

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Open Spaces & City Gardens	12 May 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Superintendent's update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Parks & Gardens	<b>For Information</b>
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>This report provides an update to Members of the Open Spaces &amp; City Gardens Committee on management and operational activities across the City Gardens section since December 2017.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the report</li> </ul>	

### Main Report

#### **Budgets**

1. Although outturn has yet to be finalised, it is anticipated that City Gardens will show a slight overspend against budget (circa £5,000, or 0.5%) for the financial year 2016/17. Bunhill Fields will show a small underspend.

#### **Personnel**

2. A new Support Services Officer has been in post since November 2016 and has successfully completed her probationary period. The City Gardens Manager resigned at Easter. Twenty-eight applicants expressed an interest in the role. At the time of writing, interviews have not yet taken place and a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.
3. The Project Manager (Public Realm) started on 2 May. This is a newly created post, part-funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy, as part of the Churchyards Enhancement Programme.

#### **Operational Activities**

4. Over the past three months the City Gardens team has undertaken significant landscape improvement works at Postman's Park, Carter Lane and The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden, all of which are now complete.

5. Postman's Park has benefited from the following improvements: repointing the York stone paving across the garden; four water points have been installed to reduce manual handling for the on-site gardener; two large mature trees have been removed; a new pond screen has been fabricated and installed; 20 benches have been purchased and installed; remaining mature trees have been pruned and under storey planting has taken place to improve both biodiversity and seasonal interest.
6. Carter Lane, The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Garden and Festival gardens have been rejuvenated with new planting including the replacement of three trees.
7. In partnership with the London Borough of Islington, the City Gardens team has led on the procurement of a five year contract for arboricultural services. Significant savings have been identified. The new contract has been awarded to Gristwood and Toms, and will begin on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 running for four years, with an option to extend.

### **Community, Volunteering, Outreach and Events**

8. Corporate volunteers from Kingston Smith and Accenture UK LTD have undertaken several volunteering sessions during February and March to complete a new shady border in Bunhill Fields Burial Ground.
9. City in Bloom is underway and the campaign focus this year is *Clean and Green for Seventeen: An Air Quality Challenge*. Entrants have been asked to design and install a street level planting that will raise awareness of air quality and help 'green' the grey City streets. The challenge was launched on 11 January 2017 and entrants have until June to build their displays. All entries will be photographed and entrants will be presented with a photo-book of all the entries.

### **Appendices**

- None

### **Martin Rodman**

Superintendent of Parks & Gardens

T: 020 7374 4127

E: martin.rodman@cityoflondon.gov.uk