

Title of Report	Annual Performance Review of Markets, Shop Fronts & Street Trading
Key Decision No	Non Key Decision
For Consideration By	Corporate Committee
Meeting Date	2 June 2026
Classification	Open
Ward(s) Affected	All
Group Director	Rickardo Hyatt, Group Director, Housing, Climate and Economy
Report Author	Daniel O'Sullivan, Head of Markets, Shop Fronts & Street Trading, daniel.osullivan@hackney.gov.uk

1. Introduction

Hackney's markets, shop fronts and street trading activity are a core part of the borough's economic, cultural and public realm infrastructure. They support local entrepreneurship, provide accessible routes into self-employment, animate high streets and help maintain distinctive town centres across the borough.

This annual performance review shows a service that has continued to grow while operating within a complex regulatory and financial environment. It reports increased paid-for pitch activity, strengthened shop front licensing, disciplined arrears management and continued investment in trader support, communications, public realm activation and compliance.

The report is presented for information and comment. It also identifies data and governance points requiring final officer validation before publication, particularly the final audited financial outturn and minor inconsistencies in source performance data.

2. Group Director's introduction

This report provides the Corporate Committee with an annual overview of Markets, Shop Fronts & Street Trading performance for 2025/26, based on the most recent leadership performance material available at the point of drafting.

The service operates across 10 street markets, 60+ street trading locations, extensive shop front and pavement licence activity, storage, events, enforcement, engagement and business



support. It is therefore both a regulatory service and an enabling service for inclusive local growth.

The overall position is positive, with full-year forecast income of approximately £3.3m and a projected surplus position. This remains subject to final Finance validation and the statutory cost-recovery principles governing the service.

3. Recommendations

There are no official recommendations contained within this report. It is for informational purposes.

Corporate Committee can

1. Note the annual performance of the Markets, Shop Fronts & Street Trading Service for 2025/26.
2. Comment on the Note and provide comments (if appropriate) on the service priorities for 2026/27, including financial sustainability, public realm licensing, trader support, enforcement, arrears management, digital communications and social value.
3. Note that final publication should be subject to Finance, Legal and Governance Services review, including confirmation of the final audited outturn, Cabinet Member details and any updated performance data.

4. Reason(s) for decision

No decision is sought. The report is brought to the Corporate Committee because the Committee maintains oversight of the Council regulatory functions and because the 2 June 2026 work programme includes an annual performance review of Markets, Shop Fronts & Street Trading.

The annual review supports transparency, scrutiny, assurance and continuous improvement in a service that manages statutory licensing functions, public realm use, market operations, business support and enforcement across all wards.

5. Background

Markets, Shop Fronts & Street Trading manages a borough-wide portfolio including regular markets, isolated street trading locations, shop front and pavement activations, storage, commercial and community events, trader support, public realm compliance and enforcement. The service also works with Police, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Highways, Waste, Community Safety, Legal, Communications and regeneration colleagues.

The service is legally and operationally distinct from a simple land or pitch rental function. Licence fees support the cost of licensing administration, operational management, waste and cleansing, infrastructure, safety, compliance, enforcement, engagement, digital communications and trader support. Where relevant, income must be applied in accordance with the statutory framework governing the licence type.

The latest performance material available for this draft is the April 2026 senior management report, covering February/March 2026. Final audited financial outturn and committee-ready KPI validation remain outstanding at the date of drafting.

Performance dashboard

Measure	Latest position	Comment
Total service income	YTD £2.8m; full-year forecast £3.3m	Forecast is approximately £370k above budget estimate and subject to Finance validation.
Projected surplus	£60k to £80k	Positive movement from prior-year surplus of £32k. Figure to be confirmed through outturn.
Paid-for pitches	59,250.5 in 2025/26 versus 56,535 in 2024/25	4.80% annual increase.
March 2026 occupancy	4,915 paid pitches versus 5,099 in March 2025	3.61% lower than March 2025, influenced by weather and holiday credits.
Shop front licences	410 versus 371 last year	10.51% increase, with permanent licences increasing from 289 to 344.
Markets & Street Trading licences	1169 versus 1118 last year	33% increase in Permanent licences from 525 to 699.
Market trader arrears	£1.2k over 12 months at March 2026 versus £27k at end of March 2025	Arrears reduced by £8.6k, approximately 21%. Annual clearance not yet finalised.
Gazebo hire income	£41,144 YTD versus £40,584.75 last year	1.36% increase.

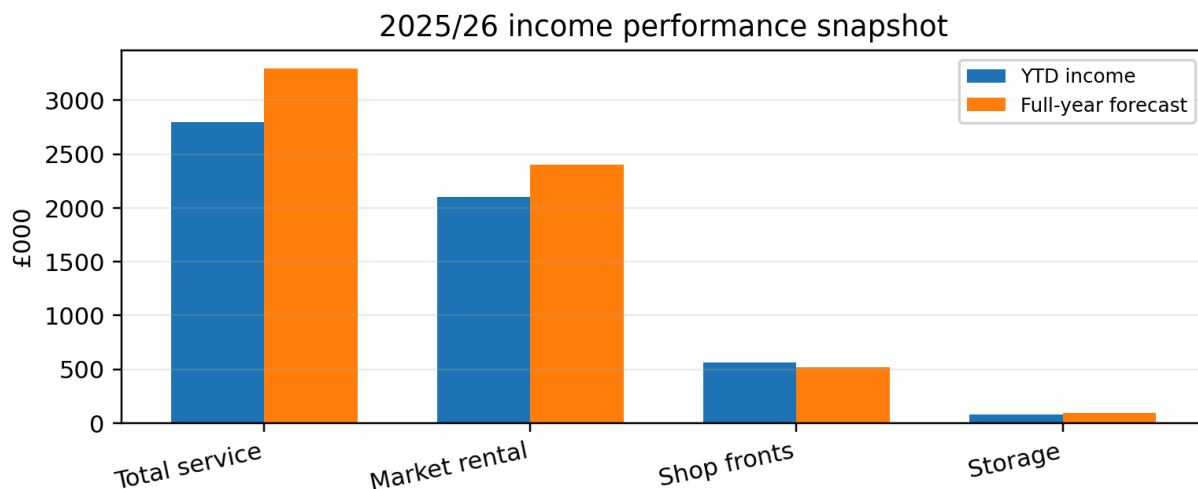


Figure 1: Draft income performance snapshot from the April 2026 leadership deck. Values are shown in £000 and still require final Finance validation expected in late June 2026.

Occupancy and trading activity

Paid-for pitch use recovered strongly after the pandemic period and remains above the 2024/25 position. The 2025/26 annual figure of 59,250.5 paid-for pitches is the highest achieved in the borough and continues five years of year on year growth.

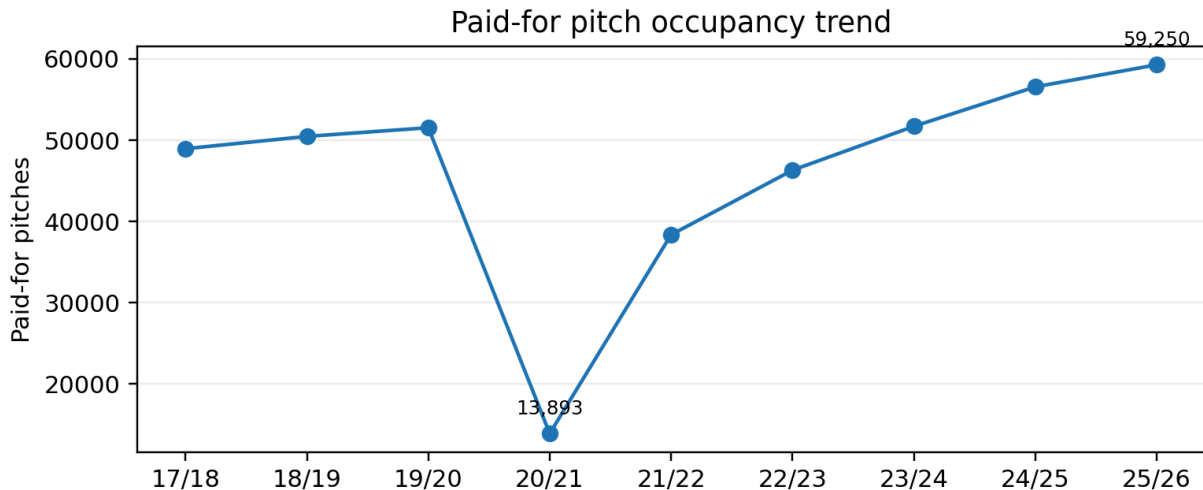


Figure 2: Paid-for pitch trend. The 2020/21 reduction reflects pandemic disruption. The 2025/26 figure is the draft annual total from the source deck.

The March 2026 site-level position shows mixed movement. Narrow Way increased significantly following more traders taking permanent licences and additional pitch availability for temporary traders. The source deck also records that there were 24 days of rainfall, 13 traders covering 40 pitches applied for holiday credits, and 504 available trading days were recorded as did not trade, including 356 from Ridley Road.

Financial performance and income streams

The service forecast is positive. Total monthly income in the February reporting period was £311k, including a £75k GLA contribution. The full-year forecast is approximately £3.3m against a budget estimate of £2.8m. Market rental income remains the principal income stream, with shop front income strengthened by grant-funded public realm activity and storage activity continuing to outperform budget expectations.

Income stream	Latest monthly income	YTD income	Full-year forecast	Draft interpretation
Total service	£311k	£2.8m	£3.3m	Above budget estimate and last year.
Market rental	£182.4k	£2.1m	£2.4m	Slightly below monthly budget estimate but above last year.
Shop fronts	£119.4k including £75k GLA	£520.5k	£561.3k	Outperforming budget estimate.
Storage	£9.1k in another	£86.9k	£94.5k	Growth on last year but still has

Income stream	Latest monthly income	YTD income	Full-year forecast	Draft interpretation
				circa £8k of arrears to collect.

Arrears and debt management

Market trader arrears have reduced materially, with March 2026 arrears of £32.5k compared with £41.1k in March 2025. The source deck identifies £1.2k of debt over 12 months and £13.8k of debt six months or less. This is substantially lower than the £27k carried over from FY24/25. Shop front arrears remain low in absolute terms at £0 with no debt over six months.

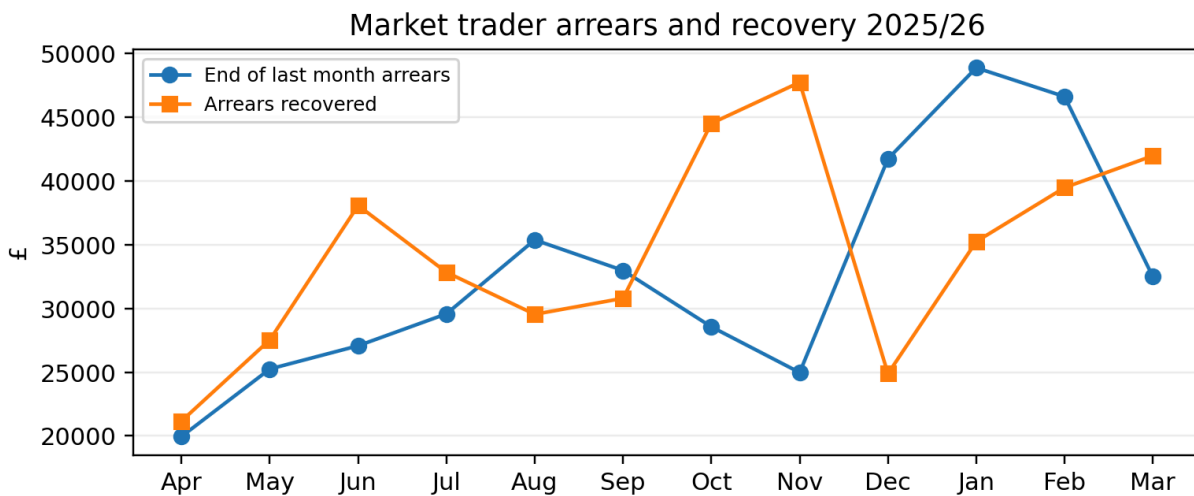


Figure 3: Market trader arrears and recovery during 2025/26, based on the April 2026 leadership deck.

Projects, digital communications and trader support

The revised fees and charges were published in the Hackney Gazette on 26 February 2026, digitally displayed between 23 and 27 February 2026, published on the Council website on 17 February 2026, and emailed to all licence holders on 25 February 2026.

The service is also developing a separate public-facing online micro hub for markets and shop fronts, including hackneymarkets.co.uk and hackneyshopfronts.co.uk. The purpose is to provide up-to-date information, promote individual traders, share events, improve recruitment and support public awareness. This will be a significant improvement to the front end of the Open Markets platform where the majority of applications are received.

The Ridley Sunday Collective launched on 8 March 2026 at the top of Ridley Road, providing a curated weekly market focused on locally made goods, quality food, sustainable fashion, homewares, natural body care and craft workshops. This supports inclusive growth, place activation and new trader development.

Strategic Policy Context

The service contributes to inclusive economic growth, town centre vitality, fair access to trading opportunities, community wealth building, public realm management, regulatory compliance,

climate and waste objectives, youth enterprise and local employment. The Corporate Committee work programme includes this item as part of its wider oversight of regulatory functions.

Options appraisal

Option	Description	Assessment
Option A - Note only	The committee notes the report without further comment.	Administratively simple but misses the opportunity for Committee challenge and direction.
Option B - Note and comment on 2026/27 priorities	The committee notes performance and comments on the priority areas identified.	Recommended. Maintains scrutiny while allowing officers to refine the work programme.
Option C - Request a dedicated deep-dive	The committee requests a further report on one topic, such as fees, public realm or enforcement.	Useful if members want more assurance on a specific risk, but should be proportionate to officer capacity.

Equality, inclusion, diversity and belonging

Markets and shop front trading provide a comparatively accessible route into entrepreneurship for micro-businesses, sole traders, family businesses and residents seeking self-employment. The service supports inclusive growth through temporary pitches, youth trading opportunities, business support, trader promotion and outreach.

The equalities risks are affordability, language and digital exclusion, disability access and the risk that enforcement is experienced as inconsistent or disproportionate. The service mitigates these through published conditions, clear licence boundaries, accessible consultation routes, targeted support and a public realm approach that protects clear footway access.

Sustainability and climate change

The service contributes to waste minimisation, reuse and circular economy objectives through zero-plastic markets, food waste management, trader education, public realm improvements and support for sustainable commodities and events. The largest sustainability challenge remains waste and cleansing from high-volume food and fruit and vegetable trading, which also has a direct financial impact on the market account.

Consultation/engagement

Engagement during 2025/26 included trader communications on fees and charges, publication through the Council website and Hackney Gazette, direct emails to licence holders, operational engagement through market officers and emerging digital communication channels. The service also uses market-level engagement, trader forums, project-specific consultations and one-to-one support where appropriate.

Risk assessment

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Performance data not finalised	Reports may be challenged if outturn figures change.	Final Finance and performance validation before publication.
Data anomalies in source deck	Risk of undermining confidence in the report.	Reconcile licence totals, 2024/25 pitch total and storage lines.
Cost pressures and under-recovery	Potential pressure on General Fund or future fee increases.	Annual review, transparent cost model and early engagement.
Trader affordability and arrears	Risk of hardship, debt and business failure.	Hardship pathways, early intervention, payment reform and business support.
Public realm and accessibility	Obstructions could affect disabled people, families and older residents.	Clear conditions, inspections, enforcement and EqlA-led controls.
Political and reputational scrutiny	Fees, Ridley Road and public realm activity remain sensitive.	Evidence-led reporting, consistent messaging and governance oversight.

6. Financial implications

This is an information and comment report. No new decision to incur expenditure or amend fees is sought through this paper. Any future decision requiring expenditure, fee changes, procurement, consultation or staffing change will require the relevant delegated or Cabinet authority and formal Finance comments before publication.

Financial implications prepared on behalf of the Group Director Finance & Corporate Resources by: John Holden – Assistant Director of Finance - Sustainability, Public Realm and Special Projects. John.Holden@hackney.gov.uk. 0208 356 4653

7. VAT implications on land and property transactions

Not applicable to this information and comment report. No land or property transaction is proposed. Any future land or property transaction, licence structure, lease arrangement or concession arrangement will need separate VAT review.

VAT implications prepared on behalf of the Group Director Finance & Corporate Resources by: - John Holden – Assistant Director of Finance - Sustainability, Public Realm and Special Projects John.Holden@hackney.gov.uk 0208 356 4653

8. HR/OD implications

There are no direct HR/OD implications arising from this report. The report notes operational pressures and the need to maintain sufficient capacity across licensing, market operations, public realm management, engagement, compliance and business support. Any future restructure or staffing proposal will require separate HR/OD advice, consultation and decision-making.

9. Legal implications

The legal framework referenced in this report includes the London Local Authorities Act 1990 as amended, the Food Act 1984, the Highways Act 1980, the Business and Planning Act 2020 as amended, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, the Equality Act 2010 and related public law duties. There are no official recommendations within this report, and there are no further legal implications arising from this report.

Legal implications prepared on behalf of the Director of Legal, Democratic & Electoral Services by: - Josephine Sterakides - Senior Lawyer-Litigation and Public Realm
Josephine.Sterakides@hackney.gov.uk 020 8356 2775

10. Appendices

Appendix	Title
Appendix 1	N/A
Appendix 2	N/A
Appendix 3	N/A

Reason(s) for exemption

None. The report and appendices are proposed as open documents, subject to final review of any commercially sensitive, personal, legal privilege or enforcement-sensitive material before publication.

Background documents

In accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) England Regulations 2012, the following background documents were used in preparing this report:

- None