



Natural Environment Board

Date: THURSDAY, 11 JULY 2024

Time: 11.00 am

Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM 2 - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)	William Upton KC (Ex-Officio Member)
Eamonn Mullally (Deputy Chairman)	Alderman Gregory Jones KC (Ex-Officio Member)
Andrew McMurtrie	Deputy Alpa Raja
Anne Corbett	Heather Barrett-Mold
Wendy Mead OBE	Vladislav Dobrokhotov
Benjamin Murphy	Tony Leach
James St John Davis	Dani Stephenson
William Upton KC (Ex-Officio Member)	Catherine Bickmore (Observer)
	Paul Morris (Observer)

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Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

NB: Certain matters for information have been marked * and will be taken without discussion, unless the Committee Clerk has been informed that a Member has questions or comments prior to the start of the meeting. These information items have been collated in a supplementary agenda pack and circulated separately.

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

3. **MINUTES**

- a) Draft Minutes of the Natural Environment Board Meeting on 16th May 2024
(Pages 5 - 12)

To agree the public and non-public summary of the Natural Environment Board Meeting on 16th May 2024.

For Decision

4. ***NATURAL ENVIRONMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Report of the Executive Director for Environment.

For Information
(Pages 13 - 16)

5. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CHARITIES & COMMERCIAL VERBAL UPDATE**

Assistant Director of Charities and Commercial to be heard.

For Information

6. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director for Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 17 - 28)

7. ***ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN PROGRESS REPORT (YEAR-END 2023-24)**

For Information
(Pages 29 - 40)

8. ***REVENUE OUTTURN 2023/24**

Joint Report of the Chamberlain and the Executive Director for Environment.

For Information
(Pages 41 - 52)

9. **FINSBURY CIRCUS ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS**

Report of the Executive Director for Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 53 - 76)

10. ***CITY GARDENS UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director for Environment.

For Information
(Pages 77 - 80)

11. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED**

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION: The following matters relate to business under the remit of the Court of Common Council acting for the City Corporation as charity Trustee, to which Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 public access to meetings provisions do not apply. The following items contain sensitive information which it is not in the best interests of the charity to consider in a public meeting (engaging similar considerations as under paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act) and will be considered in non-public session.

For Decision

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

14. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

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NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BOARD Thursday, 16 May 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Natural Environment Board held at Committee Room -
2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 16 May 2024 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)
Andrew McMurtrie (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Anne Corbett
Wendy Mead OBE
James St John Davis
William Upton KC (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Alpa Raja
Catherine Bickmore (Observer)

In Attendance:

Eamon Mullally
Benjamin Murphy
Paul Morris (Observer)

Officers:

Emily Brennan	- Environment Department
Anna Cowperthwaite	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's
Simon Glynn	- Environment Department
Jo Hurst	- Environment Department
Joanne Hill	- Environment Department
William LoSasso	- Environment Department
Bob Roberts	- Environment Department
Joseph Smith	- Town Clerk's Department
Pauline Mouskis	- Chamberlain's Department
Rob Shakespeare	- Environment Department
Simon Owen	- Chamberlain's Department
Paul Maskell	- Environment Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received by Eamon Mullally, who attended the meeting virtually.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. ***ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL**

Members received to Order of the Court of Common Council dated 25 April 2024 appoint the board and setting its Terms of Reference.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED – That, in accordance with Standing Order 30, Caroline Haines being the only Member indicating her willingness to serve be appointed as Chairman for the ensuing year.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED – That, in accordance with Standing Order 29, Eamon Mullally being the only Member indicating his willingness to serve be appointed as Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.

6. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED - That, the public minutes and non-public summary of the last meeting held on the 19 February 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

7. **APPOINTMENT OF A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE STREETS AND WALKWAYS SUB-COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED – That, Eamon Mullally being the only Member indicating his willingness to serve be appointed as a representative to the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee.

8. **NON-VOTING EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTMENT(S) TO NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BOARD**

The Board considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning the appointment of non-voting external Members.

Prior to their appointment(s), the external representatives introduced themselves and noted their areas of expertise, which included naturalism, parks, events, international forestry, and income generation. The board welcomed the new Members and expressed their enthusiasm for working with them on the natural environment strategies and projects.

RESOLVED – That, Member approve the appointment of the candidate(s) shortlisted for the following terms:

- a) For a term of one year, Dr Heather Barrett-Mold OBE
- b) For a term of two years, Tony Leach
- c) For a term of three years, Vladislav Dobrokhotov & Dani Stephenson

9. **CITY OF LONDON NATURAL ENVIRONMENT YOUTH BOARD**

The Board considered a report of the Director of Natural Environment, concerning establishing a City of London Youth Natural Environment Board as part of the ongoing efforts of the City of London Environmental and Outdoor Learning Project.

The board heard a presentation from officers about the proposal to establish a City of London Natural Environment Youth Board, which would involve young people from the city family of schools and beyond in engaging with the natural environment and influencing the board's decisions and strategies.

The board expressed its support and enthusiasm for the proposal, which aligned with the board's vision and the new natural environment strategies. The

board also recognised the importance of youth voice and participation in environmental sustainability and climate action.

The board agreed to receive regular updates from the youth board and to invite representatives to attend future meetings and events. The board also suggested some potential projects and initiatives that the youth board could get involved in.

The board thanked officers, and the students from King Edward's School, who had prepared a video to introduce the youth board concept. The board also thanked officers for their update on the learning and heritage programmes and the positive outcomes for the participants.

RESOLVED – That Members, endorse the establishment of the City of London Youth Natural Environment Board as per outlined in the accompanying report

10. RESOLUTION OF THANKS TO OLIVER SELLS

The Board heard the Chairman.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Oliver, whose leadership on the previously named Open Spaces Committee and West Ham Park offered valuable clarity and guidance through a particularly arduous period.

During his time as Chairman he steered us through challenges - particularly post-Covid -with unwavering resolve.

His profound commitment and deep appreciation for the importance of outdoor spaces in fostering community health and well-being was self-evident with a standout achievement guiding the play area at West Ham Park through to completion. Another visit was the wonderfully vibrant visit of the Lady Mayoress, Lady Hilary Russell.

In the case of Finsbury Circus, a cherished City asset disrupted by Crossrail activity, Oliver's leadership saw the revitalisation of its gardens and the reclaiming the garden as a cherished green oasis.

As Oliver leaves the board, we extend heartfelt appreciation for his myriad accomplishments under his tenure and wish him continued success in his endeavours within the City of London Corporation and beyond.

RESOLVED – That Members, approve the resolution of thanks to Oliver Sells.

11. RESOLUTION OF THANKS TO GRAEME DOSHI-SMITH

The Board heard the Chairman.

The Natural Environment Board wishes to express gratitude and profound appreciation for Graeme's exceptional service as Chairman of the Natural Environment Board (formally called the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee) from June 6th, 2016 until July 2019, Graeme's leadership was

marked by remarkable achievements in challenging times, reflecting an open-minded, forward-thinking approach combined with a delightful sense of humour and enthusiasm.

As steward of the Strategic Committee overseeing the City's Open Spaces, Graeme steered the passage of significant legislation and provided strategic vision for the Department. His advocacy for environmental sustainability, community engagement, and technological advancement was instrumental in driving positive change.

The Board recognises Graeme's unwavering dedication, evidenced by the retention of prestigious awards and notable accolades during his tenure. We extend profound appreciation for his exceptional contributions and best wishes for his future endeavours, with fond recollections of the substantial achievements realised under his leadership when he was Chairman.

RESOLVED – That Members, approve the resolution of thanks to Graeme Doshi-Smith.

12. **RESOLUTION OF THANKS TO BOB ROBERTS**

The Board heard the Chairman.

Bob has been a member of the Corporation's Executive Leadership Team for several years and in different guises including as Deputy Town Clerk and Executive Director of Communications and External Affairs. His encyclopaedic knowledge of the Corporation, combined with his outstanding communication and influencing skills, have been instrumental in raising the profile of the Natural Environment Division, in improving governance and management, and in leading the team through a period of significant change.

Bob's affection for the outdoors began in his childhood growing up in South Africa and continued when he moved to Essex as a teenager to study at Loughton College. Epping Forest was on his doorstep and Bob spent many enjoyable hours in and around the Forest. His work for the Corporation enabled him to develop extensive knowledge of all the Corporation's open spaces, often in the context of having to respond to crises! Taking up the role of Environment Director gave Bob the opportunity to raise the profile of the Corporation's natural environment work in a positive and proactive way, supporting the new Natural Environment Director to lead the development of a new vision and strategies for the Division. He also championed the Natural Capital Audit of the Corporation's Open Spaces, a piece of work which gained a huge amount of positive media coverage for the Corporation and which has been instrumental in raising the profile of the Natural Environment Division and of the wider Environment Department.

His political, communication and influencing expertise has been put to excellent use in the Environment Department. Bob continued to build strong relationships with Members and significantly improved governance processes across the Department including in the Natural Environment Division. The support and guidance he provided to the Natural Environment Director, Emily

Brennan, has been particularly crucial as Emily had only recently joined the Corporation. He's given Officers extensive guidance on Corporation governance, policies and processes, helping them successfully navigate these to get the best outcomes for the Division. For example he helped shape the NE Charities Review, focusing on identifying sustainable future funding options for the NE Charities.

His knowledge of the Corporation's governance, project management and funding processes and mechanisms has enabled projects such as the new world-class athletics track at Hampstead Heath to be completed. He's also influenced the future and governance of major assets such as the planned transfer of The Monument, and has helped identify and secure funding for major events such as the West Ham Park 150th anniversary.

Bob led the Environment Department's input into the new Corporate Plan, ensuring that the work of the Natural Environment Division, City Gardens and wider Environment Department assets and priorities were appropriately reflected. He has also elevated key departmental risks, such as tree-related risks, to the Corporate Risk Register.

Bob's engaging manner, outstanding leadership and management skills, and extensive knowledge about the Corporation, including its Open Spaces, will make him a very hard act to follow. He leaves the Natural Environment Division in good shape and we thank him, most sincerely, for consistently going above and beyond the call of duty and wish him all the best for his future plans.

RESOLVED – That Members, approve the resolution of thanks to Bob Roberts, Interim Executive Director, Environment.

13. ***DRAFT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25**

The Board received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning the revised version of the high-level Business Plan with the requested changes incorporated.

The board received a revised version of the Environment Department's high level business plan, which had been updated to reflect the new corporate plan outcomes.

The board noted that detailed business plans for each of the natural environment charities were being developed in consultation with the various environment committees, and that these would set out the specific priorities, activities, and performance measures for the next five years.

14. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT**

The Board considered a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning The Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register includes risks which are managed by the Natural Environment Director at a higher, strategic, level.

RESOLVED – That Members, confirm, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, that the Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register (contained in Appendix 1 of the report) satisfactorily sets out the key top-level risks to the charities and that appropriate systems are in place to identify and mitigate risks across the charities.

15. **ENJOYING GREEN SPACES AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT – 2023-24 GRANT AWARDS AND FUNDING CRITERIA REVIEW**

The Board considered a report of the Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation concerning grant awards and funding criteria.

The board received an annual report on the programme, which outlined the decision making process and the details of the six grant awards for 2023-2024, totalling £49,000.

The board also considered a review of the funding stream criteria and some recommended amendments, which were based on consultation with applicants, assessors and officers. The proposed changes included clarifying the eligibility and assessment criteria, increasing the maximum grant amount to £15,000, and aligning the fund more closely with the natural environment strategies and outcomes.

RESOLVED – That Member, approve the proposed amendments to the current Enjoying Green Spaces and the Natural Environment funding criteria as referenced in paragraph 12 of the report and that the criteria for grant making would be circulated to all members of the Committee.

16. ***COOL STREETS AND GREENING – PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Board received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning an update on the delivery of the Cool Streets and Greening programme (CSG), which is structured around four Phases.

The board received an update on the progress of the initiative, the plans for future sites such as Aldgate Square and St Paul's churchyard. The board also discussed the challenges and opportunities of delivering the initiative, such as the need for collaboration with other departments and stakeholders, the impact of climate change and air quality, and the potential for attracting more visitors and businesses to the city. The board expressed their support for the initiative and thanked the City Gardens team for their work.

17. ***LEARNING AND HERITAGE ANNUAL REVIEW, 2023 -24**

The Board received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning the key activities undertaken by the Learning and Heritage teams in 2023-24.

Officers presented an overview of the learning programme, which included school, play, youth and special educational needs provision at Epping Forest, Hampstead Heath and West Ham Park. The board noted the achievements and impacts of the programme, such as reaching over 40,000 participants, building

nature connection, engaging children from deprived boroughs and delivering grant-funded projects.

The Head of Heritage presented an overview of the heritage programme, which included managing and promoting the heritage assets of the corporation, such as Keats House, the monument, the grotto and the hill forts. He highlighted the challenges and opportunities of the programme, such as securing external funding, developing conservation management plans, increasing visitor numbers and income, and collaborating with the learning team.

The board expressed their appreciation and support for the learning and heritage team and their work.

18. ***LEVELLING UP AND REGENERATION ACT 2003**

The Board received a report of the Remembrancer concerning an overview of the provisions of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (“the Act”) that are relevant to the City’s cultural, heritage and environmental interests.

19. ***CITY GARDENS UPDATE**

The Board received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning an update to Members of the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee on current management and operational activities across the City Gardens section.

The following points were noted:

- The City Gardens Manager, reported on the recruitment process for the keeper of Bunhill Fields, the cancellation of the Aldgate Live event (which had now been reinstated via the Aldgate Connect BID), the status of the Cheapside, Jubilee Gardens and Finsbury Circus projects, the Meet the Gardeners event, and the upcoming walk for Members.
- He also mentioned the corporate volunteering programme and the partnership with the Net Zero festival.
- Officers also provided an update on the asset condition surveys and the cyclical works programme, and how they are working with City Surveyors to prioritise and deliver the maintenance and conservation of the City Gardens assets.

20. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

21. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED**

There was no urgent business.

22. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That, That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

23. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2024 be agreed as a correct record.
24. ***DEBT ARREARS - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT DIVISION PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2023**
The Board received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment.
25. ***NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES – INCOME ANALYSIS AND PRIORITIES**
The Board received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment.
26. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.
27. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There was no urgent business.
28. **MINUTES**
RESOLVED – That, the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified

Chairman

Contact Officer: Blair Stringman
Blair.Stringman@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board – For Information	Dated: 11 July 2024
Subject: NE Director’s Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Y/N N/A
Report of: Bob Roberts, Interim Executive Director Environment	For Information
Report author: Emily Brennan, Natural Environment Director	

Summary

The purpose of this report is to highlight progress made since the Natural Environment Director’s appointment in June 2023 and to update Members on key pan-Division issues and initiatives including the appointment of a new Executive Director Environment.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

Main Report

Background

The permanent Natural Environment Director, Emily Brennan, came into post on 5th June 2023 following a period of significant change. The Natural Environment Division was established in 2022 from the previous Open Spaces Department with the aim of being more strategic, joined-up and outward-looking. Prior to Emily’s appointment there were two interim Natural Environment Directors in post and the previous Executive Director Environment, Juliemma McLoughlin, was replaced in July 2023 by Bob Roberts as Interim Executive Director Environment.

Current Position

1. **Executive Director Environment**
 - 1.1 A permanent new Executive Director for the Environment Department, Katie Stewart, will join the Corporation on 22 July 2024, replacing the Interim

Executive Director, Bob Roberts, who departs on 28 June. Katie will have induction meetings with Bob before he departs to support a smooth transition. Katie joins the Corporation from Surrey County Council where she is currently Executive Director of Environment, Infrastructure and Planning ([19](#)) "[katie stewart](#)" | [Search](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

2. Natural Environment Director Key Achievements June 2023-June 2024

Emily Brennan, the Natural Environment Director, has now been in post for a year. Key achievements include:

2.1 Strategies and governance

- 2.1.1 Building positive working relationships with Natural Environment Board Chair, Deputy Chair and other Committee Members.
- 2.1.2 Leading the development of a shared vision, mission and strategies for the Natural Environment Division.
- 2.1.3 Ensuring incorporation of Natural Environment priorities into the new Corporate Plan and good NE officer representation in the consultation process.
- 2.1.4 Supporting the appointment and induction of External Advisors to the Natural Environment Board.
- 2.1.5 Supporting the annual NEB dinner.
- 2.1.6 Supporting the review and updating of NEB Terms of Reference.

2.2 Leadership and management

- 2.2.1 Implementing TOM2 across the Natural Environment Division including redeploying all 43 staff at risk of redundancy.
- 2.2.2 Establishing strong leadership for the NE Division through site visits, engagement and relationship-building, listening to and supporting staff, tackling operational gaps and issues, establishing good internal communications, and involving staff in strategic planning.
- 2.2.3 Recruiting strong leaders and managers to the NE Division including Superintendents for NLOS and Epping Forest and the Assistant Director Charity Development.
- 2.2.4 Improving culture and performance including tackling poor performance and behaviours, working with the Business Support team and HR on recruitment, induction, training, development and workforce planning.
- 2.2.5 Building a reputation across the Corporation as an effective leader for the Natural Environment Division, including with City Surveyors, Chamberlains, Town Clerks, Remembrances and City Bridge Foundation.
- 2.2.6 Leading the implementation of a skills audit for the Division to identify and better utilise expertise and knowledge.
- 2.2.7 Leading the development of 5-year business plans for the NE Division, piloting a new, adaptable business plan template to meet the needs of the teams, the Division, and the NE charities.

2.3 Projects and programmes

- 2.3.1 Driving forward the Natural Environment Charities Review, enabling improved governance and more opportunities for income generation.
- 2.3.2 Improving NE involvement in the Operational Property Review and buildings maintenance backlog work (the 'Bow Wave').

- 2.3.3 Commissioning a Natural Capital Audit for CoL's open spaces.
- 2.3.4 Leading rescoping of the Carbon Removals Project for the open spaces (part of the Climate Action Strategy).
- 2.3.5 Tackling challenging issues e.g. deer management at Epping Forest to enable the development and implementation of effective governance and implementation.

2.4 Financial and risk management

- 2.4.1 Improving financial planning and management across the Division, delivering balanced budgets.
- 2.4.2 Ensuring risk management and reporting are done consistently across the Division, including elevating specific risks such as dangerous trees and buildings maintenance backlog to the departmental / corporate level.

2.5 Communication and engagement

- 2.5.1 Championing the work of the Division internally and externally e.g. through proactive and reactive media coverage and attendance at high profile events e.g. Night of the 10,000 Personal Bests at Hampstead Heath and the West Ham Park 150th anniversary celebrations.
- 2.5.2 Launch of the Natural Capital Audit and the Natural Environment vision, mission and strategies at the NEB Dinner in January 2024, maximising impact and profile for the Division.
- 2.5.3 Continue to drive forward major projects and programmes e.g. the Carbon Removals Project and the new Parliament Hill Athletics Track.

3. Natural Environment Board Away Day 2024

- 3.1 The NEB Away Day will be held on Thursday 3 October, 8.45am -12.30 at the Guildhall followed by lunch in one of the Members' Dining Rooms.
- 3.2 The agenda will include sessions on volunteering, NE business planning and prioritisation, income generation, and the Youth Natural Environment Board.

Financial implications - None

Resource implications - None

Legal implications - None

Risk implications - None

Equalities implications – The work of the NE Director and the NE Division supports the Corporation's equality, diversity and inclusion work and all officers have an EDI objective in their start of year appraisal.

Climate implications – The work of the NE Director and NE Division supports implementation of the Corporation's Climate Action Strategy, particularly through delivery of the Carbon Removals Project.

Security implications - None

Conclusion

Excellent progress has been made in strategical and operational matters across the Natural Environment Division over the past year. The NE Director has stabilised and

grown the staff team, is leading positive culture change within the Division and is facilitating cross-team and cross-departmental working. The Interim Executive Director has provided essential guidance and support on governance processes and on communications, and is working on a smooth handover to the permanent Executive Director Environment.

A number of key strategic, pan-Division initiatives have been successfully delivered including the development of a vision, mission and strategies for the Natural Environment and the production of a Natural Capital Audit for the Corporation's open spaces.

Appendices- None

Emily Brennan

Natural Environment Director, Environment Department

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Agenda Item 6

Committee(s)	Dated:
Natural Environment Board	11 July 2024
Subject: Risk Management Update Report	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diverse engaged communities• Vibrant thriving destination• Providing excellent services• Flourishing public spaces• Leading sustainable environment
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
Report of: Bob Roberts, Interim Executive Director Environment	For Decision
Report author: Joanne Hill, Business Planning and Compliance Manager	

Summary

This report is presented to provide the Natural Environment Board with assurance that risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department are satisfactory and that they meet the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework and, where applicable, the Charities Act 2011. Risk is reviewed regularly within the Department as part of the ongoing management of the operations.

The Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register includes risks which are managed by the Natural Environment Director at a strategic, level. The Cross-Divisional risks are summarised in this report and at Appendix 1.

Each of the Natural Environment charities holds its own risk register which is reported to its respective Committee.

City Gardens is part of the City Operations Division of the Environment Department, and its risks are held in a separate risk register which is summarised in this report and at Appendix 2.

Recommendations

- A. **Natural Environment Division Risks:** Members are asked to confirm, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, that the Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Summary Risk Register (Appendix 1) satisfactorily identifies the key top-level risks to the charities and that an appropriate risk management process is in place.
- B. **City Gardens Risks:** Members are asked to note the content of this report and the City Gardens Summary Risk Register (Appendix 2).

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London's Risk Management Strategy, which forms part of its Corporate Risk Management Framework, requires each Chief Officer to report regularly to Committees on the risks faced by their department.
2. The Charity Commission requires Trustees to confirm in a charity's annual report that any major risks to which the charity is exposed have been identified and reviewed and that systems are established to mitigate those risks. These risks are to be reviewed annually.
3. Each Committee to which the Natural Environment Division of the Environment Department reports receives a quarterly update on the risks of the charity or charities relevant to that Committee. Detailed risk registers are presented to Committees every six months. The two interim quarterly reports present summary risk registers, with individual risks being reported in detail by exception. This reporting frequency aligns with the City of London's Risk Management Strategy and exceeds the requirements of the Charity Commission.
4. The Interim Executive Director Environment assures the Natural Environment Board that all risks held by the Natural Environment Division and the City Operations Division continue to be managed in compliance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and, in the case of the Natural Environment Division, with the Charities Act 2011.
5. Risks are regularly reviewed by management teams, in consultation with risk owners, with updates recorded in the corporate risk management information system. Risks are assessed on a likelihood-impact basis, and the resultant score is associated with a traffic light colour. For reference, the City of London's Risk Matrix is provided at Appendix 3.
6. The Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register includes risks which are managed by the Natural Environment Director at a strategic, level. The Cross-Divisional risks are summarised in this report and at Appendix 1.
7. Each of the Natural Environment charities holds its own risk register which is reported to its respective Committee.
8. City Gardens is part of the City Operations Division, and its risks are held in a separate risk register which is summarised in this report and at Appendix 2.

Current Position

Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risks

9. The Natural Environment Director maintains oversight of all risks and holds a Cross-Divisional Risk Register containing risks which are common to most or all Natural Environment charities: individual charities hold their own local risks on

these matters, and the Cross-Divisional risk consolidates them for oversight by the Director.

10. The Natural Environment Director reviews the Cross-Divisional risks regularly in liaison with her Senior Leadership Team. The Register, summarised below and at Appendix 1, contains eleven risks (four RED, six AMBER, one GREEN).
11. The highest risk on the Cross-Divisional register remains 'Decline in condition of assets' which is currently scored at Red 32 (likely to occur, with a serious impact). The cause of this risk is the backlog of repair and maintenance works required to be undertaken on the charities' built assets. Additional funding to address the bow-wave of maintenance works across the Corporation has recently been approved. Officers are working closely with colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department to formally assess, allocate and prioritise the funding allocated to the Environment Department to areas of most need. The completion of priority works, along with any alternative funding options identified through the Natural Environment Charity Review should help to reduce the risk.
12. The current scores of two risks have recently been reduced:
 - a. The likelihood of the 'Lack of asset register' risk has reduced from 'likely' to 'possible'. A full asset review is underway, and a Charity Asset Officer has now been recruited to work on the development of a comprehensive asset register.
 - b. The likelihood of 'Negative impacts of carrying out wildlife management' has reduced from 'possible' to 'unlikely' taking the overall score to Green 4. This follows the successful deer cull at Epping Forest during winter 2023/24, and the preparation of plans for the 2024/25 season which are awaiting approval of the Deer Management Oversight Group. It is hoped that the risk will reduce further by the end of the financial year.
13. The full list of Natural Environment Cross-Divisional risk is as follows:
 - **ENV-NE 003: Decline in condition of assets** (*RED, 32*)
 - **ENV-NE 004: Negative impacts of pests and diseases** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE 010: Budget pressures** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE 015: Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and sites** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE 001: Risk to health and safety** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 002: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 005: Negative impacts of development and encroachment** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 011: Recruitment of suitable staff** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 014: Lack of asset register** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 013: Negative impacts of visitor pressure** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE 012: Negative impacts of carrying out wildlife management** (*GREEN, 4*)

City Gardens Risks

14. City Gardens is part of the City Operations Division of the Environment Department, alongside Cleansing Services. The City Gardens Risk Register, summarised below and at Appendix 2, contains seven risks (one RED, four AMBER, two GREEN) which are owned and managed by the City Gardens Manager and his Management Team.
15. Since the date of the last report to the Natural Environment Board, all risks have been reviewed and updated in the risk management information system. None of the risk scores have changed.
16. The highest risk for City Gardens remains 'Negative impacts of public behaviour' which is currently scored at Red 16 (likely to occur, with a major impact). Irresponsible public behaviour continues to be an issue in and around the City Garden sites. To address this, officers work in partnership with the City of London's Outreach Team and Street Environment Officers, and with Parkguard where appropriate. Recruitment is underway for a new 'Keeper' post. This individual will have enforcement duties and it is hoped that once they are on board, the risk will reduce.
17. Work to reduce other risks on the register is ongoing. Staff resources are increasing, with four apprentice gardeners having been taken on in January, and four other posts currently proceeding through the recruitment process. Officers are working closely with colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department as the corporately approved funds to address the bow wave of maintenance works is allocated and works prioritised.
18. The full list of risks held by City Gardens is as follows:
 - **ENV-CO-GC 018: Negative impacts of public behaviour** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 011: Tree and plant diseases and other pests** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 016: Staff resources** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 017: Decline in condition of assets** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 009: Risk to health and safety** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 015: Electric vehicles (lack of suitable electric vehicles to replace existing fleet)** (*GREEN, 4*)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 012: Climate and weather** (*GREEN, 3*)

Risk Management Process

19. Across the Environment Department, risk management is a standing agenda item at the regular meetings of local, divisional and departmental management teams.
20. Between management team meetings, risks are reviewed in consultation with risk and action owners, and updates are recorded in the corporate risk management information system.

21. Regular risk management update reports are provided to the Natural Environment Board in accordance with the City's Risk Management Framework and the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Identification of New Risks

22. New and emerging risks are identified through several channels, including:
 - Directly by senior management teams as part of the regular review process.
 - In response to ongoing review of progress made against Business Plan objectives and performance measures, e.g., slippage of target dates or changes to expected performance levels.
 - In response to emerging events and changing circumstances which have the potential to impact on the delivery of services. For example, changes to legislation, accidents, severe weather events.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

23. Effective management of risk is at the heart of the City Corporation's approach to delivering cost effective and valued services to the public as well as being an important element within the corporate governance of the organisation.
24. The risk management processes in place in the Environment Department support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, our Departmental high-level Business Plan, local business plans, the Natural Environment Division's core strategies and relevant Corporate Strategies including, but not limited to, the Climate Action; Cultural; Sport and Physical Activity; and Volunteering Strategies.
25. Risks which could have a serious impact on the achievement of business and strategic objectives are proactively identified, assessed, and managed in order to minimise their likelihood and/or impact.

Conclusion

26. The proactive management of risk, including the reporting process to Members, demonstrates that the Environment Department is adhering to the requirements of the City of London Corporation's Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 2 – City Gardens Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 3 – City of London Corporation Risk Matrix

Contact

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Natural Environment Cross-divisional Summary Risk Register

Generated on: 18 June 2024

Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE 003	Decline in condition of assets	32		24			
ENV-NE 004	Negative impacts from pests and diseases	16		12			
ENV-NE 010	Budget pressures	16		12			
ENV-NE 015	Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and sites	16		12			
ENV-NE 001	Risks to health and safety	12		8			
ENV-NE 002	Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change	12		8			
ENV-NE 005	Negative impacts of development and encroachment	12		8			
ENV-NE 011	Recruitment of suitable staff	12		4			
ENV-NE 014	Lack of asset register	12		4			
ENV-NE 013	Negative impacts of visitor pressure	8		6			
ENV-NE 012	Negative impacts of carrying out wildlife management	4		2			

City Gardens Summary Risk Register

Generated on: 17 June 2024



Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-CO-GC 018	Negative impacts of public behaviour	16		6			
ENV-CO-GC 011	Tree and plant diseases and other pests	12		12			
ENV-CO-GC 016	Staff resources	12		8			
ENV-CO-GC 017	Decline in condition of assets	12		8			
ENV-CO-GC 009	Risk to health and safety	8		8			
ENV-CO-GC 015	Electric vehicles	4		1			
ENV-CO-GC 012	Climate and weather	3		3			

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City of London Corporation Risk Matrix (Black and white version)

Note: A risk score is calculated by assessing the risk in terms of likelihood and impact. By using the likelihood and impact criteria below (top left (A) and bottom right (B) respectively) it is possible to calculate a risk score. For example a risk assessed as Unlikely (2) and with an impact of Serious (2) can be plotted on the risk scoring grid, top right (C) to give an overall risk score of a green (4). Using the risk score definitions bottom right (D) below, a green risk is one that just requires actions to maintain that rating.

(A) Likelihood criteria

	Rare (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Likely (4)
Criteria	Less than 10%	10 – 40%	40 – 75%	More than 75%
Probability	Has happened rarely/never before	Unlikely to occur	Fairly likely to occur	More likely to occur than not
Time period	Unlikely to occur in a 10 year period	Likely to occur within a 10 year period	Likely to occur once within a one year period	Likely to occur once within three months
Numerical	Less than one chance in a hundred thousand (<10-5)	Less than one chance in ten thousand (<10-4)	Less than one chance in a thousand (<10-3)	Less than one chance in a hundred (<10-2)

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(B) Impact criteria

Impact title	Definitions
Minor (1)	Service delivery/performance: Minor impact on service, typically up to one day. Financial: financial loss up to 5% of budget. Reputation: Isolated service user/stakeholder complaints contained within business unit/division. Legal/statutory: Litigation claim or find less than £5000. Safety/health: Minor incident including injury to one or more individuals. Objectives: Failure to achieve team plan objectives.
Serious (2)	Service delivery/performance: Service disruption 2 to 5 days. Financial: Financial loss up to 10% of budget. Reputation: Adverse local media coverage/multiple service user/stakeholder complaints. Legal/statutory: Litigation claimable fine between £5000 and £50,000. Safety/health: Significant injury or illness causing short-term disability to one or more persons. Objectives: Failure to achieve one or more service plan objectives.
Major (4)	Service delivery/performance: Service disruption > 1 - 4 weeks. Financial: Financial loss up to 20% of budget. Reputation: Adverse national media coverage 1 to 3 days. Legal/statutory: Litigation claimable fine between £50,000 and £500,000. Safety/health: Major injury or illness/disease causing long-term disability to one or more people Objectives: Failure to achieve a strategic plan objective.
Extreme (8)	Service delivery/performance: Service disruption > 4 weeks. Financial: Financial loss up to 35% of budget. Reputation: National publicity more than three days. Possible resignation leading member or chief officer. Legal/statutory: Multiple civil or criminal suits. Litigation claim or find in excess of £500,000. Safety/health: Fatality or life-threatening illness/disease (e.g. mesothelioma) to one or more persons. Objectives: Failure to achieve a major corporate objective.

(C) Risk scoring grid

	X	Impact			
		Minor (1)	Serious (2)	Major (4)	Extreme (8)
Likelihood	Likely (4)	4 Green	8 Amber	16 Red	32 Red
	Possible (3)	3 Green	6 Amber	12 Amber	24 Red
	Unlikely (2)	2 Green	4 Green	8 Amber	16 Red
	Rare (1)	1 Green	2 Green	4 Green	8 Amber

(D) Risk score definitions

RED	Urgent action required to reduce rating
AMBER	Action required to maintain or reduce rating
GREEN	Action required to maintain rating

This is an extract from the City of London Corporate Risk Management Strategy, published in May 2014.

Contact the Corporate Risk Advisor for further information. Ext 1297

October 2015

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Committee(s)	Dated:
Natural Environment Board	11 July 2024
Subject: Environment Department high-level Business Plan 2023/24 – Progress Report (Year End, April 2023-March 2024)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse engaged communities • Vibrant thriving destination • Providing excellent services • Flourishing public spaces • Leading sustainable environment
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
Report of: Bob Roberts, Interim Executive Director, Environment	For Information
Report author: Joanne Hill, Environment Department	

Summary

This report provides an update on progress made by the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens towards delivery of the Environment Department’s high-level Business Plan 2023/24.

The report summarises the progress that has been made against major workstreams and performance measures during 2023/24. An update on the financial position is provided in the separate Chamberlain’s Revenue Outturn Report also presented to this Committee.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of this report and its appendices.

Main Report

Background

1. The Natural Environment Board (then the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee) approved the Environment Department’s high-level Business Plan 2023/24 on 13 February 2023. The Business Plan set out the priority strategic workstreams and key performance indicators (KPIs) for the year ahead for the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens. The high-level Plan is supported by detailed charity, service and team work plans.
2. To ensure the Natural Environment Board is kept informed, progress made against the high-level Business Plan is reported every six months. This approach

allows Members to ask questions and have a timely input into areas of particular importance to them.

Current Position

Major workstreams

3. The high-level Business Plan set out the priority workstreams that would be undertaken during 2023/24. Throughout the year, Members have been kept informed of the progress of specific workstreams by way of regular Assistant Director Update reports and/or separate detailed reports. An overall summary of progress is presented at Appendix 1.

Performance Measures

4. Ten Key Performance Indicators were identified in the high-level Business Plan. These measures are monitored to assess performance against targets and the progression of key workstreams. Details of performance to the end of March 2024 is provided at Appendix 1.

Awards/Achievements

5. City Gardens: Friends of City Gardens achieved GLA Rewilding Funding for Bunhill Fields.
6. The Learning Team expanded work with new youth and community groups, including: Family Action UK; Wanderers of Colour; Transition Kentish Town; and City of London Early Help Team.
7. The Learning Team led a holiday learning project to extend the reach of City of London cultural opportunities to those who may not otherwise access them. Evaluation showed a 28% increase in feelings of confidence to explore our spaces.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – The monitoring of key workstreams and performance measures links to the achievement of the aims and outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan.

Financial Implications – Financial implications are addressed in the separate Chamberlain’s Revenue Outturn report.

Resource implications – Recruitment to vacant posts across the service areas continued throughout the year and is now progressing well.

Risk implications - Risks to achieving the objectives set out in the Business Plan are identified and managed in accordance with the City of London Risk Management

Framework. Risk Registers are reported to the Natural Environment Board and the Charity Management Committees quarterly.

Climate implications – The Climate Action Strategy is supported by a range of workstreams being undertaken by the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens. Progress against these is regularly reported to Members.

Charity implications - Many of the Natural Environment sites are registered charities. Any decisions must be taken in the best interests of the relevant charity.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Progress against key workstreams

Appendix 2 – Progress against key performance indicators

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Progress against key workstreams 2023-24
1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

Ref:	Workstream	Progress 2023-24
1.	Refine the elements of the Natural Environment Charity Review for approval, working with the Comptroller and City Solicitor and the Corporate Charity Review Group to ensure each charity is fit for purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NECR is a transformation project seeking improvements to the NE charities that will facilitate changes ensuring the charities can operate in a self-determining and financially secure way into the future. • Between July 2023 and March 2024, the NECR identified, via a cross departmental officer Task and Finish group highlighting 22 areas of improvement for the charities. • In this period 14 workstreams were completed, with 8 still in progress which will inform or relate to further planned work. • During the scoping phase, more systematic areas of challenge were identified which would require further funding and expertise. • Since March 2024 the NECR has moved into development phase, further expanding the issues and potential solutions to those fundamental problems for the charities uncovered during scoping.
2.	Embed the transformation plans for Phase Two of the Target Operating Model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase Two of the Target Operating Model has been implemented across the Natural Environment Division. All staff at risk of redundancy have been redeployed and the majority of the vacancies have been filled or are currently being recruited to. • A series of workshops for NE Division staff will be held in June and July to give officers the opportunity to feed back what is working well, what isn't working well and where there are staffing gaps and/or overlaps. This feedback will be reviewed by the NE Leadership Team who will make recommendations accordingly.
3.	Ensure the safety of our buildings and assets by collaborating with the City Surveyor's Department on the Operational Property Review to prioritise and carry out essential repairs and maintenance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corporation has approved funding to address the significant maintenance backlog, including of the Natural Environment Division's built assets. Officers are working closely with colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department (CSD) formally assess, allocate and prioritise the funding allocated to the Environment Department to areas of most need. • A condition survey of high-priority lodges was undertaken and work is underway to feed back the findings and prioritise work internally and with CSD.

Ref:	Workstream	Progress 2023-24
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full review of Natural Environment assets is underway. The outcome will be the compilation of a comprehensive, accurate asset register which will enable us to identify ownership of our assets. • A Charity Asset Officer is under recruitment as part of the Natural Environment Charity Review (NECR) to ensure assets are recorded correctly and consistently. Value and condition may form part of that project. • Officers also continue to seek alternative funding or other opportunities to enable repair and maintenance works to be undertaken outside the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP).
4.	Further develop, and commence implementation of, the core Natural Environment strategies in line with Corporate strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The four Natural Environment Strategies have been finalised, were launched at the Natural Environment Board Dinner in January 2023 have been shared on our public-facing website. These strategies are being implemented through the development and delivery of business plans for each Charity; a new business plan template has been produced which enables recording of which of the 4 strategies each project/workstream contributes to.
5.	Continue to progress the Carbon Removals project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project was rescoped in autumn 2023 and approved by Policy and Resources Committee in January 2024: delivery of the rescoped project is now underway. • Late in 2023 consultants began to prepare details on the new added element of the project: “Basine protection”, i.e. protecting our habitats’ carbon sequestration capacity. This work is expected to complete between April and August 2024. • The process to recruit a new Carbon Removal Project Manager commenced in March 2024.
6.	Develop income generating activities and continue to investigate further opportunities for funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Assistant Director Charities and Development is leading on analysis of extant income streams and priority rating of new or extended funding sources for the Natural Environment charities. This will support the developing Charity Review and Fundraising Strategy. • At the North London Open Spaces (NLOS), recruitment for a Head of Development and Partnerships will proceed in April 2024; the new postholder will then recruit a Business Development Officer. • NLOS officers are exploring the ability to partner with third-party providers to expand the filming and wedding offer and associated income; and have set goals to increase commercial event income during FY' 2024-25.

Ref:	Workstream	Progress 2023-24
7.	Review digitalisation of services to achieve efficiency gains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North London Open Spaces is procuring/building a replacement booking system for swimming operations. This will simplify the existing system, improve customer experience, and minimise overhead costs. • Other developments under consideration include a new online platform for the Constabulary to capture and analyse data; and a system to streamline the administration of commercial dog walking licences on Hampstead Heath.
8.	Develop Gift Aid system for the Natural Environment Charities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hampstead Heath Charity and Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Charity are able to receive Gift Aid if donations are made through Just Giving which is able to collect Gift Aid on the charities' behalf from HMRC. Once the new Head of Development and Partnerships has been appointed, the scheme will be extended to West Ham Park. • Epping Forest has completed registration for Gift Aid and is embedding this functionality into the existing CRM system for donations and other income streams where applicable.
9.	Support the development of volunteer skills, networks and confidence, and improve volunteer wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recognised that much of this work is undertaken by third party/partner organisations. • North London Open Spaces is in the process of renewing the agreement with Heath Hands, which delivers numerous and voluminous benefits such as a varied programme of walks, talks, training workshops and social events runs throughout the year. • West Ham Park has an ongoing commitment to work with volunteers via the Friends of West Ham Park.
10.	Epping Forest: complete the Countryside Stewardship Scheme application for remaining Forest Buffer Lands and Wanstead Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the year, work focussed on submitting a Countryside Stewardship Scheme application for the second half of Epping Forest. • The plan for Copped Hall was clarified. • An application for the Buffer Lands is still planned and will proceed when resources are available to do so. • Initial work needs to be carried out on the Wanstead Park project before a CSS application can be made.
11.	Work with local partners on the inclusion of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common within an extended Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has not yet made any progress with its boundary review.

Ref:	Workstream	Progress 2023-24
12.	Continue to work closely with stakeholders on the Burnham Beeches landscape scale habitat management programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership meetings continued to be held during the year, with a draft Memorandum of Understanding circulated for development in 2024/25.
13.	The Burnham Beeches Team will work with Buckinghamshire Borough Council to deliver the agreed Strategic Access Management and Monitoring program; and with Slough Borough Council to deliver Section 106 agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual report of activity has been produced and circulated to partners. • Our Community Engagement Rangers are having a positive impact, and development of essential monitoring systems was established in 2023/24. • Developer contributions to deliver the SAMMs collected by Buckinghamshire Borough Council have been transferred to the City of London.
14.	Continue to provide learning programmes for schools and for children with special educational needs which build wellbeing and nature connection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the 2023-24 the Learning Programme engaged audiences across Hampstead Heath (including Parliament Hill Fields and Golders Hill Park), Highgate Wood, Epping Forest (including Barn Hoppitt and Wanstead Flats), and West Ham Park, with a total of 40,000 participants. • 88% of participants reported feeling 'connected' or 'very connected' to nature after taking part. • A detailed update on the Learning Programme's performance during 2023-24 was presented to the Natural Environment Board in May 2024.
15.	City Gardens Deliver the Biodiversity Action Plan; deliver improvement schemes along biodiversity routes as part of the Climate Adaptation Strategy; develop a Climate-resilient planting catalogue; and deliver a street tree development programme under the Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Biodiversity Action Plan progressed during 2023-24 with actions and target dates reviewed. • The Biodiversity Partnership Group was reformed with the aim of fostering a network of external organisations who can collaborate and support one another to deliver the Biodiversity Action Plan. The Group has since formed three subgroups made up of City of London officers and external organisations, to focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communications: identify opportunities to engage with City community to raise awareness of the BAP and support biodiversity in the Square Mile. ○ Pollinators in the City: develop guidance on supporting pollinators in the built environment by enabling a biodiversity partnership working group. ○ Biological Recording in City: increase understanding of biodiversity in the Square Mile through systematic surveys and species recording.

Ref:	Workstream	Progress 2023-24
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plant species list has been produced and is being employed in new projects. The list will be reviewed and improved annually as lessons are learnt. We will also share the list with external partners and ask for their feedback.
16.	<p>City Gardens Replace the City Gardens Team's existing diesel fleet with fully electric vehicles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first of the new electric vehicles has been delivered and is now in use. • There has been a delay with the build of the remaining electric vehicles, but these are expected to be delivered before summer 2024.

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**Progress against Key Performance Indicators
1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024**

↑	The annual performance of this indicator is on or above target .
↓	The annual performance of this indicator is below target .

Performance Measure	Performance 2022-23 (full-year result)	Target 2023-24	Performance mid-year 2023-24 (Apr-Sep 2023)	Performance 2023-24 (full year result)
Retain our Green Heritage Site Accreditation.	13 Awards	13 Awards	13 Awards ↑	13 Awards ↑
Retain our Green Flag Awards.	14 Awards	14 Awards	14 Awards ↑	14 Awards ↑
Number of volunteer work hours.	N/A <i>Comparable data for 2022/23 is not available</i>	N/A baseline to be set in 2023/24	The Commons: 7,816 Epping Forest: 3,166 HH, QP & HW: 8,841 West Ham Park: 921 Keats House: 352 Total: 21,906	The Commons: 19,445 Epping Forest: 13,346 HH, QP & HW: 14,706 West Ham Park: 2,565 Keats House: 1,065 Total: 51,127
Number of Ranger days spent interacting with visitors in Burnham Beeches with regards to SAMM commitments and Section 106 agreements.	N/A <i>New measure for 2023/24</i>	>100 days by year end	N/A, annual measure	102 days ↑
Number of visitors to Keats House.	5,149	> 5,149	4,206	7,338 ↑

Performance Measure	Performance 2022-23 (full-year result)	Target 2023-24	Performance mid-year 2023-24 (Apr-Sep 2023)	Performance 2023-24 (full year result)
Number of visitors to The Queens Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge (QEHL) and the Temple at Epping Forest.	QEHL: 10,644 The Temple: N/A <i>Comparable data for 2022/23 is not available</i>	QEHL: >10,644 The Temple: N/A baseline to be set in 2023/24	QEHL: 7,041 Temple: 617	QEHL: 10,572 ↓ Temple: 930
Number of visitors recorded at the Bathing Ponds and Lido at Hampstead Heath.	N/A <i>Comparable data for 2022/23 is not available</i>	N/A baseline to be set in 2023/24	Lido: 181,372 Ponds: 280,137 Total: 461,509	Lido: 249,238 Ponds: 375,835 Total: 625,073 *1
Self-reported perception of wellbeing by Learning Programme participants.	12%	Positive result	9% ↑	10% ↑
Progress toward achieving net zero (carbon) (improvement against baseline).	-16.2 kilo tonnes CO2e	-16.2 kilo tonnes CO2e	-16.2kt CO2e ↑	-16.2kt CO2e ↑
Health and safety accident investigations completed within 21 days.	85%	85% (Corporate target)	87% ↑	82% ↓*2

*1 Swimming visitor figures are based on the number of ticket sale transactions rather than the number of individual tickets, i.e. transactions for multiple tickets are counted as one. Figures are lower for the second half of the year due to seasonal fluctuations in the autumn/winter.

*2 The result for this KPI is for the whole of the Environment Department; figures are not available at a more granular level. Health and safety incidents did not meet the target across the department in 2023-24. All staff have been reminded of the importance of completing accident investigations within 21 days, and a new improved reporting system due to be introduced corporately, should improve future performance.

Agenda Item 8

Committee(s)	Dated:
Natural Environment Board	11 July 2024
Subject: Revenue Outturn 2023/24 – Natural Environment Board	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	n/a
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	n/a
Report of: Chamberlain Interim Executive Director Environment	For Information
Report author: Clem Harcourt – Chamberlain’s Department	

Summary

This report compares the revenue outturn for the services overseen by your Board in 2023/24 with the final budget for the year. In total, there was an adverse budget position of (£246k) for the services overseen by your Board compared with the final budget for the year as set out in the table below.

The Natural Environment Board is the strategic overarching committee for the entire Natural Environment Division and whilst this report details the 2023/24 revenue outturn position for the Natural Environment Directorate, Learning Programme, City Gardens and Bunhill Fields (see table below), the report also provides a summary of the revenue outturn for all of the sections within the Natural Environment Division (excluding Keats House and The Monument which are reported to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee) as provided in Appendix 2.

	Final Budget	Revenue Outturn	Variation Better/ (Worse)
	£000	£000	£000
Local Risk			
Interim Executive Director Environment	(2,597)	(2,674)	(77)
City Surveyor	(82)	(259)	(177)
Total Local Risk	(2,679)	(2,933)	(254)
Central Risk	(104)	(88)	16
Recharges	691	683	(8)
Total Net Expenditure	(2,092)	(2,338)	(246)

Explanations for significant budget variances are detailed in paragraphs 5 to 8.

The Interim Executive Director Environment had an overall local risk overspend of (£77k) (excluding City Surveyor) for activities overseen by your Board. The Interim Executive Director Environment also had net a local risk underspend totalling £114k on activities overseen by other Committees within his remit, after adjusting for unspent carry forwards from 2022/23. The Interim Executive Director Environment is proposing that £37k be carried forward into 2024/25, none of which relate to your Board. A request has also been made to carry forward £2k in unspent Transformation Fund monies into 2024/25.

Recommendation(s)

Note the report and the proposed carry forward of Transformation Fund underspending into 2024/25.

Main Report

Budget Position for 2023/24

1. The 2023/24 original budget for services overseen by your Board (received in December 2022) was (£1.893m) net expenditure. This budget was endorsed by the Court of Common Council in March 2023 and subsequently updated for approved net increases of (£199k) resulting in a final budget for 2023/24 of (£2.092m) net expenditure. This is explained by the following budget movements:
 - (£173k) increase in your Board's local risk resource base following implementation of the second phase of the Target Operating Model (TOM2) within the Natural Environment Division;
 - (£89k) net increase in local risk budgets following contingency funding provided for cost of living pay increases to staff and centrally funded apprenticeships during 2023/24;
 - (£84k) central risk Transformation Fund monies to support the Operational Property Review within the Natural Environment Division and the IT Transformation project at City Gardens;
 - (£60k) local risk carry forward funding from 2022/23 to support the Biodiversity Action Plan at City Gardens;
 - (£29k) net increase in other budgets primarily attributable to additional recharges largely explained by increased recharges from the Cleansing Services section to City Gardens; and
 - £236k transfer of Directorate contingency funding to support initiatives in other sections of the Natural Environment Division.

2. A reconciliation between the original budget and the final budget for 2023/24 is provided in Appendix 1.

Revenue Outturn 2023/24

3. Actual net expenditure for your Board's services during 2023/24 totalled (£2.338m), an adverse budget variance of (£246k) compared with the final budget of (£2.092m) net expenditure.
4. A summary comparison with the final agreed budget for the year is tabulated below. In the tables, income, increases in income and reductions in expenditure are shown as positive balances, whereas brackets are used to denote expenditure, increases in expenditure, or shortfalls in income. Only significant variances (generally those greater than £50k) are commented on.

Natural Environment Board
Comparison of 2023/24 Revenue Outturn with Final Budget

	Original Budget £000	Final Budget £000	Revenue Outturn £000	Better (Worse) £000	Para
LOCAL RISK					
Interim Executive Director Environment City Gardens	(1,354)	(1,409)	(1,406)	3	
Bunhill Fields	(108)	(116)	(108)	8	
Directorate	(679)	(638)	(742)	(104)	5
Learning Programme	(370)	(434)	(418)	16	
Total Net Expenditure	(2,511)	(2,597)	(2,674)	(77)	
City Surveyors Local Risk (Repairs and Maintenance)	(45)	(42)	(22)	20	
City Surveyors (Cyclical Works Programme)	(40)	(40)	(237)	(197)	6
TOTAL LOCAL RISK	(2,596)	(2,679)	(2,933)	(254)	
CENTRAL RISK					
City Gardens	(20)	(24)	(3)	21	
Directorate	0	(80)	(85)	(5)	
TOTAL CENTRAL RISK	(20)	(104)	(88)	16	
RECHARGES					
Insurance	(20)	(20)	(20)	0	
Admin Buildings	(98)	(98)	(15)	83	
Support Services	(360)	(360)	(359)	1	
Surveyor's Employee Recharge	(62)	(62)	(64)	(2)	
IT Recharges	(62)	(62)	(124)	(62)	
Film Liaison Staff Costs	0	(3)	(4)	(1)	
Capital Charges	(27)	(27)	(29)	(2)	
Recharges Within Fund (Directorate, Democratic Core, & Learning)	2,176	2,139	2,142	3	
Recharges Across Fund (Directorate Recharges)	(824)	(816)	(844)	(28)	
TOTAL RECHARGES	723	691	683	(8)	7, 8
OVERALL TOTAL NET EXP	(1,893)	(2,092)	(2,338)	(246)	

Reasons for Significant Variations

- The (£104k) overspend for the Directorate was largely due to agency costs being required to provide additional HR and health and safety support to the Natural Environment Division following implementation of the TOM2 restructure. This was in addition to extra internal legal fees being incurred during 2023/24 to support the work of the Natural Environment Division. The overspend on the Directorate was partly offset by the contingency budget not being fully utilised.

6. The (£197k) adverse variance within the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) was largely due to re-phasing of the delivery of CWP projects over the life cycle of the programme relating to conservation works on the Bunhill Fields Burial Grounds project. The CWP is a three-year rolling programme reported to the Projects and Procurement Sub Committee quarterly, where the City Surveyor will report on financial performance and phasing of the projects. Under the governance of the programme, variances on budgets are adjusted for the life of the programme to allow for the completion of works which span multiple financial years.
7. Net recharges for your Board were (£8k) overspent overall compared with the final budget for 2023/24. This is largely due to increased IT recharges (£62k) due to additional costs incurred by the IT Division and higher than budgeted recharges from the Environment Department's Directorate (£28k). The net overspend on recharges was partly offset by £83k reduced cost of administrative buildings being lower than originally anticipated.
8. During 2023/24, a review of central support services recharges was carried out. This involved updating the basis of apportionment for all recharges following the TOM and Governance Review along with trying to make them more transparent and fairer across all services. The updated basis has led to several variations to the original budget across committees, but overall total recharges have remained within the total original envelope. City Fund Original Budget (£29.9m) vs Outturn (£27.9m), and City's Estate Original Budget (£24.2m) vs Outturn (£22.9m). Consultation has been held with areas where recharges are funded from local reserves, i.e. HRA and Police, any variation/increase in costs across other services are met from the deficit funding and have no effect on front-line services. The full review has not yet been formally approved by Members as work is ongoing as how the new basis will affect 2024/25 budgets. Once the review is fully adopted, the 2024/25 budget will be reviewed and updated where necessary and the paper on the review made available.

Local Risk Carry Forward to 2024/25

9. Chief Officers can generally request underspends of up to 10% or £500,000 (whichever is the lesser) of the final agreed local risk budget to be carried forward, so long as the underspending is not fortuitous and the resources were for a planned purpose that was prevented from happening during the year. Such requests are subject to the approval of the Chamberlain in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Resources Allocation Sub Committee. In accordance with Financial Regulations, any overall Departmental overspends are carried forward in full and are met from the agreed 2024/25 budgets.
10. The Interim Executive Director Environment had a local risk overspend of (£77k) on the activities overseen by your Board. The Interim Executive Director also had a net local risk underspend totalling £114k on activities overseen by other Committees within his remit, after adjusting for unspent carry forwards from 2022/23. The Interim Executive Director Environment is proposing that his maximum eligible underspend of £37k be carried forward, none of which relates to activities overseen by your Board.

11. Please also note that a request has been made to carry forward £2k in unspent central risk Transformation Fund monies relating to the IT Transformation project at City Gardens into 2024/25.

Natural Environment Division Revenue Outturn – 2023/24

12. Appendix 2 provides a summary of the outturn for the whole Natural Environment Division and City Gardens for 2023/24 which is analysed between the different sections of the Division and provides explanations for significant variances above £50k. Appendix 2 shows total net expenditure of (£19.122m) for 2023/24 for the Natural Environment Division, amounting to an overspend of (£1.894m) compared to the final net expenditure budget of (£17.228m). Please note that the summary excludes the outturn position for both Keats House and The Monument which are reported separately to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries committee. Further detail will be provided in the various outturn reports to the individual Natural Environment service committees.

Conclusion

13. This report presents the revenue outturn position for 2023/24 for the Natural Environment Board for Members to note.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Movement between 2023/24 Original Budget and 2023/24 Final Budget
- Appendix 2 – Natural Environment Division – Summary Revenue Outturn – 2023/24

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Appendix 1 - Movement between 2023/24 Original Budget and 2023/24 Final Budget

Natural Environment Board	£000
Original Budget (All Risks)	(1,893)
Original Net Local Risk Budget (Interim Executive Director Environment & City Surveyor)	(2,596)
Interim Executive Director Environment	
Adjustments to resource base following second phase of Target Operating Model (TOM2) within Natural Environment Division	(173)
Contingency funding provided for pay award and centrally funded apprenticeships	(89)
Carry forward funding from 2022/23 local risk underspends to support Biodiversity Action Plan at City Gardens	(60)
Contingency funding covering staff redundancy payments	(40)
Central funding for increased energy prices at City Gardens	(9)
Allocation of Directorate contingency budgets to support initiatives across the Natural Environment Division	236
Local risk funding for implementation of irrigation system to support Finsbury Circus Reinstatement capital project	49
City Surveyor	
Savings on Integrated Facilities Management (IFM) following implementation of new contract	3
Final Net Local Risk Budget	(2,679)
Central Risk	
Original Central Risk Budget (Interim Executive Director Environment)	(20)
Transformation Fund monies to support work around Operational Property Review within Natural Environment Division	(80)
Carry forward of unspent Transformation Fund budget to support IT Transformation at City Gardens	(4)
Final Central Risk Budget	(104)
Recharges	
Original Recharges Budget	723
Re-apportionment of costs recharged from Directorate and Learning Team to other sections of Natural Environment Division	106
Reduced recharges from Environment Department Directorate	8
Increased Cleansing Services recharges to City Gardens	(143)

2023/24 Film Liaison team recharges to support filming activities at City Gardens	(3)
Final Recharges Budget	691
Final Budget (All Risks)	(2,092)

2023/24 Revenue Outturn Summary for Natural Environment Division

Summary of Natural Environment Division	Original Budget £000	Final Budget £000	Revenue Outturn £000	Better/ (Worse) £000	Para
Local Risk					
Interim Executive Director, Environment					
Natural Environment Board	(2,511)	(2,597)	(2,674)	(77)	1
West Ham Park	(639)	(658)	(636)	22	
Epping Forest	(2,534)	(3,248)	(3,248)	0	
The Commons	(1,471)	(1,635)	(1,638)	(3)	
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park	(4,948)	(4,612)	(4,374)	238	2
	(12,103)	(12,750)	(12,570)	180	
City Surveyor					
Natural Environment Board	(85)	(82)	(259)	(177)	3
West Ham Park	(65)	(109)	(146)	(37)	
Epping Forest	(896)	(971)	(524)	447	4
The Commons	(159)	(156)	(249)	(93)	5
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	(757)	(774)	(1,377)	(603)	6
	(1,962)	(2,092)	(2,555)	(463)	
Total Local Risk	(14,065)	(14,842)	(15,125)	(283)	
Central Risk					
Natural Environment Board	(20)	(104)	(88)	16	
West Ham Park	(25)	(25)	(33)	(8)	
Epping Forest	(444)	(521)	(511)	10	
The Commons	(50)	(56)	(74)	(18)	
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	2,039	2,037	885	(1,152)	7
Total Central Risk	1,500	1,331	179	(1,152)	
Recharges					
Natural Environment Board	723	691	683	(8)	
West Ham Park	(404)	(394)	(433)	(39)	
Epping Forest	(1,448)	(1,598)	(1,841)	(243)	8
The Commons	(480)	(485)	(535)	(50)	9
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	(1,982)	(1,931)	(2,050)	(119)	10
Total Recharges	(3,591)	(3,717)	(4,176)	(459)	
Total Net Expenditure	(16,156)	(17,228)	(19,122)	(1,894)	

Reasons for Significant Variances

1. The (£77k) adverse variance is primarily explained by an overspend on the Directorate's budget as a result of agency costs being required to provide additional HR and health and safety support following implementation of a staffing restructure within the Natural Environment Division. This was in addition to extra internal legal fees being incurred.
2. The £238k underspend is largely attributable to savings in employment costs as a result of staffing vacancies being held whilst a staffing restructure was undertaken. The underspend can also be explained by additional income generated from tennis and car parking as well as from the Ponds and Lido swimming facilities at Hampstead Heath.
3. The (£177k) adverse variance largely relates to the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) due to the re-phasing of CWP projects over the life cycle of the programme for conservation works at Bunhill Fields Burial Grounds.
4. The £447k underspend can predominantly be explained by the re-phasing of works falling under the CWP at Epping Forest for a range of various projects including works relating to the Copped Hall Estate.
5. The overspend of (£93k) at The Commons is attributable to the re-phasing of CWP projects at Burnham Beeches. This is in addition to extra expenditure incurred on the corporate contract for building repairs and maintenance and cleaning at both West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons and Ashted Common.
6. The (£603k) adverse variance is explained by the re-phasing of projects falling under the CWP such as works at Sandy Heath and the upgrade of the electrical system at Highgate Wood. This was on top of additional expenditure incurred on reactive works at the Lido at Hampstead Heath.
7. The (£1.152m) adverse variance is predominantly attributable to reduced investment and dividend income generated from the Hampstead Heath Trust compared with budget as a result of a lower yield generated from dividends. This was attributable to the level of inflation and interest rates during 2023/24 which had an impact on corporate earnings. In addition, strategic adjustments were made to the Trust's portfolio during 2023/24 in order to support the long-term growth of the portfolio which has resulted in lower income from dividends being achieved in the short-term.
8. Total net recharges were (£243k) higher than budgeted at Epping Forest. This can be explained by additional IT recharges as well as increased recharges from corporate departments following a review of the apportionment bases used to calculate central support recharges.
9. The (£50k) overspend is largely explained by additional recharges from the IT Division at Burnham Beeches, West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons and Ashted Common.

10. There was a (£119k) overspend in the net cost of recharges which can largely be explained by additional recharges from the IT Division as well as increased structural maintenance recharges from the District Surveyor to Hampstead Heath.

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Committees:	Dates:
Streets & Walkways Sub – for decision Natural Environment Board – for decision Projects & Procurement Sub – for Information	09 July 2024 11 July 2024 23 September 2024
Subject: Finsbury Circus Access Improvements	Gateway 2-5 Authority to Start Work Light
Unique Project Identifier: 12455	
Report of: Executive Director, Environment Report Author: Clive Whittle	For Decision
PUBLIC	

Recommendations

<p>I. Approval track, next steps and requested decisions</p>	<p>Project Description:</p> <p>In line with the Liverpool Street Area Healthy Streets Plan, this project seeks to implement accessibility improvements and to rearrange parking to enable improvements and to accommodate micromobility (dockless cycles and e-scooter hire) parking.</p> <p>The proposals include creating accessible crossing areas at the entrances to Finsbury Circus Gardens by raising the carriageway and by creating new and widening existing pavements. Kerbside parking provision has been comprehensively reviewed and will be amended to enable these improvements and to accommodate micromobility parking. This parking will serve both visitors to the gardens and surrounding buildings and people travelling to and from Liverpool Street and Moorgate stations.</p> <p>This project is subject to the approval of the Liverpool Street Area Healthy Streets Plan (HSP) by the Planning and Transportation Committee in July, therefore no Gateway 1 Project Briefing is necessary as this project will follow on as part of that approval.</p> <p>Next Gateway: Gateway 6 Outcome Report</p> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete detailed design and cost estimate.
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- Commence legal processes and consultation required to install the raised carriageways and amend parking bays and the waiting and loading restrictions.

Requested Decisions:

Subject to the July 2024 Planning & Transportation Committee’s approval of the Liverpool Street Area HSP;

For Streets & Walkways Sub Committee

1. Agree to the proposal as detailed in Section 6, and to note that the making of the necessary traffic orders, subject to no objections, or the resolution and consideration of any objections arising from the statutory processes, is delegated to the Director of City Operations under the Scheme of Delegation.
2. That a budget of £556,000 is approved to reach the next Gateway, to be funded from the Liverpool Street Crossrail Urban Integration project (Phase 2).
3. Note the total estimated cost of the project at £556,000 (excluding risk).
4. That a Costed Risk Provision of £304,000 is approved (to be drawn down via delegation to Chief Officer).
5. Delegate to the Executive Director Environment authority and in consultation with the Chamberlain to approve budget adjustments between budget lines and within the approved total project budget, above the existing authority within the project procedures.

For Natural Environment Board

6. Agree to the proposed changes to the pathways at the entrances inside Finsbury Circus Gardens, to align with the adjacent highway measures shown on the plan in Appendix 2.

2. Budget

Item	Reason	Funds/ Source of Funding	Cost (£)
Staff Costs (P&T)	Project management	S106	£15,000
Staff Costs (Highways)	Completion of detailed design	S106	£20,000
Staff Costs (Highways)	works supervision	S106	£35,000

		and coordination		
	Fees	Topographical and radar surveys: site investigations	S106	£36,000
	Fees	Traffic Management Orders and Public Notices	S106	£12,000
	Works Utilities	Works by utility companies	S106	£50,000
	Works	Construction of raised carriageways, footways, tactile paving, drainage, road markings, and signage	S106	£370,000
	Maintenance	Provision for maintenance works for 20 years	S106	£18,000
	Total			£556,000
	<p>Costed Risk Provision requested for this Gateway: £304,000 to be funded from S106 (as detailed in the Risk Register – Appendix 5).</p> <p>The total cost of the project has been estimated at an early stage and can deviate significantly. Therefore, the majority of the costed risk provisions requested is to cover the higher end of estimated cost range to ensure there is sufficient budget for the project.</p>			
3. Governance arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Service Committee: Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee b. Natural Environment Board (for works inside the Gardens to tie in with levels on the public highway) c. Name of Senior Responsible Officer: Bruce McVean, Assistant Director. 			

	Due to the limited scope of this project, a project board is not considered necessary. All other decisions concerning this project are delegated to the Chief Officer.
4. Progress reporting	Although this is a relatively high-cost project, the proposals and risks are minor and of a routine nature. No progress report would be necessary. Any project changes will be sought by exception via an Issues Report to the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee, Natural Environment Board or delegated to the Chief Officer as appropriate.

Project Summary

5. Context	<p>The Liverpool Street Area Healthy Streets Plan (HSP) covers the area bounded by Bishopsgate to the east, Moorgate to the west, London Wall-Wormwood Street to the south, and the City of London boundary with the London Boroughs of Islington and Hackney at northern edge.</p> <p>The plan provides a framework for improvements to the streets and spaces within the HSP area. It was approved by the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee in May and is due to be considered for adoption by the Planning & Transportation Committee in July 2024. For Finsbury Circus, the plan includes exploring opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create new and improved public realm around entrances to the gardens and provide accessible crossings points to access these. • Reduce and break up car and motorcycle parking around the gardens with greening and seating, reallocate some bays to cycle parking and dockless cycle and scooter bays (micromobility). • Relandscape the western arm, introducing climate resilience measures, seating, and planting. • Improve the public realm on the eastern arm of Finsbury Circus and provide a space for cycle parking and micromobility bays. <p>Works are currently being carried out in Finsbury Circus Gardens to transform it into a tranquil and beautiful environment following its occupation by Crossrail. This is due for completion later in 2024. Works are also due to commence in the next few weeks to relandscape the western arm, with completion also expected by the end of 2024. Additionally, routine resurfacing works was programmed for Finsbury Circus but in light of this project, this has been deferred until February 2025.</p> <p>Proposals, in line with the HSP for the rest of the Circus have now been developed and are being advanced at pace to co-ordinate, as far as practical, with the above activities. This would</p>
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	achieve a greater level of improvements, reduce disruption and save on abortive works and costs.
<p>6. Brief description of project</p>	<p>The main proposals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Raising of the carriageway at five locations, four of which are at the entrances to the garden and the other at the eastern end by its junction with Blomfield Street. This will improve accessibility by providing levelled-crossing points for people walking or wheeling at the key locations. The raised carriageways will also reduce traffic speeds which should create a safer, calmer and more pleasant environment. ii. New pavements and widening of existing pavements at locations where most people will be crossing. This will provide space for people waiting, improve visibility and access. In conjunction with i. above, it would also improve the public realm around and visibility of the garden. iii. Minor works to raise / adjust the footpath levels inside the entrances to the gardens, with alterations to the gates and drainage, to join on to the new and widened pavements and raised carriageways. This will ensure a step free continuation of the levelled crossing points from the carriageway and pavements into the gardens. iv. Parking around the Circus will be re-arranged to accommodate the measures detailed above (points i and ii), and to provide new and increased provisions for micromobility parking. This will necessitate reductions in other parking provisions and will be apportioned to reflect the various factors including alignment with the Transport Strategy. There is no reduction in pay & display bays. Further details of the existing and proposed kerbside provisions and considerations can be found in Appendix 4. v. Changes to the waiting and loading restrictions including new “at any time’ waiting and loading restrictions at all the raised carriageway locations to keep the junction and crossing areas clear of parked vehicles to reduce obstruction. <p>A plan of the existing and proposed layout can be found appendix 2 and 3.</p> <p>This project is being advanced at pace primarily to co-ordinate, as much as possible, with the works at the Gardens, the public realm works on the western arm and the resurfacing works, to maximise the benefits including reduction in disruption and save</p>

	<p>on abortive works and costs, but it is noted that these projects and activities are well advanced.</p> <p>An Equalities Analysis (EA) Test of Relevance has been carried out on the proposals which has identified that a full EA is not necessary.</p>
7. Consequences if project not approved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accessibility to the Gardens and at key crossing locations would remain sub-optimal. Step free/levelled crossing surfaces are ideal for inclusive mobility. 2. The opportunity would be missed to make the garden entrances more visible and attractive. 3. Safety would not be improved. Parking close to crossing areas can hinder visibility, and crossing distances would remain excessively wide. Traffic speeds would remain unchanged as there are no speed reduction deterrents. 4. The haphazard kerbside arrangements in the Circus won't be improved. Parking and kerbside use would continue as they are which does not make the best use of space available or meet demand in micromobility parking. Although this could be progressed independently, that approach is not optimal or holistic. 5. The opportunity to co-ordinate with the garden and the western arm public realm projects and the resurfacing works would be missed.
8. SMART project objectives	<p>The success criteria are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The streets and accesses to the garden are accessible and free from obstruction. • The accesses to the garden are more visible, attractive and inviting. • Crossing distances are shorter and easier for people walking and wheeling. • Adequate parking provisions are provided for micromobility users, to accommodate increasing demand. Parking for other essential users is retained. • The project is advanced at pace to coordinate with works in the garden, the western arm and the resurfacing works which will reduce disruption and save on abortive works and costs.
9. Key Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public realm, accessibility and visibility to Finsbury Circus Gardens. • Improved safety, shorter and easier crossing areas for people walking and wheeling, and a calmer and more pleasant environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking reapportioned to create provisions for micromobility users which in turn reduces the impact of these vehicles left outside of designated bays.
10. Project category	4a. Fully reimbursable
11. Project priority	B. Advisable
12. Notable exclusions	None

Options Appraisal

13. Overview of options	<p>The scope of this project is defined by the Liverpool Street Area HSP. Therefore, only one option has been taken forward. However, variations to the option have been considered. These include raising the entire carriageway or more sections of the carriageway being raised, seating, greening and construction in different materials such as in granite setts are all possible but would not be cost effective and require more time to progress so it would not be possible to co-ordinate with the existing projects/planned resurfacing works.</p> <p>Variations to the positioning and apportionment of parking bays has also been considered but the option proposed is considered the most optimal as it aligns closest to the Transport Strategy, retains space for essential parking, servicing and enables new provisions to meet demand for micromobility parking, including for people accessing Liverpool Street and Moorgate stations.</p>
14. Risk	<p>Overall project risk: Low</p> <p>The estimated cost of the project has been provided at an early stage and may deviate significantly. To mitigate against this risk, an appropriate sum has been included in the Costed Risk Provisions. Furthermore, should additional budget be necessary, minor alterations to the proposals could be explored or an increase in the budget (from available funds) would be requested.</p> <p><u>Traffic Implications</u></p> <p>The City is under a duty to “secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians)” so far as practicable (S.122 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984). Traffic impact during construction will be minimised as far as possible but will require some pavement and lane closures to enable the works to be undertaken.</p> <p><u>Legal Implications</u></p>

	<p>Statutory processes will be followed to undertake the Traffic Management Order changes for the rearranged parking and waiting and loading restrictions, and for the public notices for the raised carriageways.</p> <p>Once the consultation has closed officers will need to consider whether a public inquiry should be held and must consider all objections duly made and not withdrawn, although it may be possible to manage this through dialogue with the objector or through minor amendments that do not affect the overall project. Consideration or resolution of any objections to the advertising of Traffic Orders before making them is delegated to the Director of City Operations under the scheme of delegation.</p> <p>There could be objections to the proposals, especially in relation to the reduction in motorcycle parking provisions. However, surveys carried out by officers, have shown that with the existing motorcycle spaces currently available (51 meters suspended since January 2024 for the Garden works), which is a similar amount proposed, spaces were still available. Should demand exceed the proposed on-street provisions, users can park in the London Wall car park, which is just a short walk to Finsbury Circus, free of charge.</p> <p>Further information is available within the Risk Register (Appendix 5).</p>
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Resource Implications

15. Total estimated cost	<p>For recommended option</p> <p>Total estimated cost (excluding risk): £556,000.</p> <p>Total estimated cost (including risk): £860,000</p>									
16. Funding strategy	<p>Is the funding confirmed:</p> <p>All funding fully guaranteed</p>	<p>Who is providing funding:</p> <p>External - Funded wholly by contributions from external third parties</p> <p>Recommended option</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Funds/Sources of Funding</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Cost (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Liverpool Street Crossrail Phase 2 S106</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£860,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£860,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Liverpool Street Area HSP identified a variety of funding sources that could be used. The Liverpool Street Crossrail</p>	Funds/Sources of Funding	Cost (£)	Liverpool Street Crossrail Phase 2 S106	£860,000			Total	£860,000
Funds/Sources of Funding	Cost (£)									
Liverpool Street Crossrail Phase 2 S106	£860,000									
Total	£860,000									

	Phase 2 S106 (with £1.64M available) is considered the most appropriate and suitable funding to be used for this project.
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Appendices

Appendix 1	Project Cover Sheet
Appendix 2	Plan of proposal
Appendix 3	Plan of Existing Layout
Appendix 4	Table of changes to parking places
Appendix 5	Risk Register

Contact

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Options appraisal table.

	<i>Option 1</i>
1. Design Summary	The project aims to create accessible crossing areas at the entrances to Finsbury Circus Gardens by raising the carriageway and by creating new and widening existing pavements. Kerbside parking provision has been comprehensively reviewed and will be amended to enable these improvements and to accommodate micromobility parking. This parking will serve both visitors to the gardens and surrounding buildings and people travelling to and from Liverpool Street and Moorgate stations.
2. Scope and exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installing raised carriageways on Finsbury Circus • Reallocated parking and changes to waiting and loading restrictions • Installing new and widened pavements • Raising gates and paths, and alterations to drainage inside the gardens at the entrance points
<i>Project Planning</i>	
3. Programme and key dates	<p>It is anticipated that construction would start around November 2024 for a duration of four months.</p> <p>There will be coordination with:</p> <p>The City of London Policy and Projects, and Highways teams for the improvement works on the western arm of Finsbury Circus, from August 2024</p> <p>City of London City Gardens and City Surveyor's for the improvement works in Finsbury Circus Gardens, currently underway, with completion due in November 2024.</p>
4. Delivery Team	City of London Policy and Projects, and Highways teams
5. Risk implications	<p>Overall project option risk: Low</p> <p>The main risks are set out in the report, which are:</p> <p>Project costs increase due to issues identified with utilities apparatus during detailed design stage, which could increase costs and cause delays.</p> <p>Objections resulting from objections to the TMOs for changes to parking arrangements and to the Public</p>

	Option 1
	<p>Notices for the raised carriageways. This could cause delays and increase costs to address or overrule.</p> <p>Project costs increase due to unforeseen issues that the arise during the detailed design.</p> <p>Further information available within the Risk Register (Appendix 5).</p>
6. Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved accessibility • Improved safety • Improved public realm • More visible entrances to the gardens • Increased micromobility parking
7. Disbenefits	Reduced motorcycle parking
8. Stakeholders and consultees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City Gardens 2. Access team 3. Statutory Traffic Management Order consultees, including the emergency services, disability, cyclist and motorcycle rider organisations. <p>An EA test of relevance has been undertaken. This indicates a full EA is not required.</p>
Resource Implications	
9. Total estimated cost	<p>Total estimated cost (excluding risk): £556,000 (moderately confident)</p> <p>Total estimated cost: £860,000 (including risk):</p>
10. Funding strategy	This is to be fully funded from the Liverpool Street Crossrail Phase 2 S106 budget, and is fully affordable.
11. Estimated capital value/return	N/A
12. Ongoing revenue implications	None
13. Investment appraisal	None. Only one visible option is available.
14. Affordability	Fully affordable
15. Procurement strategy/route to market	This work will be carried out using the Highways Term Contractor, with an agreed schedule of rates.

	Option 1
	Minor work within the gardens may be procured using City Gardens contractors.
16. Legal implications	Statutory consultation is necessary for public notices for the introduction of raised carriageways, and for traffic orders for the introduction, relocation and removal of parking bays, and for changes to waiting and loading restrictions. Once the consultation has closed officers will need to consider whether a public inquiry should be held and must consider all objections duly made and not withdrawn, although it may be possible to manage this through dialogue with the objector or through minor amendments that do not affect the overall project. Consideration or resolution of any objections to the advertising of Traffic Orders before making them is delegated to the Director of City Operations under the scheme of delegation.
17. Corporate property implications	None.
18. Traffic implications	<p>The City is under a duty to “secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians)” so far as practicable (S.122 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984). Traffic impact during construction will be minimised as far as possible but will require some pavement and lane closures to enable the works to be undertaken.</p> <p>There will be a reduction in space for motorcycle parking, however, this will be about the same space that has been lost for the past few months for suspensions while works are taking place in the gardens. There is still a significant amount of space available, and many users will have found alternative parking or made other travel arrangements. There is also spare capacity available nearby in London Wall carpark.</p> <p>There will also be a reduction in disabled parking bays from 10 to 9, however, surveys have shown there is an oversupply of these bays in Finsbury Circus.</p>
19. Sustainability and energy implications	None.
20. IS implications	None.

	<i>Option 1</i>
21. Equality Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An equality impact assessment will not be undertaken. The project will deliver a more accessible environment, and an EA test of relevance has been undertaken, which indicates a full EA is not required.
22. Data Protection Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A. The risk to personal data is less than high or non-applicable and a data protection impact assessment will not be undertaken
23. Recommendation	Recommended

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Project Coversheet

Appendix 1

[1] Ownership & Status

UPI:12455

Core Project Name: Finsbury Circus Access Improvements

Programme Affiliation: N/A

Project Manager: Clive Whittle

Definition of need:

To implement improvements on Finsbury Circus as part of the Liverpool Street Area Healthy Streets Plan. The proposals include creating new and improved public realm around entrances to Finsbury Circus Gardens with raised carriageways and new and wider pavements to form accessible and safer crossing points, which will also improve safety by reducing vehicle speeds. Parking around the Circus will also be re-arranged to maximise kerbside use and will be apportioned to reflect the Transport Strategy, which includes new provisions for micromobility parking. There will be no reduction in pay & display parking bays.

Key measures of success:

- The streets and accesses to the garden are accessible and free from obstruction.
- The accesses to the garden are more visible, attractive and inviting.
- Road crossing distances are shorter and easier for people walking and wheeling.
- Adequate parking provisions are provided for micromobility users. Parking for other essential users is retained.
- The project is advanced at pace to coordinate with works in the garden, the western arm and the resurfacing works which will reduce disruption and save on abortive works and costs.

Expected timeframe for the project delivery: July 2024 – Mid 2025

Key Milestones:

Gateway 2-5 July 2024

Detailed design completed October 2024

Construction substantially complete mid 2025

Are we on track for completing the project against the expected timeframe for project delivery? Y

Has this project generated public or media impact and response which the City of London has needed to manage or is managing? No

[2] Finance and Costed Risk

Headline Financial, Scope and Design Changes:

'Project Briefing' G1 report (as approved by Chief Officer 21/06/2024):

- Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £556,000
- Costed Risk Against the Project: £304,000
- Estimated Programme Dates: July 2024 to Mid 2025

Scope/Design Change and Impact:
None

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'Project Proposal' G2 report (N/A):

- Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £556,000
- Resources to reach next Gateway (excluding risk): £556,000
- Spend to date: 0
- Costed Risk Against the Project: £304,000
- CRP Requested: £304,000
- CRP Drawn Down: 0
- Estimated Programme Dates: G2/3/4/5 July 2024 – Mid 2025

Scope/Design Change and Impact:

None

'Options Appraisal and Design' G3-4 report (as approved by PSC) N/A:

- Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £556,000
- Resources to reach next Gateway (excluding risk): £556,000
- Spend to date: 0
- Costed Risk Against the Project: £304,000
- CRP Requested: £304,000
- CRP Drawn Down: 0
- Estimated Programme Dates: G2/3/4/5 July 2024, Completion of works, Mid 2025

Scope/Design Change and Impact:

None

'Authority to start Work' G5 report (as approved by PSC) N/A:

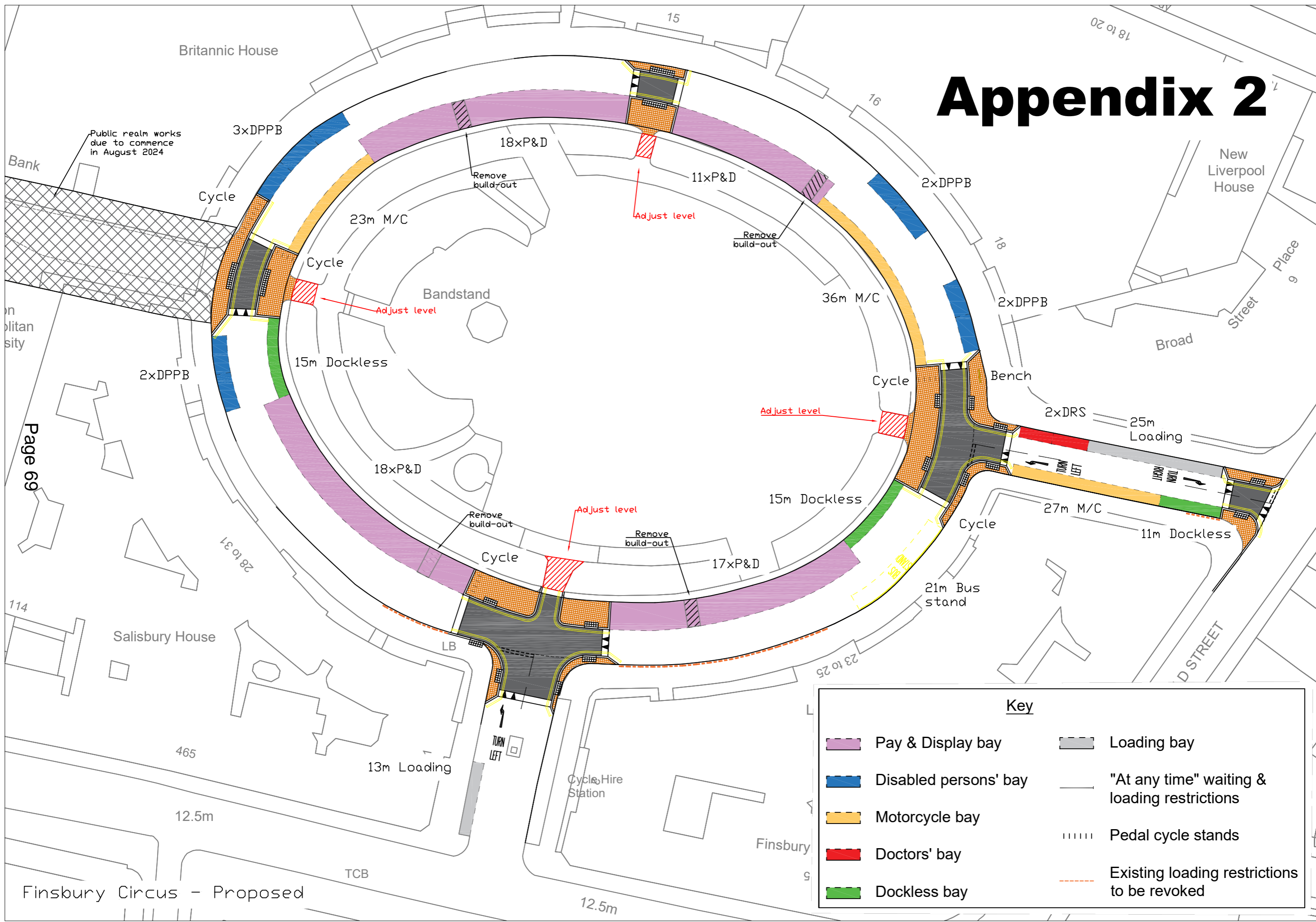
- Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £556,000
- Resources to reach next Gateway (excluding risk £556,000
- Spend to date: £0
- Costed Risk Against the Project: £304,000
- CRP Requested: £304,000
- CRP Drawn Down: 0
- Estimated Programme Dates: G2/3/4/5 July 2024, Completion of works, Mid 2025

Scope/Design Change and Impact:

None

Total anticipated on-going commitment post-delivery [£]18,000 Commuted maintenance (included above)

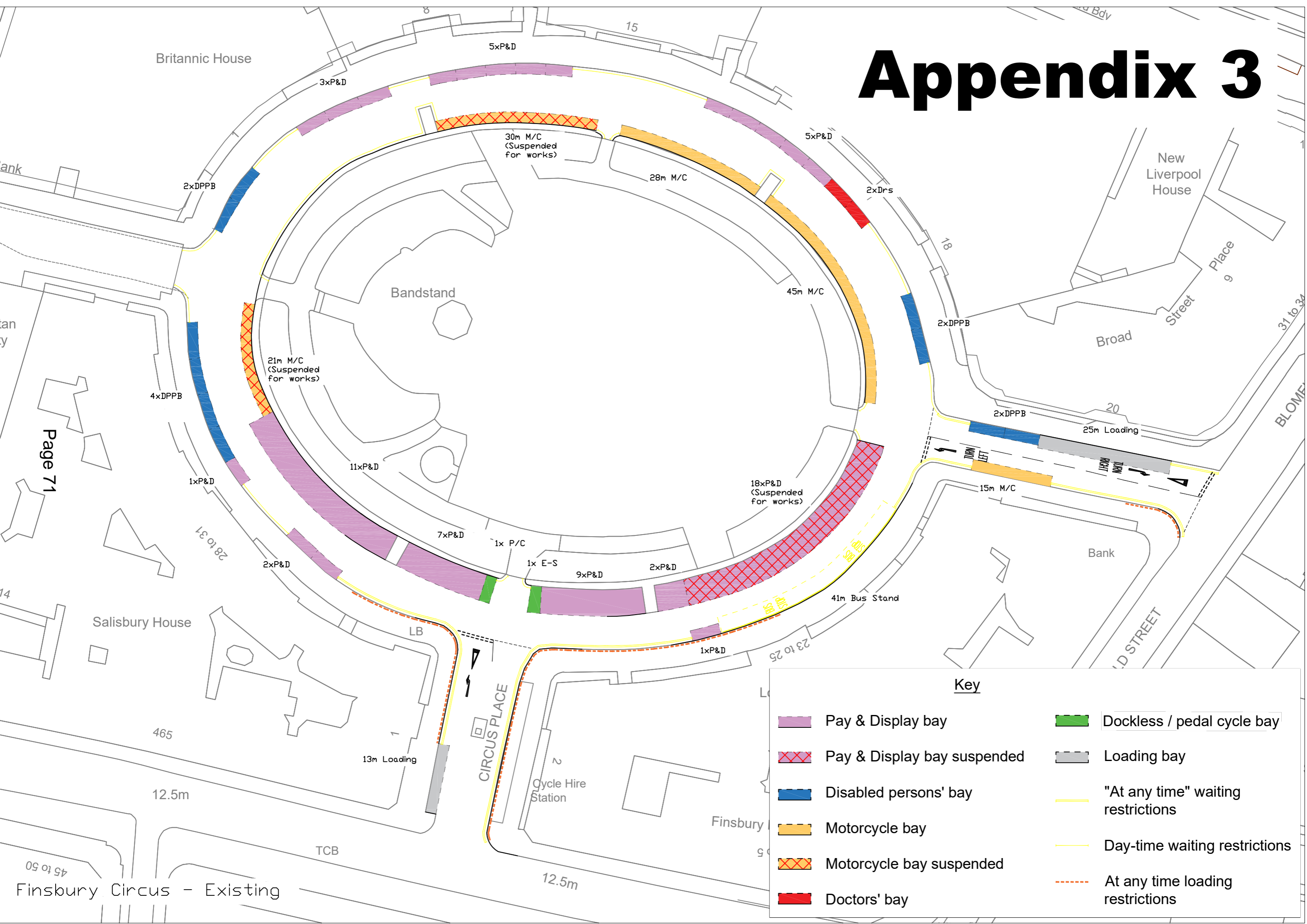
Appendix 2



Key	
	Pay & Display bay
	Disabled persons' bay
	Motorcycle bay
	Doctors' bay
	Dockless bay
	Loading bay
	"At any time" waiting & loading restrictions
	Pedal cycle stands
	Existing loading restrictions to be revoked

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Appendix 3



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Key	
	Pay & Display bay
	Pay & Display bay suspended
	Disabled persons' bay
	Motorcycle bay
	Motorcycle bay suspended
	Doctors' bay
	Dockless / pedal cycle bay
	Loading bay
	"At any time" waiting restrictions
	Day-time waiting restrictions
	At any time loading restrictions

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Table 1: Comparison between Existing (without suspensions) and Proposed kerbside provisions.

Kerbside use	Existing	Proposed
Pay & Display	64	64
Disabled bays	10	9
Doctors' bays	2	2
Loading bays (spaces)	Up to 6	Up to 6
Motorcycle bays	139m (approx. 174 spaces)	86m (approx. 107 spaces)
E-Scooter / dockless cycle bays	5m	41m
Bus Stand	41m	21m
Cycle stands	5	26

Table 2: Summary of Kerbside survey

Kerbside Use	Existing capacity	Mon 03/06 09:15	Mon 03/06 11:00	Thu 06/06 09:30	Tue 11/06 09:30	Thu 13/06 09:30	Thu 13/06 12.00 noon	Av. parked	Max. parked
Pay & Display ¹	46	48	48	50	49	48	48	49	50
Disabled bays	10	1	2	4	1	4	2	2	4
Doctors' bays	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Loading bays (spaces)	Up to 6	2	0	2	3	3	2	2	3
Motorcycle bays ²	110 (88m)	94	99	105	101	102	103	101	105
E-Scooter / pedal cycle bays ³	10m	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bus Stand	41m	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parking on yellow lines	Not measured	7	6	4	11	10	3	7	11
Cycle stands	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹Only 46 Pay & Display bays in use as 18 are currently suspended for works in the Garden. Where parking numbers exceed 46, the excess are parked in the suspended bays.

²Only (up to) 110 spaces (88 meters) of motorcycle parking are in use as 64 spaces (51 meters) are currently suspended for works in the Garden.

³E-Scooter and cycle parking bays were suspended and barriered off

Survey observations and considerations:

- All Pay & Display bays were at or exceeded the available capacity (46 in total) leading to some drivers parking in suspended bays and, a large proportion, on yellow line restrictions. The existing number of Pay & Display bays is therefore retained which, based on the occupancy surveys, meets current demand, and has resilience for additional vehicles.
- The majority of users were small to medium size vans such as the Ford Transits Custom or Connect, making up to at least 95% of the motor vehicle composition (excluding motorcycles) in Finsbury Circus.
- Demand for motorcycle parking was at or near capacity with a few spaces remaining. This is despite the suspension of 64 spaces (51 meters). Motorcycle parking tend to be “long stay” and provide no opportunity for multiple users of the same space and thus is a less efficient use of the kerbside space than other modes. The number of motorcycle parking is to be reduced from 174 spaces (139 meters) to 107 spaces (86 meters), which is similar to what is available on street now. If more parking spaces are needed, the London Wall Car Park has spare capacity and is only a short distance walk to Finsbury Circus.
- The Bus Stand was not seen to be used by buses, but TfL has requested that this facility is retained. It should also be noted that the original length of the Bus Stand was much shorter (in the region of 25 meters) but extended over time to accommodate works including to the Liverpool Street Station, which affected the bus station. It is proposed to retain the Bus Stand but reduced to 21 meters long.
- There is an over-provision of Disabled Persons Parking bays, with a maximum of four vehicles observed using them. However, recent City-wide surveys of disabled parking places indicated that there is a lack of these provisions overall. Therefore, it is proposed to retain 9 of these bays, which should provide capacity to accommodate future needs.
- Parking for micromobility users such as pedal cycles, E-Cycles and E-Scooters is an important element of the Transport Strategy. The massive increase over the past few years has created significant impacts and challenges on our streets. Parking for E-Cycles and E-Scooters will increase from 10 meters to 41 meters, and from 5 cycle stands 26 cycle stands for pedal cycle parking. As well as serving visitors to the Gardens and surrounding properties this will also has the potential to serve people using Liverpool Street and Moorgate stations.

Appendix 5

City of London: Projects Procedure Corporate Risks Register																											
Project Name:		Finsbury Circus Access Improvements										PM's overall risk rating:		Low		CRP requested this gateway		£ 304,000		Average unmitigated risk		3.0		Open Risks		3	
Unique project identifier:		12455										Total estimated cost (exc risk):		£ 556,000		Total CRP used to date		£ -		Average mitigated risk score		2.0		Closed Risks		0	
General risk classification													Mitigation actions						Ownership & Action								
Risk ID	Gateway	Category	Description of the Risk	Risk Impact Description	Likelihood Classification pre-mitigation	Impact Classification pre-mitigation	Risk score	Costed Impact pre-mitigation (£)	Costed Risk Provision requested Y/N	Confidence in the estimation	Mitigating actions	Mitigation cost (£)	Likelihood Classification on post-mitigation	Impact Classification post-mitigation	Costed Impact post-mitigation (£)	Post-Mitigation risk score	CRP used to date	Use of CRP	Date raised	Named Departmental Risk Manager/Coordinator	Risk owner (Named Officer or External Party)	Date Closed OR/Realised & moved to issues	Comment(s)				
R1	5	(2) Financial	Project costs increase due to issues identified with utilities apparatus during detailed design stage	If the risk is realised and becomes an issue needing to be resolved, this could involve a change of design or scope, or additional costs and time delays	Possible	Minor	3	£200,000.00	Y - for costed impact post-mitigation	B - Fairly Confident	Regular liaison with Highways team to address any issues and deal with any changes as soon as they arise	£5,000.00	Unlikely	Minor	£100,000.00	2	£0.00	To protect, divert or adjust positions of utilities apparatus	14/06/2024		Clive Whittle						
R2	5	(3) Reputation	Delays resulting from the TMOs for changes to parking arrangements and to the Public Notices for the raised carriageways	This could delay the scheme	Possible	Minor	3	£10,000.00	Y - for costed impact post-mitigation	A - Very Confident	Dialogue with objector to reach a solution to withdraw objection, or follow processes to overrule objection if this is not successful.	£2,000.00	Unlikely	Minor	£7,000.00	2	£0.00	To report objections, re-advertise if necessary or make minor adjustments to TMOs to address objectors concerns	14/06/2024		Clive Whittle						
R3	5	(2) Financial	Project costs increase due to unforeseen issues that arise during the detailed design	This could increase costs as proposed designs may need to be modified	Possible	Minor	3	£97,000.00	Y - for costed impact post-mitigation	B - Fairly Confident	Regular liaison with Highways team to address any issues and deal with any changes as soon as they arise	£5,000.00	Unlikely	Minor	£50,000.00	2	£0.00	To cover any unforeseen construction costs when the detailed estimate is produced	14/06/2024		Clive Whittle						
												£0.00			£0.00		£0.00										

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Agenda Item 10

Committee:	Date:
Natural Environment Board	11 July 2024
Subject: City Gardens Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1)Diverse Engaged Communities 2)Leading Sustainable Environment 3)Providing Excellent services 5)Vibrant Thriving Destination 6)Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Bob Roberts, Interim Executive Director Environment	For Information
Report author: Jake Tibbetts, City Gardens Manager	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the Natural Environment Boards on current management and operational activities across the City Gardens section.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

Main Report

Personnel

1. City Gardens are currently recruiting for a new Team Leader, the Keeper Role and three gardeners.

Procurement

2. At the time of writing tenders had been received for both the tree works contract and the design and consultation for the playground at Tower Hill Gardens.

Operational Activities

3. **Tower Hill Gardens:** A public consultation exercise on the new playground will which will feed into the design will take place over the summer. Members will have the opportunity to comment on the proposed designs at a later committee.
4. **Friends of City Gardens:** The FoCG are progressing with delivering the rewilding works at Bunhill Fields, this includes :
 - the establishment of new shade beds
 - enhanced woodland habitat through planting native plants and ferns
 - improving habitat for ground nesting bees
 - improved grass areas through introducing wildflower species
 - planting of new trees
 - increased biodiversity of planting across the site
 - delivering outdoor learning sessions for young adults, local children, residents and workers via ecology, integration boards and guided walks
 - A number of corporate volunteer events have also been delivered
5. **Bunhill Fields:** Works has started on making safe a leaning wall in the north western part of the site. Parkguard are attending site more regularly to focus on encouraging responsible dog ownership, this will continue until the new keeper is in post.
6. **Business Improvement Districts:** A programme of sporting and cultural events are being planned in conjunction with the BIDS in a number of City Gardens Sites. These include:
 - Yoga and Yogalates in Christchurch Greyfriars
 - Bollywood dance in Postmans Park
 - Bootcamp in Barbers Sugeons
 - Table cricket in conjunction with The Lords Taverners in Christchurch Greyfriars
 - Outdoor screening of sporting events and films at Seething Lane
7. The open mic sessions that were being planned in Aldgate Square will not be proceeding in their original format, however, the Aldgate BID will be hosting four Aldgate Sounds live music sessions on evenings throughout August.

8. A meeting between City Gardens and representatives from all of the BIDs was held to consider how to deliver a full programme of events in City Garden sites over the course of next year.
9. City Gardens are in advanced contractual discussions with the EC bid to fund an additional Gardener for the EC area, this gardener will focus on raising the quality of key sites.

Project Updates

10. Current projects
 - 1 Cheapside/ Sunken Gardens; the planting is complete, the final hard landscaping works are due to be finished within the next few weeks.
 - Jubilee Gardens – A climate resilient scheme that will feature a relative high volume of new trees for the size of the site. This scheme is on site and it is intended that planting will take place in October
 - Moorgate London Wall – a redesign of the area around the oldest Oak tree in the Square Mile, will be delivered this winter
11. **Finsbury Circus:** Maylim, the main contractor, took occupation of the site 20th November 2023.
 - I) Physical works Completed since last update:
 - Paving installed to SE & NE
 - Soakage trenches dug in North & South of Lawn (outside LUL Zone)
 - Lawn Planters dug and filled with sub-soil to East & West Lawn
 - LuL Zone de-compacted
 - Park Office & Yard relocation design agreed
 - II) Works planned for coming month:
 - Updated Method Statement to be issued (Tree works Arboriculturist)
 - Updated Levels design & drawings to be issued
 - Install foundation for Park Office & Yard
 - Installation of paving in Outer Perimeter Pathway
 - III) Works have been delayed slightly during the current period. The tree roots in the area of the planned office and in some locations of the path network have proven to be higher in depth and more extensive than anticipated. This has meant there has had to be a redesign to parts of the paths and the office location to ensure that the impact of the development on the trees' health is as small as possible. The programme is therefore delayed slightly with completion date likely in early 2025. A site visit for NEB members around Finsbury Circus is being planned for September, this will be circulated shortly. Official opening, attended by the Lord Mayor being planned for early Summer 2025 .

- IV) City Gardens are developing the Finsbury Circus Events Policy, this will be completed by the time the gardens open, the first draft will be presented to committee at a October NEB.

Events

12. London in Bloom judging is taking place in the City on the 3rd July.
13. The members tour took place on the 12th June. Members were taken to a range of City Gardens to see meet a range of staff from the team, to hear about projects, challenges and innovation within the Team.

Jake Tibbetts

City Gardens Manager

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