

MARKETS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28 January 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Markets Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Wednesday, 28 January 2015 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

John Scott (Chairman)	Michael Hudson
Hugh Morris (Deputy Chairman)	Edward Lord
Alex Bain-Stewart	Professor John Lumley
Nicholas Bensted-Smith	Wendy Mead
Revd Dr William Campbell-Taylor	Deputy Joyce Nash
Deputy John Chapman	Graham Packham
Karina Dostalova	Adam Richardson
Deputy Stanley Ginsburg	Deputy Dr Giles Shilson
Alderman Timothy Hailes	Angela Starling
Brian Harris	James Tumbridge
Tom Hoffman	Mark Wheatley

In Attendance

Officers:

Andrew Crafter	
Debbie Howard	Chamberlain
Malcolm Macleod	
Nigel Shepherd	
David Smith	
Julie Smith	
James Goodsell	Town Clerk's Department
Julie Zhu	
Caroline Al-Beyerty	Chamberlain's Department
Gregory Moore	Town Clerk's Department
Chris Bartson-Umuliisa	Town Clerk's Department
Kay English	Department of the Built Environment
Huw Rhys Lewis	City Surveyor's Department
Donald Perry	Markets and Consumer Protection Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Christopher Boden, Alderman Charles Bowman, Christopher Hayward, Elizabeth Rogula and Ian Seaton.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

The public minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2014 were approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- That minute 7 be amended to include the word 'hours' between '35' and 'a week'
- That Adam Richardson be added to the list of Members having been present.

4. **MARKETS BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE PERIOD 2 2014/15 (AUGUST - NOVEMBER)**

Members received a report of the Director of Markets and Consumer Protection providing an update on progress made against the Business Plan of the Markets Department for Period 2 (August-November) of 2014-15.

It was noted that the Director of Markets & Consumer Protection was forecasting a year end underspend position of £193k (10%) for his City Fund and City Cash services.

The Chairman noted that long-term sickness had affected a number of individuals within the Smithfield Market Constabulary but that the situation was now described as manageable; the Director of Markets & Consumer Protection advised that the long-term sickness periods had covered a three month period and the affected individuals had now returned to work. He also confirmed that the usual Constabulary headcount at the market was 19.

In response to a query as to why August and October seemed to see more sickness absence than other months, the Director undertook to consult with his department's HR business partner to see if there were any underlying causes or if this was a normal seasonal trend.

Members also asked for an update on future occupancy at Smithfield Market once vacancies at the Poultry Market had been filled; the Director advised that he would find out what the new occupancy level would be at this point and update Members accordingly.

Members also discussed the efficacy of the charging regime associated with fire safety inspections which had been implemented at Spitalfields Market. The Superintendent advised that the scheme had been received well and witnessed a high level of take up from traders, with only two tenants yet to satisfactorily complete the inspection process.

It was noted that there was a missing full stop in paragraph 4 of the report., It was clarified that any underspends within the Billingsgate and Spitalfields Repair & Repainting Fund were returned to the reserve at the end of the year, since these were funded by the tenants' service charges. However, those

underspends relating to works at Smithfield which fell within the Additional Works Programme managed by the City Surveyor were returned to City's Cash but would normally be 'rolled over' to the following year..

Members discussed the self-surrender waste management process at Spitalfields Market and asked whether it was viable to introduce an intermediary charitable organisation so that some of the waste produce could be used for good causes. The Superintendent noted that such an arrangement already existed between individual traders and local charities, and that he encouraged representatives of such organisations to speak directly with traders, but confirmed that there was not a formal arrangement with an existing organisation that the City of London Corporation was involved with. Following debate, Members asked for legal clarification on what exactly the market could and could not do with the waste surrendered to it, with a view to clarifying what would be possible in terms of future action. The Director of Markets & Consumer Protection and the Spitalfields Superintendent agreed to look into the matter and provide clarity in due course.

In response to Members' questions around filming at the markets, it was noted that the fees received by the markets were determined by a number of factors including the duration and timing of the filming and the inconvenience caused to normal operations. The fees were negotiated individually each time, with the Public Relations Office holding corporate oversight, and were a good source of income generation. The Financial Services Director advised that charging for filming was being looked at as part of the service based review's focus in to income generating activities, as it was felt that it might be possible to further maximise revenue from this area. Following further queries, the Billingsgate Superintendent agreed to update the Committee outside the meeting on specific details regarding two particular filming/photography charges.

Resolved – That the content of the report be noted.

5. **SMITHFIELD MARKET CONDENSER WATER COOLING SYSTEM: UPDATE**

Members received a report of the City Surveyor providing an update on the performance of Smithfield Markets' Condenser Water Cooling System, which served Tenants' refrigeration equipment, and the works currently being undertaken to improve the system. The report highlighted that the performance of the condenser water cooling system since the last report in November was satisfactory.

The Chairman advised that he had requested that the penultimate paragraph of report summary be amended to note that the proposal to increase the system operating temperature was subject to consultation with the Smithfield Market Tenants Association, to make clear that a consultation process was ongoing.

Resolved – **That the content of the report be noted**

6. **CHRISTMAS 2014: SMITHFIELD MARKET TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Smithfield Market, updating on the outcome of the Traffic Management Plan at Smithfield Market for the period leading up to Christmas 2014. The Committee agreed that the plan was successful in minimising congestion and was a vast improvement on the previous year.

A Member asked the Director whether the relaxing of parking charges during Christmas 2014 had been shown to improve customer activity at the market. The Director responded by highlighting that it would be difficult and impractical to gather sufficient data to facilitate meaningful analysis and produce an auditable figure. However, anecdotal evidence indicated that the decreased costs had played a factor in encouraging trade at the market; further, the car park had been much busier than normal. The free parking had also meant that the car park barriers could be left open, thereby assisting with traffic flow and the overall traffic management strategy.

In response to a Member's query, the Traffic Manager undertook to provide further clarity as to the training undertaken by car park attendants and any relevant accreditation held.

The Committee noted the reputational benefits of the free parking and the well-implemented traffic plan, and it was agreed that Members should receive an update on the efficacy of the Traffic Management Plan each year.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

7. **REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS - COMPARISON BETWEEN ORIGINAL 2014/15 AND LATEST APPROVED BUDGET 2014/15**

Members received a joint report of the Chamberlain and Director of Markets and Consumer Protection which had been prepared following a request by Members to receive more detail as to the variances between the original budget for 2014/15 and the latest approved budget, agreed by the Committee at its 26 November 2014 meeting.

The Chairman thanked the Chamberlain for responding to the Committee's concerns, advising that he and the Deputy Chairman had met with the Financial Services Director to agree that all future items which impacted on the budget would now state the individual as well as the cumulative impact, to help Members track movement between budgets.

The Financial Services Director confirmed that the intention of the original report template had been to simplify the way in which information was presented, but noted that this approach had sometimes made it more difficult for Members to track movement of individual items across budgets. As a result, this new version agreed with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman would also be implemented for other Committees, so as to provide consistency and clarity for Members.

Resolved – **That the report be noted.**

8. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

New Covent Garden

A Member noted that New Covent Garden Market had recently published plans which suggested that it was intending to expand the range of wares currently sold. In response, the Director of Markets & Consumer Protection reassured Members that his department enjoyed a good relationship with New Covent Garden management and had been fully appraised of the plans; he also confirmed that there was no suggestion that New Covent Garden Market had any intention to create a meat or a fish market as part of their redevelopment on a smaller site.

Caterers at Guildhall

A Member advised that she was aware of a catering company engaged in a forthcoming event at Guildhall that did not source produce from the City Markets, asking what could be done to encourage such companies to use Market produce. The Director of Markets & Consumer Protection assured Members that the Remembrancer was diligent in encouraging those companies on the eligible caterers list to source ingredients from the Markets and did so wherever possible.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

West Poultry Avenue

The Deputy Chairman reported back to the Committee on his recent visit to the vaults below West Poultry Avenue, where he had inspected the structure of the vaults so as to gain an understanding as to whether there was scope to alter the usage of the road above.

It was advised that the nature of the vaults was fundamentally different to those on adjoining tunnels, making any works difficult; further, the way in which electrical wiring was secured meant that any works would be extremely time-consuming and, consequently, given the very limited amount of time that work could be conducted within the tunnel, the cost could be prohibitive.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act as follows:-

Item	Paragraph
11-15	3

11. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The non-public minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2014 were approved as a correct record, subject to one amendment.

12. **WRITE-OFF OF BAD DEBT**

Members considered and agreed a report seeking approval to write-off a bad debt, subject to the concurrence of the Finance Committee, under the provisions of Standing Order 53(1)(c).

Resolved - That the write-off of bad debt detailed in the report be approved.

13. **DEBT ARREARS MARKETS - PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2014**

Members received a report from the Director of Markets and Consumer Protection informing of invoiced income raised and outstanding as of 31 December 2014.

Resolved – That the report be received and its content noted.

14. **TENANCIES AT WILL AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Members received a regular report on Tenancies at Will that have been granted at the City of London's Wholesale Markets and on lease assignments.

Resolved – That the report be received and its content noted.

15. **NON PUBLIC APPENDIX TO THE 'SMITHFIELD WATER CONDENSER COOLING SYSTEM – UPDATE'**

These were the non-public appendices associated with Item No. 5 and were considered in conjunction with that item.

16. **NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was one urgent item.

The meeting ended at 12.58 pm

Chairman

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