

Subject: Update from Chris Philp MP – Friends of India, Purley Skyscraper, High Streets and more

From: Chris Philp MP <chris.philp.mp@parliament.uk>

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To: [REDACTED]

Local News from Chris Philp MP



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Dear All,

Here is an update on various things which might be of interest.

Conservative Friends of India

Anyone with an interest in India is welcome to come to a Conservative Friends of India evening with Priti Patel MP, former Secretary of State for Overseas Development. It is at Archbishop Tennison's High School, Selborne Road, Croydon CR0 5JQ at 7:00pm Thursday this week, 21st March. Please RSVP by replying to this email.

Another Purley Skyscraper Update

The Purley Skyscraper Enquiry process is set to begin all over again following a Judicial Review in the High Court. Croydon's Labour-run Council used taxpayers' money to fight the decision to deny planning consent. This does not mean that the skyscraper now has planning consent – the whole Public Enquiry process will start again and is likely take a year or more. I will fight the skyscraper again through a new Enquiry and I hope that everyone who fought so hard against it before will continue to do so.

Business Rates Cut for High Street Shops Coming in April

A campaign started by Purley shopkeepers has led to a business rates cut for every small shop in the country that will take effect in April. About a year ago, a number of shopkeepers from Purley met with me and raised the question of high business rates, especially when faced with competition from firms such as Amazon. I then lobbied the Chancellor repeatedly on this point.

As a result, the Chancellor announced that business rates will be cut by 1/3rd for all smaller shops with a rateable value under £51,000 across the UK – this covers pretty much all high street shops. At the same time, the largest online companies like Amazon will have to pay £400m per year in a Digital Services Tax from 2020. The Business Rates cut for small shops will be effective in just a few weeks' time, in April. This should really help High Streets across the country – all thanks to a campaign started by Purley shopkeepers.

Simon Cripps of the Purley Business Improvement District said, "Local traders are really appreciative that Chris listened to our concerns about Business Rates and then lobbied the Chancellor so effectively on our behalf. I'm delighted that the Chancellor listened – it's good to know that the voice of local shopkeepers in Purley is being heard in Downing Street."

Planning

Croydon's Labour-run council has been granting planning permissions indiscriminately. Over 90% of all applications are getting approved by the Committee. In particular, they are routinely allowing family housing to be destroyed and replaced with small blocks of flats. Please fill in my petition on this if you have not already, and forward it to friends and neighbours: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CroydonPlanning

Croydon Council Fails to Bid for High Streets Funds in the South

Croydon Council has not made a single bid for Government funding to help High Streets in the south of the Borough. The Government currently has a total of £675 million available for local authorities like Croydon to bid on as part of its "Future High Streets" Fund to improve High Streets. Our Labour-run council has made three bids for high streets in the north of the Borough. I am very disappointed that they have once again ignored the south of the Borough.

Jobs Figures and Minimum Wage

Figures recently out from the Office for National Statistics show that unemployment is at a 40 year low at just 4% and wages are rising faster (3.3% per year) than inflation (1.8% per year). 3.4 million new jobs have been created since 2010, 75% of which are full time. Only 3% of all jobs are in "zero hours" contracts.

In a few weeks, the national minimum wage will go up again from £7.93 an hour to £8.21 an hour. Since 2010, it has gone up by 38% – from £5.93 an hour in 2010 to £8.21 an hour. Combined with the increase in the personal allowance, somebody who works full time on the minimum wage is 44% better off after tax. Given that inflation was 25% during this period, that's a significant increase in real term wages for those on lower incomes.

30 million working people have also benefitted from the increase in personal allowance – the amount you can earn tax free. This has gone up from £6,745 in 2010 to £12,500 from April this year – saving working people around £1,200 each in tax every year.

First Time Buyers

I am very keen to help first time buyers get on the property ladder. Here is a question I asked in Parliament about this recently:



Tackling Knife Crime

I recently discussed Police funding in the context of knife crime with Andrew Neil on *Politics Live*:



Social Media Responsibility

Social Media companies need to do more to assist Police with criminal investigations. I asked

the Prime Minister about this in Parliament recently (warning: this clip references an extremely distressing case):



The Great Croydon 5k

The Lily Pad Appeal are organising a five kilometre sponsored walk at 10am on 5 May. The sponsored walk will be to help raise £750,000 for a state-of-the-art Children's Oncology Unit for Croydon University Hospital (Mayday).

If you would like to take part in this important fundraiser, there are more details here:

www.chartwellcancertrust.co.uk/lily-pad

The Great Croydon 5k Sponsored Walk will be in Lloyd Park, and entrants will be asked to pay £5.

TWiCE Campaign – Spring Forward into Financial Freedom

The TWiCE Campaign is a community interest company, dedicated to providing people advice about their financial affairs. On Friday 22 March they will be holding their *Spring Forward in Financial Freedom* event. This will be at 7pm at Project B, Croydon, CR0 1RE. This is an event for learning more about how to make money work for you and to get useful hints and tips.

Tickets are available here – twice-campaign.eventbrite.co.uk

I hope this update is useful. Further information is available at www.chrisphilp.com.

Best wishes,

Chris



Chris Philp

Member of Parliament for Croydon South

P.S. You can keep up with what I've been doing from day to day at www.chrisphilp.com



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