

Committee:	Date:
Open Spaces & City Gardens	15 February 2022
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 December 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. City Gardens are currently advertising for the Horticultural Project Manager. The TOM is now in the consultation phase, preparations are being made to recruit to all of the vacant posts and to those that are currently filled with fixed term contracts.

Procurement

3. The tree procurement contract has now been awarded to a new supplier; Van den Berk nurseries who will supply trees for City Gardens for the next five years.

Operational Activities

4. **Queens Green Canopy:** As part of the department's events supporting the Queens Green Canopy, The Lord Mayor will be planting a tree to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The date and location will be circulated to Members once finalised. Other planting schemes in the City will be carried out in support of this scheme. The plans for how the Natural Environment Division will celebrate the Jubilee is the subject of another paper that will be presented to committee.
5. **Biodiversity Action Plan:** The Biodiversity Action plan will be ready for circulation imminently; committee Members will be sent a copy as soon as it is complete.
6. **Fleet:** The lease agreement is being prepared for a new electric Luton style box van. We will retain the existing vehicle until the new vehicle is ready. The current lease agreement on the three diesel tipper transits has been extended by 18 months. The Goupil G4 electric vehicle will be delivered by the end of this financial year.

Project Updates

7. **2-6 Canon Street (phase 2) Old Change Court/St Nicholas Cole Abbey:** Drainage issues have now been overcome and planting will be taking place before the end of March.
8. **Finsbury Circus Reinstatement Project:** The planning application was submitted at the beginning of September and the decision is still awaited. The Tender process for the contract to build the new garden and pavilion ended on 4 February 2022. At the time of writing, the submissions were due to be evaluated.
9. **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 is now on site with clearance works having started, planting will be completed by the end of March.

10. **Vine Street:** Eight new trees are to be planted; the species (Two *Zelkova serrata* and six *Koelreuteria paniculata*), have been selected based on their climate resilience, but have not previously been planted in a highway setting in the City.
11. **Bunhill Fields:** the internal waterpipes in Bunhill Fields have been leaking. We are working with City Surveyors on a project to replace them. City Gardens will be carrying out the trenching works which will be done in sympathetic way around the tree roots. Works to be completed by March.

Planning

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

Community, Volunteering and Events

13. The Friends of City Gardens have delivered a number of corporate volunteering days with MACE at Bunhill Fields and at St Bartholomew's the Great.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – List of planning application Open Spaces consultations February 2022

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Planning Application Open Spaces Consultations to February 2022

Application number	Location	Description
PT_AC/21/00973/MDC	81 Newgate Street London EC1A 7AJ	Submission of details of tree protection pursuant to condition 41 of planning permission 20/00311/FULMAJ dated 11.09.2020.
PT_GD/21/00983/MDC	City Tower and City Place House 40 - 55 Basinghall Street London EC2V	Submission of a demolition and construction logistics plan and details of tree protection measures pursuant to conditions 8 and 18(j) of planning permission dated 29th September 2021 (ref. 21/00116/FULMAJ). Subsequently withdrawn.
PT_GHS/21/00793/FULMAJ	Ibex House 42 - 47 Minorities London EC3N 1DY	Extensions and alterations of the building of the building, including at ground and lower ground floor on Haydon Street and Portsoken Street (1016sq.m GEA), to incorporate external 'winter gardens' at lower ground floor and creation of external roof terraces. Also showing indicative only changes to the adjacent Portsoken Street and Portsoken Street Garden.
PT_AC/21/00985/FULL	81 Newgate Street London EC1A 7AJ	Application to vary condition 54 (floor areas by land use) and condition 56 (approved plans) of planning permission 11/09/2020 (app. no. 20/00311/FULMAJ) to incorporate various minor material amendments including: winter gardens and terraces within the existing single glazed east, west and south atriums, amendments to the massing of the building and changes to the internal arrangement of the building.
PT_LH/21/00781/FULMAJ	61 - 65 Holborn Viaduct London EC1A 2FD	Re-consultation with some amended documents. Redevelopment of the site for a new building comprising basements, lower ground and ground levels, plus 12 upper floors including purpose-built student accommodation and associated amenity space (Sui Generis), flexible cultural / community use at part ground and lower ground floor levels (Sui Generis), a publicly accessible roof terrace, a pedestrian route through the site, hard and soft landscaping, together with ancillary plant, servicing and enabling works.