

MDA No.: 1650

Title: Closure of Smithfield and Billingsgate Markets

1. Executive Summary

1.1 At the Planning and Regeneration Committee meeting on 9 October 2024 the Committee resolved that:

“That authority be delegated to the Chair of the Planning and Regeneration Committee, following consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Leads, to agree any output from the meeting”.

1.2 Following consultation with party Group Lead Members, the Chair agreed the Committee’s letter to the Mayor of London on the closure of Smithfield and Billingsgate Markets, as attached at **Appendix 1**.

2. Decision

2.1 **That the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, agrees the Committee’s letter to the Mayor of London on the closure of Smithfield and Billingsgate Markets, as attached as Appendix 1.**

Assembly Member

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:



Printed Name: Andrew Boff AM

Date: 10 December 2024

3. Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

Background and proposed next steps:

- 3.1 The terms of reference for this investigation were agreed by the Chair, in consultation with relevant party Lead Group Members and Deputy Chairs, under the standing authority granted to Chairs of Committees and Sub-Committees. Officers confirm that the letter and its recommendations fall within these terms of reference.
- 3.2 The exercise of delegated authority approving the letter to the Mayor of London will be formally noted at the Planning and Regeneration Committee's next appropriate meeting.

Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:

Signature (Committee Services): Saleha Fazal

Printed Name: Saleha Fazal

Date: 10 December 2024

Financial Implications: NOT REQUIRED

Note: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.


Signature (Finance): Not Required

Printed Name:

Date:

Legal Implications:

The Chair of the Planning and Regeneration Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal): 

Printed Name: Rory McKenna, Monitoring Officer

Date: 11.12.24

Email: rory.mckenna@london.gov.uk

Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

- James Small Edwards AM
- Zoe Garbett AM

4. Public Access to Information

- 4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published 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

If yes, until what date:

Part 2 – Sensitive Information:

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

Is there a part 2 form? NO

Lead Officer / Author

Signature: David Hirst

Printed Name: David Hirst

Job Title: Head of Policy Scrutiny

Date: 10 December 2024

Countersigned by Executive Director:

Signature:



Printed Name: Helen Ewen

Date: 11 December 2024

LONDON ASSEMBLY

City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
London E16 1ZE
Tel: 020 7983 4000
www.london.gov.uk



Andrew Boff AM
Chairman of the Planning and Regeneration Committee

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London
(Sent by email)

9 December 2024

Dear Sadiq,

I am writing to you on behalf of the London Assembly Planning and Regeneration Committee following the announcement on Tuesday 26 November that the City of London Corporation would be closing Smithfield and Billingsgate Markets in 2028.¹ This is a concerning decision, which falls just as the Committee has finished taking evidence through its investigation 'Social value in planning and regeneration'.²

Through this investigation, we have heard repeatedly about the broader social and community value markets and small businesses provide, their deep connection to the areas they exist in, and how that is not always factored into decision making, or that existing social value is not recognised at all. We also heard that funding for markets should address the basic infrastructure needs, before considering the need for major redevelopment.

Smithfield and Billingsgate markets are London's oldest markets and provide an important seam in London's rich cultural tapestry.³ The Committee believes the decision to close the markets

¹ City of London Corporation, [City of London Corporation ends markets' move to Dagenham as traders decide their next move](#), 26 Nov 2024

² Planning and Regeneration Committee, [Social value in planning and regeneration](#) [accessed online: 29 Nov 2024]

³ City of London Corporation, [Wholesale markets - City of London](#) [accessed online: 29 Nov 2024]

fails to appreciate the immense social and cultural capital these two markets contribute to London.

Further, this news comes only four years after planning applications were submitted⁴ to relocate Smithfield Market with Billingsgate and New Spitalfields at a new purpose-built site in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham as part of a “major regeneration” project⁵ – now cancelled. In our investigation we have heard that markets are “complex ecosystems, and you need to minimise moves if you do not want to lose your existing market.”⁶

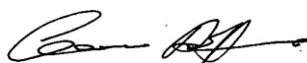
While the City of London Corporation has promised financial support to help market traders relocate to new premises, the Committee is concerned that this will not stop these businesses, and the associated social, cultural and economic goods disappearing from London for good.

Recommendation 1: The Mayor should seek an urgent meeting with the Policy Chairman of the City of London Corporation, Chris Hayward, and use it to call for the Corporation to reconsider and reverse this decision.

Recommendation 2: If the decision is not reversed, the Mayor should work with partners across London and urgently seek suitable alternative location for these two iconic London markets.

I would be grateful if you could respond to the Committee in writing by 10 January 2025 copying your response to David Hirst, Head of Policy Scrutiny (david.hirst@london.gov.uk) and Saleha Fazal the Committee’s Clerk (saleha.fazal@london.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Boff AM

Chairman of the Planning and Regeneration Committee

⁴ City of London Corporation, [Plans submitted to bring the capital’s historic food markets to Barking & Dagenham](#) 2020

⁵ City of London Corporation [City Corporation deposits Private Bill as part of markets relocation to Barking and Dagenham](#). Nov 2022

⁶ [Planning and Regeneration Committee transcript 9 Oct 2024](#)