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| Committee(s) | Dated: |
| West Ham Park Committee | 12 February 2021 |
| Subject: West Ham Park Managers Update | Public |
| Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly? | 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12 |
| 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: Colin Buttery | For Information |
| Report author: Lucy Stowell-Smith | |

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the West Ham Park Committee on management and operational activities at West Ham Park since December 2021.

The funding for the work stated is met through the Park's local risk budget, apart from the Friends of West Ham Park's Exhibition which is being paid for by external funding raised by the Friend's group.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

Main Report

Current Position

Budget and Personnel

1. **Budgets:** As stated in previous reports the budget continues to be impacted by lockdown. Facilities have been closed since November reducing the ability to generate income through sports. Due to COVID sickness and clinically vulnerable staff self-isolating, we have had to employ additional temporary staff, which will further impact on expenditure by approximately £10,000.
2. **Staffing:** As mentioned above there have been a number of unrelated COVID sicknesses in the Park. At times this has reduced one of our keeping teams (normally 5 members of staff) to 1 individual. Additional staff were brought in through Parkguard to help patrol, especially during busy weekends. All staff who were on site during the March – May period of the pandemic have been put forward for the COVID honorarium to recognise their efforts during this difficult period.

Community, Volunteering, Outreach and events

3. **Wild Schools:** Unfortunately due to lockdown restrictions, most planned educational sessions have been cancelled, however our most local primary school, Park Primary, continues to use the wildlife gardens for wild schools sessions with key worker children who are still attending school. The Park's Wild Schools officer is planning new sessions later in the spring when lockdown measures hopefully ease.
4. **Friends of West Ham Park:** The Friends held a collection for foodbanks in December, but all other normal activities such as Park in the Dark were cancelled. A small number of volunteers are continuing to maintain the vegetable garden and are working with our apprentice to plan for the year ahead. Maintenance sessions in the wildlife gardens are due to take place in the spring with a reduced number of volunteers, socially distanced as appropriate, if restrictions ease.

Operational activities

5. The Park continues to be much busier than we would normally expect for this time of year, but with shorter, wet and often cold days visitors are only staying for short periods and antisocial behaviour has been minimal. With a reduced number of staff, the team has focussed on core maintenance activities only.
6. **Playground:** Newham Council has granted planning permission for the playground project, which lasts for three years. If we are able to find additional funding this will give us the opportunity to extend the playground and convert the playground office into a small concession as per the original proposal. However, the Park Manager and Project Manager are currently working on the tender documents to appoint the main contractor to refurbish the playground within its original footprint. The project is a month behind schedule as both officers were off sick with COVID in December.
7. **Playground fundraising:** The donations page for the playground project is now live (see: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/west-ham-park/donate-to-us>). The Press Officer has sent out a press release to publicise this and a report will be brought to next committee with future plans for fundraising.

Property Matters

8. Nursery project: Savills Ltd has been instructed by City Surveyors to conduct a soft market testing exercise of the Nursery site. The information gained will help to inform the options for the next stage of reporting including strategy for disposal, budget and funding approval, for which Members have requested as much background detail as possible. A more detailed report will be brought to Members in April.

Report author

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