

MARKETS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 26 May 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Virtual Markets Committee held on
Wednesday, 26 May 2021 at 11.30 am

Members Present:

John Chapman (Chairman)
Deputy Henry Pollard (Deputy Chairman)
Caroline Addy
Matthew Bell
Peter Bennett
Mark Bostock
Deputy David Bradshaw
Simon Duckworth
John Edwards
Deputy Kevin Everett
Helen Fentimen
Alderman Alison Gowman
Alderman Prem Goyal
Deputy Tom Hoffman
Michael Hudson
Deputy Henry Jones
Wendy Mead
Deputy Robert Merrett
Deputy Brian Mooney (Chief Commoner)
John Petrie
Deputy Elizabeth Rogula
Ian Seaton
Deputy Dr Giles Shilson
James Tumbridge
Deputy Philip Woodhouse
Dawn Wright

Officers in attendance:

Jon Averbs	- Director of Markets & Consumer Protection
Donald Perry	- Markets & Consumer Protection
Daniel Ritchie	- Markets & Consumer Protection
Mark Sherlock	- Markets & Consumer Protection
Debbie Howard	- Markets & Consumer Protection
Peter Young	- City Surveyor's Department
Anna Dunne	- City Surveyor's Department
Steven Chandler	- City Surveyor's Department
Simon Owen	- Chamberlain's Department
Leyla Dervish	- Chamberlain's Department
Andrew Fothergill	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Antoinette Duhaney	- Town Clerk's Department

ONE MINUTE SILENCE

At the start of the meeting, the Committee observed a one minute silence as a mark of respect, following the death of Alderman Sir Roger Gifford.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Nicholas Bensted-Smith and Deputy John Scott.

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

There were no declarations.

3. PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the public minutes of the meeting held on 10 March and 5 May 2021 be approved as a correct record.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LOG

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk tracking progress on actions outstanding from previous meetings.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and completed actions removed.

5. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES

The Committee heard oral updates from the Markets Superintendents on the matters set out below.

Smithfield

Trade - Trade was generally returning with a more noticeable increase in activity since the last government easing of COVID controls on 17th May 2021. Wholesale trade had increased significantly but retail trade was quieter. Traders were hopeful that in the coming weeks and months, trade would return to similar pre-pandemic trade levels. The Lord Mayor would be visiting the market on 10th June 2021 and local businesses were also re-opening but were noticeably less busy due to the reduced footfall of office workers.

COVID-19 – COVID-19 risks were being managed appropriately and the Market had opened a Public Health approved Lateral Flow Test facility for all Corporation staff, approved by Hackney Public Health. Free lateral flow test kits were also available for all Market staff upon request.

HGV Audit – Following the audit on 21st March 2021 which identified 13% non-compliance, an improvement audit was carried out on 3rd May which indicated 8% non-compliance. The importance of full compliance had been reiterated and letters had been sent to traders reminding them of their obligations to perform safe HGV tenant banksman controlled deliveries.

In response to questions from Members, Officers reported that Climate Change considerations were reflected in the Departmental Business Plan.

Billingsgate

COVID-19 - Traders were being encouraged to take regular Lateral Flow Tests and home testing kits were being distributed among traders and their staff. Public Health guidance was being followed in respect of social distancing, face coverings, limiting numbers on the market floor, enhanced cleaning procedures and provision of PPE for staff. The market was also hosting a COVID-19 Mobile testing Unit 3-4 days per week on behalf of Tower Hamlets Council.

Trade - Tenants had generally reported a slight increase in trade as lockdown restrictions gradually eased and it appeared that Brexit had not significantly impacted trade.

Filming - The site remained popular with filming companies and requests were being accommodated wherever possible. Officers were cautiously optimistic that this will generate beyond expectations in 2021/22.

Service Charges - Regrettably there was an under recovery of 0.85% of the service charge budget or £20,362.12 at Billingsgate in 2020/21. This was due to the significant impact of COVID-19 on trade and reduced car parking income owing to less vehicles entering the site. There was a shortfall of car park income of £38,656 for 2020/21.

New Spitalfields

Trade – Vehicle numbers for April 2021 were down 30% compared to the same period in 2020 but there had been a gradual month on month increase during 2021 thus far. Vehicle numbers had increased by 15% between March and April 2021 and a further increase was expected following further easing of restriction on 17th May 2021. Catering trade had increased to 30% of pre pandemic levels and cafes were now able to offer indoor dining.

Brexit – There was no significant impact in April 2021 due to deferred customs declarations for up to 6 months and most import checks had been pushed back to January 2022.

COVID-19 – All Public Health and Government guidance was being followed and CoL staff, on-site waste contractors and tenants and their staff had been issued with lateral flow test kits.

Air Quality – subject to confirmation from the Spitalfields Markets Tenants Association (SpMTA), new regulations were being implemented for the use of electric forklifts within the market pavilion only. These new regulations would be implemented over a 3-year period to December 2024 by which time all tenants must use electric forklifts in preparation for the move to the new site at Dagenham Dock.

Pedestrian gate and turnstile - The gate and turnstile had been in operation since 11th May 2021. Initial teething issues had been addressed and the system was fully operational supporting security and safety on the site.

In response to questions from Members, Officers reported that the Climate Strategy targets were being actively supported and the market was working towards zero landfill waste.

RESOLVED – That the updates be noted.

6. MARKETS BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE PERIOD 3 2020/21 (DECEMBER 2020 - MARCH 2021)

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Markets & Consumer Protection providing an update on progress made during Period 3 (December-March) of 2020/21 against the key performance indicators (KPIs) and key improvement objectives.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. WHOLESALE MARKET RISKS UPDATE

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Markets & Consumer Protection outlining management procedures in place to meet the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. SMITHFIELD MARKET CAR PARK UTILISATION: APRIL 2020 - MARCH 2021

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Markets & Consumer Protection providing utilisation data on Smithfield Market Car Park for the period April 2020 to March 2021.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

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

There were no questions.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

11. 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:-

Items	Paragraph
12-20	3

12. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The non-public minutes of the meetings held on 10 March & 5 May 2021 were approved as a correct record.

13. **SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES**

The Committee considered an oral report from the Superintendents on non-public matters.

14. **SMITHFIELD MARKET - POULTRY MARKET LETTING OF FIRST FLOOR OFFICES NUMBERED 202-203**

The Committee considered a report of the City Surveyor in respect of the letting of office space.

15. **MARKETS DEBT ARREARS FOR PERIOD ENDING 30TH APRIL 2021**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Markets & Consumer Protection highlighting arrears of invoiced income.

16. **TENANCIES AT WILL AND ASSIGNMENTS**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Markets & Consumer Protection reporting on Tenancies at Will that have been granted at the City of London's Wholesale Markets and on lease assignments.

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

There were no questions.

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

The Committee considered one item of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 12.58 pm

Chairman

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