media relations to be handled, as appropriate, by the <programme communications manager>.

Where issues demand a political response, this should be coordinated and led by the Council's press office. Where issues demand a commercial/business response, this should be led by Croydon Business.

Political responses should be avoided so far as possible, to avoid giving the impression that this programme is directly managed by politicians.

For media responses to awkward, damaging or controversial issues, the <programme communications manager> will consult executives and Croydon Council's press office to agree a response, and who should deliver it.

As a partnership, joint quotes or responses may often be appropriate. However ALL partners should share responsibility – it would be completely inappropriate if responses to all negative issues were to come from one partner only.

Croydon Business and identified council communications specialists should be able to brief on the programme, subject to the usual safeguards.

### **The public face of the programme**

Many people will contribute to the success of programme communications; but few will speak for it. This approach will ensure clarity and the proper association with faces and the organisations they represent.

Visible, attributable 'spokespeople' should be restricted to the CEO of Croydon Business and the Programme Director. Broadly-speaking, both will be singing from the same hymn sheet, but the broad split, yet to be finessed, should be divided according to a 'client-contractor' model. This should help give some clarity to our audiences.

The <programme communications manager> should be able to brief, and speak for, both the programme director and CEO Croydon Business, subject to the council press office's established ground rules (*see Media Relations.*)

Communications will be a key responsibility for both post-holders and both should be prepared to devote appropriate time to this role. This should include appropriate public speaking engagements, sought by council and CB comms staff. This should include appropriate joint opportunities.

Of course the council remains the accountable body, so the Leader and Council CEO have key roles, but these should be tightly limited to appropriate national forums and other strategic opportunities.