



City of Westminster

**Finance, Planning and Economic
Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

Date:	14 June 2023
Portfolio:	Planning and Economic Development
The Report of:	Councillor Geoff Barraclough
Report Author and Contact Details:	Maria Burton, Portfolio Advisor, mburton@westminster.gov.uk

- 1. No key decisions have been made in the period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 04 May 2023.**
- 2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress since my last report. Following agreement with the Chair, only areas with significant developments or with actions from the previous meeting on 04 May 2023 are included.**

Economy

2.1 Markets

Berwick Street – Community Saturdays

Following the Berwick Street Community Saturdays Event which is a series of events involving local businesses in the area, residents with business ideas and traders who fitted into the theme of art, fashion, music and culture participated in the events. Out of 24 event traders, 17 traders provided feedback. 2 additional traders are registered to trade on a Saturday in Berwick Street and also trade during the week and therefore participated in the event. All of the other event traders either have a business in Berwick Street such as Nissan Fabrics, are a resident in the local area or trade elsewhere during the week. The two traders who are licenced in Berwick Street during the week and participated in the event commented it was great to see the space activated on a Saturday, with one hot food trader noting a slight increase in sales. The other trader felt there was no change in terms of sales. Out of the 17 event traders who provided feedback, 2 of those were local businesses operating the area. Their experience was wholly positive.

The data does not suggest that trade (measured in terms of customers and sales/takings) has increased compared to weekday trading on Berwick Street. Instead, the data asks each individual event trader to comment and provide feedback whether they experienced more customers or generated more sales/takings than when compared to a typical trading day wherever this may be. This is subjective, with each individual performance being measured against their own parameters of success and expectations for market trading.

The goal has been to measure the success of a varied offer on Berwick Street and whether it is commercially viable for traders. As we know the Monday to Friday market has a high dominance of hot food and feedback suggests these events running on the first Saturday of each month show that Berwick Street is viable in terms of providing alternate commodities. The main aim of our Community Saturday Events is to bring together businesses and residents in the area and offer stakeholders a non-food offer as opposed to drawing more visitors to Soho. As part of Berwick Street Community Saturdays we have two further events taking place on 3/06 and 01/07.

Planning Policy

2.2 Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD

The POAH SPD must respond to a series of commitments in the City Plan that it will include guidance on a number of issues, such as carbon offsetting and income thresholds for intermediate housing. SPDs can only provide guidance on areas of policy covered in the City Plan and cannot create new areas of policy.

Under the previous administration a Draft of the SPD was consulted on in March 2022. It has subsequently been redrafted in response to feedback from the consultation and Cabinet Members, as well as to align with the Fairer Westminster Strategy and Future of Westminster Commission.

The new Draft SPD has been viability tested to ensure the planning obligations do not make development unviable, and officers have worked with the Greater London Authority to ensure the SPD is in line with the Mayor of London's policies and guidance. Following further internal steer, a new consultation period will take place, with the final sign-off of the SPD expected in Autumn 2023.