

Committee(s): Markets	Date: 6 March 2019
Subject: Smithfield Market – Car Park Utilisation in 2018 and Christmas 2018	Public
Report of: Interim Director of Consumer Protection & Market Operations	For Information
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Summary

This update report informs Members about the utilisation of Smithfield Market Car Park during the recent Christmas Traffic Plan period covering six nights between the 13th/14th December and 20th/21st December 2018.

The September Markets Committee approved the Smithfield Market Tenants' Association request for concessionary parking for this period and the provision of traffic marshals. Your Committee agreed expenditure of £14,284 to meet this request.

Recommendation(s)

Members are invited to note the contents of this report.

Main Report

Background

1. Concessionary rates for parking at the Smithfield Rotunda car park during the busy Christmas trading period has been a feature of traffic management plans at the market for a number of years. At the February 2019 Markets Committee, the Chairman requested that a written report on traffic and car parking volumes at the market be presented to Committee; this report fulfils that remit.
2. Introducing concessionary rates at the Market delivers two distinct advantages. Firstly, to ease traffic congestion and the consequent noise and pollution in the immediate surrounding area and secondly to encourage trade and support Smithfield as a central pillar and contributor to a thriving economy.
3. In 2018 the car park typically reached peak occupancy levels between 0700-0900hrs on a weekday morning when 50% of the 520 available spaces were

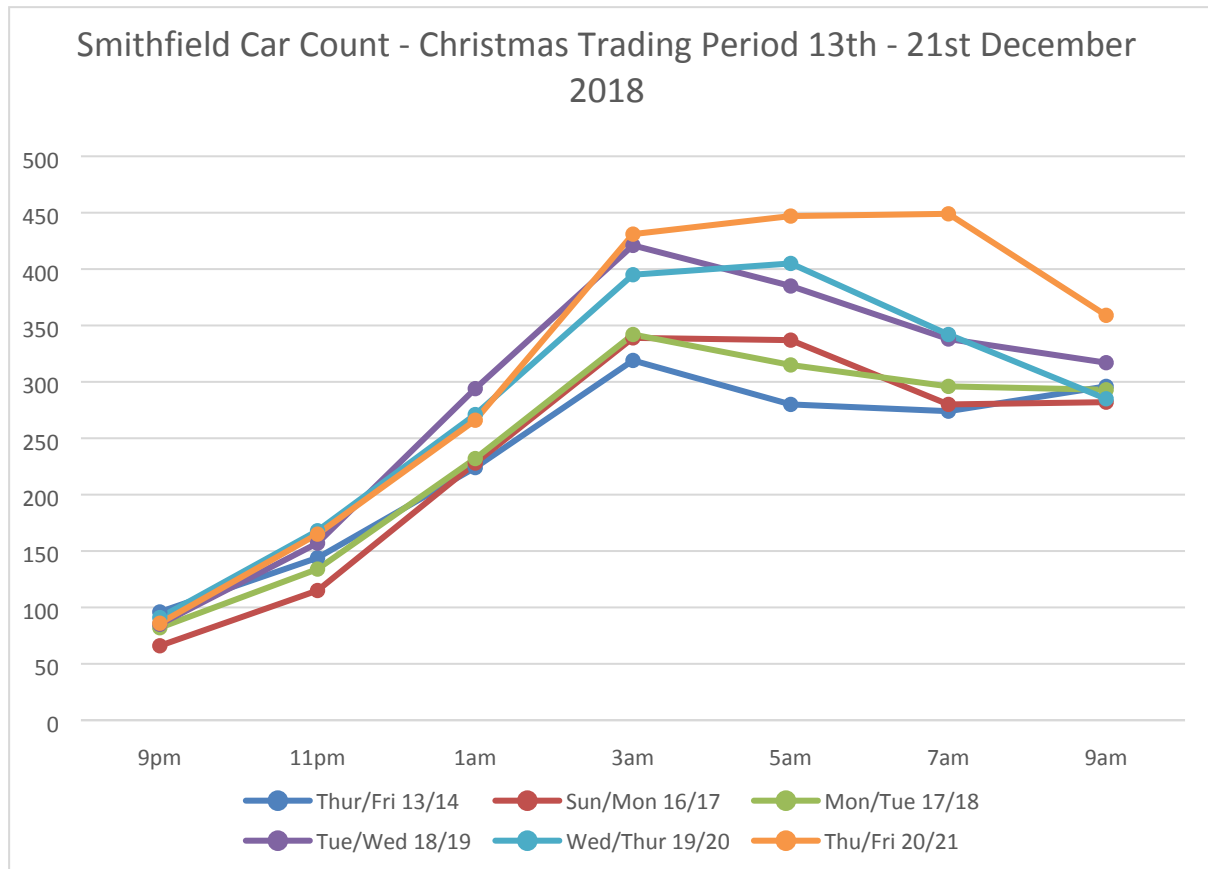
used. This rises to approximately 70% on a Friday and falls to 15% on a Sunday.

4. The make-up of usage by ticket holder across an average week is 65% hourly ticket and 35% pass card. This is subject to seasonal and trade variations during the day and weekly 24-hour period.

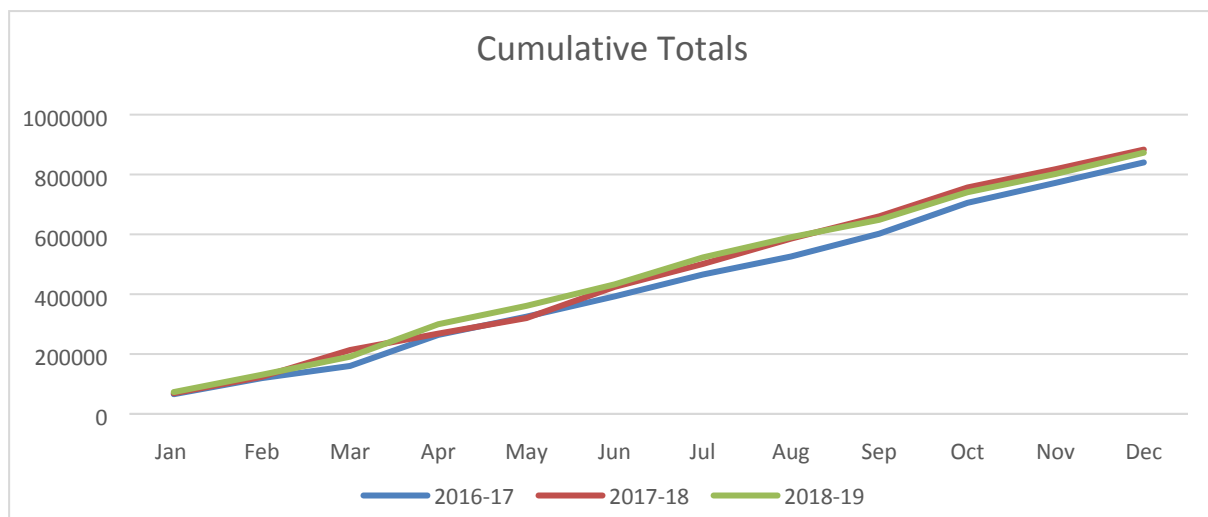
Current Position

5. Trade was busy and the traffic management plan worked very well for six nights which started on Thursday 13th December and finished on Friday 21st December.
6. The only unforeseen complication which significantly affected traffic flows around the Market, was the closure of Farringdon Street down to Ludgate Circus (south of the Market) for the whole period due to a major water main burst. This saw HGVs arriving from different smaller arterial roads which challenged some of the road closures. The traffic stewards and Constabulary dealt well with these issues when they arose.
7. With good teamwork between the Market Security team, SFM Traffic stewards and to a lesser extent the City Police, traffic generally flowed well around the Market and there was no significant traffic gridlock.
8. The car park was utilised well across the free parking periods but never reached capacity of 510 vehicles which happened last Christmas. Peak occupancy was reached on the evening of 20/21st December with 449 vehicles.
9. Across the five weekdays preceding Christmas, car park usage was up 14% based on last year, but this was spread more evenly across those days, owing to the Market being open on the preceding weekend and Christmas eve 22nd to 24th December. The last day of free parking this year was the 20/21st December.

10. The graph below shows the level of usage during the Christmas 2018 period.



11. Fixed Penalty notices issued across the midweek 5 day period numbered 270, compared to 227 last Christmas.
12. The following graph indicates the income stream for the car park with cumulative totals to date since January 2016 to the end of December 2018.



13. Income to the end of December for Smithfield in 2018 was slightly down on 2017 by approximately £11,000 although income for the concession month of December was up £5,500 compared to December 2017. A further increase to the hourly tariff from April 2019 (approved at February Committee) should complement revenue streams further.
14. During 2018, as in previous years, the true cost of the Christmas concession is based on both assessed and reported revenue across the whole prior year. At Christmas, without operational barriers being lowered (they are often raised for long periods to aid traffic flow in the car park and the surrounding roads), it is not possible to capture or accurately assess true occupancy levels for the concession period in question.

Conclusion

15. It is not possible to accurately quantify forgone revenue as a result of the concession. A major unknown is the number of vehicles that left or entered the car park across the 12-hour manual count period, or how many vehicles stayed for more than 3 hours. Any estimate would be subjective and not likely to be highly accurate.

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