

Committee:	Date:
Open Spaces & City Gardens	7 December 2021
Subject: City Gardens 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?	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: Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director Environment	For Information
Report author: Jake Tibbetts, City Gardens Manager	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee on management and operational activities across the City Gardens section since October 2021.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

Main Report

Current position

Finance

1. As detailed in the previous City Gardens update, the service commenced the 2021/22 financial year with £158k deficit of, as yet; unidentified savings, which equates to 9% of the total budget. The team is working to reduce this figure by generating additional income, minimising expenditure and holding temporary vacant posts. The team continue to explore other options to fully balance the bottom line.

Personnel

2. A gardener at the Barbican has been seconded to the Barbican Conservatory until March, a temporary agency gardener has been secured and is in post. The City Gardens Project Officer post is still vacant, and the Project Manager has also handed in their notice and will be leaving mid-February. We have gained approval to recruit a Horticultural Project Manager which will contain aspects of both roles, it is unlikely that this will be filled before April. The TOM and the resulting structure will determine how the remaining responsibilities of these roles are delivered. For the time being workload is being absorbed by other staff in the City Gardens Team, notably the City Gardens Manager and the Technical Manager.

Procurement

3. Tree procurement tender – responses to the tender have been received and are currently being assessed.

Operational Activities

4. **Climate Action Strategy:** City Gardens have secured funding from the Climate Action Group to deliver a climate resilient planting scheme in beds along the river in front of the Boys' School. This project will commence in December and is on track to be completed by the end of this financial year. City Gardens have met with the school to look at how the students can be involved with monitoring the success of the plants and different approaches to planting.
5. City Gardens are working with the Climate Action Group to assess utilising the network that monitors and controls street lighting within the City to carry out various monitoring functions. These will be trialled at the Boys' School project as well as Cheapside sunken Garden. The aim is to enable more efficient use of water, by only watering when required rather than on a timed programme as they are currently.
6. **Biodiversity Action Plan:** The final design of this document has been delayed. It is anticipated that the document will be delivered in January.
7. **St Dunstan's in the West:** Hoarding and scaffolding is to be installed inside the gardens to facilitate the development at 100 Fetter Lane. The Large London Plane tree nearest the development will also be pruned back to allow room for the scaffolding. The cost of replacement planting will be met by the developer.

Project Updates

8. **Guildhall North Piazza:** The re-planting of the bed outside of the main entrance that was stripped out and repaired due to drainage issues has now been completed.

9. **2-6 Canon Street (phase 2) Old Change Court/St Nicholas Cole Abbey:** Work is progressing on site; drainage is an issue that is presenting challenges that we are working to overcome with colleagues within the Environment Department.
10. **Greening Cheapside Phase 1B (Sunken Garden)** This project looks to redesign this area and to introduce a sustainable urban drainage scheme is anticipated to start in the spring of 2022. The City are working with Kings College who have installed remote sensors into this site as a test, to measure temperature and soil moisture before and after the project.
11. **Finsbury Circus Reinstatement Project:** The planning application was submitted at the beginning of September and the decision is still awaited. The contract to build the new garden and pavilion is prepared and ready to tender subject to a favourable outcome.
12. **Tower Hill Playground:** The gateway 5 report was approved by Projects Sub-Committee in November. Anticipated competition of the new playground is Autumn 2022.
13. **Jubilee Gardens:** Investigations works including trial holes have now been carried out and the final scheme is being developed.
14. **Bank Junction:** The final scheme is currently being developed, City Gardens are working with the design team to ensure that maintenance of this scheme delivers value for money and covers a twenty-year period.
15. **Barbican Podium Phase Two:** City Gardens are part of the design consultation team for this project that seeks to significantly increase the amount of green infrastructure in this area, working closely with the appointed designer to ensure that the scheme delivered is sustainable and presents value for money.

Planning

16. A list of planning applications that have been received since the last Committee meeting can be found in Appendix 1.

Community, Volunteering and Events

17. The Friends of City Gardens held a successful corporate volunteering day at Bunhill Fields in November with MACE. Leaves were cleared and Bulbs planted.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – List of planning application Open Spaces consultations to November 2021

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APPENDIX 1 - Planning Application Open Spaces Consultations to November 2021

Application number	Location	Description
PT_BXD/21/00807/FULL	Tenter House 45 Moorfields London EC2Y 9AE	Replacement of existing railings and plinth surrounding the car park ramp, replacement surface treatment to the car park ramp and bell mouth, and replacement surface treatment to the pedestrian accesses to City Point Plaza, including revisions to levels and gradients, a new pedestrian ramp, new public seating and planting and associated works to public highway.
PT_GHS/21/00861/MDC	100 And 108 Fetter Lane London EC4A 1ES	Submission of details of an Arboricultural Report pursuant to condition 2 of planning permission dated 30/09/2021 (app. no. 21/00454/FULMAJ).
PT_AS/21/00815/FULL	City Point 1 Ropemaker Street London EC2Y 9AW	Temporary installation of sculptures for a temporary period between 29th November 2021 and 16th January 2022.
PT_LZR/21/00799/FULL	1 London Wall Place London EC2Y 5AU	Installation and display of two illuminated sculptures for a temporary period between 29.10.2021 and 30.01.2022.
PT_CL/21/00783/FULL	St Brides House 10 Salisbury Square London EC4Y 8EH	Refurbishment and extension of the building including new hard and soft landscaping and other works.
PT_AS/21/00930/FULL	1 Exchange Square London EC2A 2JN	Part demolition of the site for the refurbishment and extension to the existing facades facing onto Exchange square and Bishopsgate and other works including, public realm improvements and external terraces.