

# Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
London SE1 2AA  
Tel: 020 7983 4362

Rajesh Agrawal  
Deputy Mayor for Business  
[By Email]

16<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Rajesh,

## **Re: Support for London's Market Traders and Markets**

I am writing to ask what support is being given to London's markets in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

London's countless markets add very much to the vibrance and cultural diversity of our city, as well as being a significant part of the capital's economy. It is essential that traders from markets, large and small, from the famous markets of Greenwich and Camden to markets that take place and serve communities across every corner of London, are supported properly as we move out of lockdown.

I appreciate that market traders have the opportunity to apply for the Local Authority Discretionary Fund in order to get some financial support in this difficult time and have had access to other pots of money throughout the crisis through their local authority. However, I am deeply concerned to hear that in certain parts of London market traders are not getting the necessary support they need and are only receiving incredibly small amounts of money that make little difference to the dire economic circumstances many traders are facing as a result of the pandemic.

Tower Hamlets Council, for example, has been reported as offering only £360 to market traders to compensate them for a loss of income during the pandemic.<sup>1</sup> I am sure you would agree that given the catastrophic effect this pandemic has had on market traders, and indeed many businesses, £360 will do little to sustain such businesses.

I fully understand the difficulties we are facing nationally and across London as a result of this pandemic, and that many businesses need support. Furthermore, it is clear that boroughs face unprecedented financial uncertainty and strain as a result of the pandemic and following five years of deep Government cuts to local government. However, given the cultural and economic importance of our markets and market traders across London, I would be grateful if you could provide more information on how you and the Mayor plan to compliment and build on the support being given to market traders by boroughs in London over the coming weeks and months.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.eastendenuirer.org/2020/07/east-end-street-markets-set-to-be-latest-casualty-of-covid-19/>

If you could provide me with information on the discussions you have been having with market traders across London during this time, as well as more detail on your plans for supporting market traders going forward, as they will continue to face significant difficulties as we move out of lockdown and face an uncertain economic future. I would be particularly interested to hear how you have been working with the London Markets Board, set up by the Mayor in 2017, and the LEAP in your work supporting markets.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Pidgeon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Caroline Pidgeon AM  
Liberal Democrat Assembly Member