

Committee(s):		Date(s):
Markets Board	For information	17/01/24
Subject:		Public
General Manager (GM) Updates		

Briefing Note

Smithfield

Staffing - all local roles are currently filled albeit with some agency staff in the maintenance (1), cleaning (4) and security (2) functions. One of the previous maintenance operatives roles at Billingsgate has been recruited to. There were 22 applications for the position, although the standard of application was poor and the experience required not evidenced sufficiently. Four candidates were selected for interview and despite confirming their attendance in the prior days, two of the candidates did not turn up.

Cleaning - The fridge decks were cleaned in November. The protective bird netting in four areas will be cleaned and repaired in January. Once the netting has been completed and the level of bird pest activity reduces, the glass canopies above trader premises will be cleaned. All enhanced cleaning activity will be factored into more regular planned cleaning tasks in the future.

Energy - no further updates since the November Board.

Health & Safety - Since January 2023 Smithfield has reported ten accidents or incidents. Two of these were fire or life safety system related matters – a contractor damaged a sprinkler head whilst carrying out works in October and another contractor working on the new Animal By Product facility mixed the wrong ratios of resin chemicals which created an exothermic reaction creating smoke and a fire alarm activation resulting in a full evacuation of the Market. There were no injuries or lasting damage to the facility. The remaining eight events were three slips/trips/falls (non serious), one lifting/handling matter in February and four instances of verbal abuse towards staff.

Tenant Association priorities - Poultry Market vacation and operational transition. Fortnightly transition meeting are held with the TA and officers from the Markets, Projects and Highways departments. The West Smithfield road to the Market from Farringdon Street re-opened on the 30th November, the closure of the west side of East Poultry Avenue for the installation of project welfare cabins will commence from the 6th January 2024 and the remaining roof light installation to the Poultry Market at the end of December. Further stakeholder consultation meetings will be held in the New Year to address risk mitigation measures required to protect the Market condenser water cooling towers from contamination, once more invasive demolition works start on the Poultry Market in February 2024. It is likely that the

transition meetings will continue in 2024 as the London Museum project gathers pace, albeit on a less frequent basis.

There are a number of outstanding maintenance items in progress for completion in December and early January through the FM team in the City Surveyors department (CSD). These have been fast-tracked for additional funding which has recently been approved. The works relate to repairing the north barrier in Grand Avenue, bring lift 5 in the car park back into operation and the repair to floor degradation in the service corridors of both Markets. Repairs to other Market assets are taking a long time to remedy and the performance of the principle contractor (CBRE) is discussed regularly with CSD, recently resulting in the application of fines in line with the contract service agreement. CBRE are now recruiting an additional project manager to address performance and speed of response service.

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Billingsgate Market

Staffing - Following the temporary transfer of the Billingsgate Security Manager to Smithfield an internal recruitment process was completed with a temporary promotion for one of the existing Market Sergeants until the end of March 2024. This in turn created an opportunity for a Constable to step up and a suitable candidate has been appointed to cover the Sergeant position. This will allow development across the team giving valuable experience and developing resilience.

Despite a poor response to the opening for a GMO within the Maintenance team we had one suitable candidate who has been appointed and is going through the onboarding process.

A level 3 Business Administration apprentice has also joined the team at Billingsgate and is learning the required tasks and settling in well.

Cleaning - Work was undertaken during the autumn in conjunction with the Maintenance team to deal with a pest issue that had developed. An increase in rodent activity was curtailed by proofing of areas and an improved cleaning regime in the temperature-controlled area of the north canopy. In conjunction with the LFMA the storage of product in this area had new limitations introduced which enables a thorough daily clean. Duties have been reviewed across the team which have made small but valuable adjustments to service delivery. A slightly staggered start to daily shifts has meant that clearing the trade car park is better managed. There has been positive feedback from tenants on the improved cleaning regime which we continue to develop.

Energy – Billingsgate continues to perform well in energy consumption with usage falling year on year. A project to map all sub meters on site will commence in the new year to enable the facilities team to provide consistent readings to tenants.

Health & Safety - following a study by the TRA and a number of local risk assessments an action plan to tackle multiple issues at the area to the west of the market known as the Q Shops has been developed and is underway. The area is the site of a number of processing units as well as unloading bays which receive frozen product from HGVs. The primary focus is improving the separation of pedestrians and traffic and the management of this traffic. The buy in from tenants is needed as there will be changes to the way the space operates. The LFMA have raised this issue as an area of concern and their backing is vital in introducing these improvements.

Tenant Association priorities - As above. In a recent meeting the H&S around the Q shop areas was flagged as a primary concern for the Tenants' Association. Support and buy in from stakeholders will provide a safer space for their staff to work in.

At the same meeting concerns were expressed in relation to enforcement powers available to the CoL Environmental Health team and whether there is scope for devolvement from Tower Hamlets.

Ongoing concerns regarding the relocation programme are regularly expressed by a large number of tenants.

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New Spitalfields

Staffing - All vacancies within the Security team have now been filled through the latest round of interviews, all new staff will begin their roles by the end of January 2024. The vacant electrician post and vacant maintenance site lead post are filled by agency staff. Our new Level 3 Business Administration apprentice joined the team in November and is settling in well to the team.

Cleaning – No current concerns. The high-level cleaning project of the yellow steel framework inside the Market Pavillion continues to progress well and should be completed by the end of January 2024.

Energy – We are intending to enter into an agreement with an EV Charging provider in the coming weeks that will see 12 charging points being installed at no

cost to the City of London or our Market tenants while enabling us to offer a much-needed service to our tenants and visitors alike.

Health & Safety – A six-week programme of remedial repairs to the Market Pavillion roof is almost complete, these repairs were identified during an in-depth roof survey carried out in May 2023.

We are continuing in our efforts to improve the health and safety culture out on the Market. The January bulletin will focus on forklift operator safety, after we saw two entirely avoidable incidents occur in early December that could easily have led to severe injuries.

Tenant Association Priorities – The ongoing negotiations regarding the 2020 rent review of the Catering Supply Block units remains unsettled. This along with the uncertainty of the /markets involvement in the Markets Colocation Programme continue to be of concern.

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