

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD3299

Further financial support fund for Seven Sisters Market traders (2024)

Executive summary:

Seven Sisters Market (SSM) is an indoor market consisting of 37 traders. It is a specialist, culturally-specific amenity. The freehold interest in the building is owned by Transport for London (TfL). In 2012, Haringey Council granted planning permission to Grainger to redevelop the site. As part of this, Grainger would in 2021 develop a temporary market, known in the agreement as Apex Gardens, as part of the redevelopment process.

In March 2020 SSM was closed due to a failure in the power supply. It remained closed in line with national COVID-19 restrictions, after which TfL decided to pause reopening the market due to the cost. On this basis, it was not expected that SSM would reopen before Apex Gardens opened. Considering the period of closure, and the financial impact on traders' livelihoods, the Mayor directed TfL to make financial support available to traders. This was formalised under MD2724 on 30 November 2020, and payments were made to traders in December 2020.

In August 2021, Grainger withdrew from the project, including the development of Apex Gardens. Given the continued impact of the closure on traders, the Mayor further directed TfL (formalised under MD2868) to continue the provision of financial support to traders. This was provided in October 2021.

In early 2023, TfL received planning permission to develop the site. The temporary indoor and outdoor markets were due to open by July and October respectively. To support traders, a further payment was made in May 2023 (formalised under MD3097).

The opening of a temporary market has been delayed due to unforeseen flaws in the fabric of the building, which must be resolved to make the market safe; and is not now expected until 2025. It is considered appropriate that traders receive a fourth hardship payment to support them until the temporary market opens. As the financial support is outside the scope of TfL's statutory powers, a delegation of the Mayor's power is necessary to enable TfL to provide further financial assistance.

Decision:

The Mayor:

- authorises Transport for London (TfL), under section 38(1) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (the GLA Act), to exercise the Mayor's powers under sections 30 and 34 of the GLA Act to undertake the activities required by the attached Direction, in accordance with the terms of the attached Delegation
- directs TfL under section 155(1)(c) of the GLA Act in the terms of the attached Direction.

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

16/10/24

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Seven Sisters Market (SSM) is an indoor market above Seven Sisters underground station, in Tottenham. The market was inside the Wards Corner building, since vacated. The freehold interest in the building is owned by Transport for London (TfL). The indoor market consists of 37 traders and plays a vital role in London's Latin American community.
- 1.2. This is the fourth MD on the subject. As such, this introduction cross-references with the three previous decisions: MD2724 (November 2020); MD2868 (August 2021); and MD3097 (March 2023).
- 1.3. Haringey Council has long had plans to regenerate this part of the borough. In 2007 it entered into a conditional development agreement with Grainger to redevelop the site; this included a new purpose-built indoor market, comparable to the existing market. As part of this agreement, Grainger would provide a temporary market (known as Apex Gardens) whilst the existing market was redeveloped. (paragraphs 1.2 to 1.6 of MD2724 give further detail on this agreement.) Apex Gardens was expected to complete by Spring/Summer 2021. In March 2020, SSM closed due to a failure in the power supply; it remained closed in line with national COVID-19 restrictions (paragraphs 1.7 and 1.8 of MD2868 give further detail on the market's closure). Subsequently, independent surveys commissioned by TfL identified significant health and safety issues, and the building was deemed unsafe to reopen.
- 1.4. The market was expected to remain closed until Spring/Summer 2021, when Apex Gardens was expected to be completed. Considering the extent of this period, and the financial impact on the livelihoods of the traders, staff and their families, the Mayor directed TfL to make up to £500,000 in financial support available to traders for financial year 2020-21. This was formalised under MD2724 on 30 November 2020. TfL distributed a total of £486,550, comprising 37 direct payments of £13,150 on a basis agreed with the traders. This was based on the principles of an equal distribution between all those trading when the market was closed in March 2020. Further details of how these payments were distributed can be found in MD3097.
- 1.5. On 5 August 2021, Grainger confirmed that it would not proceed with the Seven Sisters regeneration project, including the installation of the temporary market at Apex Gardens. TfL then began progressing plans for a separate temporary market, which would enable the traders to return to the market safely.
- 1.6. The quantum of financial support provided by TfL in late 2020 was based on traders relocating to Apex Gardens in June 2021 and being able to trade again, which did not happen. In recognition of the further delay to traders returning to the market, the Mayor directed TfL to make a another payment of up to £500,000 in financial support available to traders. This was formalised under MD2868 on 31 August 2021, and covered financial year 2021-22. The second payment was made in October 2021, on the same basis as the first (37 payments of £13,150 made to the same list of traders).
- 1.7. In 2022, TfL received planning permission for temporary indoor and outdoor markets. The indoor market was due to open in July 2023, and the outdoor market in October 2023. A further payment to support the traders was made in May 2023, approved in MD3097.
- 1.8. TfL has now faced further delays in the opening of the temporary market, due to unforeseen flaws in the fabric of the building. These must be resolved in order to make the buildings surrounding the market safe; work is ongoing in this regard. Reflecting this continuing delay to the provision of the temporary market, TfL proposes to provide further direct financial assistance to the affected traders.
- 1.9. The Mayor is invited to direct TfL to provide further direct financial assistance to the market traders; TfL has indicated its agreement to provide such assistance. As the provision of the financial support is outside the scope of TfL's statutory powers, a delegation of the Mayor's power is also necessary.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. Markets such as SSM provide variety, diversity, history and character; and offer a breadth of products and services that local people need and depend on. These types of markets also bring footfall to London's high streets and town centres from further afield. SSM plays a vital role in London's Latin American community and provides a range of specialist products that are difficult to obtain elsewhere in London.
- 2.2. The financial support provided under MD2724, MD2868 and MD3097 helped protect the market by supporting traders financially while they were unable to trade. Given Grainger's withdrawal from the project, and the unavoidable time it has taken for TfL to progress plans for a separate temporary market, traders now require further support to ensure the market remains protected.
- 2.3. Robust criteria were developed to ensure best value and fair allocation of funds approved under MD2724. These were also applied to subsequent requests (MD2868 and MD3097). The same process will be followed for the distribution of funds, should this decision be approved. The total value of further financial support across all traders is up to £500,000.
- 2.4. The situation at SSM is unique, with TfL acting as landlord; and with Haringey Council and the Greater London Authority (GLA) both having made specific commitments to preserve SSM as part of the area's redevelopment. This commitment recognises SSM's status as a specialist, culturally specific amenity. This further financial package delivers on the Mayor's and TfL's commitment to assist in safeguarding the market's future via a payment for a fourth financial year.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act), as a public authority, in carrying out his functions the Mayor must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty. Protected characteristics under the Equality Act are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage or civil partnership status (the duty in respect of this last characteristic is to eliminate unlawful discrimination only). In line with best practice, the impact on groups who also have the potential to be socially excluded (in this case, people on low incomes or from deprived communities) has also been considered – notwithstanding that these specific attributes are not protected under the Equality Act, but may be common to people with protected characteristics.
- 3.2. The proposed financial assistance to support traders will assist in preserving a vital community amenity, which showcases London's diversity and participates in the local economic vitality of Seven Sisters. The market housed 37 traders, the majority of whom are from the Latin American community; and served as a meeting place for the Latin American community. This decision will help support the preservation of this community asset.

4. Other considerations

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.1. The importance of local markets is recognised in the Mayor's report, 'Understanding London's Markets' (2017). The report highlights that markets sit at the heart of London's communities and local places, and offer a range of economic, social and environmental benefits. Markets provide variety, diversity, history and character; offer a breadth of products and services that local people need and depend on; and bring footfall to London's high streets and town centres.

- 4.2. Small independent traders (such as those at SSM) provide good social value, being based in places where Londoners can: positively interact and connect with others; share experiences; get involved in their local community; volunteer; and start businesses. Being within a short walk or cycle of such places brings clear health and environmental benefits, and a boost to wellbeing from being connected to the community. Support to SSM is in line with the London Partnership Board's High Streets for All mission, which aimed to transform cities into greener and more people-friendly places; and to create thriving, inclusive and resilient high streets and town centres, with culture, diverse shops and jobs within walking distance of all Londoners.
- 4.3. The Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) recognises that land around stations creates the opportunity for mixed-use places that are well connected to local amenities; and to jobs and locations further afield. Local amenities also enable people to access the services they need by walking, cycling and public transport. This supports the MTS ambition for 80 per cent of journeys to be made by active and sustainable modes by 2041.
- 4.4. The London Plan policy 4.8 sets out the need to support the range of London's markets, complementing other measures to improve their management; enhance their offer; and contribute to the vitality of town centres. In addition, the Mayor's Market Toolkit, published in 2019, provides guidance and practical advice on recording and demonstrating the value and impact of markets.

Risks

- 4.5. If further unforeseen challenges are found during the construction phase, there is a risk that the temporary market could take longer to complete than expected. TfL will work closely with all stakeholders including Haringey Council to mitigate this risk, and open the temporary market at the earliest opportunity. The continued support and cooperation of all traders will be needed to move forward TfL's proposals for a temporary market.

Consultations and impact assessments

- 4.6. The GLA has consulted TfL regarding the delegation and direction. TfL's comments have been considered in the preparation of the draft direction.
- 4.7. No officer involved in the drafting or clearing of this Mayoral Decision has any interests to declare.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is sought to direct TfL to make £500,000 available to SSM traders, as further financial support needed due to SSM's ongoing closure and further delays in the opening of the temporary market.
- 5.2. There are no direct financial consequences for the GLA arising from this decision.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. Section 30 of the GLA Act gives the GLA a general power to do anything which it considers will further one or more of the principal purposes of the GLA. The principal purposes, as set out in section 30(2) are:
 - promoting economic development and wealth creation in Greater London
 - promoting social development in Greater London
 - promoting the improvement of the environment in Greater London.

- 6.2. Section 34 of the GLA Act allows the GLA to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of any of its functions (including the functions under section 30).

Delegation of Mayoral powers

- 6.3. TfL's own statutory powers do not extend to the provision of the proposed financial support. Section 38 of the GLA Act provides that any function exercisable on behalf of the GLA by the Mayor shall also be exercisable on behalf of the GLA by TfL (as well as other bodies or persons specified in subsection (2)). The Mayor may impose conditions on any such delegation. This decision invites the Mayor to delegate powers under sections 30 and 34 of the GLA Act to TfL, so that TfL has the necessary powers to comply with the attached Direction.
- 6.4. Section 38(7) of the GLA Act gives TfL the power to exercise any functions delegated to it by the Mayor pursuant to section 38, whether or not TfL would otherwise have had that power and irrespective of the nature of the function.
- 6.5. It is considered that the provision of the proposed financial support, as set out in this decision form, will further one or more of the principal purposes in section 30 of the GLA Act – and in particular, the promotion of social and economic development and wealth creation in Greater London.
- 6.6. Funds provided by TfL pursuant to this decision should be distributed in compliance with subsidy control processes.

Mayoral Direction to TfL

- 6.7. Section 155(1) of the GLA Act allows the Mayor to issue general directions as to the manner in which TfL is to exercise its functions, or specific directions as to the exercise of TfL's functions.
- 6.8. The proposed direction by the Mayor to TfL to provide financial support to SSM traders in the circumstances set out in this decision form may be made under section 155(1)(c) of the GLA Act. The direction must be in writing and is attached.
- 6.9. Officers have indicated that the GLA has consulted TfL regarding the proposed delegation and direction required to implement this decision.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Request information from traders	As soon as MD is signed
Bank details received from traders	Three weeks from MD getting signed
First payments made	Three/four weeks from receiving bank details from traders

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1 – Mayoral Delegation and Direction to TfL

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will be published either within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 – Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Philippa Borrowman has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Philip Graham has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Seb Dance has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

This decision was agreed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 7 October 2024.

✓

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature:

Fay Hammond

Date:

14/10/2024

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor.

Signature:

D. Bellamy

Date:

07/10/2024