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| Committee: | Date: |
| Open Spaces & City Gardens | 29 April 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 February 2022.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

Main Report

Current position

Finance

1. Following the implementation of the TOM savings have been made and a balanced budget out turn is forecasted for this year.

Personnel

2. City Gardens are currently recruiting to the following positions:
 - Horticultural Project Manager
 - X3 Gardeners
 - X1 Assistant Gardener

- X1 City Garden Operative

Procurement

3. There following contracts are coming to an end and new contracts need to be procured this year:
 - Tree pit surfacing materials
 - Bedding plant supplies
 - Tree Management Software

City Gardens will also be looking to extend the tree works contract with KPS Ltd for the two years permitted under the current contract.

Operational Activities

4. **TOM:** Following the completion of the TOM, City Gardens now sit in the Cleansing and Gardens service, within the City Operations Division. An interim Gardens and Cleansing Assistant Director has been appointed. The team is starting to look at synergies and opportunities to improve the cleansing and gardens services.
5. **Queens Green Canopy:** The Zelkova serrata in Whittington Gardens was planted by the Mayor in March of this year and attended by members of the committee and students from Sir John Cass School.
6. **Biodiversity Action Plan:** The Biodiversity Action plan is complete and will be sent to members.
7. **Fleet:** Current lease agreements have been extended for up to a year and the procurement exercise for the new zero emissions fleet about to commence. The delivery for the Goupil G4 electric vehicle has been delayed and is now due mid May.

Project Updates

8. **2-6 Canon Street (phase 2) Old Change Court/St Nicholas Cole Abbey:** This project was completed in March. Phase 3, which covers an area to the south of the church will be carried out later this year.
9. **Finsbury Circus Reinstatement Project:** Planning permission has been granted. Tenders have been received and tender clarifications ongoing. It is anticipated that the site will be closed from July of this year.
10. **Climate Action Strategy:** City Gardens have completed the climate resilient planting scheme in beds along the river in front of the Boys' School. This

scheme incorporates climate resilient species with different planting mediums. Information boards will be installed in the next few months.

11. **Vine Street:** The eight new trees for this site have now been planted; the species (Two *Zelkova serrata* and six *Koelreuteria paniculata*).
12. **Bunhill Fields:** The City Gardens team have dug trenches and installed the replacement water pipes and are awaiting for the final connections to be made by City Surveyor's contractors.
13. **Moorgate/ London Wall:** A scheme to improve the oval garden at this junction is being developed, it aims to include greening of the paved area around it, add sustainable planting, increase seating in the area and improve the area for the mature Oak tree located in the garden. Implementation will take place this financial year.

Planning

14. A list of planning applications that have been received since the last Committee meeting is not available for this report. The complete list from February will be supplied to committee at the next meeting.

Community, Volunteering and Events

15. The Friends of City Gardens have delivered a number of corporate volunteering days, which have included mulching at Smithfield Rotunda, leaf collection at Bunhill Fields. They are also organising a Bioblitz in Bunhill Fields in Bunhill Fields on the 1st May to record plants, insects and birds.

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