

Committee(s):		Date(s):
Markets Board	For information	9 November 2022
Subject:		Public
General Manager (GM) Updates		

Briefing Note

Smithfield Market

1. Following the fork lift truck accident in early July, a series of phased improvement measures have been implemented in the Poultry Market covered and service ways by way of a Poultry Market Traffic Management Plan (TMP) which has been developed in detailed consultation with the Corporate Health & Safety team. The TMP details the traffic management arrangements in place to meet this duty and ensure that the Market is safe for people in the Market and the vehicles using it, the traffic routes are suitable for the people and vehicles using it and where vehicles and pedestrians share a traffic route, there is adequate separation.

Focus areas have been safe site design within the constraints of the existing building structure, pedestrian segregation, vehicle segregation and traffic routes, pedestrian and vehicle driver line of sight visibility, speed limits and lighting. Safe site activity covers reversing and the use of banksmen, designated parking spaces and loading bay operation linked to loading and unloading activity.

Improvements implemented so far have been phased into three sets of activity, to deliver improvements as quickly as possible within the timeframe set by the HSE. Phase 1 was the creation of a designated pedestrian footpath separating pedestrians as much as possible from vehicle activity at the entrances to the covered ways, additional and improved signage both inside and outside the covered ways, the creation of a one-way system in the south covered way and the mandatory wearing of PPE when operating a fork lift truck or whilst working within the confines of the covered ways. Traders must also remove all product immediately upon receipt to within their premises. The Market Constabulary team are now mandated to enforce these controls without exception. Phase 2 works were completed on the 9th October and relate to the upgrade and refresh of all pavement and highway hazard markings around the entire Market. Phase 3 and the final activity set of the action plan encompasses a raft of highway and operational zone demarcation safety controls and road/pavement markings, setting specific areas for vehicles, fork lift trucks and pedestrian and product movements. The Corporation highway contractor (Conways) is tasked with delivering

these final works by the 30th October in advance of officers making their formal response of actions to the HSE.

A working group with representatives from all three Markets, the Director, Corporate H&S team and the tenants' association continues to meet every two weeks to oversee the action plan, and officers meet weekly to review all action tasks and progress against that plan. The TMP will then become an improved integral part of the Market's site rules.

2. TOM recruitment is almost concluded at Smithfield with the recent appointment of a new Security Manager, an administration team leader and an administration assistant. One vacancy for a constabulary officer remains before the Market is up to full staff compliment.
3. Energy – electricity prices will increase by approximately 48% for the period October to May 2023. Beyond that, price increases are not currently forecast due to the continuing volatility in the energy markets. The power purchase agreement has helped alleviate some of market forces cost increases (approximately a 112% increase without PPA) but the 48% increase is dependent upon the solar farm connection to the grid later this year.
4. Cleaning – no items of note.

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Billingsgate Market

1. Cleaning

Members will recall that at your last Board meeting I advised that I had received a written complaint lamenting the cleanliness of the market. I advised that the issues had been exacerbated by the summer recess and staff vacancies being covered by agency staff. I have completed a round of recruitment and offered four posts to cover the five positions advertised. Regrettably one turned down the offer. I have also received a further resignation and will look to recruit to these roles in the very near term.

Whilst I have received no further written complaints, I accept that cleaning standards are a priority for our tenants and all stakeholders at the market.

2. Staffing

Further to the above, there are also vacancies in our constabulary which we are in the process of recruiting to. Billingsgate has an establishment of 36 so recruitment to positions is a constant process. We have been unable to recruit to the Electrician post within the maintenance team recently but plan to go out to advert again shortly.

3. Energy

The impact of dramatically increasing prices is beginning to be felt by some tenants. The data we collect locally indicates that the trend line for energy use on the service charge continues to fall, though for individual tenants it continues to rise slightly. The energy team have visited site in October to investigate further efficiencies that could be made. They have offered to deliver a workshop/seminar for tenants on practical tips they can use to minimise energy use and I have spoken with the LFMA Chairman about arranging a date for this.

4. Health & Safety

All accidents continue to be recorded and investigated promptly in line with City of London Corporation standards. Our local H&S team continue to meet quarterly with the support of tenants, Trade Unions and other stakeholders.

Billingsgate Market:

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New Spitalfields Market

1. General Updates

On Friday 9th September we hosted a delegation from Uganda that were in London for a UK-Uganda investment conference. Many of the group were involved in the export of flowers, fruit & veg and wanted to discuss the Ugandan produce sold at the market as well as the benefits and challenges that come with importing from there. The traders were very forthcoming with information and the group found the visit very productive.

Michael Janis, General Manager of San Francisco Wholesale Market came for a site tour on Thursday 6th October. They are currently redeveloping their site and considering a co-location with the San Francisco's Floral Market, and was very interested to hear about our operations, particularly waste management which differs greatly from the United States, as well as design ideas being considered for the City of London's co-location programme.

2. Staffing

We have recruited for two vacant General Maintenance Operatives who are expected to join the team on 1st December. This will relieve the pressure on the existing staff and enable us to take on additional chargeable tenant works. The Electrician post remains vacant. We are also still recruiting for 4x Market Constables, but the team are managing to deliver service standards with the use of agency staff and overtime.

3. Health and Safety

We introduced a new onsite forklift training provider to our tenants on 1st October. Our previous partner had been delivering novice and refresher courses to our tenants since 2016 so it was a welcome opportunity to review other options and to improve the offering. The new provider are a large company covering much of London and the Home Counties. They have offered competitive pricing and have opted to make improvements to the existing training area and deliver evening courses to enable workers to train before starting a long night shift (something that tenants agreed would better the quality of participation). We are hoping to be able to offer this service to the other markets' tenants once they have settled in, this will help with parity across the sites as well as providing a cost effecting service.

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